

**Frido Evers (NL), Aiko Tezuka (JP)
Emma Waltraud Howes (CA), Kaia Hugin (NO),
Stine Marie Jacobsen (DK), Lynne Marsh (CA),
Sam Smith (AU), Ciarán Walsh (IE)**



WELCOME

MAGO is a newly established production- and exhibition space. Based in the old power station at Eidsvoll Verk, it opened its doors for the first time on April 11th 2015. Inspired by the well-known delegates from across the country who came to the power station known as 'Værket' on this particular April weekend in 1814, MAGO aims to function as a national power station for the production of new works – not only by artists, but also works by composers, curators, actors and writers.

The name Mago originates from a smallholding nearby the river Andelva, which belonged to the foundry Eidsvold Jærnværk. Eidsvold Jærnværk was founded in the early 1600s, during a period of great immigration from Finland. Among these immigrants was a Finnish coal miner with the surname Mago who lived next to the waterfall Siktemelfossen during the 'Courland times' (c. 1664). Later on, the four groundwood mills built from 1880 onwards were named after this smallholding. Mago B and the tractor stables, next to the waterfall Ludvigsfossen and Eidsvoll House (Eidsvollsbygningen), were completed respectively in 1894 and 1909.

AIKO TEZUKA

"Lessons for restoration"

MASKINVERKSTEDET

KORNTØRKA





Aiko Tezuka, *Lessons for Restoration (perspective) 3*, 2015
Untied fabric (souvenir from Florence) 71 x 64 cm

LESSONS FOR RESTORATION

Next door to Eidsvoll 1814, the recent winner of the *European Nostra prize* for the restoration of the Eidsvoll house, you will find MAGO. The aim of Norway's newly opened power station for new productions of art is to build bridges in the Constitution village. Our goal is to open up the field of art to a wider audience than only those who are initially interested.

What does it mean to build bridges? That everyone should agree? Or that the debate about contemporary art should be silenced? As the curator of MAGO, I have invited this first summer season artists working on monumental, colorful and extravagant scales, as well as a curator who independently investigates my ambition with a critical eye.

Aiko Tezuka is an artist working with thread and traditions, using textiles she alternately develops or destroys. In the series *Lessons for Restoration*, Tezuka takes nearly kitsch woven carpets from Florence and dissolves the midsection. The works look as if someone has erased the focus point, the main motif, as if the part intended to be admired had become unclear. We could also imagine such woven souvenirs with picturesque landscape designs here at Eidsvoll Verk. Thousands of tourists visit the Eidsvoll house to experience the restored idyll, but Aiko prevents us from seeing it. It's as if she forces us to look inwards, backwards, and into it.

In the second series, titled *Certainty / Entropy*, Tezuka also pulled out the threads in the centre motif, although these are not souvenirs she bought in Florence. The last part of each work's title indicates its inspiration, such as *Certainty / Entropy (India 5)* or *Certainty / Entropy (England 5)*. However, these are not woven carpets from England or India, but rather patterns designed by the artist herself. On top of (or beneath) the traditional-looking woven flower pattern, Tezuka has stamped a number of symbols using contrasting colored thread. They are not easy to discern, though

in the piece *Certainty / Entropy (India 5)*, DNA molecules, ovaries, and other elements can be recognised. It's uncomfortable. I am one of those who could really use a trip to India eventually, although such trafficking is considered the ultimate sin, at least here in Norway. Is this the thematic Aiko wants to address? I haven't asked her.

We sat in her kitchen in Berlin just a week before the exhibition opening when she began telling me more. Not about ovaries, but Singapore and the piece *Certainty / Entropy (Peranakan 7)*. Peranakan is the name of the local culture in Singapore, and according to Aiko it means 'mixed blood of Chinese and Malaysian'. I don't know if we can fully trust my translation, this happened way past midnight and I'd started my working day seventeen hours earlier after five hours of sleep. Nevertheless, Aiko has worked longer than me, she is in the process of creating new works, and the translation goes from Japanese to English before it reaches me, translating it into Norwegian, and then eventually English. This is often the case when a story is being told; it changes a bit with each 'carrier' and along the way. Instead of looking up what Peranakan means, it seems more correct to describe what actually happened.

Faced with Aiko's pieces, there are several layers to discover and you can choose which one you want to look into. Aiko is concerned with how patterns travel; either by explicitly going into her pieces, such as *Thin Film*, *Underground Forest*, or by standing in front of one of her more two-dimensional wall works, squinting at the textile surface, you can also travel a little.

One of the other artists, Frido Evers, told me that the strong colors we often associate with African garments are in fact an import from the Dutch colonisers. Again I feel slightly sceptical, and it is very tempting to Google a little to see how it's all really connected, but I don't. Aiko's selection of six patterns travelling from Ireland to Japan, and now from Japan to Norway in the form of an artwork – thanks to a slightly mad curator –, stresses that there are always several answers. Take my own



Aiko Tezuka, *Thin Film, Underground Forest*, 2007. Embroidered yarn on canvas, 7 m diameter / 2 m height. Installation view at Spiral / Wacoal art centre

bunad, for instance – it is admittedly from Innherred, although it's not approved as a national costume, and it is actually rather new. What is new and what is old in Norwegian embroidery? Often, it is conceivable to think that a tradition is true, centuries old and genuine to us Norwegians – although the exchange has been greater than what the Norwegian folk singer Rotmo expresses from his Spanish exile. We should certainly protect the Norwegian traditions and celebrate the national state at Eidsvoll verk, though thanks to artists like Aiko I hope we can get a little more curious to dive into and loose track, in a forest made out of fifty thousand woolen threads.

As you enter Traktorstallen next Friday, a big thing is going to be hung from the ceiling, weighing several hundred kilograms. We need to drill holes through the

ceiling and up into Snekkerverkstedet to be able to attach the hooks. Aiko Tezuka's *Thin Film, Underground Forest* consists of two-meter long woolen threads simply hanging down from the main embroidery, from the unreachable surface of the water. I have previously written about this piece and about how it could be comforting to the unemployed. Because even though you might feel lost in choices, in yourself, or entangled in opportunities, there is a system behind it all. After some time. If you only get a bit of time, if you keep on fighting and get up to admire the embroidery. Having said that, it's not the only the twenty-year-old unemployed that needs an overview. Here I am sitting on a flight from Vienna to Barcelona, writing on a Mac placed on a folding table, constantly on the move, constantly going forward. Even the director at Eidsvoll 1814 was wondering if I am busier than him. Obviously not – well, maybe I am, but if you want to build something from scratch, when I need to deliver it to all of you, to do the impossible, well, then it's not so easy to keep my feet on the ground. What does it really mean to be taught restoration? Aiko gives us exercises – and I hope you will join me – in investigating the roots, in daring to dig a little deeper. To me, this is exactly what art is all about – getting an exercise without a simple solution. We are not only going to restore at Eidsvoll Verk – the museum manages new readings of our constitutional history every single day, while MAGO provides artists the space to create new things. Huge things, strange things.

An elderly gentleman posed a question to one of our initial artists in residence, Joakim Blattmann, as he was about to dismount his sound installation in Sandefjord. I think this question sums up a lot. 'What did you find out?' The gentleman asked.

Maria Veie Sandvik

Crator

MAGO

June 2015



AIKO TEZUKA

"Vapor"

MASKINVERKSTEDET

Aiko Tezuka, *Vapor*, 2013. Untied secondhand cloth (probably made in 1920's Germany)
213 x 160 x 30 cm (installation size). Photo: © Lepkowski Studios, Berlin
Courtesy Galerie Michael Janssen Berlin-Singapore`



Aiko Tezuka, *Certainty / Entropy (India 1)*, 2014. Untied fabric designed by the artist with coloured weft threads, wooden frame, 82 x 61 cm. Installation at Hermes Singapore. Photo: Edward HENDRICKS



Frido Evers

FRIDO EVERS

"Pavilion K"

TRAKTORPLASSEN



Frido Evers is building a piece with a title taken from JM Coetzee's novel 'The life and times of Michael K'. Creating 'Pavillion K', Evers removed a part of the ground in a forest area in Eidsvoll measuring 5,40 meter in diameter.

This part of the forest is going to be moved to the outdoor area between the two red brick buildings by Andelva (Traktorstallen and Mago B), forming the base of a pavilion with three entrances. As you're inside, you are at the same time outside. The pavilion itself is similar to a bird cage, resting on a circle of red bricks taken from Eidsvoll verk. The vegetation will be visible from the outside, and the spectators inside will be visible, looking into the three continents. Through oval portals (a type of web cameras), the visitors will be able to talk to those who are located where the cameras are placed. One of the cameras will be placed in Galerie Donald Browne, in Montreal, Canada, another in Miri, Malaysia, and a third one in Cape Town, South Africa.

This way, one might ask – where are we now? Are we mainly present with our body, or mentally through a screen? Evers was inspired by Coetzee's protagonist who is not really present in South Africa. He is present with his body, but nothing more. Similarly, my aim is to challenge the visitors at MAGO during our first season through tactile actions such as a three portal pavilion.



Frido Evers, sketch for Pavilion K, 2015



FRIDO EVERS

One of the challenges I face as an artist is to find a place for large projects like this portal garden at MAGO.

A place where you don't have to think about the overhead, commercial interests or the likes but where you can focus on the content, context and the execution. This is both a mental and a physical space.

That freedom is the most precious thing an artist can get. This gives an extra possibility to create instead of being limited to producing. Where producing is more of the same, good or bad.

Creating is, in my opinion though, being on the edge, pushing forward, failing but having a chance at striking real gold.

**Resident curator
Charlotte Lalou Rousseau**

HOW FAR IS HERE

Emma Waltraud Howes (CA): BIG ROOM

Kaia Hugin (NO): GARDEROBE

Stine Marie Jacobsen (DK): OFFICE

Lynne Marsh (CA): TOOL SHED

Sam Smith (AU): BRYGGERHUS

Ciarán Walsh (IE): CHECKERED FLOOR

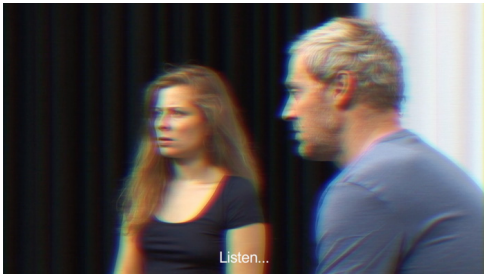




Motholic Mobble part 3, video still. Kaia Hugin, 2009. Garderobe.

The exhibition *How far is here* is curated by resident Charlotte Lalou Rousseau. The Canadian curator has developed the project as part of her Masters in Curatorial Studies at the University of Toronto. Her aim is to address questions related to contemporary art centres and the implementation of residencies. How do the working methods of an artist or curator change when they are placed in a new environment, both culturally and geographically? And which strategies can be developed for the resident to achieve an interesting dialogue with the local and international public, and vice versa?

With a background in art history and gallery management, Rousseau will contribute crucially in the development of the residency program in 2016-2018, and function as a mediator and contact for the international audience at MAGO.



Left page, from top:
Plänterwald, video still.
Lynne Marsh, 2010. TOOL SHED

It's Just a Shadow Away, video still.
Ciarán Walsh, 2011. CHECKERED FLOOR

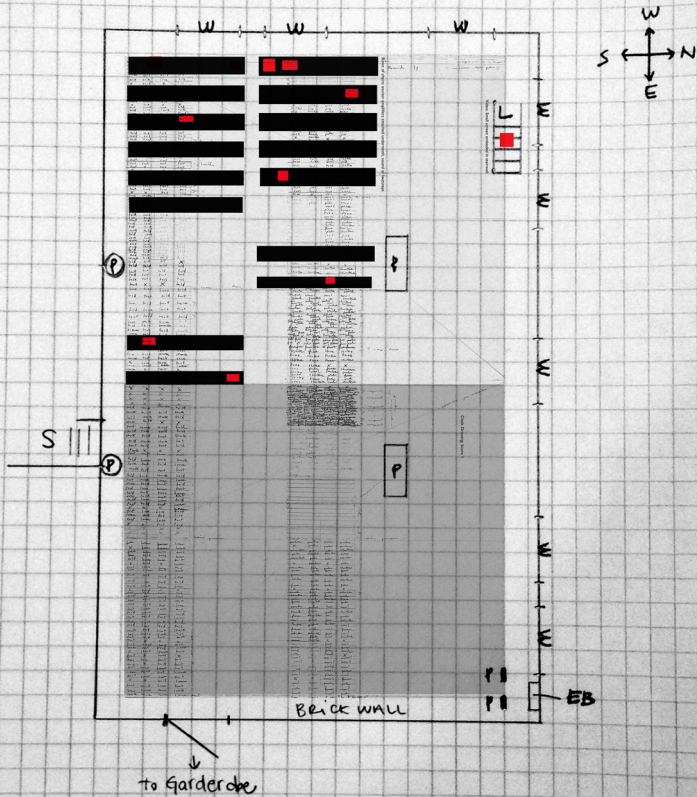
Mann beißt Hund, video still.
Stine Marie Jacobsen, 2015. OFFICE

Slow Fragmentation, video still.
Sam Smith, 2015. BRYGGERHUS

Right page:
Ankyloglossia (n. tongue-tie) : Interlude.
Image courtesy of the artist:
Emma Waltraud Howes in collaboration with
Charlotte Lalou Rousseau, 2015. BIG ROOM

EMMA'S ROOM

1m



S: Staircase

P: pillars

L: Ladder to the attic

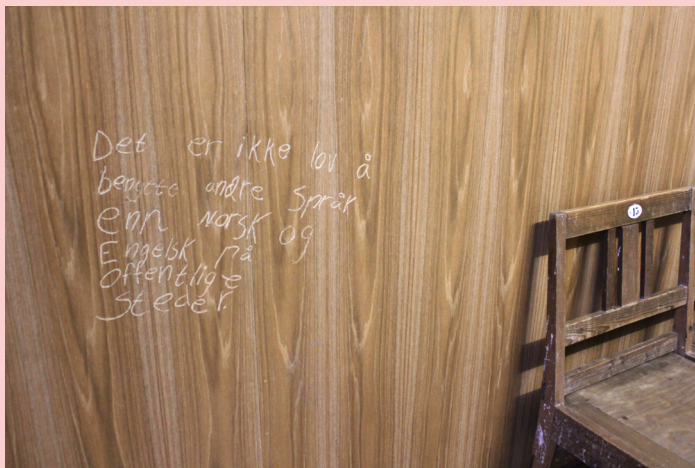
W: window

EB: Electrical box

Stine Marie Jacobsen

MANN BEIßT HUND (MANN BITER HUND)

OFFICE, MAGO B



Mann beißt Hund, teenage law workshop at MAGO
Stine Marie Jacobsen, 2015

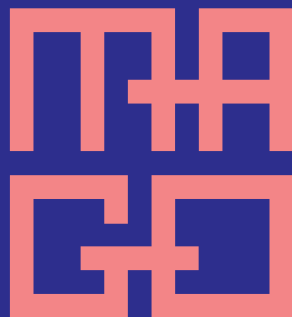
In the context of the exhibition *How far is here*, curated by Charlotte Rousseau at MAGO in Eidsvoll Verk, Stine Marie Jacobsen was invited to present her project *Mann beißt Hund*. The exhibition addresses the proliferation of contemporary artistic and curatorial residencies on a global scale, through questions of community and displacement.

Law writing is accelerating at the pace of globalisation, and citizens often no longer have any say on or knowledge of the laws they live by. Concerned with this situation, Jacobsen's art- and law project is threefold: the feature-length remake of the Belgian cult film *Man Bites Dog* without actors, a law-writing workshop and the re-enactment of a real court case. What happens when legislative power is placed in the hands of individuals or private corporations? Who has the right to sentence and decide what is right and what is wrong? Who should we address to request change? *Mann beißt Hund* challenges our own relationship to the law.

The remake *Mann beißt Hund* uses film as metaphor of a violent law, inconsiderate to humans. Film locks what it captures; its system does what it is pre-programmed to do without considering anything or anyone. Like law, film is violent in its form.

A group of teenagers from Eidsvoll are invited to discuss law and the boundary between private and public domains in the context of a law-writing workshop. The results of the workshop will be presented on the walls of the exhibition *How far is here*.

The teenagers are then invited to re-judge a real Norwegian court case in a trial moderated by a lawyer. The case opposes a young political activist and the head of Utlendingsnemnda (Immigration Appeals Board). Can a government officer be held personally responsible for the deportation of refugees? When does activism become illegally reckless? What kind of laws do we want for ourselves?



MAGO, Traktorstallen | Magovegen 24, N-2074 Eidsvoll Verk | www.mago.no