



During K and La Kahina's life as diplomatic couple, 52 Rue Spontini was the first big address in Paris, later followed by 33 Avenue Cortambert in Passy, and finally 109 Avenue Henri Martin—all in various positions at the OECD/IEA.

Just as *footprints* and *handouts* are the warp and woof of the *present series* (22 sheets); the weft of *character analysis* and *portraiture* emerged in extension of these, and a *precision* of my interest in “lopsided pairs” **A** and **B** & their *vectorial sum* **X**. That is, as a *clarification of the terms in which the problem of the project Trolling words is set*. The relation between *character analysis* and *portraiture* was established by painter Alf Krogh Holt's method of working on *portraiture*.



Alf Krogh Holt, *La femme de l'artiste* (Arlette Krogh Holt or Annemor Kristiansen?), 92 x 60cm oil on canvas. Is the interior from 109 Avenue Henri Martin?

12.03.23

Alf Krogh Holt (1919-1997) started his life as a painter when he went to study with André Lhote on a French State Fellowship in Paris (1951). During the period 1975-77 he came regularly for lunch with *La Kahina*, at her Parisian address: 52, *rue Spontini*. They spoke of a wide range of subjects and also his legacy in painting: featuring Paul Cézanne—who taught André Lhote—as his artistic grandfather. His conversations with *La Kahina* went on while he was working on her portrait.

He worked at forming an *impression* of her, and then went to work on the portrait in his atelier. This method of *recording* and *replaying* he had from Cézanne: he mentioned, on several occasions, that Cézanne worked in his atelier with *invisible*—or, *not present*—models. He could envision them in a chair, go to correct their posture and go back to continue his painting. Evidently, this was part of Krogh Holt's legacy, as he studied *La Kahina*. She never posed for him.

He worked in two steps: incorporating an *impression* of her during their conversations, worked from it *conjured* in his atelier, while the painting itself articulated a *counterpoint* to this transient optical illusion: the pigment, its materiality sculpting the surface, how it was resolved in the plane delegat-

ing the gaze to multiple viewpoints and to the surface itself ([Dondero, 2020](#)), which was Krogh Holt's cubist/impressionist legacy. He could decide that his portraits should be done in green, to the surprise/displeasure of some.

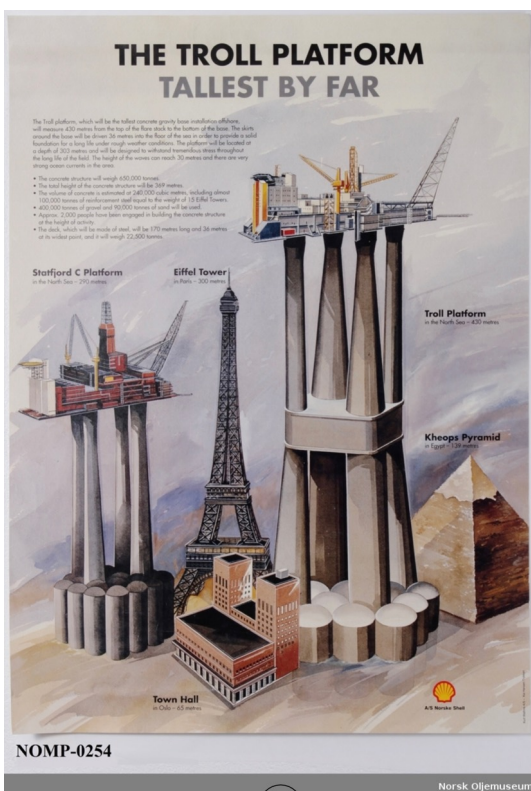
In the mind of *La Kahina* the method of transposing an impression from a domestic conversation to the work of staging in the atelier, was verging toward a fantastic example of *optical illusion*. Yet, it was marked by the real through the lengthy periods of character-study that the artist incorporated into his work. It was also marked by the real from another end: the struggles on the canvas with the staging of his atelier, which resulted the painting as a piece of narrative *fiction*.

Of course, were are in an uncertain terrain here where nothing is determined and written in stone. And the present handout is written in an answer to a response from artist Michel Pavlou on a piece, where I am making a point of drawing up a thesis on the nature of [illusion versus fiction](#): *here*, optical illusion vs. narrative fiction. The point being that *conjuring* the optical presence of a human figure captured by impressions from sessions devoted to character analysis *is* an illusion.

But *only if seen in isolation*, which it was not. The point being that an *illusion in context* is already in deconstruction. It is lodged in the *between space* of the *character* and her *portrait*, and exists in the *time of portraiture*: which means that we—at this interstice—capture something **X** that otherwise would escape us. Which is the *performance*. Which underscores the depth of *the relation between painting and performance in the fine arts tradition*. It opens up a whole landscape.

Evidently, the legacy of 71 diaries left to posterity by *La Kahina* are materials for a *character analysis* alongside a project of *portraiture*: the portrait of a woman in extended service for the Norwegian Foreign Ministry. And, in all honesty, when *augmented* by her husband *K's* collection of selected documents—from his career as a diplomat—I have the same opportunity in mind for a portrait of the *Troll-platform* projects and the *long-term* agreement with Gaz de France.

For reasons indicated, the trail left by *K* are *whispers* compared to *La Kahina's* daily regimen of diary-writing: it *hovers* over his selection of documents—where his *hand* is revealed—and his wayward attempts to convey his sense of peaks and pitfalls of Norwegian politics abroad. But he neither had much experience with in public office nor with authoring. Despite a defined character, he did not manage to get his narrative afoot. Except for the Troll-project.



He had a hand in the agreement from the beginning to the end, and it evolved to become an assumption of both his intellectual *quests* and practical *queries* for the rest of his career. The deconstruction of the illusion—Trolls-creatures turn into stone or burst at the first light of dawn—is the assignment of a narrative: moving *from* the assumptions of illusion *to* the assignments of fiction. The place of that narrative in the Norwegian petroaesthetics: a *scenario* of sorts.

Here another level of portraiture begins: the archival search from my current location at the National Library of Norway as a *researcher in residence*: looking into the materials accessible from there on the importance of communicating the *size* of both the construction and projects of Norwegian offshore platforms. The Troll-platform, in particular: a “moon-landing”. The Eiffel Tower has used to scale several of these. The technical know-how was of SciFi proportions.

Therefore the ongoing dialogues with NLN—of where the private archive after *K* and *La Kahina* might belong in the archival system—will puncture the spell of its *assumed* value and replace it with a fictional *assignment* of a public source-material. As will a process of developing an analytical practice from an

intended series of sessions with a *psychoanalyst*. So that the private archive—like Krogh Holt's paintings—is *marked* from two ends: archival & analytic in a *joint* performance (i.e., a [deposition](#)).