

## “From a Point of View”

Tungenes Lighthouse, Randaberg / European Capital of Culture Stavanger. 2008



Red zone is dead zone.

Part of the bigger lighthouse project, *On the Edge*. This particular exhibition project took place at Tungenes Lighthouse.

The idea for the project became apparent to me the moment I entered the living room of the old lighthouse-keeper's residence, and saw the beautifully embroidered text picture “*Der er Liv i et Blikk*” hanging on the wall, - and at the same time noticed the sea's horizon reflected in it's glass frame. The text is part of an Easter hymn: “*There is life in the gaze of the bleeding lamb, just now there is life, and for you.*” The reference is to the Lamb of God, - the suffering Christ on the cross.

The quote has a wider ethical significance that I thought interesting, that becomes evident particularly as the text occurs at Tungenes Lighthouse. The function of the lighthouse is to save lives, to watch out and to send signals that provide the seafarers safe passage. This is in stark contrast to the bunker from the last world war that shares the same situation as the lighthouse on the same site. It has the same view, outward and around, as the lantern room, but the function is the opposite.

The lantern room is open and pleasant, while the bunker's space is grim and harsh, and yet beautiful, - but can we liberate ourselves from it's past?

This duality prevails at Tungenes Lighthouse. As long as they both exist they are inextricably connected to one another, and the text is valid for the gaze of both spaces. What one sees depends on who is seeing and what setting the viewer encounters, when seeing.

I use the bunker, this tight claustrophobic space, where the view and the horizon are emphasized, to work on a site specific installation that takes hold of the relationship between the two extremities of the view and the human presence. It's an installation one reacts physically to. I work at the point where presence disappears, and the view disintegrates.

Site-specific interactive sound and light installation, duration 3 months. Voices, EKG signals and programmed Magic Film. Interactive technique and programming Jarle Henriksen.



The fading gaze.

Reviews extract:

**Kunst på kanten.** Kunstkritikk 03.06.2008 ([www.kunstkritikk.no/arti-cle/37802](http://www.kunstkritikk.no/arti-cle/37802))

On the edge/ På eggen, art projects at 6 lighthouses along the south-west coastline, summer 2008.

Artists: Michael Petry, Pipilotti Rist, Halldör Ásgeirsson, Viel Bjerkeset Andersen, Frode Gundorf Nielsen, Jaakko Niemela, Bente Sommerfeldt-Colberg, SteffenTast, Per Maning and Mona Næss.

Official part of the European Capital of Culture Stavanger Art Program, 2008.

**Reviewed by Trond Borgen.**

“... At Tungenes Lighthouse six artists from the Nordic countries come together, with installations, combining the interior and the exterior. The most poetic is Viel Bjerkeset Andersen's, *From a Point of View*. She transforms a small bunker from the Second World War into a private, quiet room for contemplation. The text she presents in one of Petry's flasks in the lighthouse further south is read here by a woman's voice. In this way she connects the two lighthouses in an intertextuality for the initiated. The text's narrative concerns a child's secret little room, a childhood memory that Bjerkeset Andersen triggers, where one can sit quietly for a long time.

And then the fog slowly emerges outside the bunker, or so it would appear. She has installed narrow panorama windows in the bunker. By a mechanism that slowly turns them an opaque milky white, one is given the impression of the ocean mist rolling in. But, it is also as if it were the child's, or the fragile person's, wish to be completely hidden from the surroundings. The horizon, that was just now the edge of the sea (I saw the end of the earth/ landsend), is now, for a short while, shrunk to this tiny space that I physically fill in the bunker; and the large space I fill with my fantasy, my dreams and experience. ....”

(Translated from Norwegian by Peter Speed)

**Vann, vind og kunst.** Stavanger Aftenblad. Published 23.06.2008

A splendid contribution to the Stavanger 2008' visual art program.

**Reviewed by Sigrun Hodne.**

“Nature is powerful at Tungenes: the sea, the wind and the vast sky that constantly changes colour. It is almost as if reality was animated. The place is great for art, but not easy to manage- because nature threatens, at all times, to devour all attempts at organisation and human control...

.... It is not easy to compare the various works in this good exhibition, but Viel Bjerkeset Andersen has, in my opinion, created the most beautiful and most poetic work of art at Tungenes this summer. Her installation takes its place in a bunker directly below the lighthouse and the work plays on the two structures' opposing roles. The lighthouse sends light to guide seafarers on the right passage like an eternal friend in the darkness, while the bunker watches for enemies. Narrow, horizontal slits in the bunker's concrete walls, frame the view of the sea- but slowly, the invisible glass fills with smoke or steam, the view disappears, and you are suddenly completely alone, enclosed in your own little world. You hear a quiet song, and a voice that reads a short story, a memory: ‘When I was little I made a private space in the top of the closet... I could be there for hours. I saw nothing but darkness - eternal blindness.’ It is as if an invisible reality creeps under one's skin. ....”

(Translated from Norwegian by Peter Speed)



Golden Rain by artist Michael Petry is an installation of 100 gold mirrored dropletshaped glass vessels that reference to the Greek myth of Danae. Petry invited 100 international artists to place artwork, poem, object, or text inside one of the mirrored bottles, asking them to imagine being locked in a tower and having the bottle as their only means of communication. Petry then permanently sealed the mirrored bottles leaving their contents hidden but illustrated in the accompanying catalogue.



### The Messages



When I was 1000 I made a private space in the top of the closet in my room. It was just big enough for me sitting in there and when I closed the closet door I felt the dark silence around me. I could be in there for hours. In there I felt my presence eternal. The thoughts of being locked in a tower brings me back to my childhood's feelings of eternal life though this time with a knowledge of life's limitations.

What is left of me when I have passed?

I remember something I once read from an interview with Christian Bultman (his de beiss). The first death could be called the slow death. Dead but still remembered and kept alive of all the people who knew you. The second and a more severe death is the one when all people who knew you also do the effacement of the memory.

What is left of me when they have passed?

Thinking of the edge of being the edge of presence I could cry out for attention. I could put my hair at the outside hoping to be used for fashion. Instead I approach my inner self. The only thing I have for sure is me, my silk, and I have behind an embroidered muslin of hair from my body and head or semi-transparent silk an small inside but personal object, a part of me, my DNA, my link to the universe a Prelude for Eternity.

Meridia is the greek name for my own chart or geometric pattern that represents the cosmos metaphysically and symbolically. It represents a microcosm of the universe, from the standpoint of man, with gates to the north, west, south and east.

Viel Bjerkeset Anderson

PRELUDE FOR ETERNITY, 2008 human hair, silk, 30 x 31 cm



Wendy Anderson

MICA LIGHT, 2008, mica powder in a test tube, cork, 10 x 2 cm (MMS)