



Comments made by visitors to Kristinehamn and the Picasso sculpture

A woman relates...

“My grandchild was visiting and we went for a drive out to the Picasso sculpture. When we got there, she ran up to Jacqueline and gave her a big hug”.

An Email to the Tourist Office...

“We made a detour and visited the Picasso sculpture. Kristinehamn was totally unknown to the four of us. The drive from the town centre out to the Picasso sculpture was lovely. What a beautiful bay, with so many pretty residential areas!”



**Picasso chose Kristinehamn
Welcome!**



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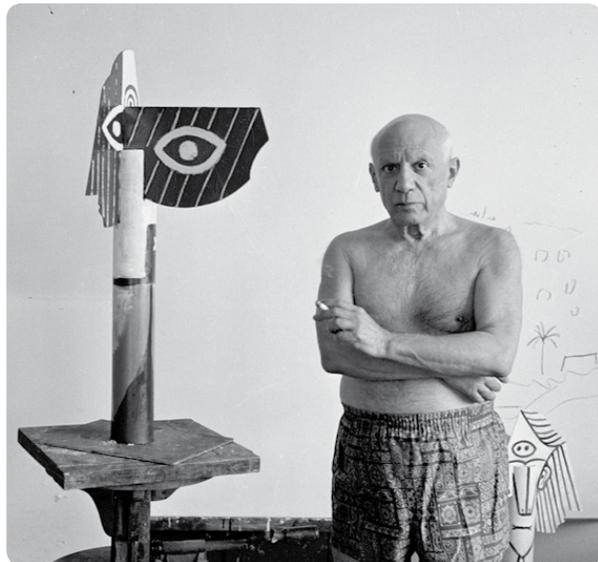
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It all started by chance on a dusty country road in France...

...where Bengt Olson, an artist from Kristinehamn, met the Norwegian painter and photographer Carl Nesjar. Nesjar, who experimented with decorative work in a new concrete-based material, was in contact with Pablo Picasso and knew that Picasso was keen to construct his sculptures in the “Les dames de Mougins” series on a monumental scale. With his access to suitable material, Nesjar provided Picasso with the chance of realizing his dream.

Why not in Scandinavia?

...asked the Swede and Norwegian, well aware of Picasso's interest in this peaceful part of the world. On his return to Kristinehamn Bengt Olson presented the project to the local county council. They, in turn, contacted Picasso and sent him pictures, recordings of traditional folk music, etc. to illustrate the spirit of Värmland.



Confirmation from Picasso, in the form of a deed of gift, arrived shortly after...

...in the form of a photograph showing a model of the sculpture in the Swedish countryside. It was signed simply “Oui” (Yes) Picasso, 7.7.1964. Work could then begin!

The location that was decided upon was the shore of Lake Vänern, on the Vålösundet channel, approx. 7 km from the centre of Kristinehamn. The sculpture was constructed by Carl Nesjar. Unfortunately Picasso, who followed the whole process via films and photographs, never saw the work of art itself.

The 15 m high sculpture was inaugurated on Midsummer's Eve 1965 by the Swedish poet Bo Setterlind.

The Picasso sculpture in Kristinehamn is one of Picasso's biggest works of art...

...and has attracted considerable attention both in Sweden and abroad. The Picasso sculpture is Kristinehamn's most famous “celebrity” and the peninsula on which it is placed is the town's most frequently visited location.

The road from the town centre out to the peninsula follows the shore of Lake Vänern, which is lined with jetties, boats and cafés.

Out here you can take a trip on one of the many ferries that traffic the northern part of Lake Vänern in the summer. A boat trip also means that you can admire the sculpture from the water! Housed in a small building close by, photographs and plans illustrate the process involved when the Picasso sculpture was constructed in Kristinehamn.



Picasso chose Kristinehamn Welcome!

- Do you think it's strange to hear that Picasso chose Kristinehamn even though he had never even been here? In actual fact Picasso was also asked if he'd construct the sculpture in New York, but he chose Kristinehamn instead!
- Picasso's sculpture in Kristinehamn is one of the sculptures in the series “Les dames de Mougins”, in which his wife Jacqueline is the main subject.
- The monumental sculpture is 15 m high. The column is 1.65 m in diameter and has two “wings”, one of which weighs 8 t and measures 6x4 m. It is made from “natural concrete” which involved liquid white cement being sprayed in through a sandblasting process. Picasso was very pleased when he learnt that the surface was so hard, it should last for 2,000 years!