

From the Series Theses on the Body Politic (Requiem for Rejmyre) (2008)

Sculptural sound installation

Customised H/K Soundsticks II subwoofer, miniature landscape, looped sound, ø22cm x 26cm

Requiem for Rejmyre – a sculptural sound installation based on the unique Harman/Kardon Soundsticks II subwoofer and the thumping sound of the Rejmyre Hammermill – is connected to the history and the present situation of Rejmyre, Sweden as IC-98 sees it. Generally, the piece is about historical-economical changes in the Nordic Welfare model and how communities react to them. The subwoofer's plastic (conceptually glass) dome is built by the community to protect the locality and its values from unwanted outside influence. However, the forces of capitalism that are seen as a threat are not only exterior but also interior and in fact constitute some of the founding principles of the community itself. Thus, the strategy of saving the community is capitalist per se: to make the place a museum, to make it a touristic spot – to use the logic of supply and demand to enliven the local culture. The trembling of the giant hammer echoes from the past to the present.

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The sound of the hammermill is echoing from the past all the way to the present. Before, when the forests were cut down and the landscape bald, the unrelenting beating of the hammer provided the rhythm for everyday life. Today, the rhythm is no less persistent: it's not just heard anymore. But it is felt and experienced as the deadly, modulating pulse of capitalism.

The same capitalism that made the nation richer, helped to build the welfare state and gave us our Volvos and Saabs is responsible for the contemporary cycle of depression and progression. The investments are circulating around, they come and go. One moment the funding helps to enliven a community, the next the money is withdrawn and capitalists are blamed. Global capitalism is a force, which at the same time is hailed as a saviour and cursed as a greedy predator.

In this constant state of emergency, people want to preserve our way of life. To do this, they need to conjure up the capital. But the capital is like a demon, you can summon it but you can't control it. You draw a circle to protect yourself, you think you take all the necessary cautions, you come up with business plans. It all comes down to the deadly rhythm of the production line. It always comes down to the same principles, which were introduced two hundred years ago. We keep hearing the hammer, we keep hearing the hammer, we keep hearing the hammer, we get used to the hammer, do don't hear the hammer anymore. But there it is, giving pace to all our activities. We have taken the hammer into our life and don't know how to get rid of it. And how could we – as we don't hear it. This is life in the 21st Century. This is life in Rejmyre, Sweden. This is life in Mänttä, Finland. This is what IC-98 wants to address.

IC-98

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Rejmyre, Sweden

