

PRESS RELEASE

June 7, 2006



A Postcolonial Exhibition Project in Five Acts

OPENING OF ACT 4 IN ROVANIEMI, FINLAND/SÁPMI JUNE 16 – JULY 9, 2006

*Art Exhibition & Film Program in VR:n Veturitalli (Finnish Railways Locomotive Engine Shed)
June 16 – July 9
Opening Friday, June 16, 5 – 8 pm
Press Preview Friday, June 16, 2 – 4 pm*

*Conference in The Arctic Centre
June 17 – 18, both days 12 am – 5 pm*

Curated by Kuratorisk Aktion (Frederikke Hansen & Tone Olaf Nielsen) for
NIFCA, Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art

www.rethinking-nordic-colonialism.org

Colonialism Within

A deserted locomotive engine shed in the woodlands of Rovaniemi – the gateway to the Sámi homeland area Sápmi – will soon become the stage for an international art project on Nordic colonialism.

Taking its cue from local interests within Sámi culture and politics, the exhibition ***Colonialism Within: Indigenous Rights and Multicultural Realities*** and a concurrent conference at the Arctic Centre will rethink the colonial history and its present-day ramifications in the Nordic region from an indigenous perspective.

Acclaimed indigenous and non-indigenous artists and academics from as different places as India, Canada, Nigeria, Greenland, New Zealand and Sápmi will meet in Rovaniemi. They will discuss such issues as the right to land and resources, representation and agency, the myth of indigeneness, the state and the environment, women's interests, sexuality, and race. In doing so, they put special attention to indigenous interests in the age of globalization and the current global economy.

Both the exhibition, which includes a comprehensive film program, and the conference will address indigenous concerns as a sort of colonialism *within* and hence question dominant ideas of colonialism as something remote in time and space that has already been sufficiently historicized.

A Bigger Project

The happening in Rovaniemi is part of the ambitious exhibition project, ***Rethinking Nordic Colonialism***, which was launched earlier this year by NIFCA, Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art. The curators, Kuratorisk Aktion (a.k.a. Frederikke Hansen and Tone Olaf Nielsen), hope to provoke new discussions on Nordic imperialism past and present by providing a unique platform for discussions combining art, activism, politics, and academic work.

Rethinking Nordic Colonialism is divided into five acts and presents 56 participants from all over the world. The first act opened in Iceland in March, where artists, theorists, and activists discussed the widely forgotten history of Nordic colonialism. Staged in Nuuk in April, Act 2 took this discussion one step further by looking into current problematics in contemporary Greenland and other de-colonizing societies. The Faroe Islands provided the context for Act 3, during which artists and performers discussed how colonial dynamics operate on body and mind. Act 4 will now look at colonialism *within*, giving artistic and intellectual attention to indigenous interests in the global economy.

Opening up discussions to an appropriate global investigation, ***Rethinking Nordic Colonialism*** brings people with similar interests but lacking knowledge of each other together in the “peripheries” of the Nordic region and represents a first postcolonial attempt at writing a collective history of colonialism in the region.

All these critical voices are collected in a DVD Box Set, which will be published throughout the Nordic region and the world at large at the end of the year. Bringing the marginalized voices to the centers of power will be the fifth and final act.

The Program

For three weeks, the engine shed will be home to new artworks by **Archana Hande** (India), **Geir Tore Holm** (Sámi, Norway), **Kent Monkman** (Cree, Canada), **Katarina Pirak Sikku** (Sámi, Sweden), and **Fatimah Tuggar** (Nigeria/USA) – as well as to the film program, ***Silver Screen Resistance***, featuring four decades of postcolonial cinema with **Stephanie Black** (USA), **Randi Broberg in collaboration with Tine Bryld** (Greenland & Denmark), **Laila Hansen** (Greenland), **Isaac Julien** (United Kingdom), **Alanis Obomsawin** (Abenaki, Canada), **Pratibha Parmar** (Kenya/United Kingdom), **Gillo Pontecorvo** (Italy), and **Paul-Anders Simma** (Sámi, Norway/Sweden/Finland).

Following the opening on June 16, a two-day conference titled ***Beyond Subject and State? Indigenous Interests in the Age of Globalization*** will be open to everyone interested. Speakers are **Archana Hande** (India), **Richard William Hill** (Cree, Canada), **Rauna Kuokkanen** (Sámi, Finland/Canada), **Kaisa Raito** (Finland/Swedish Sápmi), **Henriette Rasmussen** (Greenland), and **Makeke Stewart-Harawira** (Waitaha, New Zealand/Canada).

Practicalities

Detailed information on participants, programs, locations, schedules, etc. can be found on **www.rethinking-nordic-colonialism.org**

There will be a free shuttle bus service for the opening night on June 16 running from 5 – 8 pm. It leaves from Sampoaukio to VR:n Veturitalli every half hour. Schedule online.

Admission to both exhibition and conference is free. At the conference, simultaneous interpretation will be available.

VR:n Veturitalli (Finnish Railways Locomotive Engine Shed)
Rovaniemen asema-alue, 96100 Rovaniemi
Wednesday – Sunday, 1 – 5 pm, admission free

The Arctic Centre
Arktikum, Pohjoisranta 4, 96200 Rovaniemi
+358 16 341 2758, www.arcticcentre.org
Admission free

Publication

Rethinking Nordic Colonialism is accompanied by a free 148-pages User Guide containing a full event program as well as detailed descriptions of all the participants and their contributions. The User Guide is available in all the exhibition venues or can be acquired at nifca@nifca.org. Participant and program information is also available online at www.rethinking-nordic-colonialism.org.

Support

Rethinking Nordic Colonialism is realized with financial support from: NIFCA, Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art, Nordic Council of Ministers, The Living Art Museum, Stoðir hf., The Reykjavik Academy, Greenland National Museum and Archives, Teachers' Training School of Greenland, The Faroe Islands Art Museum, The Nordic House in the Faroe Islands, Finnish Railways, The Arctic Centre, European Cultural Foundation, The Danish Art Council's Committee for Visual Art, Nordiska Museikommittén, The Danish Arts Council's Committee for International Visual Art, Atlantic Airways Ltd., Embassy of Canada in Finland, Icelandair, Hotel Hans Egede, Svenska kulturfonden, IASPIS – International Artists' Studio Program in Sweden, Mentanargrunnur Landsins, Det Kongelige Grønlandsfond, Arts Council of Lapland, FRAME: Finnish Fund for Art Exchange, NACS: Nordic Association for Canadian Studies, Puukeskus Rovaniemi, Air Logistics Aps, Skipafelagið, Ljóð-Tøkni, Royal Arctic Line A/S, Hotel Føroyar, The Nordic House on Iceland, Hótel Leifur Eiríksson, Dronning Ingrid's Hospital – Central Laboratoriet, Nuuk Værft A/S, U.S. Overskudslager, Danske Veteranbiludlejning, Den Danske Trådvarefabrik, Beredskabsstyrelsen, KNR: Greenland National Broadcasting Company, and more to be announced...

Info

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