In 2013, Ipsen received the Danish Art Foundation’s 3-year working grant. In this connection, the Art Foundation remarked that Ipsen is “one of the most gifted ceramicists in the country.” His work is often called ‘basic research’ because he investigates the relationship between a form - and a decoration.

He is interested in process and investigates a theme again and again - as with the two works, for example, here at the embassy in which he assembles ceramic spheres to create an organic, effervescent shape. His works are often glazed, so they acquire a ‘lusciousness’ and an almost industrial look despite the fact that he has created a unique piece of craftsmanship.

Ipsen is internationally-recognized and represented in many museums around the world, including Art Decoratif in Paris and the Victoria & Albert in London.

The work in the foyer is called **Bobbles 3** (2003) and displays a theme he has worked on many times.

The work in the dining room is called **Organic** (2014)

**Louise Hindsgavl (born 1973)**

Hindsgavl and Ipsen both represent a renewal of the Danish ceramics tradition for which they have harvested great international recognition. Together, they have been given the chance to leave their mark on the entrance to the embassy, each with a work on a small Finn Juhl table as a podium, which places their works at eye-level for visitors.

Through her figures in white-glazed porcelain, Louise Hindsgavl interprets anew a genre that belongs to the classic 18th-century Rococo repertoire of porcelain production: the conversation piece. This was an object placed in the middle of a lavishly-set dining table to invite
In the 1700s, these were idyllic scenes and idealized figures. Hindsgavl challenges the conversation piece - her figures are immediately inviting but, upon closer inspection, often disturbing, contorted, inhuman. She plays with titles, which help stress their uncanniness. For example, the little creature in the sculpture in the foyer is deformed, with hands and feet that have grown into the tree stump - and the title is uncanny as well: *But I Still Remember the Sound of My Footsteps* (2012).

Hindsgavl has also received the Art Foundation’s 3-year working grant and is represented in various museums in Denmark and abroad: In the US, for example, at the Minneapolis Institute of Art, the Museum of Art and Design in New York, and the ASU Art Museum, Arizona.

**Anne Bjørn (born 1954)**

Anne Bjørn works at the intersection between weaving/tapestries, visual arts, and sculpture. Her works are, as a starting point, two-dimensional, but she weaves shadow in as an essential element and, thus, challenges the tapestry as a surface. Instead, her works become almost sculptural. At the same time, she does not use traditional threads as materials. She uses paper yarn on which she paints acrylic colors. She herself says: “I am attracted by paper materials because it is so ‘brittle.’” The first paper weaves I did were closely woven. Some of them I painted. In 2009, I did a very open work. I was interested in “drawing with thread” and letting the shadow on the wall become a large part of the expression.”
The work in the foyer is called *Rødt spind* [Red Web] (2013). You might say that Bjørn’s works are about creating new space - and moods in space. Layers of woven paper yarn are hung behind each other, and this results in a complicated play of shadow on the wall behind them. Shadow is used as an effect to amplify the works.

The work in the living room is called *Lag på lag* [Layer upon Layer] (2013). The weave is again done in paper yarn and consists of 6 layers of open weave in staggered layers. There are five gray/black layers with a slight “quivering from a yellow layer,” as Anne Bjørn herself puts it. She believes the work can almost be understood digitally, since the prominent black color gives it the sense of text, codes, and symbols.

**Anders Clausen (born 1978)**

Clausen works with language in his art but not only with words or text. He works to just as high a degree with text-related symbols that we all recognize from our interaction with computer screens in connection with information and word processing programs. In his work, Clausen examines how reality is controlled by and subjected to programs that are supposed to help us but, at the same time, control and limit us in relation to what is ‘correct’ and ‘incorrect.’ Most people, for example, recognize the red zigzag line from the Microsoft Word processing program.

In his work *I Would Prefer Not To (Server Too Busy)* (2013), Clausen combines more computer-related symbols and text passages with poetry. Here, it is from the American writer Herman Melville’s classic tale “Bartle by the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street” from 1853 in which a lonely and isolated scrivener with quiet defiance meets every corrective with the words: “I would prefer not to ....”
Most people probably recognize the feeling of wanting every so often to respond to the world with a quiet ‘I would prefer not to...’ And probably also the feeling that your server is too busy...

A review in the newspaper *Information* says of Clausen’s work: “Anders Clausen is interested in screen culture, our interaction with the computer, our little clashes and our celebrations.... When the computer places a red zigzag line beneath a word, Anders Clausen crawls beneath it and adds the mechanical ‘I would prefer not to’ in reference to the figure of Bartleby from Herman Melville’s classic ‘Bartleby, the Scrivener: A Story of Wall Street’ (1853) in which the protagonist prefers not to do anything at all. He cares neither to eat nor to sleep. He merely exists. Like a sullen computer.”

The work is printed on a large vinyl banner (PVC), which would normally be used for ads but which the artist here uses as a canvas. Like a billboard, it is a large work that must be read at a distance, which is exactly why it fits well in the foyer, where you already get an impression of the work from the outside.

Anders Clausen is represented at the well-known Saatchi Gallery in London and Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle in Munich.

**Henrik Frederiksen (born 1967)**

Henrik Frederiksen is a skilled carpenter who was later educated at the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts. Thus, he has a keen eye for a material’s utility, functionality, and design qualities. In addition to running his own furniture company, he designs furniture for other firms.

The embassy’s residence is filled with classic Danish furniture from our ‘golden age’ in the 1960s. Therefore, it seemed obvious to bring contemporary examples of furniture design into the mix.

For Frederiksen, innovative thinking, function, detail, simplicity, and lightness are the most important elements in his work with furniture and products. He strives to produce furniture that is simple and silent – every detail must have a clear purpose, and nothing may be made more complicated than necessary.
An important part of Frederiksen’s work process is to challenge materials and forms - and to ask questions about the designs with which we surround ourselves. He makes experimental prototypes and more sculptural one-time installations and uses these experiments for renewal and innovation in his production.

Three works, the Freja Chair, Tipi Stumtjener og Knagen [Freja Chair, Teepee Coat Rack, and The Peg] (2015), are just such prototypes, which he has only made in very limited editions. The furniture itself he made earlier in wood, but here he plays subtly with the red/white barrier tape we know from building sites, road work, safety signs - which denies access. Used in furniture for the home, Frederiksen says instead, “Come in, take your coat off, and sit down” - and, with humor, turns our usual expectations upside down.

THE DINING ROOM

Anne Lass (born 1978)

Anne Lass, a German/Danish photographer, works with series in which she investigates the relationship between nature, society, and culture. When do they encounter each other? What happens? And how do we adapt ourselves in cities, in the country, in-between? Her photographs contain many small tales - taken from everyday situations - that we all encounter but may not dwell on.

The three pictures in the dining room derive from a series of 60 works, called Wandeln (‘change’ in German). The photographs were taken on a journey from her home in southern Schleswig through Europe, Australia, and the US, and the motifs are, in part, documentation of the photographer’s travels and observations on the journey.

The photographs are strangely surreal because we are constantly confronted in a down-to-earth picture of the everyday and close surroundings with something unreal. A polar bear? Horses in a parking lot? It seems so staged, like a set piece; but, unbelievably, none of Anne Lass’ photographs are set-ups or staged. This gives the pictures an almost mystical character.
Her works are often called ‘Untitled’ but with a place name added in parentheses. By putting the geography in parentheses, she indicates that it is not, as such, documentation of where we are (like a typical vacation photo, for example). Rather, it is the action in the picture and the small tales that are important. The three works are called: Untitled (Chicago), Untitled (Milan), Untitled (Chicago) (2005).

The works have a traditional placement as a centered triptych above the sideboard. The dining room is a space in which people are seated for a long time and in which conversation is given pride of place. Those who do not look at Anne Lass’ nature look out on the manmade nature in the park.

Lass’ works have been shown in solo exhibitions in the US, Germany, and Denmark. She also regularly participates in group shows throughout most of the world.

Mette Vangsgaard (born 1968)

Mette Vangsgaard works with many different artistic media - drawing, water colors, woodcuts, collage, and ceramic sculptures. She says: “The works show a spectrum of stories about Western civilization and our problems generally. Some recurring themes are the effects of a world in rapid change and the human view of nature.”

Like many of the other artists, she crosses genre boundaries - she was educated as a visual artist but also works with ceramics. Today, ceramic is an especially popular material that is no longer reserved for craftspeople or ceramicists.

Vangsgaard has a special interest in marginalized groups and ways of life, which she believes often disappear because of a political and social desire for growth and development. The works are her way of maintaining those ways of life.

Another recurring feature is her focus on everyday things - taking a nap on the couch with the dog, petting the soft snout of a horse - with a keen eye for detail, which provides us with the opportunity to get down to ground level and be reminded of sensual details - often in an encounter with nature.
The two sculptures in the dining room were a part of a collected exhibition called ‘Lemon Moon,’ which dealt with Vangsgaard’s own upbringing in a small Jutland village in the 1970s. The works are personal recollections but seem very recognizable in their down-to-earth presentation. The exhibition’s poetic title refers to a popular lemon cake, shaped like a half-moon - which, in its original form, was a classic Danish afternoon coffee cake. Today, it is a sad, plastic-wrapped, and preserved classic available at every gas station.

The work Bondemanden Arne sover til middag [Farmer Arne Takes a Nap] (2016) is a portrait of her neighbor Arne Hansen, who always took a midday nap after feeding his pigs. Vangsgaard and Arne’s son Claus moved the furniture in the living room around while Arne slept - as a prank. In Reunion (2016), we see Vangsgaard on a motorcycle. She is back in the fields of her childhood, visiting her horse once again.

Vangsgaard has been represented at many major, international exhibitions, including The Armory Show in New York. She received the 3-year working grant from the Danish Art Foundation.

Martin Erik Andersen (born 1964)

Like many of the other artists described above, Andersen also mixes materials and genres. Originally trained in sculpture, he moves freely among art forms.

The work in the dining room is a worn Oriental rug - silver-plated on the back. It can be viewed as a monochrome, a surface with only on color, but in reality it is a landscape of nuances in which the silver becomes gold, almost white, and other places dark gold. This coloring is a part of a process that will continue over time along with the oxidization of the silver.

The work is not much for creating narratives. It is very unlike the other works in the dining room (Lass’ photographs and Vanggaard’s sculpture) - pure abstraction that nevertheless captures us with its tremendous sensuality. However, with the work’s title, Andersen inserts many meanings and references that we must try to make sense of in relation to the work. It is called: Lenity (Asmat/Ezra Pound), (2016).
Lenity means ‘mildness’ and is often used as a legal term in connection with a judgement – a lenient judgement. Pound was an American poet, musician, and critic who was a driving force in modernist poetry at the beginning of the 20th century. He moved to London and was an editor for American periodicals in which he helped discover and shape contemporaries such as T.S. Eliot, James Joyce, and Ernest Hemingway. But in indignation over the horrors of the First World War, he lost faith in England and considered international capitalism to be one of the war’s causes. He moved to Italy in 1924 and, throughout the 1930s and 1940s, he joined the fascist movement and did radio broadcasts for the Italian government in which he was critical of the US and President Roosevelt. After the war, he was convicted of treason. He became mentally ill and lived quietly in Italy until his death in 1972.

The lenient judgment in the title may refer to the judgment that was passed on Pound – was there some ‘mitigating’ factor to his treason because of his role in culture? Or does it refer to the judgments that Pound himself passed on authors by virtue of his role as a critic in which he helped pave the way for some and closed off avenues for others?

Andersen allows his works to remain open to interpretation and maintains that the way he understands his works is not the truth. As he says in an interview, his silver rugs are, “of course, also just fiercely beautiful and empty - and that’s what they are supposed to be.”

On the occasion of Martin Erik Andersen’s 50th birthday in 2014, the newspaper Berlingske Tidende published a portrait, which said, among other things: “Martin Erik Andersen long ago distinguished himself as one of his generation’s most important visual artists .... the Middle Eastern pictorial tradition is one of his recurring inspirations. In addition to the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts, he was educated at the academy in Cairo - and, in his frequent fragile works, you may encounter a conception that he - and we as observers - are rounded by an old culture and a rich life experience we might sometimes forget in our busy lives and a society that strives to be very streamlined, fast, and often also superficial.”

Today, Andersen is a professor at the Academy of Fine Arts and has received the greatest Danish medals in the art world - the Thorvaldsen medal, the Eckersberg medal, and the Carl Nielsen and Anne-Marie Carl Nielsen prize. His works have been shown at various international exhibitions, and he is represented in museum collections.
Camilla Reyman’s three works *Guilty Pleasures #8, Guilty Pleasures #9, Guilty Pleasures #10* (2015), like Martin Erik Andersen’s, are also abstract and partially monochrome – and, yet, not. When you come closer, you can sense how the surface lives. The works are created through many layers of epoxy (glue with a very high strength) into which she has put pigment. This gives the works an exciting depth and, at the same time, a very sleek surface.

The works seem to be simple and very sensual, but Reyman also includes references that can give the works meaning. Reyman has sought inspiration for the works within the Indian tantra movement in which abstract painting is used for meditation. You meditate while you paint - and use the painting to meditate on when it is finished. Typically, minimal, geometric shapes, dots, and stripes are painted. In India, the method has been passed down from parent to child, which is something that has been going on for many hundreds of years. Through the process, one becomes a part of something greater, something outside the self - both in time and in thought.

Camilla Reyman finished at the Academy of Fine Arts in 2013 and is one of the younger important artists working in Denmark right now. She, like many of the other artists described, is obsessed with challenging materials and genres. She moves between sculptural installations, conceptual art, and visual art. She describes how she is searching for “something other and greater”: “I have for many years felt a need to escape the civilized concordance my surroundings lull me into. I daydream about running into the rain forest and learning the ancient wisdom of the shamans, but it always ends with me thinking that is a bit of a challenge...."
Tina Maria Nielsen (born 1964)

In the same way as Martin Erik Andersen on the other side of the same wall, Nielsen takes her starting point in a familiar and expensive artistic material: Bronze. She has made use of a classic bronze casting technique, but her motif is far from classic bronze sculpture – an electric cable from her own studio.

Her work *Stream* (2014-2016) is characteristic of her production of bronze casts. She takes ‘humble,’ overlooked everyday objects and uses the material to raise questions about their normal functionality and visibility.

The work enters into a dialogue with visual art (two-dimensional) and sculpture (three-dimensional) – the cable relates to the surface and the wall but, at the same time, sticks out as a relief. The work has a raw form of expression that stands in contrast to the space in which it is placed.

Tina Maria Nielsen has been awarded countless honors for her work and several working grants from the Danish Art Foundation.

THE LIBRARY

Mette Gitz-Johansen (born 1956)

Gitz-Johansen works with many different techniques – video, painting, and photography. In her 12 pencil drawings at the embassy (10 in the library and 2 by the cloakroom), Gitz uses detail to explore narratives and hidden layers of meaning.

The series is called *Replacing* (2014) and shows private possessions, an office landscape, a kitchen, but focused on details and ‘distorted’ in perspective, so you as an observer always feels you have changed position.

Gitz is, thus, an extension of both Lass’ photographs and Vangsgaard’s small sculptures in the dining room, which focus on small, everyday details - but, in the moment, they are focused on and zoomed in on, the everyday becomes central for narratives about life as it is lived in its patterns and history.
THE SMALL ROOM OFF THE GARDEN

In this room, ceramics have been brought into play in different ways, gathering up the ceramic threads laid out in the rest of the exhibition.

Rose Eken (born 1976)

The three Rose Eken works (the jacket, the shoes and the tape tower) were a part of a large total installation – a meta-studio in clay in which individual objects were a reproduction of Eken’s own workshop: brushes, paint cans, utility knives, towers of rolls of tape, piles of art books, coffee cups, a laptop - plus all the other small personal things that the artist has in her workplace.

*Painter’s Denim Jacket* (2015) is a model of Eken’s own jacket, hung on a peg - as if she has just been through the room and, in addition, just deposited her sneakers there: *Ash Trainers with Rivets* (2015). In a way, the objects seem very personal, almost like a self-portrait that tells us about the artist.

The tower of tape balances somewhere between a very specific reproduction of something very everyday – rolls of tape - at the same time that the tower in its totality appears to be a pure abstract and colorful formation.

The three works are very typical of Rosen Eken, who takes her starting point in everyday objects, in real events, and specific spaces; but, in some way or other, the objects become strangely unreal, glazed, frozen. The materials and the surface make them anything but real; and, instead, we look at them as entirely new objects that are strangely un-functional.

Eken is absorbed with calling attention to how we unconsciously give objects value, attribute meaning to them, or read stories into them beyond their functionality. By being super-specific, she prepares the way
for a different way of working with narrative than, for example, Martin Erik Andersen and Anders Clausen, who make use of clear references in titles.

Rose Eken and Tina Maria Nielsen both work with everyday objects from their own world. They are interested in how the things with which we surround ourselves help create us as human beings.

Eken’s works have been shown at exhibitions around most of the world, including a number of solo exhibitions in New York and San Francisco.

Julie Stavad (born 1987)

Stavad is a sculptor (works with three-dimensional art) - but, in the series *Kopper* [Cups] (2016), she has thrown herself into very different materials and media: photogravure. Photogravure is a reproduction of photographs in intaglio printmaking: The image is transferred to a copper plate, which is treated with asphalt and resin powder and coated with chrome gelatin. After washing and etching, a print is made with printing ink. The photogravure leaves a residue or a texture on the paper, which in itself becomes a new material - virtually three-dimensional objects are deposited on the paper. In this way, the physical cup becomes a photograph, which, in the photogravure, becomes a new object on paper.

Stavad has depicted some inhomogeneous, finger-dabbed coffee cups in ceramic, which she made over the past few years. As a starting point, the ceramic cups were not conceived as works of art but as ‘exercises’ in fashioning clay and learning to work with the material.

In the series *Kopper*, Stavad has reproduced the cups larger than they are in reality. They become oversized, almost intrusive, and you get the sense that you are a Lilliputian invited to tea in a kingdom of giants. As in Eken, the everyday is nudged out of the zone of normality and becomes unreal.
Mette Winckelmann (born 1971)

Mette Winckelmann works with abstract forms of expression, but her works also contain a conceptual content. In media such as painting, textiles, collages, and installations, she takes her starting point in communities, identity, gender, and freedom.

She is particularly interested in the customary and often symbolic connections in which we use textiles such as, for example, patchwork, which is associated with women’s recompensing work with decorating and creating the blankets that warm us. Or the national flag, which is identity-creating and connected with honor, pride, or warfare.

She herself says, “As far as media are concerned, I work a lot with textiles in different formats. The flag as an object, phenomenon, and symbol for identification interests me. I use the flag’s authority and authenticity to de- and reconstruct ideas and conceptions about ourselves and others.”

*Types of Relations* (2003) consists of material in two shades of color. Both colors are broken up and put together again but now in an open/loose construction in which many patches are sewn together into an overall format. The whole thing is later mounted behind a glass case in which you would normally see expensive paintings.

Winckelmann has not done anything to hide the process that is behind the work. Rather, it stands out as a central part of the work’s overall expression.

The textiles may very well be reminiscent of a flag with simple shapes and colors that can be read from a long distance - but, as they hang there, ripped into pieces and loosely put back together, the flag’s simple structure becomes an image of dissolution rather than a picture of a proud, united nation. Winckelmann is interested in how we generate identity-creating hierarchies and patterns for our behavior - this network of mutually-connected relations that helps forge a society but, at the same time, maintains us in structures.