After 85 years the „blue portrait“ of AC-inventor Nikola Tesla is rediscovered!

At NordseeMuseum Husum, a unique oil-painting from New York City, thought to be lost for 85 years, has been rediscovered in our archives. The treasure found might correctly be called a sensation, as the canvas shows the only portrait of the famous inventor of Alternating Current and the radio, Nikola Tesla (1856-1943).

Tesla has been called a „Master of lightning“, „the genius, who lit the world“; or: „He invented the future.“ No superlative seems too big to characterize this brilliant inventor, whom the world owes not only radio and ‘electricity from the grid, i.e. A.C.-generators, -transformers, and -motors, but remote control and fluorescent lamps as well. The first power station on an industrial scale at Niagara-Falls was equipped with turbines based on Tesla’s Polyphase System, the power grid still feeding the world with electrical energy. Maybe the work of Nikola Tesla can be summarized best in the words of physics-Nobel-prizewinner Arthur Holly Compton: „Tesla is entitled to the enduring gratitude of mankind."

Hard to believe but Nikola Tesla only once in his lifetime sat for a portrait, and he did this only for the painter-princess Vilma Princess Lwoff-Parlaghy. The blue light for illuminating the setting was installed by the inventor himself at her atelier. When on March 1st 1916 the public could examine the portrait for the first time, it made a blue impression, an effect created by blue filters placed in front of specially designed lamps. This is how the oil-painting got its name as the „blue portrait“.

The NordseeMuseum will present this unique treasure on March 2nd 2009, 11 o’clock at a public press presentation

- first time ever in EUROPE
- first time after 85 years

The follow-up exhibition will be „Mythos, Strom und eine Malerfürstin. Das „blue portrait“ von Nikola Tesla, dem Mann, der die Welt erleuchtete“. (Myth, electricity and the painter-princess. The „blue portrait“ of Nikola Tesla, the „man who lit he world“).

The exhibition is supported by Nord-Ostsee Sparkasse and Husumer Stadtwerke.
History of the re-discovery

When the only! portrait of Nikola Tesla was completed, it was presented March 1st 1916 in New York in „blue“ light- naturally in the blue, artificial light of Tesla’s fluorescent lights. It created a sensation within the U.S., as until then inventor of world fame Nikola Tesla refused to sit for a portrait - and he never did it again.

When painter Vilma Elisabeth Princess Lwoff-Parlaghy died in 1923, the portrait was to be auctioned. From that day on the ,Icon of the Tesla-parish' was missing.

The painting was bought, together with others by the same author, by New York merchant Ludwig Nissen. Since that time the painting was part of the Nissen-collection, resident at the Nissenhouse Husum since 1937, now called “NordseeMuseum”. As early as 1991 the art historian Dr. Cornelius Steckner could assign the painting, taken inventory as „portrait of a man“, as a picture of Nikola Tesla. It was not identified as the 'blue portrait'. Large-scale investigations by the Tesla-museum in Belgrad (Serbia), a.o.t. at Tegernsee in Germany, about one year ago again led to Dr. Steckner and Dr. Astrid Fick from NordseeMuseum Husum to finally identify the painting as the “blue portrait” of Nikola Tesla.

At the beginning of 2009 the NordseeMuseum Husum decided to restore the portrait, a task excellently executed by Susanne Gerlach.

links:
- http://www.teslasociety.ch
- http://www.tesla-museum.org/
- http://www.ebe-online.de/home/tgobmaie/tesla/index.htm
- http://www.allabouttesla.com/