

Project description *StillAlive- Man as the Place/ SAMP #1- #9, 2008-2012 (ongoing)*

SAMP is an interactive project in the public space where 20-30 self-glowing objects are placed outdoor in different places in the city. The objects are placed where they easily can be seen or in more hidden places and they glow in the night. The outplacement ritual and the objects journey through the city becomes a choreography in a bird's eye view. Topologically the places where the objects are left will become coordinates for a while.

Will the objects dissolve, dematerialize or be taken care of by passersby ?

The project meets its audience in the public space. At the same time it differs from the idea of public art as it only will be temporary and anyone that find an object can take care of it keep it and become a godparent. If you find an object you can detect an engraved link underneath and go to the project website , www.stillalive.eu, for further information. You can read about the progress of the project and get instructions on how to become a godparent.

The project consists of 4 parts:

- 1) an installation with self-glowing objects in a totally dark space;
- 2) a workshop with outplacement performance by volunteers from the specific city
- 3) a godparent ship for those who find the objects in the city
- 4) a project website www.stillalive.eu where the many stories of the participants since 2008 can be read.

The idea is that this site-specific project will continue from city to city, develop and change from location to location depending on the different preconditions in every new city together with the experience from earlier implementations of the project. So far the project has been implemented 9 times in collaboration with art institutions in different cities around Sweden. The recent implementation took place in the lapponian city Kiruna in 2012.

Objectives

My intention with the project is to investigate existential questions about human vulnerability, loneliness and homelessness but also the responsibility we have for each other in life. I want to examine what we do with our public space, if it is really public and a place for everyone.

The definition of the public space is intimately connected to our ideas of what it is to be a human being and what kind of society we should create. By placing an object in the city one commits an intrusion. You see what happens with the object, how long it will stay, if it is removed or even vandalized.

In the selection of volunteers I strive for a wide spectra regarding genus, ethnicity, age and professional background as possible. The workshop that they participate in consists of, one one hand, discussions that aim to enhance their awareness of the city and on the other, of instructions for the outplacement ritual.

Involvement

The project involves the citizens in different ways: First the visitors of the installation with the self-glowing objects. Then the volunteers who in the outplacement ritual help the objects on their journey out in the city. They finally find suitable places where to leave the objects according to the instructions given earlier.

After that the passers-by are involved. They choose if they want to take care of an object. In the project website they are given instructions of how to become a godparent.

If they decide to keep the object a counteraction is required by giving a contribution (money or other help) to an human aid organisation or individual they know of having suffered in the public space.

As a godparent you are also asked to report your comments about the experience of the project to me. These stories are published with photos on the website. Here you will also find the texts of the participating volunteers and other godparents.

Investigation of the public space

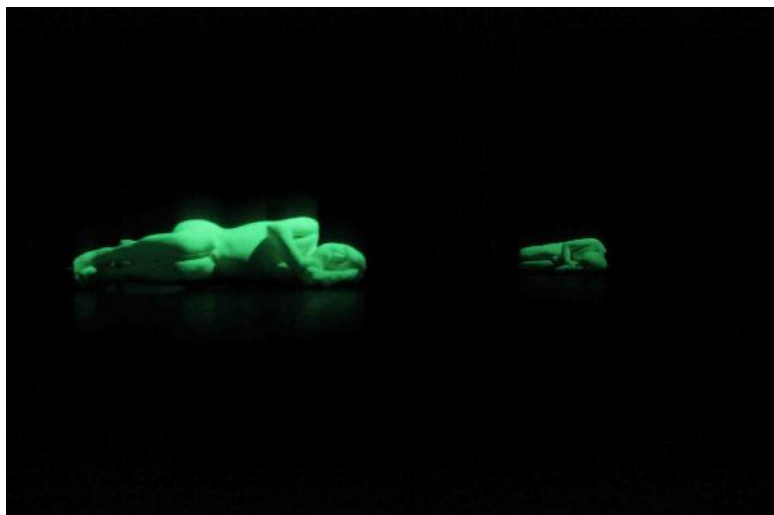
The public space is our common space. Despite that it is conditioned by given laws and rules. Placing an object in different conditions is to make an intrusion. The outplacement becomes the provocative act. It's a way to investigate the public space and create issues. Is the public space really public and for everyone?

By seeing how long the object is allowed to remain where it is left you can understand how public the space really is. Is the public seen as something own privately?

The actual artwork is the action and the reception, not the art objects in themselves. The space in between, the context is the artwork. The objects become coordinates for a while and they contrasts to each other as they are site specific. In that way they mirror the city in two levels, first the singel object that reflects a specific place, and then the objects that interact and shows the whole city.

The use of relational aesthetics, with the involvement of the audience in a shared process and investigation of the public space that they know in many other ways already, is further a way to test new possibilities for artistic activity and research.

Images from implementation SAMP#9, Konstmuseet i Norr, Kiruna, 2012



Installationsview, Kiruna City Hall, 2012



Instructions in the street, Kiruna, 2012



Found object in the city, Kiruna, 2012



Workshop with volunteers, Kiruna, 2012



Outplaced object in the iron mine, Kiruna , 2012

(for more images see <https://annahesselgrencvbilder.wordpress.com/>)