

KUNSTHAL CHARLOTTENBORG

Simone Aaberg Kærn's war painting is prolonged due to massive interest

Due to massive interest from the public in the wake of the extensive media coverage of Simone Aaberg Kærn's painting and exhibition Batalje, we have decided to prolong the exhibition period until January.

Prolonged exhibition period: November 9 – January 15

Original exhibition period: October 6 – November 6



War painting from Libya and controversial sketch

Simone Aaberg Kærn embraces the art of war, when we present the exhibition *Batalje* from the beginning of October 2016. Kærn was the artist behind a much discussed portrait of Denmark's former Prime Minister Anders Fogh Rasmussen that brought war within the doors of the parliament at Christiansborg. For *Batalje* Kærn has created 7 metres long tripart painting illustrating the Danish war effort in Libya. A controversial sketch for an earlier version of the painting is also part of the exhibition. The sketch was rejected because of a statement from the Ministry of Defense who thought the sketch was not representative of the Danish troops' effort in the war. Simone Aaberg Kærn uses her art to bring political issues up for discussion, and she therefore also exhibits parts of the press coverage and debate, the painting caused even before its realization.

Sketch rejected because of statement from Department of Defense

The basis for the work presented in *Batalje* was a collaboration between Simone Aaberg Kærn and the Museum of National History, who wanted a war painting illustrating the Danish effort in Libya. However, the Museum of National History rejected a sketch of the painting, which Simone Aaberg Kærn had made. The reason for the rejection was made with reference to a statement by Per Ludvigsen, General Major from the Danish Military's Operative Command, who had the opinion that the sketch was not representative of the Danish effort in Libya because it did not contribute to "the actually pretty happy ending of the war" and because the spectators could get the impression that the damages "could be or were caused by the Danish airplanes". When Simone Aaberg Kærn rejected carrying out changes requested by the Museum of National History, based on the statement from the general major, the collaboration between Simone Aaberg Kærn and the Museum of National History was ended.

Painting based on her own experiences

At her own initiative Simone Aaberg Kærn now has completed the painting— with support from a classic patron with no restrictions in the form of Peter J. Lassen, Montana – and the painting is now on display along with the rejected sketch in the exhibition. The painting by Simone Aaberg Kærn is based on her own observations in Libya, which she visited during the war in 2011. Firstly she visited and flew with the Danish Air Force from the Naval Air Station Sigonella, and secondly she went to the frontline in Libya on her own as a war painter.

The tripart painting shows the aerial war executed professionally and coldly. The aerial war fought from the height of 30.000 feet is in sharp contrast to the chaotic resistance against Gadaffi on the ground. Centrally placed in the painting is a young man of Libyan roots from Nørrebro, who jumps over a burnt-out car. According to Kærn he is also part of the Danish effort in Libya. A young girl carrying an "I Love Libya"-string bag over her shoulder is facing the spectator completely unaffected by the fighting, while she's filming us with her smartphone and making a V-sign. Besides being based on the artist's own observations the painting involves quotations from the history of art and works of contemporary war photographers.

Exhibition hashtag for social media: #batalje

Facts about the exhibition and the extension of the exhibition period

Simone Aaberg Kærn (DK): *Batalje*

Extension: November 9 – January 15 2017

Original exhibition period: Oktober 6 – November 6

Kunsthall Charlottenborg, Nyhavn 2, 1051 København K

Opening hours: Tuesday-Sunday 11am-5pm, Wednesday 11am-8pm

Admssion: 60 DKK

Read more about the exhibition: <http://charlottenborg.dk/da/udstillinger/simone-aaberg-kaern/>.

For further information please contact

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