

REPORT OF THE World Art Day 2012

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN



International guests at Museum of Modern Art, Stockholm: Niilofur Farrukh, Tania Bruguera and Marina Naprushkina.



Tartgate. The happening with designed cakes for all guests. The Swedish Minister of Culture open up the happening, which became the biggest Swedish international cultural event since 100 year (According to Swedish media).

Our intention in the Swedish Committee was to arrange a seminar on the theme of freedom of expression. We initiated a number of collaborations with various artists 'organizations and the strengthening of cooperation with the Art critics' association AICA, which has the same narrative discourse as IAA.

Our first idea was to celebrate WAD in Stockholm, Gothenburg and Malmö. This is to WAD would not be a big city event without coming across the country to share. This vision, we had to revise because of economic setback. Finding external funding raised a great time and it was not easy.

World Art Day took place at the Modern Museum in Stockholm on 15 April 2012. We had booked the largest room for 300 people: Our critics shook their heads and said that so many people will not show up on a Sunday afternoon in Easter week. We should be happy if there would be at

least 50...

So it was clear that we needed an attraction. Our program with invited prominent international guests was heavy and serious. We needed something easy and popular. This was World Art Day and it should be a popular event that interested large groups for visual arts.

Timely would The Artists Organization, KRO, celebrate 75 years anniversary.

We suggested to KRO that they should give five artists in commission to design a cake, free option, that it would be a celebration cake and coffee for those who came to World art day.

In addition, we organized and arranged a welcoming press photo of Duchamp's "Fontaine" as cake. We created an event in facebook and maintained it with information about World art day.

Little did I know that this event would become Sweden's largest international cultural event in the media ever.



This was the program:

Invitation to World Art Day 15 April at 1 pm.
Location: Moderna Museet

WORLD ART DAY

Welcome to the celebrations for World Day Art and the 75th anniversary of Konstnärernas Riksorganisation's (KRO) at Moderna Museet. A party with cake-artworks by Peter Johansson, Lisa Jonasson, Marianne Lindberg De Geer, Makode AJ Linde and Galleri Syster. Afterwards, a panel discussion on the fight against censorship and for the freedom of art with some well-known names from the international art scene

World Art Day is celebrated to highlight the importance of art in a global perspective.

13: The beginning of World Art Day where the artist-designed cakes are admired and eaten. Plan 2 between the auditorium and Pontus Hultén study Gallery.

14: Introduction by Daniel Birnbaum, director of Moderna Museet, the Minister for Culture Lena Adelsohn Liljeroth, Karin Willén, chairman of KRO and Pontus Raud, Vice-President of the European section of the International Association of Art.

15-17.30: The Fight against Censorship and for the Freedom of Art, a panel discussion in English. Christian Chambert, Chairman of Svenska Konstkritikersamfundet will launch the discussion.

Guests: Tania Bruguera, an artist from Cuba, Niilofur Farrukh, editor of the art magazine NuktaArt in Pakistan and Marina Naprushkina, an artist from Belarus.

Moderator: Sophie Allgårdh, art critic for the Swedish newspaper Svenska Dagbladet and vice-chairman of Svenska Konstkritikersamfundet.

17.30-20: Bar and mingle.

RSVP by April 11 for the cake party: worldartday@kro.se

Free admission to the World Art Day and panel discussion (no RSVP is required for the debate)



Two cakes of five.

The cakes

At 1 pm we had cake and coffee ready for 300 persons that had RSVP. The cakes were delicious made of chocolate factory, one of Stockholm's finest confectioners and who won the award in 2011 for best pastry chef in Sweden.

They were five artists who had done a cake-artwork; *Peter Johansson, Lisa Jonasson, Marianne Lindberg De Geer, Makode AJ Linde and Galleri Syster.*

Makode Linde was the only one who had designed his cake to be a performance work. His sketch for the cake was based on the Venus of wilhelmdorf but he had added a women's necklace in gold. He built a podium where only his head was exposed as the head of the cake. Painted in his blackface, as a part of his long term ongoing project "Afroromantics", he remained silent for 40 minutes while waiting for the Swedish Minister of Culture Lena Adelsson Liljeroth would show up. We had agreed that she would start with cutting up Makodes cake.

I presented the idea to start with Makodes cake and gave her the knife to start cutting up....the crowd was waiting with their cameras.... Fortunate, that we had a camera with video capacity...

- I guess you want me to start here, said the minister of culture and nodded to a part in the lower region of the cake....she let the knife slide down in the layer of black marzipan...a roar of a big scream followed....

We will add some of the articles in english of the cake-incident or "Racist-cake" as some say.

A personal reflection of the cake incident.

A big debate followed after WAD and its clear that this performance, which was held under the roof of a prominent art institutions, was in its precense not questioned as racist. Its because it was read as an performance. The artist and the audience had an agreement that this was an act of art...like a theater play contains various characters that challenge the norm in society but we don't call upon police...because we have an agreement between the thater and the audience. The same princip followed during the performance at Moderna Museum in Stockholm.

The day after, when the photos was shown at Facebook and especially the videofilm at Youtube, things started to happen!

So the cake-performance entered the political room. The norm in the political room is quite different than the room for the art. It dosent have the same hight as the rooms in art, its narrow and political correct. It is here the collision happens...and the Swedish African society banns the Swedish minister of culture.

The expression of the cake performance was in the beginning angry and frustrated. We recived a lot of threats and angry calls. A lot of aggresion that changed into confusion when it appeared that the artist was an Afroswede himself and had been doing this kind of blackface as an artproject since 2008.

After thosands of articels in newspapers, TV, radio, blogs and other social media, app 3 500 000 wiews at internet of "Painful cake" this incident become Swedens largest international cultural event in the media ever.



Daniel Birnbaum

World art day – Talks: The Fight against Censorship and for the Freedom of Art

Introduction by Daniel Birnbaum, director of Moderna Museet

Karin Willén, chairman of KRO

Pontus Raud, Vice-President of the European section of the International Association of Art.

Swedish Minister for Culture Lena Adelsohn Liljeroth,

We each held a speech around 10 – 15 minutes. I have added my speech.

The Fight against Censorship and for the Freedom of Art, a panel discussion

Tania Bruguera started with an reflection of her start as an artist in Cuba. The difficulty of working as a free artist in a society that is increasingly trying to control culture. She talked about how the censorship first appeared in her circle of friends. Guided by a secret police, and finally how even her own father tried to get her to stop questioning the society with her art. The situation finally became intolerable and she was forced to flee the country.

Nilofur Farrukh, editor of the art magazine NuktaArt in Pakistan talked about how Pakistan infrastructure were smashed and the whole cultural identity disappeared in the war. The difficulty of working as an artist in your own country and how impossible to even operate in an international art world. She showed examples of various artists who nevertheless tried with limited resources. Several of these artists are now dead or lost. She spoke about how threats to their families finally silenced the best artists and writers.

Marina Naprushkina, an artist from Belarus talked about censorship in Belarus. How she and her friends were forced to sneak in all the art that questioning the regime. Eventually she goes to Germany where she seems to challenge Lukashenko's rule of society. She has a similar tale of cencur where it begins when a person makes contact with her and question her opinions. Then people would show up at meetings and lectures to question her art and opinions.. Finally, the circle of friends who ask her to stop before she is arrested.

The strange thing is also done at our seminar. A girl of twenty five years old stands up and cries. She said she does not understand what Marina is talking about. She has never experienced Belarus as the country Marina describes.

The meeting ends in confusion with the many emotions that ends in the discussions in our bar with beer and wine.

Links Tartgate

http://articles.cnn.com/2012-04-18/world/world_europe_sweden-art-controversy_1_racist-event-cake-weekend-art-exhibit?_s=PM:EUROPE

<http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2012/apr/20/sweden-racist-cake-pippa-middleton>

<http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-2131365/Racist-cake-causes-outrage-Sweden-Lena-Adelsohn-Liljeroth-triggers-race-row.html>

<http://www.mirror.co.uk/news/world-news/swedish-minister-of-culture-slammed-for-racist-797906>

