

KUNSTHAL
CHARLOTTENBORG

FOS *Koøje*

20 Mar – 17 Maj 2015

Guide

Introduktion

Det er en stor glæde for Kunsthall Charlottenborg at kunne præsentere *Køje* – den hidtil mest omfattende udstilling af den danske kunstner FOS. *Køje* tager form af en serie totalinstallationer, der kombinerer det alvorstunge med det legende og poetieske. På vanlig FOS-vis jongleres der i Charlottenborgs imponerende arkitektur med et utal af kuriøse materialer, bl.a. armeret beton, halm, salt, kalk og kokostæpper. *Køje* er en udstilling, der inviterer til at gå på opdagelse i FOS' forførende og sanselige univers, men som også rummer en mere dystre tone.

Udstillingen åbner med værket *Your Success Is Your Amnesia*, et neonskilt placeret over kunsthallens indgangsport fra Nyhavn. Ordlyden peger på erindringens kulturbærende funktion, som også er udstillingens overordnede tematik. For at opnå succes må vi glemme, fortrænge og komme videre. Det er dog ikke vores egen personlige hukommelse, der henvises til, men den kollektive erindring. Fællesskabet fungerer som en art primus motor i FOS' praksis, der konsekvent og insisterende behandler fællesskabet som den afgørende præmis for vores eksistens og alt, hvad der derefter følger.

Digtet *Køje (Porthole)* er skrevet som en del af udstillingen og beskriver hvordan den kollektive erindring har lagt anker et andet sted. De aktuelle begivenheder har gjort vor fælles grund skrøbelig, og autoriteterne peger på

det, der ikke er væsentligt. Flere af udstillingens værker understøtter denne tilstand af usikkerhed; en grædende maske, et sæt dysfunktionelle nøgler, en monstrøs tunnel til et beskyttelsesrum, hvis dør vi ikke kan åbne og et kollaps af strukturer.

Udover digtet optræder der også en række tekstelementer i selve udstillingen. Med den samme legende tilgang, som kendetegner FOS' visuelle sprog, dyrker FOS de tvetydigheder og misforståelser, der ligger i det verbale sprog. Han finder åbninger, hvor betydningen skrider og peger på sproget som et plastisk materiale, der kan formes, vrides og vendes. Udstillingens underfundige titel *Køje*, er skæv både fonetisk og visuelt og har en dobbelt betydning, der henviser til zoologiske eller maritime komponenter. Den er dermed helt karakteristisk for FOS' æstetik, der på uhøjtidelig vis benytter sig af lige dele jordnære og forkromede materialer. Udstillingens køje tilbyder os et blik udefra ind på vor samtid, et kig ind af køjet på den båd, hvori vi bor.

Køje artikulerer en utilfredshed med måden, hvorpå vi forvalter fællesskabet. Som det næsten er symptomatisk for FOS, så ender rejsen gennem udstillingen med en model, en model af et utopisk sted med det kryptiske udsagn *Forget Memory*. FOS' idiosynkratiske univers er nemlig både meget kryptisk og helt ligetil. Måske fordi kunst i hans optik er manifestationer af tvivl.

Introduction

It is a great pleasure for Kunsthall Charlottenborg to present *Køje* – the most comprehensive solo exhibition to date by Danish artist FOS. *Køje* comprises a series of installations, which combine the solemn with the playful and the poetic. True to his style, FOS moves into Charlottenborg's imposing architecture and juggles with a myriad of materials including reinforced concrete, salt, limestone and coconut carpets. *Køje* is an exhibition that invites people to explore FOS's alluring and sensuous universe, but also strikes a sombre note.

The exhibition opens with the work *Your Success Is Your Amnesia* – a neon sign placed above the Nyhavn entrance gate. The wording of the sign refers to memory's function as a culture bearer, which is the overriding theme of the exhibition. To achieve success, we need to forget, suppress and move on. It is not our personal memory FOS refers to, but the collective one. The idea of community acts as a kind of artistic driving force throughout FOS's practice, which consistently and insistently deals with the collective as the essential premise of our existence and everything that follows.

The poem *Køje (Porthole)* is written as a part of the exhibition and describes how our collective memory has dropped anchor elsewhere. Current events have made our common ground fragile and the authorities point to issues that are not significant. Several works in the

exhibition substantiate this condition of uncertainty: a crying mask, a set of dysfunctional keys, a monstrous tunnel into a bomb shelter whose door we cannot open, and a collapse of structures.

In addition to the poem, a number of text pieces also appear within the exhibition itself. With the same playful approach that characterises FOS's visual language, he cultivates ambiguities and misunderstandings inherent in verbal language. He finds words that cause slip-ups and treats language like a plastic material that can be moulded, twisted and turned. *Køje*, the title of the exhibition, is quirky, both phonetically and visually and has a double meaning that refers to zoological or maritime components. It is therefore quite characteristic of FOS's aesthetic, which in an unceremonious way makes use of equal portions of down-to-earth and chrome-plated materials. The porthole of the exhibition enables us to look at our time from the outside – like looking through the porthole into the boat we live on.

Køje articulates dissatisfaction with the lack of care for our community. As is almost symptomatic of FOS, the journey through the exhibition ends with a model, a model of a utopian place with the cryptic statement *Forget Memory*. FOS's idiosyncratic universe is both highly cryptic and quite straightforward. Perhaps because for him, art contains manifestations of doubt.

En samtale med FOS om *Køøje*, hukommelsestab og kollaps af systemer

Katarina Stenbeck

- KS Kan du indledningsvis sige noget om udstillingens titel – hvorfor har du valgt at kalde den *Køøje*?
- FOS Et køøje er et vindue på et skib, og et skib er en afgrænset beholder i et stort rum uden vægge, døre og arkitektur. Jeg er optaget af fartøjet som et afgrænset rum, der befinder sig på havet, i et åbent rum. Så udstillingen kan ses som en båd, og båden er vores fælles hukommelse.
- KS Hvilke typer værker vises på udstillingen?
- FOS Udstillingen er en meget intuitiv iscenesættelse, dels af ny-producerede og eksisterende værker, dels af de tematikker, som gennemløber min praksis. Det er en improviseret udstilling, der består af seks meget forskellige rum, seks scenarier, hvor objektbaserede værker enten er placeret i forhold til den eksisterende arkitektur, fletter sig ind i arkitekturen eller skaber en ny arkitektonisk struktur.
- KS Du har arbejdet med et rumligt forløb i udstillingen – er der et overordnet tema, der knytter de installatoriske greb sammen?
- FOS Udstillingen handler om vores fælles hukommelse, om samfundets hukommelse som et fælles territorium, der omfatter traditioner, sprog og kultur og som henviser til nogle fælles værdier. Vores fælles hukommelse er aflejringer af det, der er levet, og på den måde mere virkeligt end det der endnu ikke har fundet sted. Vi bruger den fælles hukommelse til at træde varsomt og bevæge os videre mod en tvivlsom fremtid. Jeg har skrevet en form for digt, der hedder *Køøje (Porthole)*, og som fungerer som en slags motor for udstillingen. Det handler om, at denne fælles hukommelse har kastet anker et andet sted. At den har løsrevet sig fra det fælles.
- KS Hvordan skal vi forstå dette kollektive hukommelsestab?
- FOS Fortrængning er en naturlig del af den menneskelige fremdrift, men hukommelsestab kan også blive en tragisk smutvej for et samfund. Hukommelsestab er en måde at komme videre på, men der går også noget tabt, så på den måde er det dobbelt.
- KS Hvordan møder vi det kollektive hukommelsestab i vores hverdag?
- FOS For eksempel i de informationer vi får igennem nyhedskanaler i dag, som er blevet sit eget feedbacksystem, hvor nyheden bliver til en nyhed om nyheden, der bliver repeteret i det uendelige i forskellige medier og platforme og på den måde bliver til et simulakrum af sig selv. Det er med til at opløse vores fælles værdier. Det handler udstillingen også om, om det hukommelsestab der opstår som en bivirkning af det system. Det er det, jeg mener med at *memory has docked elsewhere, by the daily events*, som jeg skriver i mit digt. Hvor bliver hukommelsen lejret henne? Hukommelsen er i min optik en figur, der kan optage følelser som skam og skyld, dvs. personlige såvel som kollektive følelser, og det er den figur, jeg vil pege på.
- KS Interessen for fællesskabet er et vigtigt omdrejningspunkt i din praksis og for værkerne i udstillingen, der også handler om fællesskabet som et system. Hvad er dine tanker omkring det?
- FOS Jeg er interesseret i forbindelserne mellem forskellige delelementer af en struktur. I værket *The Hurricane Hasn't Passed* er det en lillebitte reje, der fastholder den store struktur omkring sig. Et andet værk i udstillingen er videoværket *Monotone*, en animationsfilm, med to firkanter, der har et forhold til hinanden. Men hvis nu f.eks. at tyngdekraften ophørte, så ville deres indbyrdes forhold ændre sig. Det samme gør sig gældende for fællesskabet og den kollektive hukommelse.
- KS Udstillingen peger også på en form for skrøbelighed eller usikkerhed. Kan du sige noget om det?
- FOS Der er en form for kollaps på færde i dele af udstillingen. I rummet med betonsøjlerne har der fundet et sammenbrud sted. Der er opstået en ny struktur, der kan skabe et nyt system. Der ligger også noget frigørende i sammenbruddet.
- KS Du arbejder med mange forskellige typer materiale som beton, kalksten, stof, salt osv. Hvad betyder dit materialevalg i forhold til de tematikker, du er optaget af?
- FOS Min interesse for strukturer og systemer afspejles også i de materialer jeg bruger. Halmballer, salt og beton er materialer med en tydelig struktur. Når man kigger ind i materialet, så er der et system, der bærer delene. Og så er der det med det store i det små – halmballer er sammensat af mange små stykker halm, beton er lavet af sand og så videre.
- KS Hvordan vil du beskrive dit arbejde med kunst?
- FOS For mig er kunst en model af tvivl; et kunstværk er ikke en formfuldendt idé. I stedet må man betvivle figuren, den har en dobbelthed, der giver den en poetisk resonans. Kunstværket er fejlagtigt, men det er bevidst fejlagtigt. Det forsøger bevidst at flytte os hen i en sensorisk sfære, som kontrast til vores omgivers krav om rationalitet.

A conversation with FOS about *Koøje*, amnesia and the collapse of systems

Katarina Stenbeck

- KS Can you start by saying something about the title of the exhibition, why did you choose *Koøje*?
- FOS *Koøje* (English: porthole) is a window on a ship, and a ship is a finite container in a vast space without walls, doors or architecture. I am fascinated by the vessel as a defined room, which is at sea, in an open space. So, the exhibition can be seen as a boat, and the boat is our collective memory.
- KS What kind of works are on display in the exhibition?
- FOS The exhibition is a very intuitive staging of both newly produced and existing works, as well as the themes that run through my practice. It is an improvised exhibition comprising six very different rooms, six scenarios where object-based works are either placed in relation to the existing architecture, intertwined with the architecture or have created a new architectural structure.
- KS You have worked with a spatial sequence in the exhibition, is there an overall theme that ties this installation approach together?
- FOS The exhibition is about collective memory, about society's memory
- as a shared territory – with traditions, language and culture, and it refers to certain common values. Our collective memory is the residue of what has been lived, and thus more real than that which has not yet taken place. We use our collective memory to tread carefully and move towards a dubious future. I have written a type of poem, it is called *Koøje (Porthole)* and it acts as a kind of engine for the exhibition. It's about how our collective memory has dropped anchor elsewhere. It has broken away from the collective form.
- KS How should we understand the idea of collective amnesia?
- FOS Repression is a natural part of human development, but amnesia can also become a tragic shortcut for society. Amnesia is a way of moving on, but something is also lost, so in that sense, it is double.
- KS Where do we encounter collective amnesia in our everyday lives?
- FOS For example: The information we receive via the news channels today, which have become their own feedback systems – the news becomes news about the news, and it is repeated endlessly in different media on different platforms and becomes, in a way, a simulacrum of itself. It contributes to the

KOØJE (PORTHOLE)

A logbook,
final cut,
walnut.

Our memory is part of yours.

Objects move inwards to a mental territory.

‡ To a set of rules.

‡ Just as feelings do.

‡ Self at sea.

As the way traditions make a place come true.

A broad landscape, a space that re-testifies itself into a shape.

Shapes. A form. As the country where you belong.

Shame, fears and hopes share this
territory, from where ideas of what
was, will reappear. Memories like
territorial traditions.

Here no shared shape obtains
feelings of fears and shame.

The common ground is stretched,
bending upon itself mirroring,
shaking, hesitating.

A (country at sea) day around
Denmark. Like other systems traditions
fall upon themselves (like taking spare
parts from the same machine that
needs them).

The index finger from the hand of
the anchorman points; at what's not
the point.

Memory has now docked elsewhere
by the daily events. Bright light all
white, no shadows are cast here from
any shared figure or border, only
itself like you you and them.

Your success is your amnesia.

dissolution of our common values. The exhibition is also about amnesia that occurs as a side effect of the system. This is what I mean by *memory has docked elsewhere, by the daily events*, as I write in my poem. Where is memory stored? In my mind, memory is a figure that can absorb feelings such as shame and guilt, i.e. personal as well as collective feelings and that's the figure that I refer to.

KS Your interest in the collective is an important focal point in your practice and for the works in the exhibition, which are also about the community as a system. What are your thoughts on this?

FOS I am interested in the relationship between the different parts of a structure. In the work *The Hurricane Hasn't Passed*, it is a tiny little shrimp that upholds the large structure around itself. Another work in the exhibition is the video work *Monotone*, an animated film about two squares that have a relationship to each other. But, for example, if gravity suddenly disappeared, their relationship to each other would change. The same is true for the community and the collective memory.

KS The exhibition also points to a kind of fragility or uncertainty. Can you comment on this?

FOS There is a kind of collapse at work in parts of the exhibition. Things have collapsed in the room with the concrete columns. A new structure has emerged that can create a new system. There is also something liberating about things collapsing.

KS You work with a variety of materials, such as concrete, limestone, fabric, salt and so on. What does your choice of materials mean in relation to the themes you work with?

FOS My interest in structures and systems is also reflected in the materials I use. Straw bales, salt and cement are all materials with a distinct structure. When you look into them, you can see that there is a system that carries the parts. And then there is the issue of the big and the small – straw bales are made up of lots of single pieces of straw, concrete is made of sand and so on.

KS How would you describe the way in which you work with art?

FOS For me, art is a model of doubt; a work of art is not a flawless idea. Instead, one must question the figure; it has a duality that gives it a poetic resonance. A work of art is flawed, but deliberately so. It consciously tries to move us into a sensory sphere, in contrast to our surroundings that demand rationality.

Biografi

FOS (f. 1971) tog afgang fra Det Kongelige Danske Kunstakademis Billedkunstskoler i 1999. Han har en omfattende og alsidig kunstnerisk produktion bag sig og har arbejdet i mange forskellige sammenhænge: fra velrenommerede museer og gallerier verden over til midlertidige udendørs interventioner i byrummet, fra indretning af et værested over design af modebutikker til stort anlagte, permanente udsmykninger i offentlige institutioner.

I 1999 stod han bag det legendariske projekt *Oslo*, en social platform for forskellige typer arrangementer og udvekslinger, der indtog byrummet på Israels Plads i København. Projektet blev i 2010 videreudviklet og under navnet *Osloo* transformeret til en flydende træpavillon med scene, bar og radiostation, der dannede ramme om et intensivt program af performances, oplæsninger og koncerter af indbudte gæster. *Osloo* lagde til kaj i Køge og København og afsluttede turneen i forbindelse med Venedig biennalen i 2011 som en del af den danske pavillon.

I 2006 stod FOS for en omfattende ny-indretning af Mændenes Hjem i Istedgade, København i samarbejde med Kenneth Balfelt, og siden 2012 har han stået for indretningen af det franske modehus Célines butikker over hele verden. Han har lavet udsmykninger på Den Danske Scenekunstscole i både 2005 og 2009 og til august 2015

indvies hans stort anlagte permanente udsmykning af HF-centret Efterslægten i København. FOS har desuden produceret publikationer som *Liquid Chain into the Vapour Wall: The Fall*, fra 2007 og den aktuelle *One Language Traveler* samt spillet musik med Small White Man, en konstellation af 6 musikere, som FOS dirigerer ved hjælp af en Storm P-lignende lys-anordning.

De senere år har FOS bl.a. haft soloudstillinger på Camden Arts Centre, London (2012), Andersen's Contemporary, København (2012), Max Wigram Gallery, London (2012), Statens Museum for Kunst, København (2011) og GAK (Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst), Bremen (2008).

Biography

FOS (b. 1971) graduated from The Royal Danish Academy, School of Visual Arts in 1999. His artistic practice is far-reaching and versatile, and he has worked in a range of contexts: from distinguished museums and galleries around the world to temporary outdoor interventions in urban spaces, from the interior design of a shelter and the design of fashion stores to large-scale permanent installations in public institutions.

In 1999, his legendary project *Oslo* – a social platform housing a variety of events and exchanges – occupied a part of Israels Plads in Copenhagen. The project was further developed in 2010 and under the name *Osloo* was transformed into a floating wooden pavilion with a stage, a bar and a radio station that provided the framework for an intensive programme of performances, readings and concerts by invited guests. *Osloo* docked in Køge and Copenhagen and completed its tour at the Venice Biennale in 2011, as a part of the Danish pavilion.

In 2006, FOS was responsible for the extensive re-design of Mændenes Hjem (a shelter for homeless men) on Istedgade in Copenhagen in collaboration with Kenneth Balfelt. Since 2012, he has worked with the French fashion house Céline, carrying out interior design projects for their stores around the world. He has made permanent installations at The Danish National School of

Performing Arts in 2005 and 2009, and his new large-scale installation at the college Efterslægten in Copenhagen will be completed in August 2015. Furthermore, FOS has published artist books such as *Liquid Chain into the Vapour Wall: The Fall* from 2007 and the recent *One Language Traveler* and has played music with Small White Man, a constellation of six musicians who FOS conducts using a Storm-P-like light bulb device.

In recent years, FOS has had solo exhibitions at Camden Arts Centre, London (2012), Andersen's Contemporary, Copenhagen (2012), Max Wigram Gallery, London (2012), the National Gallery of Denmark, Copenhagen (2011) and GAK (Gesellschaft für Aktuelle Kunst), Bremen (2008).

Arrangementer

Lørdag den 21. marts kl. 14
Omvisning i udstillingen ved publikumschef Mia Flindt.

Tirsdag den 7. april kl. 17
Oplev FOS i samtale med den amerikanske kunstner Jason Dodge og i koncert med gruppen Small White Man.

Lørdag den 11. april kl. 14
Omvisning i udstillingen for årskortindehavere ved publikumschef Mia Flindt inkl. kaffe og kage efterfølgende.

Søndag den 12. april kl. 14
Omvisning i udstillingen ved FOS for børn og deres forældre.

Lørdag den 9. maj kl. 14
Omvisning i udstillingen ved publikumschef Mia Flindt.

For information om yderligere arrangementer i selve udstillingen, se venligst kunsthalcharlottenborg.dk.

Det er gratis at deltage i arrangementerne, når entréen til udstillingen er betalt. Tilmelding er ikke nødvendig, bare mød op!

Åbent værksted
I værkstedet, der er åbent hver dag i hele udstillingsperioden, kan du lave skulpturer og fundere over FOS' kunst og hvad det er, en kunstner gør.

Udgivelser
I forbindelse med *Køøje* udgiver FOS en LP sammen med gruppen Small White Man samt kunstnerpublikationen *One Language Traveler*. Begge dele kan købes i Motto Charlottenborg.

Events

Saturday 21 March at 2pm
Guided tour of the exhibition by Mia Flindt, Head of Visitor Services (in Danish).

Tuesday 7 April at 5pm
Experience FOS in conversation with American artist Jason Dodge and in concert with Small White Man.

Saturday 11 April at 2pm
Guided tour of the exhibition for season pass holders by Mia Flindt, Head of Visitor Services (in Danish) incl. coffee and cake afterwards.

Sunday 12 April at 2pm
Guided tour of the exhibition by FOS for children and their parents (in Danish).

Saturday 9 May at 2pm
Guided tour of the exhibition by Mia Flindt, Head of Visitor Services (in Danish).

For information about further events in the exhibition, please visit kunsthalcharlottenborg.dk.

The events are free of charge once the admission to the exhibition has been paid. No need to book, just turn up!

Open workshop
The workshop is open every day during the exhibition and is a place for you to make sculptures and consider FOS's art and reflect on what an artist does.

Album and artist book
On the occasion of *Køøje* FOS has released an album with the group Small White Man and published the artist book *One Language Traveler*. Both are sold at Motto Charlottenborg.

Kurator Curator
Henriette Bretton-Meyer

Tekst Text
Henriette Bretton-Meyer
FOS
Katarina Stenbeck

Oversættelse Translation
Helen Clara Hemsley

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Tak til Thank you
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Tir – søn 11-17
Ons 11-20 (fri entré 17-20)
Tue – Sun 11am-5pm
Wed 11am-8pm (free entry 5pm-8pm)