Royal System A/S is 25 years old – or young, if you prefer it that way. We feel quite young! Over the course of these few years the company, starting with a staff of three employees, has expanded into a world-wide furniture-manufacturing concern... the largest in Denmark with exports to 40 countries, all over the world. The company has licensees throughout Africa, Asia, Europe and South America. Royal System A/S’s birthday gives us an opportunity – for a brief moment – to stop and look back. This little booklet should not be regarded as a formal anniversary issue but as quite an informal edition of the company's staff magazine, “Radius”.

On the following pages we shall be taking a look at the events of the past 25 years – years that have brought excitement and colour in the life of Royal System A/S.
The Danish “Who’s Who” tells us the following:
Poul Cadovius was born in 1911 at Frederiksberg, Copenhagen, to Agnes and Nicolaj Cadovius. The young man grew up in a hurry, and in 1944 he set up the furniture-manufacturing company, Royal System. Today he is the head of an empire of companies. Factories in Denmark. Branches throughout the world, and a number of foreign companies also make Royal System under licence. He is the Chairman of the Board of Cadomus A/S, France & Son A/S, Royal System A/S, system abstracta a/s, dan interior a/s, and also Sagitta Boats. Cadovius is member of the Boards of eight foreign branches. Designer of Royal System, System Ultra, System Cado, System Abstracta, Cadomus, etc. Awarded gold medal at the Finland Fair 1950, silver medal at the XI Triennale in Milan, Italy, 1957, special diploma of the Society of Danish Workmanship, 1959, gold medal at the 10th International Inventor’s Fair in Brussels, 1961, and the Danish Sales Symposium annual medal the same year. Cadovius lives at “Christianshus” near Hørsholm in the north of Zealand/Denmark.

But how is the man himself, the man behind the Hemingway beard? In only a few years Cadovius has become a major factor in Danish furniture design. He is most comfortable in a sloppy sweater, armed with a large cup of black coffee and a sketch-pad. The sketch-pad is his constant companion. He exudes inspiration and brightens up his surroundings no matter where he goes. He is a man with the fire of enthusiasm. Poul Cadovius must have plenty of space around him. He has an irresistible determination, untiring energy, and more stubbornness than one could believe possible in one person. He is a demanding boss but, nevertheless has a good way with his staff, and his secret in getting them to pull a heavy load is that he demands at least as much of himself. It would be easy to get the impression that he never relaxes but in fact he does. He is just as relaxed outside his work as he is intense and concentrated during the day. He has a yacht at the local marina, and goes sailing every week-end during the summer. Occasionally he takes part in races. He has always been interested in sports. In his younger days he was a motor-racing driver and became a Danish champion. Later he turned to sailing – and also won a number of major prizes. He lives by the motto: Speed and action.

You have deserved your anniversary, Cadovius!
1945-1950. In 1945 the Danish authorities registered the births of 95,062 children and one company: Jydsk Persienne Industri I/S. The firm was registered on 12th September with the object of manufacturing Venetian blinds. It was established by Poul Cadovius and Hother L. Brønner, of Fiona Wallpaper Works, Fåborg. Perhaps it is a little too much to call it a firm; it was small but the customers were satisfied and the firm got off to a good start. In a small red, wooden shed no bigger than 120 square meters Poul Cadovius started the primitive manufacturing of Venetian blinds in paper and wood, which at the time was a brand-new sales item. They quickly became fashionable. Sales rose. More people were employed, and soon there was not enough room in the old headquarters. In September 1947 the Company moved into its present headquarters, where it set up a new administration and production.

Poul Cadovius did not stop at Venetian blinds. He had one or two ideas for wall-mounted furniture systems. In 1948 the world met a white-painted shelf system under the name of “Royal System”. Time showed this to be perhaps the world’s best-known and most-copied system of sectional bookcases. In 1949 the Company produced its first light-alloy Venetian blinds. The wind was favourable – Poul Cadovius mounted every sail – expanded the factory - set course for Copenhagen, and in 1950 established a whole-sale department at Peder Skramsgade 19.

1951-1954. More ideas! The Company hungered for success – and got it. In the early 1950s it started manufacturing shelving systems in walnut, mahogany, light and dark oak, and the first sections were put on the market. Teak was introduced in 1953, and Poul Cadovius started production of various wall-bookcases, flower-boxes, folding chairs in wood and steel, mirrors, lamps and other decorative items, wooden drawer-units, wooden ceiling systems, and wickerwork. A tremendous amount of energy was invested – customers increased – the telephone did not stop ringing. New manufacturing premises were required – so they were built. In 1953 a yacht, Royal Star I, was built in one of the new halls. This signified the start of a shipyard enterprise.

1955-1959. Hother L. Brønner left the company on 15th February, 1954, and Poul Cadovius took over the helm as sole proprietor. The prospects were good and looking even better – but on 1st November the factory was virtually destroyed by fire. Speed and action! The same evening premises were rented in a neighbouring factory, and within 36 hours of the fire production was once more on the way… fantastic! By February 1956 the damage done by fire had been repaired, and exports began a month later. Royal System was introduced with great success at the Cologne Furniture Fair, and the company's first foreign branch was set up in Düsseldorf. Manufacturing under licence started in 13 countries. Golden days... an enjoyable life! The ideas were coming thick and fast.

A sleepless night in a hotelroom near Frankfurt gave Poul Cadovius the idea for Abstracta!
The butterfly shelf and Ultra Line, an attractive wall-mounted system in wood and metal in six lively colours, was introduced at the international division of XI Triennale in Milan and won the silver medal – a highly treasured prize.
Meanwhile Royal System was having a wonderful time in Copenhagen. Charming, friendly surroundings – but not enough space!
The branch had to find new headquarters. This time in a quiet area of Frederiksberg.
There was also lack of space in Aarhus, and on 26th November, 1957, the company purchased a site extending to 100,000 square metres in Randers – and the site was later supplemented by purchase of an additional 25,000 square metres.
The Dutch licensee took over the department in Düsseldorf and won all licence rights for West Germany. Royal System was becoming a big international name. In 1958 as the first Danish furniture manufacturer the company opened a department at 1130 Third Avenue, New York, and a year later departments were opened in Stockholm and Montreal.
A new flower blossoms in the garden of Cadovius’ ideas: the Pia Chair is put into production. The Society of Danish Workmanship awarded Poul Cadovius its special diploma. Cadovius was more happy than proud. Public acclaim is not something that comes along every day. The wall-mounted System Cado was marketed in 1960. And became the furniture sensation of the year. Now – in addition to shelves and cupboards – you could mount on the wall of your living-room or bedroom such things as sofas, tables and beds (part of the bed, anyway), even baby’s bed could be mounted on the wall. A startling and useful idea…
A new factory was erected in Randers, with space for future expansion. Later the entire store of processed furniture was moved to Randers, to be kept under one roof.
Everyone – especially the warehousemen – was happy. An international showroom was opened in Copenhagen just of Town Hall Square.
In August another feather in the company’s cap. At the international Frankfurt Fair the Royal System filled the entire Danish pavilion with furniture systems and system Abstracta.
This ingenious little gadget with its unlimited possibilities aroused tremendous interest and was discussed on television and in the press all over the world.
Lack of space was still a problem for Royal System in Copenhagen, and the department moved once more, this time to Herlev Hovedgade 201. In New York Royal System was supplemented by wholesale departments in Los Angeles and San Francisco. Business is brisk on the American continent. At this point the Company ceased production of Venetian blinds.
1961. Gold medal in Brussels for system Abstracta – the finest award that can be given for an invention of international value – but there was no time to rest on the company laurels…
At the sales Symposium at Fredericia the company built three bubble buildings by the Abstracta system, which King Frederik visited and inspected with great interest. Poul Cadovius was awarded the Symposium’s annual Medal for Imagination and Initiative. Cadovius was also honoured by the Danish Society of Arts and Crafts and Industrial Design. The new factory at Randers was inaugurated with much ado on 27th September.
1962. Success was “bubbling”. In spite of frost and sleet four bubbles were erected at Cologne, incorporating five kilometers of metal tubing and 2,000 Abstracta “gadgets”. Lit up from the inside the bubbles resembled Ufos.
In less than a year Poul Cadovius was known all over the world for these bubbles. They were shooting up like moleholes.

In October the Company bought Snoghøj Hotel near the Little Belt. There were plans for a recreational center of Cadovius bubble-type houses in plastic. But the idea was never put into practice. Success almost split Abstracta at the seams – again there was a lack of space, and a new site was bought at Tønder for the construction of a larger factory.

1963. The Company’s own building in Stockholm with its permanent show-room was finished and inaugurated on 4th February by the Danish Ambassador.

The sun really shone that summer:
Royal Star V, 24 metres long and a good 56 tons, was launched. A maritime note:
Poul Cadovius had always dreamed of owning his own shipyard, and on 23rd September the port of Randers offered him a 15,000 square metre site at the main quay.

In February 1964 we set up our own department within the Common Market, Royal System once more taking over responsibility for sales in West Germany and setting up its own division in Düsseldorf. New factory opened in May. The company invited the entire population of Tønder to attend. Copenhagen has its Little Mermaid, Esbjerg has Sculptor of Robert Jacobsen, and now Tønder has its “Cadovius”: a copper-plated symbol of the Abstracta gadget. And an attractive landmark for the factory.
Poul Cadovius bubbles on with his ideas on hall construction, and puts the idea into practice with the boatyard at Randers.

Sales continue to rise. Expansion: Royal System, Randers, expanded by 50 per cent and capacity was doubled, supplies were quickly passed to the customer, and the customer was happy.
And it should just be mentioned at this point that a new abstracta factory was started at Tønder in October of that year.
Economic desire for a greater share of the market for Royal System and System Cado. The agreement with the Austrian licencee was terminated, and on 12th August the company’s own department was opened at Vienna.

1965. The Royal System Yacht Yard was inaugurated at Randers on 24th April, 1965, with the christening of Sagitta 30, a 30-ft. sharp-stern vessel.

In 1966 Poul Cadovius purchased Christianshus and moved his home to Zealand/Denmark.
Sagitta 30 enjoyed success at boat exhibitions throughout Europe. The 18th Danish Furniture Fair was opened at Bella Centret, Copenhagen, where Royal System introduced a number of new ideas. At Bygg-Ma Fair in Malmö, Sweden, Cadovius demonstrates his urge to experiment with new ideas in the form of a complete series of structures in glass fiber.
One of his older ideas is fulfilled at this point – the house of the future is delivered to the exhibition by helicopter.

1966. Royal System in New York expands and occupies new premises – the company considers the independent manufacturing of wall-mounted furniture in the United States – and this is in a period when Danish companies were being purchased by foreign competitors!

A big day: on 15th November, 1966, Poul Cadovius bought the firm of France & Son A/S, which was now amalgamated with Royal System. Stream-lined production – a combined sales organization – we
were preparing for the tough competition of the Common Marked.

1967. April – spring – Royal Star VI is launched at Aarhus. The first 40-ft. glass fiber hull for commercial purposes was demoulded at the boatyard in Randers – nothing less than a marine revolution!

Royal System and France & Søn A/S show their public image at the annual Furniture Fair in Bella Centret, Copenhagen. Royal System in Düsseldorf was dreaming of its own property – so the company bought a site at Metzkausen, and building started in October. A new sea-going cruiser, Sagitta 26, had its trial run in the October storm. The new vessel was designed by one of the world’s leading naval architects, Sparkman and Stephens, New York.

1968. Danish goods must be sold in a Danish manner, is the claim of Poul Cadovius. Royal System expanded its empire, setting up its own departments in Norway and Spain. In conjunction with other Danish furniture companies, Royal System purchased the share majority in La Boutique Danoise, Paris. On the Christianshus estate which Cadovius had bought as his new home the company installed offices, workshops and showrooms for the new Company, Cadomus, and for the products of Royal System and France & Søn. The first exhibition of furniture was held in May in what had previously been the old stables of the estate, built 150 years previous. On 20th June Royal System became a limited company with Royal System Yacht Yard A/S as its subsidiary. On 21st October new showrooms were opened at Metzkausen, in the presence of the Danish Ambassador in Bonn, Count Knuth-Winterfeldt. The Revolt furniture system, a product of France & Søn A/S, was launched in the autumn – and it meant a real revolution in the furniture industry. Sagitta 26 was acclaimed Boat of the Year and was joined by a younger sister, Sagitta 20.
May 1969. The second furniture exhibition held by Royal System A/S and France & Son A/S at Poul Cadovius’s design center at Christinashus was – naturally! – a great success with dozens of new furniture creations, the work of 24 designers.

7th October in Vienna. Inauguration of Royal System’s new building, extending to 1.500 sq. m. The building was opened by His Excellency Ambassador Aksel Christiansen. A showroom was also provided.

Declaring that Sagitta 20 gave the buyer “most boat for your money”, a Swedish sailing magazine acclaimed the vessel Best Yacht of the Year.

Poul Cadovius surprised the business world by purchasing Nordisk Karosserifabrik in Svendborg, a Danish coachbuilding works. The plan was to build glass fiber boats here.

Mr. Poul Hartling, Danish foreign minister, visited Royal System in New York.

1970. The scene was perfect, birds chirped, flowers were ready to burst into blossom when Poul Cadovius opened dan interior on 5th May, as a permanent exhibition of furniture, arts and crafts.

An impressive circular building, single-storeyed, in a beautiful location quite close to the motorway from Copenhagen to Elsinore. The man behind the idea was – again naturally? – Poul Cadovius. As early as 1959 he had suggested to a number of Danish furniture – manufacturers that they should combine forces under one roof in their own headquarters in order to show foreign buyers what the Danes could do. In an area of 2,000 sq. m. Royal System A/S and France & Son A/S put on a display of furniture and experimental models of Poul Cadovius’s design centre.

Ship ahoy! The latest vessel from the Royal System docks, Sagitta 35, makes her trial trip. She is a grand boat!

System Yatch Yard A/S was separated from Royal System A/S, and the name altered to Sagitta Boats. A branch was opened in London, and on 1st September the branch in Norway moved into new and better premises just outside Oslo.

On 20th August the name Cado was introduced as a new overall brand-name for the products for Royal System A/S and France & Son A/S, which were in future to be marketed as the results of one design-minded company intent on manufacturing and selling furniture of the highest quality.

Board of directors of the Company: Poul Cadovius, chairman; Hans Sigsgaard, technical director; Christian Grande, sales director; Peter Fastrup, financial director; and Kirsten Cadovius.

25th anniversary was celebrated on 11th September, 1970.
Just outside Randers, virtually in the country-side, there is a factory of 14,500 sq. m. It is one of Europe’s most advanced furniture factories with a large annual production of the various components for Royal System and System Cado wall-mounted furniture. At the same time this factory has an output of semi-manufactured components for its sister company, France & Søn A/S in Hillerød.

In 1968 Royal System was the first factory in Denmark to switch over to centralised, computer-controlled production. Production follows the most advanced, streamlined methods of manufacturing. But in spite of modern, sophisticated techniques it still requires human beings and good craftsmanlike traditions to turn out the kind of quality for which Royal System is renowned. Royal System A/S employs both men and women, and most of the 300 employees have been given special training at the factory. The pictures on the following pages illustrate various phases of manufacture at the Royal System factory at Randers.
Long before the idea appealed to others Poul Cadovius saw a challenge in the heavy, space-stealing furniture that has been so common almost as long as Man has used tables, chairs bookshelves, etc. This challenge resulted in Royal System. The idea of course was simple. Furniture was simply moved off the floor onto the walls, leaving more space in the room.

Royal System can be built up the wall and round the corner. In living-rooms, bedrooms, kitchens and entrance halls. You can start with a few items, for example, a shelf or two – and add to these later, little by little, changing the arrangements if necessary, to suit your requirements. There are 16 million possible combinations.

That should be enough for any home!

Royal System is available in a choice of three beautiful woods. Bangkok teak, American walnut and Rio rosewood – and backing panels are also available. A special telescopic support permits the system to be used also as a room divider.
System Cado…. A classic design in splendid wood, from ceiling to floor. Can easily be adjusted to suit windows and doors. In otherwise: tailor-made furniture with the components mounted on concealed panel fittings, and forming an attractive unity.
Practical and stylish.
System Cado is a design by Poul Cadovius – available in Bangkok teak, Rio rosewood, American walnut and mat-varnished light oak. The wall panels are also available in the form of varnished pine strip-board.
System Cado can also be mounted on special wall supports and used as a room divider.
From the outside the headquarters at Finlængsgade 27-29 look peaceful enough but inside everything is friendly activity. The management, 57 employees and an IBM electronic data system are needed to handle the company's administrative and productive problems. The complexity at Finlængsgade is not merely the headquarters of Royal System A/S. It also serves as the center for France & Søn A/S, System Abstracta A/S, and some aspects of the work of Cadomus A/S and Sagitta Boats.

Royal System's employees are on the average young because the Company's expansion has been extremely rapid, particularly over the past decade. In addition to the headquarters in Aarhus, Royal System also has a department in Copenhagen which handles business in the east of Denmark.
Royal System’s sales representatives have carried out a splendid effort over the years to ensure that wall-mounted furniture was at the forefront of Danish furniture exports. This form of furniture is both functional and – perhaps unusual in this context – credited with creating a warm indoor atmosphere. In Denmark the system has become almost a status symbol, and abroad it has become a typical symbol of Danish furniture at its best. This was part of the reason why Royal System quickly became recognized as one of the pioneers of the furniture industry. Foreign contracts were quick to follow.

First – in all modesty – we “invaded” our neighbouring countries, and set up departments in Düsseldorf and Stockholm. Then we set our sights further and further away: New York, Los Angeles, Vienna, Barcelona and Oslo. Our most recent “conquest” was London. All of these divisions are centres not only of commerce but also of good, immediate customer service. It ought not to surprise anyone that the Royal System A/S sales chart shows more favourable results than does that of the rest of the Danish furniture industry.

Today 86 per cent of the Royal System A/S output goes to export. The Company thus helps to import much-valued foreign currency.

At home and abroad there are now 37 Royal System people – representatives of the Company – whose job it is to find new sales markets. Where the Company has not yet set up its own branches, it has excellent relations with local, reputable businesses. So far the Royal System works in Denmark has manufactured a total of 1.1 million items of sectional furniture. That amounts to 4 million shelves, each 80 centimetres long, or a total of 4,080 kilometres of wall-mounted furniture. And don’t worry: they are on the wall to stay!

Poul Cadovius – so typical of the man whose motto is “SPEED AND ACTION” – has on frequent occasions demonstrated the ability of a Royal System shelf to hold his 82 kg. Naturally these shelves stood the test!
FRANCE & SØN A/S
Hillerød
The factory's production is based primarily on upholstered furniture but it also manufactures desks, cabinets, conference tables, office chairs, glass-fibre furniture.
Area: 11,000 m².
Number of employees: 180.

SAGITTA BOATS
Svendborg
Mass-production of large glass-fibre boats.
Types: Sagitta 20, 26 and 35, designed by Sparkmann and Stephens, New York, and Sagitta 30, designed by Utson.
Area: 4,000 m².
Number of employees: 30.

SYSTEM ABSTRACTA A/S
Tønder
Mass-production of system abstracta components in metal. Furniture fittings for Royal System A/S and France & Son A/S.
Long lengths of roofing sheets and large components - in polyester reinforced with glass-fiber for Cadomus A/S.
Area: 8,000 m².
Number of employees: 110.
CHRISTIANSHUS, HØRSHOLM.
Poul Cadovius’s private residence and the Cado Design Centre.
Behind the yellow stucco main building are the former stables – more than 150 years old – which were converted to drawing offices and showrooms for Cadomus A/S.
These are occupied once a year in May to present the latest edition to the CADO furniture range by Royal System A/S and France & Son A/S.

25 YEARS' FAITHFUL WORK
Vagn Hindsgaard has been a faithful employee of the Company for as long as Royal System has existed. He helped to lay the foundation stone of the original company when it started production of Venetian blind in those primitive conditions in a small shed out in the countryside. He actually helped to build the shed! Vagn Hindsgaard has followed the development from wall-mounted furniture to Abstracta and on to Cadomus sectional furniture.
When system Abstracta a/s built its new factory at Tønder, he transferred to the new works, and today he is head of the joinery and experimental workshop.
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