

Academy of Design and Crafts
Mattias Gunnarsson / Susanne Westerberg
Staden till havet / The city to the sea
2018 - 12 - 20

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Staden till havet / The city to the sea is a Land Art exhibition that is organized by the municipality of Ängelholm. It takes place in Kronoskogen, the forest located between the city and the sea.

MASU (Mattias Gunnarsson and Susanne Westerberg) were invited to be a part of its second edition and we had one week for on-site work finishing with a full day seminar with invited lecturers and a presentation of the project by us (including a walk out to the site and a vernissage lunch). **MASU** is the artist collaboration between Mattias Gunnarsson and Susanne Westerberg. We have worked together as part of our artistic practises since 2012 with both KU (Artistic Development) project, exhibitions and self-initiated projects.

In the forest Kronoskogen we continued the work with the wooden laths from our previous project *Konstnärligt arbete pågår* in Halmstad. We had the 3000 wooden laths from the sculptural project att Bastionen and we had a site that was one of the few open spaces in the otherwise rather dense pine forest. In Halmstad we had been located in the city centre with a constant flow of visitors that participated in our work by writing on the wood telling the stories of their best place, in Kronoskogen we were all alone except for some birds and an occasional jogger.

Since the site in Kronoskogen was so different from the one in Halmstad we decided that even though the material was physically the same we were going to approach it differently. We also wanted to try to connect more to our drawing practice so we set out to do spatial drawings and work with a series or a family of freestanding structures moving thru the landscape from the city towards the sea. As always in our work we didn't have a clear goal, but rather an idea of how we wanted to use the material and a continuous narrative.



Once we were set up at the site we worked quite intuitively together creating single structures, each composed of 300-400 laths and wood studs, that were neither animals nor ships, but had a possible resemblance to both. The family of four were placed in the landscape in a movement across the open glade. We painted the structures in black from the ground up to about 150 cm, hinting a potential above / under or water line.

We used about half of the material from the Halmstad work for the sculptures, and the rest was packed neatly together close to the site for possible later use. We build a low table to be used for exhibition lunch, publications and drinks.

On the day of the opening we started our day with the seminar organized by Nina Wenedikter at the municipality. We presented last and as a part of our presentation all participants to walk out with us to the site to have lunch and finish the seminar. This was also the day of a storm.

When we all got out to the glade two of the four structures had fallen in the wind turning the site and the work into something very different.

The other two structures fell the day after.

Two weeks later we went back to the site and continued our work, using the material from two of the fallen structures to build a new structure that connected the two remaining. We stayed closer to the ground this time bridging the fallen sculptures with a wave-like structure that keeps the direction in the movement from the city to the sea but is rather an empowered force than a fragile ship.

We finished by adding a light grey color to highlight this new chapter in the material narrative.

The sculpture project is called *Negotiations - something about a material narrative* and it will stay in Kronoskogen until September 2019.

We have now used the wooden laths in two very different settings, letting them populate and add to the spaces where we chose to work. The hundreds of peoples voices added to the wood in the first site are quiet in the silence of the second where the audience is more often non-human than human. At the urban site the material and the structure were clearly something else, but in the forest they are becoming a part of.

We will continue to work with this material by continuing to build with the laths we have stored, and eventually again take it all apart and move it, leaving the site as we found it using the narrative as a way to follow and explore the possibilities of the dialogue between space, material and us.

www.masu-projects.se













