Roar’s Circle is the story of the modern reconstruction of a Viking ship. In mastery fashion, Henrik Juel tells the unique story of how such complex hulls are actually put together on the bare earth and how these fast, open vessels handle. Roar’s Circle paints a fine portrait of the young Danish team that built her.

In two years the team created Roar out of standing oak so precisely that her supple hull mirrors her forebear’s lines to within millimetres. They used axe, hammer, plane and screw drill, taking twenty years’ research into the Skuldelev Viking ship and on into the fields of construction and handling. This was the Museum’s ‘master’ replica, the first in a long programme that is still revealing the resources in men, material and time that building Viking ships demanded, and what they gave back in terms of performance at sea.

The ambition within the group was that each should master all of the many skills involved: techniques inferred from salvaged parts, from faint tool marks on the original or from the Bayeux Tapestry. Fierce debates frequently flared under the press of tailoring oak to the hull’s elegant curves, but beneath the wrangling there lay a sinewy community of thought, a real style, about these people. Their good humour, tinged with the finest of Danish irony, smoothed all wrinkles in the end. For all that, it is Roar that commands the action, binding the strands of effort together, and emerging as the heroine – a voyager through time and a tangible reminder of the spirit of an amazing age.

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