

26 BITS OF TEXT

on beans and beads

Mette Karlsvik

This text by Mette Karlsvik was commissioned by Entrée,
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Curated by Espen Johansen.

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i.

The wind is from west, and rain weaves works from water.
Sheets of beaded moisture drift through air. In an atelier
below the bridge hang beaded ribbons. A bridge of black
pearls -
now a subject of labour
now a door of beads
a port of pearls: a point in which spaces meet.

Behind beads, backroom smells homely. Tora drinks black
coffee. The acid works on teeth, skin, copper; etching
surfaces,
and writing the journey of the black, bitter bean.

ii.

Bjørn-Henrik knows little about Tora's work. Tora barely
knows the work of Bjørn-Henrik. Their works work
together.

Tora says Work generates work. Labour is artwork. It takes
no shortcuts.

Bjørn-Henrik says Your questions work on my mind. My replies may be sketchy and not worked through. Please feel free to use my answers, and rework it to fit into your work.

Bjørn-Henrik says But talk reduces work. Hence, dreams come at play.

He has a recurring dream.

He has a recurring image on his mind;

a photograph returns to him/

he returns to the photo: Self-Portrait as a Drowned man

is an image simultaneously bitter-sweet and dreamlike, says

Bjørn-Henrik,

and asks himself Are dreams the opposite of talk?

He places two saws on a stone. The two saws directed towards the same spot, but with a slight difference in the angle in which they saw. The scores are close. Days pass. Scores deepen. The distance between the saw blades widens.

Bjørn-Henrik buries copper in soil. He sculpts monuments from soil.

Below backrooms and gallery spaces, in the dark and wet

of the soil, copperplates rest; patiently waiting to be found, brushed, put on pedestals.

Two copperplates resemble each other. After days in air and sunlight, they oxidize; exhibiting their different burials.

A developed development; development in light following the development denied light: The copper photograph is a slow Daguerreotype depicting the nature of soil, and the action of acids, dung, minerals and microorganisms working on copper.

Oceanic ground of Bygdøy, Oslofjord, is rich in calcium, potassium, limestone etc. Slowly, minerals are released from the ground, enriching the soil, and make the earth particularly fertile. From only traces of soil, birch trees stretch out, along the rocky shores of Lutvann. Their roots find their way down to fresh water. In fresh water, between hydrogen dioxide, their roots find pieces of nourishment, and an abundance of liquid and light.

iii.

On shallow banks of lukewarm and calm sea, lives the Akoya oyster. Its pearl is said to have the most vivid colours. Its beauty is beyond shallowness.

Ornaments, says Tora, Are like parasites: They cannot exist without the thing on which it sits.

The beads of Tora partake in the net of art, of artists, and audience: The meeting between art, artists and audience talking about art, Christmas celebration, the weather; on the wind and rain from west - working on the cobbled stones, west-coastal houses, walls.

Ludwig Wittgenstein says Do not rest on success. It is like sleeping in the snow: you fall into a cold slumber, and die. Wittgenstein reworked: Work eternally!

Wittgenstein says Eternal life is given to those living in the present.

Wittgenstein reworked: Read «eternity» as «timelessness», not never-ending, and live forever, if living for the moment.

Tora says To do a good job to do a good job.

A pissoir a pissoir a pissoir like un pipe est un pipe est un pipe, a rose a rose a rose a bead a bead a bead.

Woven beads are the materialization of labour; a physical manifestation of repetition. Beadweaving takes on a life of its own.

What is the language of textile? How do pearls speak?
What is the narrative in the act of repeating the same
action: the very precise, same action.

How lives labour? What says work? How works work?
What are the words of works, the sound of workish? Will
work understand other languages than workish. Does
Work work works. Will Work understand workish? Workish
works! And Work works well; alone working the Work.
Work works with wool, with white, fine threads, weaving
wonderful dreams where Work forgets about himself,
dreams free from Work, waking up sweaty and worn out
from all the dreamweaving. Working long days, wearing
Work out. Work meets the wall, whine, and fall over, crawl
below white bed linen, feeling only a fraction of the work
that Work used to be - when Work worked well.

If sawing is dreaming, dreaming is like sawing. Dream saws
dream. Saw saws Dream into half dreams. Half dreamt
sleep is half a sleep. Sleep may be whole. It is an effort.
The effort is paid back. After holistic sleep, Bjørn-Henrik
opens clear blue eyes, says Actually, he says: What I said
about reducing may be reductive. It may be too easy,
he says: To claim that talk reduces labour, he says: Talk
is limited. As much as art works on the mind, it should
stimulate feelings, he says, and asks himself Why do I work
conceptually? What I meant, says Bjørn-Henrik: Is that
there are other issues to address too. Labour is not the
only theme.

The day brakes. Sun enlightens copper plates; exposes them to reality, registers and preserves them. Life and death, existential issues, as well as the trivial and everyday, like breakfast, Bergen Tidende, black coffee, and then - off to work.

Within the art-space, there is a space in which coffee is brewed. The room of art exhibits three pieces by Bjørn-Henrik and one piece by Tora. Between The Pieces of Art and the backroom there is a liquid portal of pearls. Black pearls marking the transition between The Art and the coffee.

Coffee cools down. Wind increases. Bridges shiver. Tora walks on foot. 9 knots wind against her chest (even though the forecast says 10). The never-ending doubt in the mind of the artist:
is the one piece of work sufficient
or should she make a piece number two? And if she so does:
can a piece number two meet the expectations -
qualitatively
is the quantity of pieces a point in itself
the number of beads
of repetitions?

Tora Endestad Bjørkheim (b. 1986 in Hønefoss) is currently based in Bergen, Norway after completing her master's degree at Bergen National Academy of Art and Design in 2013. Recent exhibitions include *Norwegian Crafts 2014*, KODE, Bergen, Norway; *TALENTE 2013*, Munich, Germany; *Masterutstillingen*, Bergen Kunsthall, Norway, 2013; and *III Moscow Biennial for Young Art*, Moscow Museum of Modern Art, Russia, 2012. Together with Johnny Herbert, she is founder and editor of *Grafters' Quarterly*, a free, Bergen-based newspaper and a forum for engaged attitudes.

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Bjørn-Henrik Lybeck (b. 1985 in Oslo) lives and works in Bergen, Norway. He is currently doing his master degree at Bergen Academy of Art and Design. Recent exhibitions include *Trial & Error*, Shedhalle Tübingen, Tübingen, Germany, 2013; *One Night Only*, Kunsternes Hus, Oslo, Norway, 2013; *Bring Your Own Plant*, Wizard Gallery, Oslo, Norway, 2014 and *Vestlandsutstillingen*, Kunsthall Stavanger, Norway, 2014.

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