

PRESS KIT

Luondu Luondus

As Part of Nature, We Are Nature

October 7, 2022 – January 15, 2023

An art exhibition at the Felleshus of the Nordic Embassies in Berlin

CONTENTS

- 1 PRESS RELEASE
- 2 IMAGE LIST
- 3 ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES AND WORKS
- 4 CURATORIAL STATEMENT
- 5 CURATOR BIOGRAPHIES
- 6 THE FELLESHUS OF THE NORDIC EMBASSIES

1. PRESS RELEASE



Marja Helander, *The Secrets of Dusk 2*, 2018–2020, Detail

AN **EXHIBITION** ON THE INTIMATE YET EXISTENTIALLY FRAUGHT RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HUMAN BEINGS AND NATURE

At the Felleshus of the Nordic Embassies in Berlin

Works by Sigurður Guðjónsson | Julie Edel Hardenberg | Marja Helander | Outi Pieski | Máret Anne Sara | Anders Sunna

Curated by Irene Snarby and Christina Landbrecht

Each year, the five Nordic Embassies in Berlin present a joint exhibition at their common cultural center, the Felleshus, tackling the Nordic countries' most recent cultural topics of international relevance. **This year's exhibition, titled *Luondu Luonddus—As Part of Nature, We Are Nature*, is a group show featuring 24 works by six renowned artists from Iceland, Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland), and the Swedish, Norwegian, and Finnish parts of Sápmi—a region which stretches across these three nations and into the Kola Peninsula in Russia.** Spanning video, sculpture, painting, photography, and installation, the exhibition offers visitors insights into different artistic reflections from across the region as well as Indigenous perspectives. The show comments on various aspects of the intimate yet existentially fraught relationship between human beings and nature.

Luondu is a Sámi word with a complex meaning, denoting nature as well as personality. *Luonddus*, in turn, means “to be in nature.” The poetic alliteration *Luondu Luonddus* amplifies both and means “As part of nature, we are nature.” For Sámi people, as well as for Inuit from Kalaallit Nunaat and the inhabitants of Iceland, human beings and nature don't just coexist, they are inextricably intertwined.

The selection of artworks, which includes several artists currently representing Nordic countries at the *Venice Biennale*, stimulates questions on how to develop a new understanding of our surroundings in the face of myriad global environmental threats.

The Icelandic artist **Sigurður Guðjónsson** invites us to zoom in on a fragment of carbon and discover matter on a microscopic level. **Outi Pieski**, from the Finnish part of Sápmi, incorporates reindeer bones and traditional textiles into her paintings. In doing so, she tells a personal story about the Giisávárri mountain as told to her by her grandmother, with an undercurrent of magic and mythology. The homeland of the ancestors of the artist **Marja Helander** lies in close proximity to that of Pieski's family: both are located near Ohcejohka / Utsjoki in the Finnish part of Sápmi. Helander presents a recent series of photographs depicting mythical creatures and hybrid beings in landscapes destroyed by the mining industry. Three sculptures by **Máret Ánne Sara**, who hails from the Norwegian part of Sápmi, include organic materials such as reindeer bones, leather, and grass. The paintings by **Anders Sunna**, from the Swedish part of Sápmi, are in turn overtly political comments on decades-long injustices experienced by reindeer herding families. Lastly, the works of **Julie Edel Hardenberg** focus on the hunting of seals, a centuries-old practice in Kalaallit Nunaat, which has provoked contentious debates in recent years.

Luondu Luonddus is a show which aims to discuss the precarious relationship between human beings and the natural world. It's a reckoning with a colonial past and its continued impact on the lives of Indigenous communities and nature. It highlights the difficulty of drawing a line between the two and underscores the fact that we live in a fragile ecosystem. Whatever happens to nature will eventually happen to us.

- Vernissage:** Thu | October 6, 2022 | 6 pm
Live concert (FI): **Niillas Holmberg** (voc) & **Pauli Lyytinen** (sax)
- Finissage:** Fri | January 13, 2022 | 6 pm
- Workshop:** Wed | November 16, 2022 | 2–5.30 pm
Whose Nature?
Co-Creating Relationships between Humans and Nature through Arts and Sciences – a workshop in cooperation with TU-Dresden
- Panel:** Wed | November 16, 2022 | 7 pm
Nordic Natures and the Politics of Science–Art–Activism
- Exhibition period:** October 7, 2022 – January 15, 2023
- Venue:** Nordic Embassies, Felleshus, Rauchstraße 1, 10787 Berlin
- Opening hours:** Mon–Fri 11 am–7 pm, Sat/Sun 11 am–4 pm | Free admission
- Press contact:** Beatrice Faßbender, presse@nordischebotschaften.org
- Press photos:** Download via Dropbox <https://bit.ly/3BDHztT>

2. IMAGE LIST

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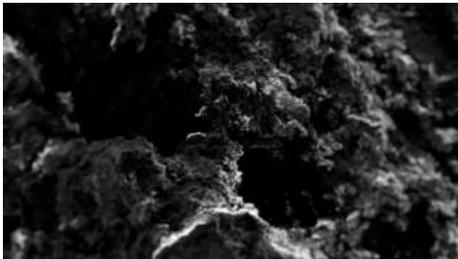
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1.
Sigurður Guðjónsson
Enigma, 2019

Video Still
(4k video, 27 mins 49 secs)
© the artist and BERG Contemporary



2.
Marja Helander
The Secrets of Dusk 1, 2018

Pigment print on aluminium, 87 x 130 cm
© the artist



3.
Marja Helander
The Secrets of Dusk 2, 2018

Pigment print on aluminium, 87 x 104 cm
© the artist

4.



Marja Helander

Waiting for the morning, 2018

Pigment print on aluminium, 87 x 130 cm
© the artist



5.

Outi Pieski

Giisavárri, 2010

Triptych

Acrylic on canvas, 180 x 366 cm

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Liv Engholm, RiddoDuottarMuseat



6.

Outi Pieski

Čáhpes Giisavárri / Svart Giisavárri / Black Giisavárri, 2010

Triptych

Acrylic on wood, 180 x 366 cm

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Liv Engholm, RiddoDuottarMuseat



7.

Máret Ánne Sara

Pile O'Sápmi Power Necklace, 2017

Porcelain and reindeer skin, 144 x 30 x 25 cm

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Karl Alfred Larsen



8.

Máret Ánne Sara

Suodji mis jus saǰáidagamet dovdat (We'll have shelter for as long as we know our place), 2020

Grass, steel, leather, fur, 200 cm x 115 cm

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Jonathan Watts, Musée d'ethnographie de Genève



9.

Máret Ánne Sara

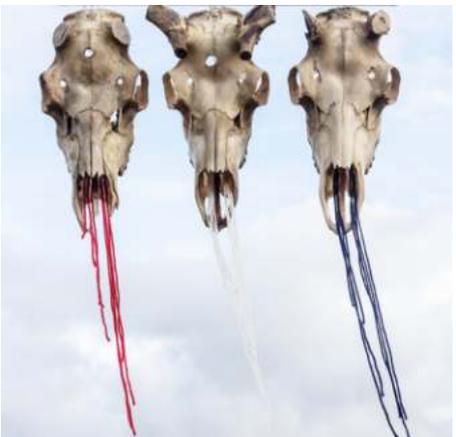
Suodji mis jus saǰáidagamet dovdat (We'll have shelter for as long as we know our place), 2020

Detail

Grass, steel, leather, fur, 200 cm x 115 cm

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Jonathan Watts, Musée d'ethnographie de Genève



10.

Máret Ánne Sara

Flag, 2020

Reindeer skulls, thread, metal, 60 x 60 cm

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Alexandra Harald



11.
Julie Edel Hardenberg
seal – dog – life, 2020

Series of 15 colour photographs

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022



12.
Anders Sunna
Death means nothing for the colours, 2009

Acrylic paint and photographs on wood, 72 x 122 cm

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: Håkon Holmgren Gabrielsen, RiddoDuottarMuseat



13.
Anders Sunna
Reclaim Saivo, 2019

Wooden panels, birch trees, 8 pieces, 250 x 120 x 6 cm (each)

© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2022

Photo: the artist

3. ARTIST BIOGRAPHIES AND WORKS

SIGURÐUR GUÐJÓNSSON (*1975) is an Icelandic artist based in Reykjavík. He studied Fine Arts in Iceland, Copenhagen, and Vienna. His works are characterized by a unique synergy between moving images and carefully arranged soundscapes, which are often conceived in collaboration with Icelandic composers and effectively enhance the viewing experience. The manner in which his works are displayed plays a major role in Guðjónsson's practice, as he seeks to experiment with different modes of presentation. The artist's work for the Icelandic Pavilion at the 59th Biennale di Venezia, for example, titled *Perpetual Motion*, is projected on a L-shaped screen whose six-meter-long vertical axis extends upwards while its horizontal axis stretches out across the floor.

The video in this exhibition, titled *Enigma* (2019), seeks to sensitize viewers to the fact that the most dramatic landscapes can be found hidden inside the smallest elements. What at first glance appears as a flickering lava field turns out to be the surface of a fragment of charcoal. Scanned with a highly advanced electron microscope while placed inside a vacuum, the images created with this technological device expose the inner structure of a quadrant of carbon magnified up to a million of times. Guðjónsson animated the scientific images and underlaid them with complex rhythmic loops. The result brings the carbon's scanned interior to life. For nearly 30 minutes, the image is constantly changing and remains ambiguous throughout the entire duration of the piece. Blurred elements coexist with their high-definition counterparts and deep, chasm-like, saturated black zones appear alongside white lines reminiscent of mountain ridges. The soundtrack for *Enigma* was composed by Anna Thorvaldsdóttir, who was awarded the New York Philharmonic's prestigious Kravis Emerging Composer Award in 2015 for creating music which, according to *The New York Times*, "conjures unseen worlds." Here, the titular enigma refers to the fact that what we see is beyond the reach of the human eye; science provides tools that enable us to reflect on the elegance and mystery of matter in a whole new way. Guðjónsson's work is often interpreted as celebrating the beauty of technology. Yet one could argue that the artist makes use of technology precisely to change our perspective on nature. *Enigma* reveals that there's a landscape to be found in nature's elemental components. This observation has a profound impact on our understanding of matter and nature alike. The latter, as Guðjónsson shows, is not external but at the core of it all.

JULIE EDEL HARDENBERG (*1971) was born in Nuuk, on Kalaallit Nunaat. After completing her art education in Trondheim and Copenhagen, in 2000, she returned to Nuuk. The daughter of a Danish father and an Inuit / Kalaaleq mother, she was raised within two cultures. Many of her works explore notions of cultural differences, asking what it means to live in a (post-) colonial society in which established colonial-era structures are still dominant. In her artistic practice, she often uses national symbols to question colonial power and preoccupations with ethnic identity.

In the late 1990s and early 2000s, Hardenberg worked with the photographic medium to portray herself and her friends embodying ethnic stereotypes. Recent photographic works are more related to a traditional yet threatened lifestyle in Kalaallit Nunaat. The photos in the series *seal – dog – life* were shot with the artist's mobile phone, in 2020, in the northern part of the country. They depict Greenland husky dogs, a remote private home, a knife and gloves, dead and skinned seals, and pictures of breathtaking views of the Arctic Ocean dotted with icebergs. They tell the story of an elder Inuit man who lives by himself with a pack of sledge dogs and their puppies. The dogs are the most reliable source of transportation in the freezing

climate. The old hunter leads a self-sufficient life, and seal hunting provides him and his dogs with nutritious food, while the fur is used to make coats, mitts, and bags. Although seal hunting in the Arctic region is a centuries-old practice, today it has become a subject of intense debate. In 2009, the EU banned the trade of seal products, with only a few exceptions made to the existing laws for the Inuit in 2015. Some view the EU Seal Ban as an animal-rights victory because they view the killing of seals as abominable, an unnecessary slaughter. The Indigenous people, however, paint a very different picture. For them, hunting seal from boats not only demands special skills but is also an essential practice to life in the Arctic. It is an existentially critical activity that both requires and provides knowledge about the region's climate, ecosystem, biology, and wildlife. In this sense, *seal – dog – life* pays quiet tribute to this ancient knowledge and traditional lifestyle in which animals, human beings, and nature show themselves in their complex interdependence.

MARJA HELANDER / Áibmejot- Jovvna Johanasa Márjjá (*1965) is a Sámi artist with roots in Helsinki and Utsjoki. Her work is grounded in various media, including photography, video, and film. She began her studies at the Lahti Institute of Fine Arts, and graduated, in 1999, from the University of Art and Design in Helsinki. The main focus of her work is the question of identity. Casting herself in various roles, ranging from the traditional Sámi to the modern Finnish woman, Helander exposes the incomprehension and ignorance surrounding Sámi values and lifestyles which she observes in Finland today. *Luondu Luonddus* includes three works from Helander's photographic series *North*. The photos were taken between 2018 and 2021 and feature landscapes that have been destroyed by the mining industry and are populated by mythical creatures and hybrid beings performed by the artist herself.

In *The Secrets of Dusk I*, the focus is on a mountain in Bjørnevattn, located on the far northeastern side of Norway near the Russian border. The severe damage inflicted on the mountain due to mining activities becomes apparent in the photograph. However, the naked mountain also exudes an uncanny beauty that allows Helander to conjure an atmosphere of darkness and eeriness and sets the tone for the other works. Meanwhile, *The Secrets of Dusk II* depicts a bright, sunny winter landscape not unusual for the region surrounding Jámežiid guolbba / Kuolleitten kuolpuna Utsjoki. It is a place where Sámi people have lived, hunted, and buried their family members for centuries. The blanket of snow covering the calm landscape cannot hide the fact that something strange is afoot. A figure at the center of the image, naked save for some feather-like snow forming on its body, appears to be purposefully approaching the viewer. It could be a *gufihtar*—a creature from the underworld. Or perhaps it is a different ghostly figure. Regardless, something about its appearance and posture suggests that it could attack and that we, the viewers, are its target. It's difficult to determine the motives of Helander's creatures. Are they driven by aggression? Should we run away or feel compassion and listen to what they have to tell us? The fox-human hybrid in her work *Waiting for the Morning* seems to invite us to do the latter. It is waiting by the river naked and defenseless, turning its sad gaze away from the semi-worn mountain. Looking at the manmade landscape in these images, we can safely assume that we might not like what these nonhuman creatures would say to us. And yet we cannot help but look and listen. That is because the power of the series *North* lies in Helander's use of mythical creatures and their suggestive ability to sensitize us to the irreversible devastation of nature. In making them the main protagonists, Helander is able to lend her voice to nature.

OUTI PIESKI / Čiske-Jovsset Biret Hánsa Outi (*1973) grew up in Helsinki with strong connections to her father's Sámi family in Utsjoki. She studied painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Helsinki, where she graduated in 2000. She works primarily with installation and painting and has been exploring the Sámi aesthetics rooted in *duodji* and storytelling. *Duodji* is often translated as Sámi handicraft, but the meaning

of the concept is much more profound. The term is used for both the production of an item and the item itself, thereby reflecting the Sámi people's holistic view toward life and culture.

Both triptychs in this exhibition depict Giisávárri mountain, located near the village Dálvadas in the north of Finland, where Pieski lives and works. There is a myth about a treasure hidden near the mountain, yet to be found. The painting *Čáhppes Giisávárri* (2009) is dark and uncanny, almost cartoonlike. In Sámi storytelling, *gufihtar*—mythological creatures of the underworld—are closely connected to certain landscapes, like the Giisávárri mountain. They are almost impossible to see, but if you rouse their interest they can either be helpful or make life difficult. Upon closer inspection, one might detect faces on the mountain's surface, making it appear like a living, breathing creature. The other painting, titled *Giisávárri* (2009), bears the colors of early autumn. Objects added to the painting's surface form a metaphorical and collage-like bridge between the mountain, the artist, and the people living around it. Some are made of textile, some are hollow reindeer bones. The colorful textiles are similar to the ornaments sewn onto the traditional headgear worn by Sámi women, like the artist's grandmother. In contrast, the reindeer bones refer to a personal childhood story the artist recalls. According to Pieski, her grandmother had warned her not to look through the bones after having sucked out the marrow. But she could not resist. After initially thinking nothing had happened, she woke up with a swollen red eye the next morning and swore to herself never to look through a hollow reindeer bone again. Pieski also includes a small, altar-like shelf at the bottom of the painting. On it rests the headgear her grandmother and mentor had owned. Pieski's work has gained international renown thanks to her unique style and a seemingly inexhaustible variety of forms. These are deeply inspired by the artist's Sámi heritage and the techniques applied in *duodji*.

MÁRET ÁNNE SARA / Mikkol Ivvára Jovsseha Ivvára ja Fimben Aillo Ánte Anne Márjja, Máret Anne (*1983), is an author, artist, and a founding member of the Dáiddadállu Artist Collective. She was born and is based in Guovdageaidnu, on the Norwegian side of Sápmi. Her work was first experienced by an international audience at documenta 14, in 2017, where she presented a curtain-like sculptural installation made of 400 reindeer skulls. Titled *Pile o' Sápmi*, the work was conceived some years earlier, following claims made by the Norwegian state against the artist's brother and reindeer herder, Jovsset Ánte Sara. Jovsset sued the Norwegian government in 2007 to counteract a law which would have forced him to slaughter so many of his animals that it would have spelled the end of the reindeer husbandry for their family. The court case resulted in a lawsuit that lasted a decade, during which Sara created several artworks in support of her brother and in protest of the government. Today, an updated version of the work, titled *Pile o' Sápmi Supreme*, is in the collection of the Norwegian National Museum in Oslo and permanently installed in the museum's new building which opened in 2022. Sara is furthermore among the three Sámi artists exhibiting at *The Sámi Pavilion* at the *59th Venice Biennale*.

Three works by the artist are presented in the exhibition *Luondu Luonddus*. The wearable sculpture *Pile o' Sápmi Power Necklace* (2017) consists of dozens of miniature reindeer skulls cast in porcelain made from ground reindeer bones. The skulls are hanging from straps mounted on a collar made of reindeer leather. The use of porcelain bears an important reference to a historic tragedy that occurred during the colonization of North America. In the late 1800s, buffalos were slaughtered by white settlers to intentionally deprive Native Americans of their food source and to use the bones for the production of porcelain. Here, Sara presents her impressive skills as a *duojár*, transforming traditional materials into porcelain to create a necklace long enough to cover the torso. The object's materiality oscillates between heavy and light, tender and sturdy. There is a seductive elegance to the piece despite the appalling history it refers to.

The second work, titled *FLAG*, is a hanging sculpture made of three reindeer skulls. Red, white, and blue strings referencing the colors of the Norwegian flag dangle from their mouths. In this work, Sara raises awareness of the ongoing conflict between the officials in Norway and the Sámi people. The flag, a symbol of state power, is deconstructed and dissolved into frayed strings because, as the artist explains, the work intends to criticize the neocolonial politics of Norway which deeply impacts and wounds Sámi culture, land, animals, and people.

The third artwork on view bears the Sámi title *Suodji mis jus sájjaidagamet dovdat*, which translates as “We’ll have shelter for as long as we know our place.” It is a two-part installation comprising a structure made of dried grass draped over a steel grid and a form reminiscent of a medieval hat with two horns. The form is inspired by a traditional Sámi boot known as *gáma*, made from reindeer hide. The making of a pair of such shoes, the *gápmagat*, demands precise crafting and design skills, such as using the material without wasting any leftovers. This is part of the philosophy of *duodji*, which encourages zero waste and never using more material than is absolutely necessary. Traditionally, dried and prepared grass, *gámasuoidni*, is used to fill the inside of the *gáma* for the best results in insulation as well as air and humidity control. Here, the artist reversed the tasks, letting the *soidni* (grass) protect the *gáma* with its warmth and softness. In Sara’s own words:

“In the present global situation, a sentence came to my mind. If we are no longer able to stand on our feet, we need to find a way to carry our feet with us into the future. Thinking of indigenous and old knowledge and wisdom in the current world, I sense a need to bring the feet and the ground back closer back to our heads.”

As evident in her work for Venice, Máret Anne Sara is actively bringing *duodji* and its close connection to nature into contemporary art for the purpose of reminding us of old traditions and values. Her works, however, can also be regarded as a means of protecting her culture and the Sámi way of life. They can be considered devices which help point out that the colonization of the north is not a relic of the past but remains an urgent and existential threat for the people and nature of Sápmi.

ANDERS SUNNA / Ántte-Náhtán-Ánte (*1985) comes from a reindeer herding family and lives in Jåhkamåhkke/ Jokkmokk on the Swedish side of Sápmi. He studied painting at the Academy of Fine Arts in Umeå and later at Konstfack University of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm. Sunna, like Máret Anne Sara, is one of the three artists who represents Sápmi at *The Sámi Pavilion at the 59th Venice Biennale*. He is known for his politically charged artworks, which function as a form of resistance against governmental policies of the past century that have made the life of Swedish Sámi communities increasingly difficult. The core subject matter of his work is the lengthy conflict played out between his own family, the Sámi village, and the county administration.

At first sight, the work *Death means nothing for the colours* appears to be a landscape painting depicting a herd of reindeer descending the snowy mountains. In the foreground, some reindeer are passing through a blank space inside a fence made of historic photographs. These show an examination of Sámi people and the documentation of their lifestyle, with some of the images made for the purpose of studies in racial biology between 1920 to 1950. There are further historical and political references in the work. The painterly style of the reindeer alludes to the visual language of the Sámi writer and reindeer herder Johan

Turi, whose drawings illustrated his book *Muitalus sámiid birra (An Account of the Sámi)*. Published in 1910, it is the first account of Sámi life written by a Sámi author. The painting also makes a political reference to the Sámi flag which is presented as if it were decomposing. Its four colors are running down from the top of the image and seemingly bleed into it, a reference to the painful chain of events caused by the colonization of the Sápmi region going back hundreds of years.

Another work consists of a *lavvo*, or Sámi tent, an object which the artist has worked with for some years. One is installed on the terrace of the Fellesthus, its walls are painted with motifs such as traditionally dressed reindeer herders and reindeer walking on a pattern of stacked skulls. All images are kept in what has become the artist's signature bright, expressive style. The multiple uses of the skull allude to past and present atrocities committed against the Sámi, which range from the forced culling of reindeer to accounts of frequent disinterment of Sámi graves, carried out to gather material for the aforementioned racial studies. Sunna's paintings contain various layers of meaning. They expose what happened to the Sámi communities and their way of life and thus tell the story of how a minority culture has been forcefully and gradually separated from nature.

4. CURATORIAL STATEMENT

How can human beings reestablish a healthy relationship with nature? How can we relearn how to find and grow our own food, find shelter when we need to, or make our own clothes? As curators, when we began our conversations around this project back in September 2021, these seemed like urgent and relevant questions in regards to curating a Nordic exhibition.

Exploring the topic of nature within the group show format at the Fellesthus in Berlin fit well with one of the project's further specifications: to invite as many artists as possible currently representing the Nordic countries at the 59th Venice Biennale, including artists from Iceland, Denmark, and the Sápmi region's Swedish, Finnish, and Norwegian parts. From Denmark, we also invited a Kalaaleq artist, as their voices are still underrepresented in international art shows and deserve greater attention.

Both culturally and scientifically, nature has become one of the most contentious topics of debate in contemporary society. The climate crisis is a daily presence in the news, and we can no longer escape images of collapsing glaciers, melting ice caps, floods, landslides, forest fires, and dried up river beds. The number of natural catastrophes appears to increase yearly, and not only scientists but also Indigenous peoples have long tried to warn the world of this trend. Since *documenta 14* opened the doors to Indigenous artists who had previously been underrepresented on the art world's major stages, we are gaining new insight into ways of life that seek to preserve nature and live in accordance with it rather than to dominate it.

Accordingly, talking about nature is not only a personal concern but also a political one. In Sápmi, communities fight to be able to maintain their traditional lifestyles and spiritual practices. This is not only due to the climate crisis but also to an ongoing battle against colonialism: windmill construction for the production of green energy has decimated large swaths of Sápmi's natural habitat, particularly reindeer pastureland. As a result, the reindeer can no longer follow their traditional routes. As the land is shrinking,

Sámi and Kalaaleq artists have made works investigating this destruction. Now, since the *Venice Biennale*, the world finally seems ready to listen—a small cause for hope for survival and healing.

Skulls and corpses, which are part of the exhibition, have always been present throughout art history—think of Baroque still lifes and *Memento mori*. These shouldn't be regarded as frightening or offensive. On the contrary, in this exhibition, the remains of animals remind us of the fact that if we want to get back in touch with nature, we must first and foremost recognize that human beings and animals have no other choice but to coexist, especially in the Nordic regions. Life in the Arctic is not possible without the meat and fur animals provide. "The animals, they teach you best about nature," one artist in the show told us. This is why we should acknowledge that the wealth of experience and wisdom of Indigenous peoples, who guard and care for the animals, is of great value. They bear not only knowledge which has been passed on by their ancestors for generations; they also possess ancient stories and a unique approach to being one with their surroundings. Indeed, both can help us to heighten our awareness about what is happening to the environment.

We believe that now is the time to learn from them. We can only hope that by looking and listening we find out for ourselves how to become more responsible and aware of what we are losing if we don't find the strength to change.

Irene Snarby (Tromsø, Sápmi) and Christina Landbrecht (Berlin)

5. CURATOR BIOGRAPHIES

CHRISTINA LANDBRECHT (*1981) is a curator and an art historian based in Berlin. She was Assistant Curator and Personal Assistant to the Director at Berlinische Galerie, Berlin's Museum for Modern Art, Photography, and Architecture from 2009 to 2012. During those years she organized major shows such as the solo exhibitions of Nan Goldin and Boris Mikhailov and a site-specific musical installation by artist and composer Ari Benjamin Meyers designed for the museum's entrance. From 2013 to 2017 she worked as Research Assistant at Humboldt University and started her PhD thesis which will be published in 2023. In it she analyzes the debate around artistic research, tracing its beginnings back to the turn of the millennium and discussing the twists and turns it took in the two decades that followed. In March 2018 she took over the position of Program Director of Arts at Schering Stiftung Berlin. The work of Schering Stiftung is dedicated to initiating projects and dialogues at the intersection of art and science as well as the support of educational programs in both disciplines. The foundation also has its own exhibition space in which two exhibitions per year are presented by Berlin-based and international artists working in the fields of art and science. Landbrecht has curated several exhibitions there, all of them including the production of new artworks. Among the artists she worked with are Sissel Tolaas, Anna Virnich, Hyphen Labs, Zheng Bo, Susanne M. Winterling, and Jenna Sutela.

IRENE SNARBY (*1967) is a curator and lecturer specializing in the field of Sámi art. She is a Doctoral Research Fellow in Art History at UiT The Arctic University of Norway, and a member of the research group WONA (Worlding Northern Art). Her PhD Thesis investigates the oeuvre of Sámi artist Iver Jåks (1932–2007), placing his work in relation to contemporary art as well as the ancient knowledge of *duodji*, the holistic philosophy from which Sámi material culture and creative practices emerge. Snarby, whose maternal family originates from Sámi *Guovdageaidnu / Kautokeino*, has been researching and working in the field of Sámi art

since the early 1990s. During her eight-year tenure as curator at the Art Department of The Sámi Museum in Karasjok, RidduDuottarMuseat (RDM), she managed, among other responsibilities, a rapidly growing collection—the world’s largest holdings of contemporary Sámi art. She was also a member of the Sámi Parliament’s acquisition committee for contemporary art.

Snarby cocurated the exhibition *In the Shadow of the Midnight Sun* together with Jean Blodgett, which toured Canada from 2007 to 2008, featuring art from Inuit areas in Canada and the Nordic Sápmi region. Together with the organization SKINN (Se Kunst I Nord Norge / See Art in Northern Norway), she curated the Sámi art exhibition GIERDU, which travelled to art institutions in Russia and the Nordic countries (save for Denmark) from 2009–2013. Snarby lectured at each location as part of the touring exhibition’s extensive public programming.

Snarby worked as a consultant for, among others, The National Gallery of Canada on the exhibitions *Sakahàn: International Indigenous Art* (2013), and *Àbadakone / Continuous Fire* (2019). She was also an adviser for the Nordnorsk Kunstmuseum’s performance *There is No*, in which the museum was converted into a fictional exhibition space for Sámi art in 2017. Other collaborations include OCA Norway and Norwegian Crafts; she was an also active member of SARP, The Sámi Art Research Group at the University of Tromsø. Snarby curated several other exhibitions, has written numerous texts, edited several publications, and lectured widely on the subject of Sámi art.

6. THE FELLESHUS OF THE NORDIC EMBASSIES

FUNCTION

The Felleshus—in English “Pan Nordic Building”—is the freely accessible cultural and event center of the five Nordic Embassies (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway and Sweden). Public exhibitions and readings, concerts, film screenings, lectures and conferences take place here. Here you can find information about the Nordic countries. There is a public canteen (run by Kenneth Gjerrud from the restaurant “Munch’s Hus” in Berlin-Schöneberg) and a café, the Kaffebær (run by “Blue Nordic Coffee”). The building also houses the consular departments of the embassies.

ARCHITECTURE & HISTORY

The Nordic Embassies in Berlin are a globally **unique project**: a joint embassy complex for five countries, established against the backdrop of a common history, relationships that have grown over centuries, common languages, and shared values and convictions.

The international architectural competition for the overall concept was won by the Austrian-Finnish firm **Berger + Parkkinen** in 1995. The underlying concept was to make visible this strong community of five individual countries. In Berger + Parkkinen’s design, a green copper band connects the Felleshus and the five embassy buildings, which were designed by architectural firms from the respective countries. The houses are arranged according to their position on the map, with the North Sea and Baltic Sea symbolized by three **water basins** between the buildings.

This **copper enclosure**, which is almost 230 meters long and 15 meters high, consists of some 4,000 pre-patinated lamellas, which—like other materials used in the complex—have not been treated or coated. The

open space within the copper enclosure, the plaza, is traversed by twelve intersecting lines of white marble. The lines define the boundaries of the respective embassy buildings, but at the same time form paths and optical connections between the buildings.

The **inauguration** took place on **October 20, 1999** in the presence of all the Nordic heads of state. Using phrase “Each autonomous, and yet together” in her inaugural speech, Queen Margrethe II of Denmark set the tone that would guide the future cooperation between the five nations.

Design: Berger + Parkkinen

Embassy area: 7500 sq m (grounds; footprint 3425 sq m)

Awards:

AIT Award Best of Europe: Office, 2004

DuPont Benedictus Award, category Best Government Building, 2003

Finalist at the Mies van der Rohe Award, 2001

PROGRAMME

In addition to the exhibitions and individual events (concerts, panel discussions, readings, conferences, performances, film screenings, and much more), there are also series of events, such as the reading series **Book of the Month**. For this event, the featured book is exhibited and sold in the foyer of the Felleshus in cooperation with the partner bookstore Pankebuch – Die schönsten Bücher des Nordens. For most events there are readings, and sometimes also book premieres. From time to time, both established and yet to be discovered Nordic musicians perform in the series **Jazz im Felleshus**. A monthly **newsletter** and a **program flyer** published three times a year provide information about the current program.

FIGURES

The Felleshus is open almost every day of the year except Christmas. On average, almost 100,000 people visit the Felleshus every year, which averages to about 275 visitors per day. Every year, some 500 events take place at this location. These are exclusively events organized by or in cooperation with the Nordic Embassies.

ADDRESS & CONTACT INFORMATION

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OPENING HOURS

Mon–Fri 11 am–7pm

Sat/Sun and public holidays 11 am–4 pm

The Felleshus of the Nordic Embassies is open to visitors daily. No appointment necessary. Admission is free. The individual embassy buildings are not accessible to visitors.

