

Bø Outdoor Gallery

ARTSCAPE NORDLAND

Artscape Nordland is an international art project featuring invited artists from 19 countries who have created an openair collection of 36 sculptures in as many municipalities in northern Norway. The project took its cue from a wide-ranging public debate about the role of art in society. Nordland has 240 000 inhabitants in 44 municipalities, yet the county has no art museum of its own. The idea of assembling a collection of contemporary art and presenting a sculpture in each municipality of Nordland was first proposed in 1988 by the Norwegian artist Anne Katrine Dolven. The first sculpture was unveiled in 1992, and the first stage of the project was completed in 1998. It continued in 2009 with three new works added to the collection. The most recent sculpture was completed in 2015. The artists invited to take part in the project choose the sites for the works themselves. By situating their sculptures as part of the landscape, they have created wholly new dialogic environments that we can visit and reflect upon. This dialogic environment is in a continuous state of becoming due to the ever-changing light conditions, the cycle of the seasons and the forces of time, rendering the sculptures both time- and site- specific.

The works featured in the project mirror the evolution of sculpture over the last five to six decades. During this period, our understanding of what constitutes an ‘artwork’ has expanded to include the context or framework where the work is situated. Its meaning depends not only on its nature as an object, but instead arises from within the wider visual domain that the sculpture activates by its presence. The sculptures seem to extend us an invitation: “Experience me, communicate with me.” We the spectators find ourselves in a mental space that we create through the associations the artworks evoke in us. We also intuit that the meaning of the work can change as we ourselves undergo changes in our lives. They unfold as an ongoing journey in art and within ourselves.

The project was produced by the Nordland County Council in co-operation with the participating municipalities.

The Outdoor Gallery is an initiative of the Municipality of Bø.

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Architects: Fredrik Lund in co-operation with Oscar Eriksson Furunes

Photographs: Courtesy of Nordland County Council

Photographers: Vegar Moen, Inge Ove Tysnes, Werner Zellien