

Dig it Up and Put It in a Bag

– ***an encounter between contemporary art, archaeology and prehistoric art***

Exhibition at the University Museum of Bergen, 28.07.– 01.11.2021.

The goal of the interdisciplinary project *Matter, Gesture, and Soul* is to explore how contemporary art intersects with archaeology. The project, led by Geir Harald Samuelsen, has created a collaborative environment where artistic, poetic and scientific expressions meet and respond to prehistoric “art”.

One of the project’s meeting points is the exhibition “Dig it Up and Put It in a Bag” at the University Museum of Bergen in the autumn 2021, with a publication to follow. The exhibit gives an insight into how art and archaeology offer different standpoints and approaches in the meeting with material from the past: prehistoric symbols and stone engravings at Fontainebleau (France), cave paintings from South Africa, the Neolithic tomb Newgrange in Ireland and the abalone shell’s practical and mythical significance to our ancestors. It deals with the way shapes and traces are recurring, how we remember and how the past continuously changes character as the position we view it from is constantly changing.

When facing humanity’s greatest challenge, to change the way we affect the earth’s ecosystems, it’s crucial we find new ways to relate to reality. We dig into the past to find a new future; we dig in order to learn how to turn sensing into new understanding. All research nudges our thinking. That is the goal. But we also know that when thought finds a voice and steps into the world in the form of knowledge, it’s often the result of a collective effort across different areas of expertise.

What may art do for other types of research? This is a question one often encounters in interdisciplinary projects. Suppose we turn the question around and ask what other fields may do for art? By nature, art is collective; it’s a field of knowledge that collects and presents without strict conditions, methods and scientific requirements. It could perhaps be compared to an expansible tote bag, bag or container where our findings and work can be collected, shared and carried on.

The exhibition is curated by **Marit Paasche**, PhD of art history, independent researcher, and author.

The exhibition is financed by NARP and UiB.

Affiliated events

On **Sep. 25**, the seminar “Dig It Up” is held in the University of Bergen’s assembly hall. The seminar is part of the initiative *UiB innsikt* (“UiB insight”) (<https://www.uib.no/aktuelt/129524/uib-innsikt>). It deals with the exhibition and the book and discusses art, science and artistic research from a more general point of view.

On **Sep. 27**, there will be a book launch in the University Museum’s “Tårnsalen”. In connection with this, a new contribution from Elin Tanding Sørensen is added to the exhibition.

The book contains contributions from the exhibitors in addition to several outstanding researchers and can be considered an extension of the exhibition. Both the seminar and the book are part of the research project *Matter, Gesture, and Soul*.

Exhibition participants

Geir Harald Samuelsen (Norway), leader of the project: “Matter, Gesture, and Soul”. Visual artist, PhD, associate professor, and researcher at the Art Academy – Department of Contemporary Art, Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design, University of Bergen.

Dragoş Gheorghiu (Romania), visual artist, professor of cultural anthropology, Doctoral School, National University of Arts in Bucharest and Instituto Terra e Memória - Mação, Centro de Geociências da Universidade de Coimbra.

Eamon O’Kane (Ireland), visual artist and professor of visual art at the Art Academy – Department of Contemporary Art, Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design, University of Bergen.

Elin Tanding Sørensen (Norway), visual **artist**, landscape architect and independent researcher. Ph.D. in Marine Landscape Architecture from the Faculty of Landscape and Society, Norwegian University of Life Sciences (NMBU).

Maarten Vanden Eynde (Belgium), visual artist and PhD candidate at the MGS project at the Art Academy – Department of Contemporary Art, Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design, University of Bergen.

Petro Cecilia Keene (South Africa), archaeologist and independent researcher, loosely affiliated with SFF Centre for Early Sapiens (SapienCE), University of Bergen.

Åsil Bøthun (Norway), visual artist and professor of sculpture and installation at the Art Academy – Department of Contemporary Art, Faculty of Fine Art, Music and Design, University of Bergen.

Contributors to the book (in addition to the exhibition participants)

Elizabeth Catherine Velliky (US), Postdoctoral Fellow, SFF Centre for Early Sapiens (SapienCE), Department of Archaeology, History, Cultural Studies and Religion, University of Bergen.

Francesco d’Errico (Italy), PhD and a member and Professor II of the RCN funded Centre for Early Sapiens Behaviour (SapienCE) at the University of Bergen and Directeur de recherche de classe exceptionnelle at the University of Bordeaux.

Igor Reznikoff, (France), Professor Emeritus, Université Paris Nanterre, UPX - Département de Philosophie.

Médard Thiry (France), Senior Researcher, Center of Geosciences, MINES ParisTech, Fontainebleau, France.

Torill Christine Lindstrøm (Norway), professor of psychology and archaeologist, Department of Psychosocial Science, Faculty of Psychology, and SapienCE, CoE, Department of Archaeology, History, Cultural studies, and Religion, Faculty of Humanities, University of Bergen.