

Laura Horelli

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Da den finske kunstner, Laura Horelli, i marts måned kom til Roosumet for at begynde et tre-måneders arbejdsophold gik der ikke lang tid før hun vidste en hel del om Malmö. Hun orienterede sig om Malmö's fortid som en driftig værftsby og fik indblirk i nutidens multikulturelle, kosmopolitiske virkelighed gennem sine samtaler med beboere fra blandt andet Rosengård og Söfielund. Et af intentionerne bag hennes arbejdsophold var at begynde på et nyt projekt til Roosums et-årige program *År 2052 kommer Malmö inte längre vara 'svenskt'*.

Sammen med Laura Horelli er flere andre internationale kunstnere, heriblandt Lyn Löwenstein, Yael Bartana, Esra Ersen og Katya Sander, inviteret til at udvikle et projekt til programmet. Alle disse kunstnere har fået eller vil i løbet af 2003 få stillet et af Roosums arbejdsrum til rådighed i cirka tre måneder som base for deres indledende research. Projekterne er steds-specificke og vil forholde sig til Malmö, til den kulturelle mangfoldighed og til en hverdag hvor forskelle mellem mennesker og kulturer er vores fælles anliggende og en stimulerende faktor.

Laura Horelli har tidligere beskæftiget sig med det multikulturelle område, blandt andet i Frankfurt, hvor hun i 2001 arbejdede med projektet *Cultural Groups in Frankfurt*. Projektet bestod af en publikation som indeholdt præsentationer af en lang række nationale eller kulturelle foreninger i byen, som for eksempel en tyrkisk klub og en tysk-amerikansk venneforening. En af ting der slog hende under det indledende arbejde var at antallet af foreninger var stor men oplysningerne om dem relativt små. Hun inviterede derfor 130 foreninger til at udforme en side om sig selv, deres aktiviteter og mål i en informativ publikation som skulle distribueres på offentlige steder i byen såsom caféer, butikker, turistkontorer, biblioteker, museer, fitness centre etc. Herfra kunne enhver interesseret tage et gratis eksemplar med sig.

På sin vis kan man sige at projektet i Frankfurt lægger sig i for-

længelse af traditionen indenfor kunsten om at skabe 'multiples', det vil sige masseproducerede kunstværker, som ofte gives væk eller sælges for en symbolsk pris. Idéen med multiples er blandt andet at give flere mennesker mulighed for komme i besiddelse af kunst, eller at have en mere personlig kontakt med kunsten og dens budskaber. Et andet aspekt af multiples er at de ofte spiller en på markedsråb, omsætning, forbrug og ejebegær, mekanismer i samfundet som kunsten er en del af ligesåvel som den kommenterer dem.

Laura Horellis publikation adskilte sig imidlertid fra multiple genren ved ikke at være et forsøg på at få kunsten til at nå flere mennesker. At publikationen udspredt af et kunstprojekt var underordnet. Derimod er det vigtigere at tage i betragtning hvordan den spillede på begæret efter information, som mainstream medier oftest lægger monopol på og tilfredsstiller med stereotyp billede, der bekræfter en bestemt holdning. Ved at sætte en publikation i cirkulation gives en anden version af de historier og billede som skabes via tv og de trykte medier. Kunstneren træder et skridt tilbage som kunstner i traditionel forstand og bliver en katalysator, en initiativtager, som vender op og ned på vores forstillinger, og som er med til at fremhæve en mere nuanceret debat.

Laura Horellis arbejdsmetode minder på flere måder om journalists. Begge arbejder med information som materiale og er involverede i en undersøgelsesproces, der siden leder frem til en sammenfattet formulering af en tematik eller en historie. Hvor journalisten kan arbejde udfra tanken om en vis objektivitet i sin indsamling af materiale, lader Laura Horelli sig i højere grad styre af sine intuitive associationer og af de muligheder som en situation byder på. Som hun selv udtaler: "I do not collect data to prove a hypothesis. The conclusions of the research are often open to various interpretations".

Et eksempel på hvordan et re-

search materiale er blevet udformet i flere versioner er det video-baserede værk *Helsinki Shipyard / Port of San Juan (2002-2003)*.

Værket blev til efter et ophold i Puerto Rico og var inspireret af et billede i en turistbrochure af krydstogtskibene i San Juan. Billedet udløste en erindring om et skibs-værft for krydstogtskibene i Helsinki, som Laura Horelli boede ved siden af som barn. Deraf fik hun idéen til at filme luxuslinjer interiorer i Puerto Rico, og deres konstruktion i Helsinki.

Hun var specielt interesseret i folks relationer til skibene på disse to geografisk vidt forskellige lokationer, og billedeledsages derfor af de ansatte berettelser om deres arbejdsplads. Stedernes forskelligheder har ikke kun betydning for indholdet i Laura Horellis værker. Den sammenhæng som værket skal vise i spiller også ind på dets udformning, og der er blandt andet dette forhold som har ført til at værket er blevet lavet i flere versioner. Den første version blev vist på en internet restaurant i det gamle San Juan, der fortrinsvis blev besøgt af besætningsmedlemmer fra skibene. Beslutningen om hvordan videoen skulle redigeres og hvordan den skulle vises var derfor inspireret af restauranten og dets miljø. Siden er en ny version kommet til med større fokus på de finske skibarbejdernes historier.

I flere andre af Laura Horellis værker fungerer stedet eller relationen til steder ligefølgende som et springbrett til at undersøge de sociale, kulturelle, økonomiske og politiske vilkår der præger de sammenhænge vi er del af. *Japanese English Advertising Slogans (2000)* er en videoinstallation som er bygget op omkring reklameslogans på produkter hun lagde særligt mærke til under et ophold i Japan. Det specielle ved varerne var, at deres slogans var på engelsk, og de var anvendt som grafiske elementer, der refererer til den vestlige kultur, snarere end som information om produktet. Med baggrund i disse slogans skabte hun en absurd dialog som siden blev fremført som små scener af japanere i daglige omgivel-

ser. I installationen vises scenerne på en videoprojektion og på en monitor i samme rum ser man selve produkterne, der refereres til i dialogen. Værket er simpelt, men sammenstillingen af hverdag og reklamebranchen, øst og vest, giver udtryk for den kompleksitet som findes i udvekslingen af værdier mellem kulturer.

Current Female Presidents (3/2001)

har hele verden som sit udgangspunkt i undersøgelsen af kon og magtfordeling på et verdenspolitiske plan. Seks farverige fotocolleger med billeder af de seks kvindelige præsidenter, som regerede på det tidspunkt værket blev skabt, er installeret ved siden af et sort-hvidt verdenskort. I dette tilfælde leger værket med magtens retorik, og gør os opmærksomme på at de få siddende kvindelige præsidenter fortrinsvis findes i områder udenfor de mere mandsdominerede 'verdenscentre'.

Laura Horellis Malmö baserede projekt vil blive præsenteret i løbet af vinteren 2003 og foråret 2004.

Laura Horelli

When the Finnish artist, Laura Horelli, came to Roosum in March to start a three month residency it did not take long before she got to know a great deal about Malmö. She informed herself about the city's past as an active shipbuilding centre and got to know about its present multicultural reality through her conversations with people living in areas like Rosengård and Söfielund. One of the intentions behind her residency was to initiate a new project for Roosum's one-year programme *In 2052 Malmö will no longer be 'Swedish'*. Along with Laura Horelli several other international artists have been invited to develop projects, among them Lyn Löwenstein, Yael Bartana, Esra Ersen and Katya Sander. During 2003 these artists have had or will have a Roosum studio as a base for their initial research. The projects are site-specific and will relate to Malmö, to cultural diversity and to differences in daily life, universals we all have in common.

Laura Horelli has previously been engaged in questions of cultural diversity. In 2001 she made *Cultural Groups in Frankfurt*, a publication with presentations of a variety of cultural and national associations, for instance a

Turkish and a German-American club. One thing that struck her when she started her research was that there were a large number of associations but the information about them was relatively small. She invited over 130 associations to make a page about themselves, their activities and objectives for an informative publication that was to be distributed in public places like cafés, shops, tourist information centres, libraries, museums and fitness centres. All who were interested could then take a copy for free.

In some ways the project can be seen as being in line with the idea of multiples within art. Multiples are mass-produced artworks which are often given away for free or sold for a symbolic price. The intention with multiples is to give more people the opportunity to own art, or to have personal contact with it and its messages. Another aspect of the multiple is that they often play on market forces, trade, consumption and the desire for possessions, mechanisms in society that art both is part of and comments upon.

Laura Horelli's publication differs however from the multiple genre by not being an attempt to make art reach more people. The fact that the publication originated from an art project was secondary. What is more important to consider is how it played on the desire for information, which is most often monopolised and satisfied by mainstream media and stereotypical images confirming a certain point of view. Putting a publication into circulation another perspective counters the stories and images often created through television and print media. Horelli takes a step back from the role of the artist in the traditional sense, and instead becomes a catalyst or promoter that counters prejudice and supports a plurality of understandings.

In a certain sense Laura Horelli's working method is reminiscent of that of a journalist. Both use information as material and are involved in a process of investigation which then leads to a formulation of a thematic or a story. But where a journalist will often work from a certain objectivity in their gathering of material, Laura Horelli lets herself be steered to a greater extent by her intuitive associations and by possibilities that a situation offers. She has stated: "I do not collect data to prove a hypothesis. The conclusions of the research are



Laura Horelli: *Japanese English Advertising Slogans*, 2001, two-screen video. Courtesy Galerie Barbara Weiss, Berlin





Laura Horelli: Helsinki Shipyard / Port of San Juan, 2002–2003, video, Courtesy Galerie Barbara Weiss, Berlin

often open to various interpretations".

The videowork *Helsinki Shipyard / Port of San Juan* (2002–2003) is one example of how research material can be shaped into more than one version. The work was made during a stay in Puerto Rico and was inspired by an image

in a tourist brochure showing cruise liners in San Juan. The image released a memory of a shipyard building cruise liners in Helsinki, next to where Horelli lived as a child. From that she got the idea of filming the interiors of the cruise liners in Puerto Rico and their construction in Helsinki. She was

especially interested in people's relations to the ships in these two geographically different locations and the images are accompanied by the employees' stories about their work place. The difference between the places is not of importance for the content alone. The context that the work is shown

in has an equal influence on the form, and it is this fact that has resulted in a number of versions being made. The first version was shown in an internet café in Old San Juan, which was mainly visited by members of the ships' crews. The decision as to how the video was edited and how it was to be

displayed was therefore informed by this environment. Since then, a new version has been made focusing more on the stories of the Finnish shipbuilders.

In several other works by Laura Horelli the place or her relation to the place also functions as a springboard to investigate the social, cultural, economical and political conditions forming the contexts we are part of. *Japanese English Advertising Slogans* (2000) was a video installation made during a residency in Japan. The work is based on advertising slogans on Japanese products. The slogans are in English and utilised as graphic elements referring to western culture, rather than for their information about the product. From these slogans Horelli has created an absurd non-sensical dialogue, performed as small sketches by Japanese amateur actors in everyday surroundings. In the installation the scenes are projected in the space and on a monitor the products referred to in the dialogue are presented. The work is simple but the juxtaposition of daily life and advertising, east and west expresses the complexity inherent in the exchange of values between two cultures.

Current Female Presidents (3/2001) takes the whole world as a point of departure in the investigation of gender and power distribution on the global political level. Six large colour photo collages with images of the six female presidents who were governing at the time the work was made, are installed next to a black and white map of the world. In this case the work plays with the rhetoric of power and brings to our attention that the few women in political office are primarily in areas outside the powerful, male-dominated centres of the world.

Laura Horelli's Malmö based project will be presented winter 2003 and spring 2004.