

Tønder Marsh: Lægan Pump Station and Marsh Trail Wayfinding

JAC Studios exhibition designer, in collaboration with Gjøde & Partnere Arkitekter

Lægan Pump Station is a 1929 industrial pumping station on the edge of the Tønder Marsh in southwest Jutland. It is the largest of four stations that together drain the low-lying marshland and protect the surrounding area from flooding. The station is part of the Wadden Sea UNESCO World Heritage site, a landscape of exceptional ecological and cultural significance. JAC Studios was commissioned to transform the building into a publicly accessible visitor destination, creating a permanent exhibition across its three floors and contributing to a wider wayfinding strategy for the Marsh Trail, a 54-kilometre hiking route that connects a series of information points across the site. The project involved close collaboration with Gjøde & Partnere Arkitekter, who led the building restoration and development, with JAC Studios responsible for all exhibition design and wayfinding.

The exhibition tells the story of the drainage system of the marsh and the engineering that makes human habitation of this extraordinary landscape possible. Inside, the ground floor houses an interactive 3D landscape model inviting visitors to trace the movement of water through the canal network. The mezzanine looks out over the station's fully operational pumps, interpreted through illustrations, photographs, and text. The rooftop offers a panoramic view across the marsh, anchored by a large landscape model identifying the key features and sights of the wider area. The building was given an exterior facelift as part of the project, with the arrival and approach designed to signal the transition from working infrastructure to public visitor destination.

Additionally, JAC Studios contributed to a system of information stands distributed at key points along the Marsh Trail, orientating visitors within the wider landscape and connecting individual stopping points to the broader story of the marsh. Designing across both the interior exhibition and the exterior wayfinding network required a consistent design language for a diverse public audience with no prior knowledge of the site.

Credits

Client: Tøndermarsk Initiativet

Exhibition Design: JAC Studios

Graphics and Illustrations: Tina Damgaard

Interior Fit-out: CPH Steel

Photographer: Tilo Franzen

About JAC Studios

With the foundation in architecture, scenography and art, JAC studios work with exhibition architecture for museums, companies as well as in public urban space.

The Vision is an interest in challenging and developing the exhibition experience and the future values this implies. We have a solid experience of small and large-scale projects in all stages of the design process. We work in close dialogue with the client, and offer a complete design, from conception, to detailed drawings, production and tender request documentation.

JAC studios believe in contextual exhibitions, where the narrative or thematic story is communicated through a one-off design, which responds to movement, the specific space, the scenic setting, light, sound and furniture. However, while the consideration of these elements as essential, the artifact remains the main driver for the design.

We believe that the combination of scenography and architecture provides a base for alternative thinking and results in communicative spaces accentuated by storytelling, aesthetics, materiality, sustainability and user participation. We believe that exhibition design plays a major role in contributing to debates and dialogues. Therefore, the exhibition should work as a social and communicative stage.