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# “TELLING THE BALTIC” AT BTH

SAILOR’S YARN AND ART: HOW DOES THAT WORK TOGETHER?

TEXT PHOTO ANJA BÖTTCHER

THIS PART OF THE INTERNATIONAL ART-PROJECT ART LINE, WAS A TWO WEEK WORKSHOP HOSTED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF CULTURE AND COMMUNICATION AT THE BTH CAMPUS IN GRÄSVIK STARTING ON THE 5TH OF MARCH. ARTISTS VISITED THE SEA, COLLECTED TALES, SOUNDS AND PHOTOGRAPHS AS WELL AS TALKED TO SAILORS AND SHIP’S CREWS, FINALLY PRESENTING THEIR RESULTS.

**THE RAW MATERIAL** served as inspiration for the artists who worked at creating art work pieces that will be exhibited 2012 and 2013 in different locations around the Baltic. Båthen followed the German artist Katrin Roeber to experience in what way she is putting her ideas into practice.

**ROEBER PICKED THE** Blekinge Museum in Rosenholm as her place of inspiration, as she said she especially likes the atmosphere of the place. And she was right. Stacked like in a storage room, numerous old furniture pieces, such as gramophones, Victorian armchairs, typewriters

and antique clocks can be found in the museum. It felt like a hidden area, like a secret attic.

**THE MUSEUM ALSO** has a collection of old boats. Katrin Roeber’s idea is to take an off-print of the wooden structures of those; some of the models have even been used by Vikings. Roeber puts several kinds of paper on interesting wooden structures, for instance where you can see the nails or a rope, and goes over it with a roller dipped in black color. Her intention is to get an imprint of the wood structure on the paper. Later on she plans to put the pieces together in order to create one whole. Through this artwork, she expects to discover how the different boats’ stories are connected.

**ROEBER, WHO IS** also giving art courses, wants to get the history of the boats from their beginning to the present. “Art means to look at things in another way. You can never go with conventions”, she says.

**LISSA ATTAWAY-HOLLOWAY** from BTH who was one of the main organizers of the workshop considers the Baltic workshop as a success: “The artists worked very intensely with story-collectors

and it was a unique and inspiring experience to have both groups together to discuss the “raw” materials collected (the stories) and to plan the exhibitions based on them. The artists were especially happy to have the whole group together, as normally an exhibition for an artist is planned in isolation from the other participants (curators and other artists).

**TO HAVE EVERYONE** share in the ways that we did within the workshop—from reflections on stories, to design of individual art pieces, to discussions of the exhibition design as a whole—was quite special. We also provided many inspirational excursions to the Blekinge region, and many sites we visited, or histories we learned about on our tours, will be incorporated into the work of the International artists. Overall, we agreed it was a particularly creative and stimulating for all!”

**IN TOTAL, 22 ARTISTS** from Germany, Russia, Lithuania and Poland were participating in the workshop and their works will be exhibited in a traveling exhibition that will have its opening at the Blekinge Museum at the 9th of June 2012.