

Danish Heidi Hove wins the Turku Biennial 2013 with two childhood memories

The winner of Turku Biennial 2013 is Danish **Heidi Hove** (b. 1976). The winner was chosen by the director of Stockholm's Nationalmuseum, Mr **Berndt Arell**. Heidi Hove will be rewarded with a prize of 5000 euros and the Turku Biennial medal by the organiser of the exhibition, Aboa Vetus & Ars Nova museum.

Heidi Hove was originally invited to take part in the exhibition by artist and curator **Ellen Friis**.

Hove studies in her art the lives of ordinary people and the human relationship with public and private spaces. It is characteristic for her to acquaint herself with the exhibition locations of her art and to build her art works based on her observations from these locations. With her subtle installations and interventions, Hove changes the meanings of different spaces and presents alternative ways of seeing our everyday immediate surroundings.

Berndt Arell's statement:

This year's Turku Biennial, which rounds up 15 Nordic artists or artist groups, focuses on the theme *idyll*. The theme may at first seem wide and difficult to grasp and this becomes quite clear when looking at both the exhibition as a whole and individual art works more closely. Interpretations are relatively free, and as a whole the exhibition is interesting and thought-provoking by being both challenging and provocative at the same – as should be.

I spent a good while studying the video installations, which were represented in the exhibition by several, lengthy works, missing perhaps more photographs, but I was nonetheless overall struck by the high quality of the exhibition.

Choosing one art work from this ensemble of works was not easy or self-evident, but it was my task. Finally I ended up choosing as the winner the art work I saw when I first entered the exhibition; Heidi Hove's marvellous, touching unity, *Backyard History I and II*. In a way the art works can be seen as two completely separate units but I personally viewed them as two stories supporting one another. The museum where the work is exhibited, i.e. the spirit of the place, has been the starting point for Hove to place her works specifically in this environment. I was taken back by the respect she had both for her task in Turku and the valuable museum building, but also the respect she has for her own and her family's history. The combination of these starting points is strong, emotional and private. Yet the privacy projected as something very public by Hove, forms its own story which I believe is something many can relate to. The memory of cutting one's leg as a child continues its presence in the showcases as a true mark of the people who once inhabited Heidi Hove's childhood home. The artist attempts to get closer to the unknown by reconstructing the items, making them whole and usable again; that tells us how close one can actually get to the past. The grip is on the spirit of the location, i.e. the museum's historical Aboa Vetus and its archaeological findings.

I would understand *Backyard History II* as the artist's expression of love towards her grandfather. With a simple yet explicit grip Heidi Hove presents the old farmer's entire life's work. It becomes concrete as a large boulder transported from the grandfather's farm and as a photograph documentation of the grandfather's long and hard life with his crops. The artist's grandfather devoted himself throughout his life to improving the farm for himself and for future generations. He regularly transported rocks, large and small, from his fields in order to ease his farming task. The grandfather collected the rocks in one large heap which throughout decades then grew and grew. A cairn located at the far end of the backyard was the result of the grandfather's hard work – something that has now already been covered by rich vegetation but can still be recognised as man

made. In the exhibition this becomes evident and beautiful. The moss growing on the granite boulder, which travelled on top of the rock all the way from Denmark, proves once again Heidi Hove's seriousness towards both her own art work and towards her attempt to share a personal side of herself in the exhibition.

Heidi Hove lives and works in Copenhagen. She studied in the Funen Art Academy in Odense from 2002 to 2007. She is one of the founding members of artist-run space Koh-i-noor operating in Copenhagen. She is also co-director and curator at the artist-run space Sydhavn Station.

The audience of Turku Biennial can also vote for its favourite work. The public vote is open until the beginning of August and the winner will be announced August 15th. The winner of this vote will be rewarded with a prize of 1000 euros.

Turku Biennial is open until September 1st. For more information on the exhibition and its calendar of events at www.turkubiennaali.fi/en and on Twitter <https://twitter.com/TurkuBiennial>.

For more information please contact:

Paula Viitanen, PR-Officer
paula.viitanen@aboavetusarsnova.fi
+358 (0)20 181 639

Silja Lehtonen, Curator
silja.lehtonen@aboavetusarsnova.fi
+358 (0)20 181 641

Johanna Lehto-Vahtera, Museum director
johanna.lehto-vahtera@aboavetusarsnova.fi
+358 (0)20 181 633

Heidi Hove, Artist
heidihovepedersen@gmail.com
+45 30428727
www.heidihove.com