

Application

Hordaland Fylkeskommune

Collaborative project for

Vestlandsutstillingen 2018

*by Karin Blomgren & Erna Elínbjörg Skúladóttir
presented at Kunsthall Stavanger 14. June - 12. August 2018
curated by Randi Grov Berger*

Background

Our collaborative project has been on going since early 2015 and has resulted in several large scale installations. In our joint work we investigate the tactility of unfired clay when juxtaposed with architecture and site. In our work we aim to enhance the inherent bodily association and tactility of the material. We work intimately with our sites, incorporating into our installations notions of the surrounding nature, history of the space, architectural features and other features of the surroundings we find important.

Both of us are participating in “Topographies of the Obsolete”, an international research project focusing on site-specific work in post-industrial spaces. The core of the project revolves around how to understand clay and ceramics as both material and subject matter within the contemporary art field.

Work method

For Vestlandsutstillingen 2018 we will make an installation in conversation with the exhibition spaces at Kunsthall Stavanger. To us, the site where we work is important both as a physical space as well as conceptual source. The site constitutes both the location of the Kunsthall in the larger Stavanger area and the building itself, both are important to us in the development of the concept.

We will use the long timeframe until the opening in June 2018 to repeatedly visit the space and surroundings and let the process of alternating work on and off site help us create and fine tune the work. This is a method that has been successfully used in “Topographies of the Obsolete” and has been crucial for the deep and visceral direction of the artworks created on site during the project. The long timeframe will allow us to do the same in Stavanger – work intimately with and respond to the site.

We will visit the Stavanger area 4-5 times during 2017 to get to know the area, the geology and landscapes surrounding the city. We will take a look at the geological and mining processes and the effects they have on the landscape and the city.

Geological Processes

For Vestlandsutstillingen we aim to create a solid conversation between material and site. We want to make a piece of work that incorporates the nature and geology surrounding Stavanger. A city on the shore where water and rocks meet and mining and extraction of natural resources is the base of the city's booming/declining economy.

We will be using raw, unfired clay as a main material for our sculpture/installation. Created through millennia of geological processes, clay is a material that is shape shifting in its nature and can incorporate a massive range of hyper tactile appearances, as it goes from being wet to dry to powder and sediment. For the work at Kunsthall Stavanger we will utilise the natural behaviour of clay as a parallel process to the geological interaction in the vicinity.

From cultural point of view clay can be viewed from many angles, it is a unruly material which can have catastrophic effects on human structures and settlements in form of landslides and natural disasters. At the same time, when tamed, it is a building material used to construct those very same settlements. This tension between construction, creation and destruction, nature and architecture, humanity and geology will be the conceptual core of the project, and one we find relevant to the Stavanger area.

The work will be made to interact with the distinctive architecture of Kunsthall Stavanger where the size of the space makes for an opportunity to make a large scale work. We want to utilise the heavy and precarious feel of raw clay to make a work that speaks to the human body, we want the pieces to impact the visitors in a deeply bodily, tactile and sensuous way.

Establishment

The project at Stavanger Kunsthall will be our largest so far. It is a project we believe will help us greatly with establishing ourselves on the art scene in Norway and hopefully internationally, as it is a renowned venue and Vestlandsutstillingen an esteemed exhibition.

Schedule

During 2017 we will devote our work on the research for the exhibition while in 2018 we will focus on realising the installation.

Our first visit to Stavanger will be in March and the next one in late April.

:

March 21-26th - Aim: Get to know the Kunsthall and meet the people there. Look at the spaces and get acquainted with the surroundings. Photographing and sketching.

April - Spend more time in Stavanger and with spring coming get to know the geology of the area. Focus on how the area is being extracted of raw materials and used for various production purposes.

Summer - research, writing and sketching.

October - More field work in the Stavanger area.

December - Work with the staff at the Kunsthall on practicalities for the exhibition and make plans for fitting the show in with the architecture.

January - May 2018 - Finishing sketching the exhibition, making plans, finding materials. Final touches.

June - Installing the exhibition.

14. Juni - 12. August - Exhibition opening