



**Theodor Kittelsen**  
Norwegian artist



**Christian Krohg**  
Norwegian painter



**Oda Krohg**  
Norwegian painter



**Selma Lagerlöf**  
Swedish author



**Carl Larsson**  
Swedish artist



**Jenny Lind**  
Swedish opera singer



**Carl von Linné**  
Swedish natural scientist



**Max Manus**  
Norwegian resistance hero



**Jørgen Moe**  
Norwegian folklorist



**Edvard Munch**  
Norwegian artist



**Fridtjof Nansen**  
Norwegian explorer



**Asta Nielsen**  
Danish actress



**Carl Nielsen**  
Danish composer



**Christina Nilsson**  
Swedish soprano



**Regine Normann**  
Norwegian author



**Aasmund Olavsson Vinje**  
Norwegian writer



**Harry S Pettersen**  
Norwegian resistance hero



**Fredrikke Marie Qvam**  
Norwegian activist



**Povel Ramel**  
Swedish entertainer



**Knud Rasmussen**  
Danish Arctic explorer



**Johan Ludvig Runeberg**  
Finnish poet



**Aksel Sandemose**  
Norwegian author



**Amalie Skram**  
Norwegian author



**Georg Sverdrup**  
Norwegian philologist



**Otto Sverdrup**  
Norwegian polar explorer



**Gunnar Sønsteby**  
Norwegian resistance hero



**Evert Taube**  
Swedish poet



**Frederik 'Frits' Thaulow**  
Norwegian painter



**Geirr Tveitt**  
Norwegian composer



**Sigrid Undset**  
Norwegian writer



**Jørn Utzon**  
Danish architect



**Gustav Vigeland**  
Norwegian sculptor



**Henrik Wergeland**  
Norwegian poet



**Anders Zorn**  
Swedish artist



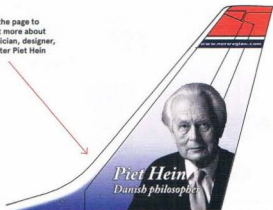
**HC Ørsted**  
Danish physicist



## More tail fins...

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Turn the page to find out more about mathematician, designer, and writer Piet Hein



**Piet Hein**  
Danish philosopher

# Hero in focus / Piet Hein

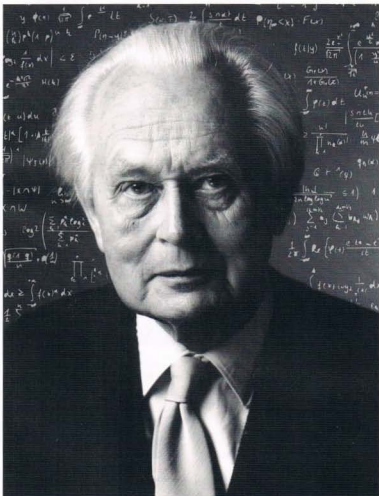
Five things you need to know about the Danish Renaissance man

- 1 Piet Hein was born in Copenhagen in 1905 to an engineer father and ophthalmologist mother. Physicist Niels Bohr and *Out of Africa* writer Karen Blixen were visitors to his childhood home. Hein developed an early fascination with maths and words, and graduated from Copenhagen's Metropolitan Grammar School.
- 2 Hein took the introductory course in philosophy at the University of Copenhagen in the autumn of 1924, but left to attend private art schools in the city, followed by a stint at the Royal Swedish Academy of Fine Arts in Stockholm. On his return to Copenhagen, Hein studied philosophy and theoretical physics.
- 3 He soon became known as a designer: he first sketched the Ra lamp (A) when he was 25; it was followed by the Sinus lamp, which looks like a flying saucer. He also invented a number of mathematical games (D), including Tangloids and board game Hex, or Con-Tac-Tix, which he created at the Niels Bohr Institute in 1942.
- 4 Throughout his life, Hein wrote more than 7,000 short, aphoristic poems he called grooks (B). *Consolation Grook*, for example, is about life under Nazi occupation: "Losing one glove is certainly painful, but nothing compared to the pain, of losing one, throwing away the other, and finding the first one again."
- 5 Challenged to manage the traffic at Stockholm's Sergels Torg in 1959, Hein suggested a super-elliptical roundabout (a variation of an oval). He returned to the shape for a range of branded homeware (C) and furniture (E). He died at his home in Funen in 1996.

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## Five of Piet Hein's creations



A

Ra Lamp

The Ra lamp was a big hit in the 1960s. In 2006 it was redesigned to match Hein's original drawings from 1931.



B

Grooks

The first grook (grook in Danish) poem appeared in Politiken newspaper after Denmark was invaded by the Nazis.



C

Super-egg vase

The super-egg is used in many of Hein's designs - there is even a 4m-tall super-egg sculpture that can be put together to form a cube or other shapes.



D

Some puzzle

Created when Hein was 26. Some is made of seven pieces that can be put together to form a cube or other shapes.



E

Super-elliptical table

At Hein's democratic, super-elliptical table, everyone is supposed to have an equal position.