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Press-release No 2

Gothenburg Craft Biennial No 3  
KONSTHANTVERK 2005  
Contemporary Craft  
September 3d- October 9th at Röda Sten

The primary goal of Gothenburg Craft biennial is to draw public attention to innovative, contemporary and Craft across boundaries. This Biennial covers a broad field with a variety of expressions and angles of approach, in form as well as contents. The exhibition consists of 20 works by 38 artists from the Nordic countries, Holland and the United Kingdom. A great number of artistic collaboration projects and works of groups is presented, as well as works of individual artists.

One of the main themes of this exhibition is Time and reflections around Craft as a concept. A question of great interest to the curator, Madeleine Park, is how craft artists during the last decades have turned to new ways of expression – utility goods have more and more been replaced with sculpture and installation art – without losing the importance of handicraft skills, which if anything has increased.

The exhibition also reflects the trend – among many craft artists of today – to form groups with the purpose of sharing ideas and exhibition projects in order to create works that communicate social issues. From Sweden the group "We Work In A Fragile Material" participates, from Denmark the group "Grus 4", from Finland the group "Amazing Animal" and from Norway the group "Temp".

In the exhibition, many of the works call in question certain structures, as well as the foundation of masculine and feminine identities. One of the exhibitors, *Mija Renström*, questions male and female historical myths in her artistry. In her mysterious pieces of crochet works, she redefines handicraft, when the works are allowed to exceed all boundaries. At Gallery Sparwasser in Berlin, the tentacles of her small and big organic crocheted objects seemingly crawled into the room, through the ventilation system. Like organisms, with a life of their own, they claimed their surrounding. *John K. Raustein* from Norway investigates our expectations regarding roles of identity from a masculine point of view. The experience of working in a pronounced feministic surrounding is the starting point of his artistic work. In his works, circulating in and around the home textile world, he brings up issues we normally consider masculine. At Röda Sten, John K. Raustein shows a gigantic ironing-board.

The Swedish group We Work In A Fragile Material, with ten members, has had several exhibitions, all attracting lots of attention, since the debut at Älvsjömässan in Stockholm in 2003. Projects and exhibitions always depend on the individual situations and conditions at hand. At Skokloster Castle, the group made an exhibition amongst the collections, inspired by a meeting with a castle in baroque style. At Röda Sten, the group will build a fictitious workshop with invisible walls.

Several of the works shown at Röda Sten require an active public and play on the expectations of the observer. The visitor is invited to participate and, by this, add to the meaning of the interactive performance. The work then focuses outwards, towards the political and social surrounding, not inwards, to its implemented presumptions. The works derive their meaning from their surrounding.

*Helene Hortlund* takes an interest in the ordinary meeting and is dedicated to the art of performance – sometimes with a touch of absurd humour – and always with a metaphorical content. In her works she examines ingrained opinions and values. In the work "In wait for the prince", she will - dressed in a crochet bridal-dress - be sitting crocheting on the veil during the whole exhibition period at Röda Sten. She uses a technique suggestive of table cloths, bedcovers and curtains. Helene Hortlund makes the bride perceptible as a part of the interior, but also as a net spinning capturer.

Besides the fact that the work illustrates how women are supposed to look upon marriage as a birth, a wait for the awakening prince, the work seemingly expands until it reaches a boundary – the ruff unbrushed industry walls of Röda Sten.

The foremost source of inspiration to *Irene Nordli* from Norway is the culture of consumption, massproduced pictures and commercial advertising. Like many pop artists, she utilizes the pictures and icons of the popular culture to draw attention to cultural phenomena. In the sculptural work "Deerman and Supervenus" the onlooker meets tired super heroes, seated in the couch. When the visitor sits down beside them sensors are activated and they start telling the stories of their lives. With the help of her works, she wants to break down the invisible borders of touching and also involve the observer, so as to participate and guide the experience. The intention of Irene Nordli, in this work, is to point out the futility of everything, but also to make us realise that laughter and maybe tears, is not that far away.

The work *Pizzeria Babylon*, solely occupies one room in the exhibition. The Finnish artists *Kalle Hamm* and *Dzamil Kamanger*, explore what happens when two different cultures meet within the framework of our relation to food. In the room with what looks like crouched pizzas and sculptural objects, the visitors are confronted with the question of the true meeting and the conditions of consciousness.

Seminars, guided tours and pedagogic arrangements are planned throughout the exhibition period, daytime as well as in the evenings. Meetings between artists and the public and workshops will take turns with dance performances and music evenings. The Swedish-Norwegian project "From Mud to Music", a concert on instruments in ceramic materials, is just one good example.

In the beginning of August, the program leaflet will present all the arrangements in and around *Konsthanterverk 2005 - Contemporary Craft*, at Röda Sten as well as exhibitions and activities in Art Galleries in the Region of Västra Götaland, during the same period.

### Participating artists:

**Denmark:** Anja Franke, Astrid Krogh, The group Grus 4: *Anne Koldsø, Malene Vetejerd, Stine Skytte Østergaard, Tifli Lerche Frederiksen*

**United Kingdom:** Clare Thornton

**Finland:** Kalle Hamm & Dzamil Kamanger, Outi Turpeinen, the group Amazing Animal: *Mervi Kurvinen, Kati Nulpponen, Maria Nuutinen*

**Holland:** Sander Luske

**Iceland:** Gudjón Ketilsson, Hildur Bjarnadóttir, Hrafnhildur Arnadóttir

**Norway:** Leif Inge, Marianne Moe, Irene Nordli, John K. Raustein, Ragnhild Margretha Taranger, the group Temp: *Anne Thomassen, Heidi Bjørgman, Ruth Moen, Ann Helen Mydland*

**Sweden:** Helene Hortlund, Mija Renström, the group We Work In A Fragile Material: *Frida Fjellman, Maria Boij, Andrea Djerf, Linus Ersson, Gabriella Höglind, Sara Isaksson From, Åsa Jungnelius, Pontus Lindvall, Ludvig Löfgren, Jakob Robertsson*

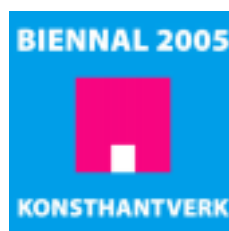
For more information and high resolution photos, please contact:

Mariann Johansson  
Project manager  
Tel: +46 (0) 73 701 82 70  
info@craft-sweden.com

For statement from curator Madeleine Park, please see separate information.

Arranger: The Association Craft Sweden

Information about the biennial and activities at Röda Sten during the exhibition period is presented at [www.craft-sweden.com](http://www.craft-sweden.com)



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P.O.Box 2035 S-411 03 Gothenburg, Sweden  
info@craft-sweden.com [www.craft-sweden.com](http://www.craft-sweden.com)