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TUNDRA - «melting ice precious earth» project

Laila Kolostyák in cooperation with Anne Kristin Vangen

«L'art dans tous ses états 2007»



Limay, France



Tundra Project

The Tundra 'Melting Ice precious earth project' proposes to bring 11 tons of natural ice from Lapland to France to create a compact ice circle protected with a layer of French soil and grass on top.

The ice will melt despite its protection, and the size, mass, power and strength of the material will change. No matter how much ice there is, the delicate metaphor for nature, cannot take heat. The ice will disappear in front of our eyes, and the process is irreversible.

The Tundra sculpture intends to raise awareness of the melting process which is taking place globally on an incomprehensible scale and with globally devastating consequences. The polar ice, glaciers and permafrost are melting at a high speed, with dramatic and tragic effects that many of the world's population have already experienced.



Ecopolicy

The process of global warming is changing the Earth. Human activity threatens the Earth's climatic balance. We are getting closer to the point of no return. The IPCC, United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, says that 90% of the world's temperature rise is caused by human activity. The rise of sea level, drought and more extreme weather conditions will cause millions of people to migrate.

The world as we know it is threatened because inadequate action is being taken. We have both the means and the possibilities to slow down the process of global warming. Shortsighted politics and economic gain will inevitably threaten human existence if drastic action is not taken immediately, and on a global scale.



Artistic Foundation

Accomplishing the project is for us a great artistic challenge.

Our aim is by artistic means to focus on the global warming crisis by making it tangible.

Our basis is both ethical and political and the sculpture is an artistic adaption of the ecological process.

Water is essential to all known forms of life. It covers 75% of the Earth's surface. Human beings consist of 72% water. Water continuously moves through a cycle of evaporation, precipitation and runoff to the sea. Water is the only common, pure substance found naturally in all three states of matter; ice (solid), water vapour (gaseous state) and water (liquid phase).

Water in all of these substances is apparent in our sculpture.

The ice we bring with us to France is harvested from the Torne river in Lapland, north of the arctic circle. The ice reflects the site where it's formed. The slow running water of the Torne river forms crystal clear ice between 70- 90 cm thickness. Mild changing weather in early winter creates opaque white ice. The ice from the Torne river has few airbubbles and few natural cracks due to the river floor and very slow running water. The winter temperature is visible in the ice. This gives the sculpture an extra natural dimension.

Time is an essential part of the sculpting process. The time it takes for the ice to melt is given by the circumstances. Already as we build the sculpture the ice is disappearing.



The Artists

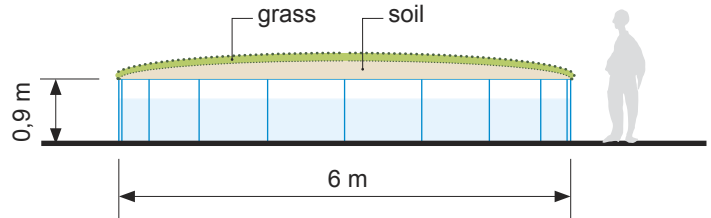
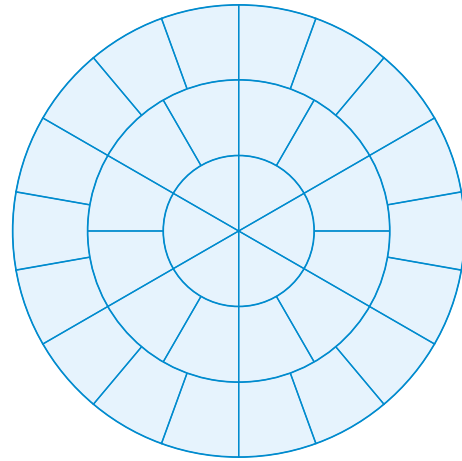
The artists Laila Kolostyák and Anne Kristin Vangen have worked on several ice projects together. In 2004 they made the installation “Guovtte Illmi Gasskas” (“Between the two Worlds”) made from 15 tonn Lapland ice brought to Copenhagen.

In 2005 they worked with female artists on the snow and ice installation “Float” for Alta Kunstforening. In January 2007 they started the “Winter Room” small community project in Norwegian Lapland dealing with social and cultural connections to the cold. The project will be continued.

Laila Kolostyák has her art education from Great Britain and the Netherlands. Snow and ice have since returning to Lapland been her main material. The space of the individual in social and cultural settings has been a reoccurring theme. She often involves other artists, musicians, architects or designers in her projects.

Anne Kristin Vangen has her art education from Oslo and Iceland. Her main area is sculpture. Nature, architecture, movement, strength and tension are her main concern. She often chooses solid materials like wood and metal.





Schedule

- March - harvesting of 11 tons of ice from Torne river, Lapland
- April - ice stored in Lapland
- June - site and technical meetings in Limay, France
- September - icecutting and preparations, Lapland
- September - freight of ice to Limay
- September - the making of Tundra. Ice meets earth and grass. Limay, France
- 22nd September to
- 28th October - the art festival «**L'art dans tous ses états 2007**» Limay, France



Background

TUNDRA

The Tundra holds one third of the world's soil-bound carbon. When permafrost melts it releases carbon in the form of carbon dioxide which is a greenhouse gas. The more CO₂ that is released into the atmosphere the higher the global temperature and consequently the melting process will speed up even more.

Tundra refers to the area where the subsoil is permanently frozen. The area includes northern Russia, Canada, Alaska and the treeless plain of northern Lapland. The polar Tundra is home to nomadic reindeer herders such as Nganasan, Nenets and the Sami.

The Tundra soil is frozen from 25-90 cm down and it's impossible for trees to grow. The land support low growing plants and there are two main seasons, summer and winter. Because of the frozen ground the water cannot sink so it forms shallow lakes and marshes.

The winter temperatures are from -28C to - 70C. The average summer temperature is between 3 -12C. Thousands of insects and migrating birds populate the plains in summer. There are also large population of reindeer and in the far north, the polar bears. There has been little human activity in these areas. This is now changing with the exploration for oil and uranium.



WATER AND ICE

The water cycle has no beginning and no end. The time it takes from water to move from one place to another varies from one second to thousands of years. Despite continuous movement the amount of water stays the same. The water cycle is powered from solar energy. Most of the solar energy warms tropical seas. The vapour is condensed as rain in another climate zone where it releases latent heat that warms the air. This drives the atmospheric circulation. Also toxins follow the water cycle and the atmospheric circulation. The last century the water cycle has become more intense and the IPCC expects it will continue to increase due to the global warming.

The icecaps of the polar region are of significance for the global climate and the water cycle.

Liquid water is one of the few substances that expands when it freezes. When ice melts it absorbs as much heat energy as it would take to heat an equivalent mass of water by 80C, while its temperature stays 0C.

Ice has long been valued as a means of cooling. Already 400 BC the Persians stored ice in the desert in underground chambers. Until the refrigerators introduction ice was the main way of keeping goods cool.

The harvesting of ice stored on ships to keep goods cool were once big industries.



EARTH

Soil consists of solid, liquid and gas. The solid part consists of mineral and organic matter including living organisms. The plants take up nutrients from the liquid. The gaseous phase supplies oxygen to the roots for respiration. The way agriculture exploits the soil and its biodiversity plays a part in the context of climate change, greenhouse gases and the release of carbon into the atmosphere.

Grass and grass-like plants have long been important to human beings. They provide a majority of food crops and have numerous other uses like feeding animals and turfhouses. Grasses are familiar to most human cultures.



U N I V E R S I T Y