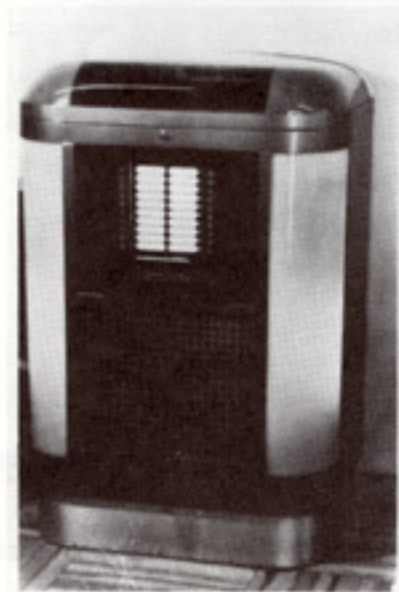


Dear friends of jukeboxes,

A few years ago I got really interested in old music boxes and the story behind them, mainly because I had been rather fond of veteran and vintage cars for some years, and through that hobby I got in touch with people, who were able to spark off my interest in jukeboxes as well. Then at a later stage I happened to get in contact with Mr. Olle Dahlbäck in Sweden, and in his first letter he told me about two Danish music boxes that he had managed to get into his collection, and then I was lost. The two models mentioned were manufactured by a company in Copenhagen, and within a very short time I became aware of the fact, that the production had been bigger than it could ever have been expected in a relatively small country like Denmark. As a result of it all I now find that it would be right of me to share my knowledge with all other friends of jukeboxes through the following small article to be published in various magazines.

#### "THE STORY OF JENSEN MUSIC AUTOMATES"

During the first few post-war years in the late forties a growing popular wish for more amusement nourished the new era, which later became known as the latest or last golden age of music boxes and other mechanical amusement automates of all kinds in Denmark.



The era, which is the following ten years, became one of the most prosperous and interesting periods ever in Danish automat industry, as ingeneer Edwin Karl Jensen and very able friends, among others also ingeneer Jørgen Mølkier, started up the development and so a production of music boxes, which had been a line of production dominated by American companies for many years.

(Fig. 1)

It was also, as it could be expected, an American model that indirectly led to the development of a special design of Danish Jensen Music Boxes. Special designs have always marked many Danish world products.

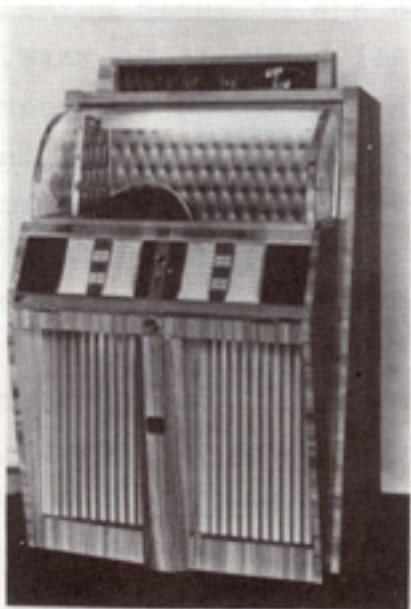
Around 1948 a Dane, Mr. Milner, returned from Iceland, and he was not exactly travelling light because among many other things he brought with him an old American jukebox, a wonderful Mills Empress from 1939, which had been installed at the American air-



base near Keflavik on Iceland during World War II. This box was then later installed in a small night café named Øresund in the lively quarter Nyhavn in Copenhagen; the box was then for some years being looked after by Mr Jørgen Mølkier, and in that way he became quite familiar with the function of such a machine.

(Fig. 2)

The first music box developed by Jensen and Mølkier was installed in another small café named Tria next to a small square called Frithjof Nansens Plads in the northern part of Copenhagen. The model mentioned became the forerunner of the well known model Linie 4, (Fig. 1), which is said to be the first mass-



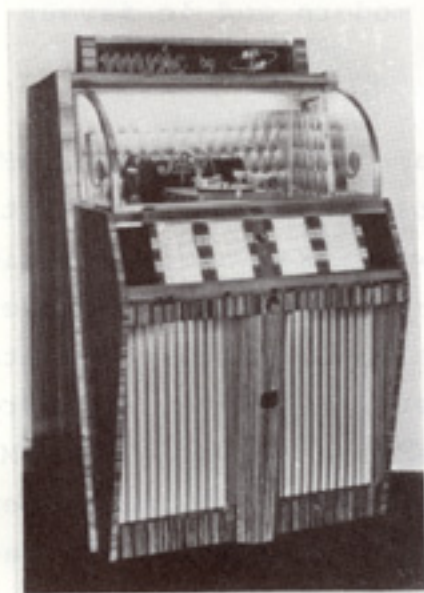
produced music box in Denmark. The name of the company was at that time Jensen & Hoffmann A/S, and the name was not changed until the summer of 1954, when an interesting and fruitful co-operation with the Automatic Musical Instrument Company was established. The name was then for the next five or six years Jensen Music Automates A/S.

(Fig. 3)

At a certain time in the years between 1949 and 1951 there were serious problems on the financial side of the production, and the company was very close to be in the red. Then the long arm of a lucky co-incidence helped the friends into contact with Mr. Wolmer Lind, who was the owner of, and also the daily manager of, Karolinelund Tivoli in Aalborg and other amusement parks; and he



did not hesitate to lend them about 80,000.00 Danish kroner, which was quite a lot of money at that time, when he heard about the difficulties they had run into. Today we can all thank the late Mr. Wolmer Lind for his foresight in this matter, because

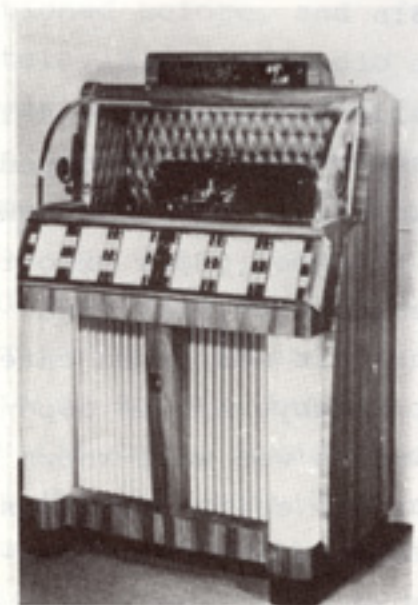


the initiative of the friends became a cornerstone in an adventure, which has been close to being neglected in our modern society.

(Fig. 4)

At the beginning of the fifties, when the production had been saved, and maybe indeed because of the very good sound, the company company became tremendous successful within a very few years, and it produced the very fine models; J40B, (Fig. 3), J80, (Fig. 4), and the colourful J120, (Fig. 5), like pearls on a string, and pearls

they were. From the year of 1951, when the first model J40, (Fig. 3), with 78 rpm mechanism was released, and up till the year 1955 there were a few, but also very small, changes in the design of these



most tasteful machines in zebrano veneer, which was the prevailing fashion at that time. The cabinets were made by local subcontractors in a high craftsmanslike standard.

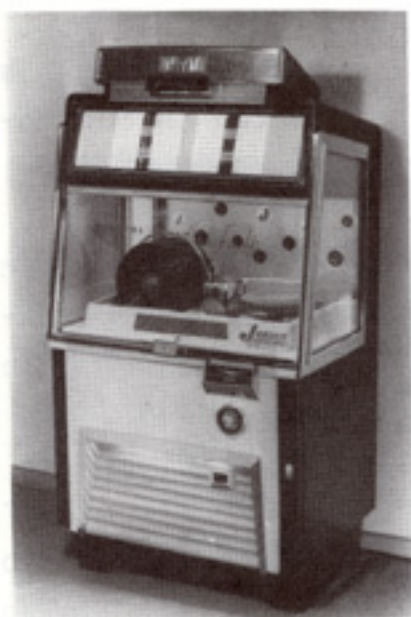
(Fig. 5)

Already at an early stage a contact was established with the Automatic Musical Instrument Company in the U.S.A. mainly because the manager at that time, Mr. John Haddock, had become aware of the correct sound, that the people at Jensen & Hoffmann A/S had been able to reach through a most

reliable amplifier unit. Mr. John Haddock's feeling for good quality became the basis of a long and fruitful co-operation between the two companies, as mentioned earlier, which re-echoed within the whole jukebox industry in the fifties. Later in the good co-opera-



tion the following models came: J40G, (Fig.6), with convertible mechanism to play both 78 rpm and 45 rpm records. The convertible pick-ups were delivered by Bang & Olufsen A/S. J80G, (Fig.7), which was identical with the J40G in design, but the mechanism was



changed to be more modern and in favour of the public.

(Fig.6)

And then finally came the model J80H, (Fig.8), also with a cabinet very much like the AMI models, which was taken as a good sign of a successful co-operation between the companies. The model J80H was unfortunately the last model ever to be released from the company in Copenhagen. Jensen IMA-AMI Music Boxes were no longer produced after the year 1960. The latest models with cabinets similar to that of the AMI models

were considered to be very reliable and successful machines because of the inner mechanical systems, which were characterized by the thoroughness, which were the backbone of all production at Jensen

Music Automates A/S.

(Fig.7)



The machines can still be found around in Europe and Asia, as most of the produced music boxes were exported. The Jensen Music Box was during the good years exported to around 26 or even 30 countries, and that part of the business was taken care of by Messrs. Oscar Siesbye A/S in Copenhagen. Mr. Oscar Siesbye was well known because of his import of coffee, and also as an intermediate broker. The many contacts that Mr. Siesbye had already were a

good help for Jensen Music Automates A/S, and it was indeed rather successful on all export markets all over the world for many years. Among the many regular customers were Messrs. Helmuth Rehbock in Hamburg. Mr. Rehbock also had the agency of Scopitone in Germany,



but unfortunately he died very early in the good period of European automat industry. Other customers to be mentioned were Messrs. Simon e Zoon in Antwerp, Messrs. Rythm House Ltd. in Bombay, and also The Goddard Company in Sydney - Australia.

(Fig. 8)



On the home market it was easier for the friends around Mr. Edwin Karl Jensen to have their own distribution company, and on balance Mr. Jensen founded another company in 1954. The name of the company was Dansk Grammofon Automat A/S, and according to the articles of association it is stated, that the aim of the company is to acquire, install, and to run music boxes in Denmark. The name of the company is still to be found in Denmark, but there have been various changes in the management over the years, so it is actually not the same now in the eighties.

The production of music boxes was stopped in 1960, as already mentioned before, and after that time the company continued to produce television and audio equipment only. The name of the same company was during the last few years Jensen Music & Television A/S, and around 1961 the famous 23" kinescope was released in Denmark by the Jensen Company.

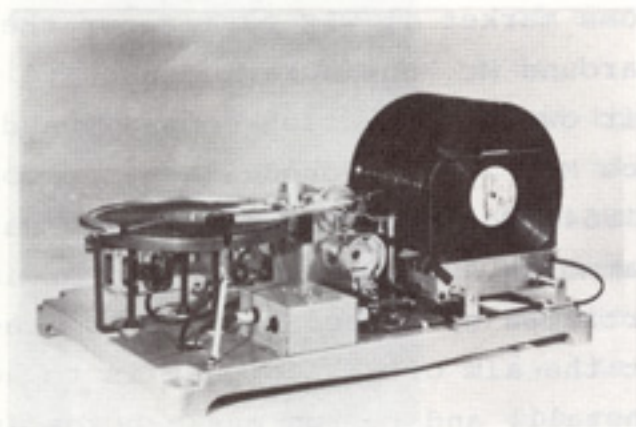


On the 31st December 1962 the firm was liquidated, and an interesting era in Danish automat industry had come to an end, but the jukeboxes from Jensen Music Automates A/S are still to be found in small private collections all over Europe, and maybe also outside Europe. Nobody should even wonder if one or two models are still in daily operation somewhere in Italy, Portugal, or in India, where some models were sold secondhand in the sixties.

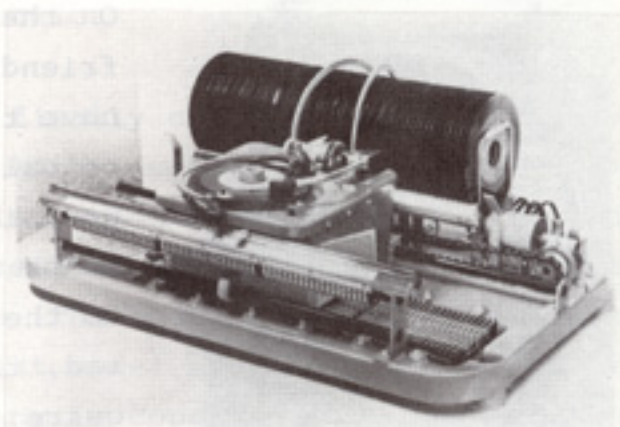
> IMA-AMI MUSIC BOX - A DANISH WORLD PRODUCT <

All photos taken on location in the fifties by Mr. Poul Beck, Tek-

nisk Foto in Copenhagen. The story of Jensen Music Boxes has also come to an end, and regrettably Mr. Edwin Karl Jensen died in September 1974, and with him a lot of valuable information was lost.



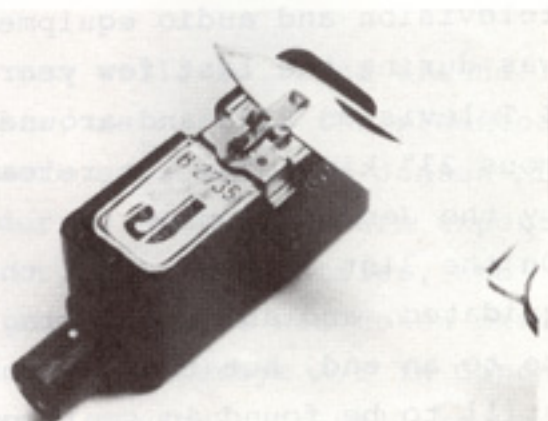
78 rpm mechanism to model J40G. It was a convertible mechanism able to play both 78 rpm and 45 rpm records. An earlier model had a soft black turntable that handled the 78 rpm records very gently.



45 rpm mechanism to model J120. A very modern mechanism also to be found with only 80 selection for J80, J80G, and J80H.

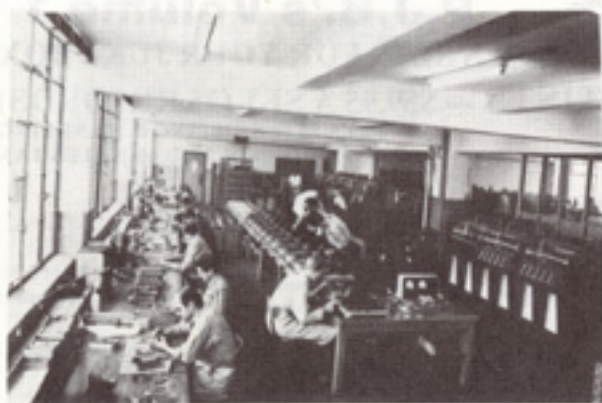


Seated left: Mr. Helmuth Rehbock.  
Seated centre: Mr. John Haddock.  
Seated right: Mr. Jørgen Mølkier.  
Standing right: Mr. Edwin Karl  
Jensen of Jensen Music Automates.



The convertible pick-up from B&O to play both 78 rpm and 45 rpm records. It is shown how easy it is to change the needle with a knife.





A photo taken in the production around 1954.



A photo taken in the production around 1957.

## Gert Almind

Dear friends of jukeboxes,

There is still a lot of valuable information yet to be found on the subject, and I will of course keep you all informed through the various Newsletters, if I should discover any interesting new points in the future. Unfortunately some of the pioneers within the Danish automat industry have died even before I got interested in jukeboxes, and so a lot has been lost for ever. I hope that you will contact me if you should have or find good IMA-AMI models in your country. Though I live in Copenhagen at the moment, my mail address is the following: Gert Almind, Johs. Jensensvej 6, Frederiks, DK-7470 Karup J., Denmark.

