

CONTEMPORARY ICELANDIC ART REFLECTS ON SUSTAINABILITY IN EXHIBITION OPENING AT SCANDINAVIA HOUSE OCTOBER 2016

Featuring work by the Icelandic Love Corporation, Libia Castro & Ólafur Ólafsson, and Hrafnkell Sigurðsson, among others

OPENING RECEPTION: SATURDAY, OCTOBER 15—5 - 7 PM

9-16-2016—Borrowed Time: Icelandic Artists Look Forward presents the work of contemporary Icelandic artists currently engaged in the global dialogue on sustainability and the issues that surround it. Featuring photography, video, collage, and installation, the exhibition invites viewers to challenge their assumptions and explore new modes of seeing. The exhibition will be on view from **October 15, 2016 through January 14, 2017** at **Scandinavia House** in New York City.



Fig 1: Icelandic Love Corporation, *Evolution (Þróun)*, 2010
Photographs, plywood, 72 x 216 1/2 x 15 3/4 in.,
Collection of the artists

OVERVIEW

Global communities are constantly in flux. As the world's population continues to grow, artists are increasingly engaging in the international dialogue on sustainability and the intricately-connected, if not overlapping, issues—environmental, economic, cultural, and social—that surround it.

The artworks featured in *Borrowed Time* reflect on and interrogate the idea of sustainability from a variety of perspectives, with the aim of challenging our understanding of our place in the world and influence on it.

A number of the artists examine the issues of waste and consumption: The **Icelandic Love Corporation** (ILC), a democratic artist group comprising Sigrún Hrólfssdóttir, Jóní Jónsdóttir, and Eirún Sigurðardóttir, focuses on the social and cultural factors—globalization, pop culture—surrounding sustainability. In the installation *Evolution* (Fig 1, 2010), ILC uses deadstock Nylon pantyhose as both subject matter and medium, highlighting waste and the fabric's long decomposition timeline. Working in a similar vein, **Hrafnkell Sigurðsson** photographs swathes of bubblewrap floating in turquoise Icelandic lakes, commenting on the West's culture of packaging and its contribution to phenomena like the Great Pacific Garbage Patch, a massive gyre of marine debris located in the North Pacific Ocean.

Artist **Hildur Bjarnadóttir** and artistic partners **Libia Castro & Ólafur Ólafsson** also reflect on culture and sustainability, with a focus on tradition. In the series *Giving Back* (2007-2009), Bjarnadóttir photographs mittens she has knitted for her grandmother, all crafted with Icelandic wool that is hand-dyed by the artist with pigment derived from her grandmother's decades-old plants, pointing both to the dominance of synthetic color in the modern world and society's fading interest in traditional craft. In *Untitled* (2006-), Libia Castro & Ólafur Ólafsson address the effects of heavy industry on Icelandic culture, photographing themselves outfitted in the Icelandic women's national costume standing beside the country's first aluminium plant.

A number of the artists highlight developing environmental crises: In her series of collages entitled *You've got a face with a view*, artist **Þorgerður Ólafsdóttir** raises questions about the environmental effects of Iceland's booming

tourist industry, while **Bryndís Snæbjörnsdóttir & Mark Wilson**, in their video *You Must Carry Me Now (Houston)* (2014), investigate the tensions between and cooperative efforts of the scientific, public, and corporate stakeholders managing U.S. wilderness.

The exhibition will also feature work by **Kristín Bogadóttir, Bjarki Bragason, Rósa Gísladóttir, Ásthildur B. Jónsdóttir, Anna Línadal, Ólöf Nordal, and Pétur Thomsen.**

SUPPORT

Presentation of *Borrowed Time* at Scandinavia House has been made possible in part by Iceland Naturally.

CURATORIAL CREDIT

Originally organized and presented by Listasafn Árnesinga/LÁ Art Museum, Hveragerði, *Borrowed Time* is curated by Ásthildur B. Jónsdóttir. Jónsdóttir (b. 1970) is an assistant professor in the Faculty of Art Education at the Iceland Academy of the Arts. She is currently pursuing her PhD at the University of Iceland and University of Lapland Rovaniemi, focusing on the potential of contemporary art sustainability-related educational curricula. Jónsdóttir holds an MA from New York University, The Steinhardt School of Culture, Education, and Human Development, and a MEd from the University of Iceland.

PUBLICATION

The exhibition is accompanied by a 50-page illustrated catalogue featuring an essay by curator and featured artist Ásthildur B. Jónsdóttir (in both English and Icelandic).

LISTASAFN ÁRNESINGA /LÁ ART MUSEUM

Funded by the eight municipalities that comprise the southern Icelandic county of Árnesýssla, Listasafn Árnesinga/LÁ Art Museum offers a year-round program of exhibitions featuring the work of both local and international artists.

AMERICAN-SCANDINAVIAN FOUNDATION

The American-Scandinavian Foundation (ASF) promotes firsthand exchange of intellectual and creative influence between the United States and the Nordic countries: Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden. A publicly supported American nonprofit 501(c)(3) organization, ASF has an extensive program of fellowships, grants, intern/trainee sponsorship, publishing, and cultural activities. Headquartered in New York City, ASF has members throughout the United States, and alumni and donors worldwide.

For more information: amscan.org

SCANDINAVIA HOUSE: THE NORDIC CENTER IN AMERICA

Scandinavia House was created by the American-Scandinavian Foundation to promote the artistic and intellectual influence of the Nordic countries. As the leading center for Nordic culture in the United States, Scandinavia House offers enriching programs that illustrate and illuminate the culture and life of the Nordic countries. The diverse programs include exhibitions, film series, concerts and other performances, readings, lectures, language courses, and activities for kids and families.

For more information: scandinaviahouse.org | Facebook | Twitter @ScanHouse | #Another North

HOURS AND ADMISSION

The Scandinavia House Gallery is open Tuesday through Saturday, 12 – 6 PM (Wednesday until 7 PM). Admission is free.

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