

Bobrikova & de Carmen

Deconstructing
an explicit
content

29 June to 23 October 2018
Svenljunga



(X)sites

29 June to 23 October 2018

(X)sites consist of two exhibitions with site-specific temporary artworks at different places along two routes in Sweden, “Kattegattleden” and “Sjuhäradsrundan.” (X) stands for the unknown in mathematics, and (X) in this context relates to the exploration of the sites. The project, with all its different parts, is characterized by exploratory or investigative work, spanning the artistic processes at the sites all the way to public encounters with the art and the landscape. An important factor in the project is that it is run by artists. The first route, “Kattegattleden,” runs 370 km from north to south. The second, Sjuhäradsrundan, runs 80 km.

The areas along each path vary from aesthetically broad natural sites to urban landscapes. A number of areas have been chosen along each route, embedded in rich historical contexts through contemporary ongoing developing sites. (X)Sites started 2017 and continues annually.

(X)Sites project is arranged by Konstnärscentrum Väst (Artist Centre West) with support of Region Halland, Region Skåne, Västra Götalands Regionen, the municipalities of Ulricehamn, Tranemo, Svenljunga and Göteborg, Kungsbacka, Varberg, Falkenberg, Halmstad, Laholm, Båstad, Höganäs, Ängelholm och Helsingborg (included municipalities are subject to change), as well as the Postkodlotteriets kulturstiftelse (National Lottery) and The Swedish Arts Council.

Martinka Bobrikova & Oscar de Carmen

Deconstructing an explicit content

TERRITORIES ARE BATTLEFIELDS

Each piece of land, regardless of its size, is a possible setting for the staging of political reflection on the forms of social production and its multiple significant layers. The landscape is a metaphor for today's society.

THE LIFE OF OBJECTS

The duo was invited in 2018 to present an idea in a forest in Sweden as part of a series of actions in a rural environment. As in most of his recent commissions, the purpose of the works commissioned was to provide an invitation to reflect on the idea of landscape itself, and the evolving and mutating condition of nature. The installation created by Bobrikova and de Carmen existed as a collection of objects and furniture, rescued from a nearby clean point, and then distributed in a meadow next to a forest.

LANDSCAPE AS THEATER

The place was an apparently innocuous landscape with generic properties of quasi-natural beauty. The initial action of compiling objects was a harvest of local household objects already considered obsolete by fast and furious post-fordian consumers. The first action of this work is, therefore, a political one: an action of reuse and resignification of objects as a second nature with the idea of generating a visual delight from the mundane. The second action is a careful staging through the insurgency of ready-mades as installation. The landscape becomes a mimetic exhibition and therefore a metaphor for all landscapes.

THE BIOETHICAL THOUGHT

The artists Bobrikova and de Carmen have been working on the social-political scene for more than a decade, and in Deconstructing an Explicit Content they set in motion a machinery of thought to reveal certain forms of capital in relation to the idea of landscape and territory. They also simultaneously invite us to consider how to channel our behavior under the guidance of ethical thinking and the necessary redefinition of the concepts of development, progress, technology, culture, humanity, and social being. The ideas presented within the work bring us closer to the reflections of Felix Guattari's ecosophical theory. The ingredients of a polyhedral work.

STILL LIFE

Once the objects were set in the landscape, their relationship with the social environment was activated in the form of reflective thinking. What are those objects? Why are there objects in nature? Who is placing objects coming from production surplus and immediate obsolescence within nature? Who is throwing away those usable objects without any guilt? Who has no concern whatsoever on the overall disposal of objects that took so much energy to produce? Who is threatening the natural world by exhausting our natural resources? These questions we may place when considering any given piece of land. A new nature is defined. Landscapes nowadays live with objects, and those objects may bring some trouble. Are these landscapes still nature? The romantic garden described by Kant, and then Burke, has been transformed.

THE ACTS

The piece has its official opening: locals came and saw a lot of random objects in the forest. Some smile and others say nothing. It is remarkable, someone says. Night comes, and as in every town and in every forest, the wild walks around and plays. With the morning sunrise, the elegant installation has already been destroyed. Objects have been moved, some have been stolen, and the function of the artwork has been activated. The process has started, and more questions are asked; Who has destroyed the art? Who has destroyed nature?

THE ATTITUDE

Most audiences are completely unaware of how to handle the life of objects. Objects may look like junk, and they also may be junk, while still having a life as a part of the new natural condition. Postproduction is a symbolic field that allows the artist to animate objects, reorder them and generate meaning. Behaviours are not judged, we read the facts. The artists placed external objects in the forest. The invisible actors played at night, expanding the conceptual layer of the artwork and helping us to understand what is happening in and with the territory. The territory is an idea as well as the object left behind. The landscape is also left behind. The trigger. A mine in your backyard. The entire play is about fascination, what environmental psychology studies as awe.

THE SOCIAL POLITICAL FIELD

The action-installation is thus integrated into both the physical and the social territory, turning the landscape into a post-landscape. The mere act of deviating the trajectory of objects is a political act and, therefore, an organic

way of approaching the idea of art, a subtle discourse, with complex and profound reflections on the ethics and aesthetics of the work itself, subverting logical fact and entering the poetics of art. The action can be seen both as a fascinating metaphor on global consumerism, the misuse of beauty and also as a pile of junk. Both are true. The work raises several questions, both formally and aesthetically and each has multiple answers according to the analyst's point of view.

ECOSOPHICAL MOTIVATIONS

By confronting the idea of what is natural and what is unnatural, this piece by Bobrikova and de Carmen makes us ask ourselves whether leaving a normal chain of anonymous objects in a beautiful Swedish landscape is a metaphor of our daily actions on a boundless canvas. We must activate questions about the ethical-political as well as the necessary transformations of the tensions resulting from this global crisis, looking at energies and feelings, while also eliminating galloping consumerism. The work seems to be a minimalist transdisciplinary opera in the search of the wisdom to lead us towards a non-binary harmonious coexistence. We are pushed to rethink the relationship we have with damaged landscapes. This short opera may be an inquiry among the psychological, the social, and the environmental, a part of the evolution towards a new model, where we become aware of the antagonistic, yet symbiotic, relationship between society and nature.

Anto Lloveras / Ávila, May 2020







28/06/2018



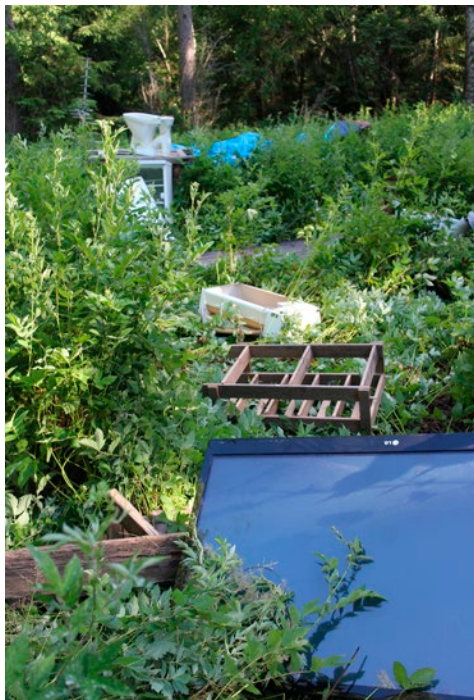
12/10/2018



28/06/2018



12/10/2018





We warmly thank and acknowledge all of our contributors, collaborators, and the organization that helped make the installation of this project possible. A special thanks is also owed to: Linnea MF Larsson, Juan Ochoa, Marita Pahlen.

Authors & editors
Martinka Bobrikova & Oscar de Carmen

photo
Wahel Surur, Martinka Bobrikova, Oscar de Carmen

text
Anto Lloveras
language corrector and proof reader
MaryClaire Pappas

design **Aurélia Garová**
Edition of 200 copies

www.bobrikovadecarmen.org

Oslo, 2020

Martinka Bobrikova & Oscar de Carmen have been working together as an artistic duo since 2005. They have participated in several residencies such as SaSa Art Project, Jatiwangi Art Factory, AIR Krems, Sweet Home / Curators Network in Madrid, Seoul Art Space_Geumcheon, KulturKontakt Austria, Nida art Colony or MeetFactory. Their works have been presented in venues and projects such as 5th Odessa Biennale, Fotogalleriet, Saitama Triennial, Akershus Kunstnersenter, Tranzit.sk, 2nd Tbilisi Triennial, Prague Quadrennial, Centre Contemporary Art in Singapore, Museum of Contemporary Art Roskilde, Singuhr- Berlin; Center of Contemporary Art- Tbilisi, Röda Sten.

Since 2012 we have run Nomad AiR, a Nomadic artist-in-residence program focuses on the notion of hospitality and the social relations between “host” and “guest” para-siting the infrastructure of other institutions and in 2017 we co-founded the project / residency program Future Utopia Community Key, which is dedicated to the activities in the rural village of Uddebo (SE) and the area. From 2018 we curate an annual gathering in form of a anti-symposium IECES (International Encounters of Community and Environmental Sociology, New forms of contemplation for a new society), that serves as a meeting place for the exchange of experiences of the participants with the local community where the objective is to discuss the future of independent cultural frameworks also as the exploration of knowledge production and non hierarchical structures. In 2019 we became active part of reshape project where we contribute to imagining, testing and creating concrete, realistic and sustainable solutions within the group with the theme: “Transnational / postnational artistic practices: What framework and tools do artists working transnationally need and how to provide them”. Recently we have founded "The Union", an organization with aim to bridge international diaspora of artist and art spaces in Oslo with those in South America, Africa and Asia.