

Swedish Artists Participate in 3rd Tbilisi Triennial in Gori, birthplace of Josef Stalin

Public lecture Wednesday 28.11 at 10.30 am, Aulan Valand Academy, Univ. of Gothenburg

Leslie Johnson and Josefina Posch's first collaborative artwork "The Metamorphosis of Power" opened in Gori, Georgia October 4 as part of the third Tbilisi Triennial. The artwork responds to the specific situation of an electric bus transformer station in central Gori behind Stalin Avenue.

Gori, part of the ancient silk route is near Uplisciche, an ancient sun temple dating back to 6000 BC. Gori, the windiest city in Georgia is developing as a center for alternative energy such as wind and solar power. Johnson and Posch's work links together the development of wind and solar power as a transformation of the ancient silk trade route and historic power structures.

In "The Metamorphosis of Power" visitors meet a theatrical spectacle of light, form, movement and sound. Shadows of the forms of Bombyx mori, a silk moth which only lives one night, pass by the windows, trapped in the building as they are drawn to the light. The shadows, visible in the warm golden light are cast on a transparent membrane sealing openings in the building: doors, windows and bullet holes from the 2008 war with Russia.

An LED trail of light leads the public to the backside of the building with three rooms. Visible through barely open doors, moth forms flicker here and there among piles of mortar and scrap flooded with warm light in two of the rooms. In the central room the sound of wind comes from behind a gigantic cocoon suspended in violet light powered by a wind and solar power turbine on the rooftop, symbolizing historic political power in transition.

During the installation of the work, Posch and Johnson, working with local electricians, engineers and others, awakened the curiosity of the passing local public. They met students and teachers from the Gori art school, who gave feedback; and were interviewed on Gori TV, radio and by The Swedish Embassy in Georgia.

The exhibition "Metamorphosis of Power" was opened by Wato Tseretelli, curator for the Tbilisi Triennial, and the mayor Mr. Konstantine Tavzarashvili, as the spearhead of a plan to renovate the electric transformer station into a new cultural center.

Johnson and Posch also participated in the Triennial with an elaboration of the Gori work at Galleri Artarea in central Tbilisi. The installation "Walk the Solar Carpet" featured a video which is a collaboration with a local film maker, drawings, and vitrines with research material.

The project is supported by the Swedish Embassy in Georgia, Tbilisi Triennial organization, Gori City Development, Valand Academy University of Gothenburg and Wilhelm & Martina Lundgren Foundation.

Contact: Josefina Posch, info@josefinaposch.com, 0738384180
Leslie Johnson, lesliejohnson854@gmail.com, 0703611863

