

Kerstin Bergendal – KB Edition dec 08

Trekroner Art Plan

Danish Art Foundation Committee for Art in Public Realm
Roskilde Municipality, Denmark

Paul O'Neill: So how did the Trekroner Art Plan originate? How and when? Why was it originated? How did it emerge?

Kerstin Bergendal Trekroner was a long premeditated expansion of Roskilde City, long before any art plan entered the story. Since the 70-ies, several versions of an enlargement of the city towards the west had been discussed. In 1973 a new university, the Roskilde University, was placed here. Since, the students have been seen walking across empty fields in all kinds of weather. First by the end of the '90s, the City Council decided upon a modern university park structure, to be built around an open slot of "nature" and an artificial lake.

But the concrete field of operation for an actual art project emerged from the planners decision *not* themselves to define how to integrate these artworks in the new area. Instead, in 1999 the planners from Roskilde City applied The Danish Art Foundation, Section for Art in Public Raum for financial support..

In the end it was the Foundation that chose to extend a commission to me, and to the landscape architect Jeppe Aagard Andersen in early 2001.

PON: What was the initial commissioning context from which Trekroner Art Plan emerged?

The key issue in this commission text was, in what ways visual art "could contribute to add a sense of local identity to a new urban area".

The text included a point of departure in a negative preset. We were asked to suggest contemporary expressions of art " rather than appointing spaces for monumental artworks".

We were finally asked to give our response in specific form of meta level - the operational plan . Suggest a succession of concrete actions, pinning out which artistic strategies we would recommend to be implemented, where to implement them, when and how . There was a specified time fram of 12 years to consider.

PON: What was/is the organisational structure of the commissioning team? (*I understand this question as related to the people who formulated the commission :*)

The Danish Art Foundation is a national ministerial organisation supporting and

mediating artworks and artists. It has different sections for different artforms. For visual arts there are two sections, one of which is *The Section for Art in Public Raum*. This section consists of two visual artists and one architect, each appointed by the Minister of Culture for three years. At the time in question, the chairman of the section was the architect Torben Schønherr (mail: ts@schonherr.dk) and the artists Mogens Møller, and Frithioff Johansen. Ref www.statenskunstfond.dk contact Vibeke Jakobsen 004533744500 or vibjak.statenskunstfond.dk)

In each given commission, the section committee is extended with three additional members in order to form a so called “ad hoc committee”. The three additional members are chosen by the recipient body of organization – in this case by the Municipality of Roskilde. In the end, it is this ad hoc committee that formulates the final commission, and receives the finished work from the artists.

Concerning Trekrøner Art Plan the director of the Strategic Planning Department Martin Holgaard participated in the expanded ad hoc committee, as did the director of the Technical Department, Ole Møller, and the director of the Cultural Department, Stig VS Hansen. (Ref www..roskilde.dk)

We were given about 8 months to complete the work. During the research I was connected to and informed by the planner Peter Schultz Jørgensen, who originally was one of the authors of the application to the Arts Foundation. The commissions were rewarded by 150 000 dkk each.

In late 2001 the two versions of an operational Art Plan was delivered and accepted. Jeppe Aagaard basically outlined locations to place monuments. I wrote a text concerning three different durational strategies to be realized during the twelve years.

Subsequently, in early 2002, Roskilde City Council decided to implement my plan – or at least major parts of it.

PON *Can you briefly describe the core substance in the plan? In what way is it durational*

My proposal consists of three different strategies. Each has its proper focus. I suggest that these three different strategies are implemented simultaneously and intertwined. Through the triple and continuous focus, it would be possible gradually to

insist on aspects that possibly could enhance a sense of local, and give room to a local ownership to the new city. Both of which would support the growth of a local public raum.

The first strategy concerns an addition of specific physical spaces to the otherwise standardized solutions. Because of the relatively early stage in the planning, artists could be invited to collaborate with planners, architects and landscape architects before any actually locking of positions and sizes of the settlements. In collaboration with the architects the artists can suggest altered form, alter use or add layers to buildings, spaces and passages. . As the role of the artist in this strategy is collaborative, it does not necessarily lead to production of singular works of art . Instead, it integrates and implements the experience from the making of visual art in public raum.

Over time, these different rooms and places could be used as sites for a local public life –site for temporary artworks, for play, feasts, sports and other social activities. The specifically local sites also enhances the possibility to cultivate traditions proper to the area. But even empty in between use, these space would add an aspect “locus” to the the standardized entity - the distinct physical point of orientation.

The second focus introduces temporary artworks. Artists would be invited to elaborate / display / perform a work of art intended specifically for temporary appearance only. Temporary artworks would appear and disappear without ties to functional or rational aspects. But there would be one obligatory preset - for the artist to relate to, comment or react against this specific local area in one way or the other. In this way a lot of these temporary artworks would appear relevant to the inhabitants – it is about them selves.

Over time this relation could possibly engage the inhabitants in a continuous reflection upon what Trekrøner is – and what it could be. This discourse indirectly would indicate and activate a local arena for expressions of any kind – that is initiate a local public raum.

The third focus concerns a collection of local memories. I call it a Memory Box. It suggests an ongoing, but random collection of local memories. All sorts of digital memories could be included.

The conscious collection should be done over the 12 years of the plan.– It could be drawings from the planning, documentation of daily activities, feasts and houses. It could be documentation of the temporary and permanent artworks. It was all to be connected to a server installed in a specially constructed pavilion. This pavilion in its turn was to be placed on a spot, which naturally would offer a point of rest and overview during a walk around the lake. On the inside of this pavilion, the collection could be displayed on screens through activating a chance operation.

Over time this collection of local memories would become like a digital version of Noas Arch – preserving a mix of fragments, describing basic conditions for a 20th century urban area, its life and inhabitants – but through a backwards museum logic – a conscious use of random and without any concept or principle of prioritization. A passer by could through this pavillion and its Memory Box in combination sense the local identity of the Trekroner valley both in a physical and a mental way.

PO’N: And, in the original Art Plan, did you set out a timescale for delivery of the entirety of the Art Plan?

The twelve years that was preset in the invitation, is the very condition for the realisation of the plan.

PO’N: What is the organisational infrastructure that you have to work within, in order to deliver this?

It is a bit complex as a structure. It operates from two sides of a fence – both from within and from outside of the Municipality.

You should bear in mind, that the Art Plan Project is conceived as a suggestion for a municipal strategy. Therefore it is organisationally linked to the Municipal administrative system from the start Or in a way you could say that it follows a virus logic - intervention from within a system.

Formally, the Art Plan is realized by the Municipality as a part of their planned urban development. During the realization, and until the fusion in 2007 between Roskilde City and two other cities, the Art Plan Project was linked to the Strategic Planning department of Roskilde. At this time Martin Holgaard was the administrative director of the department, and he was a strong supporter of the project. (Today he works

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But within the municipality the plan is during the first five years regarded as a separate organizational structure, linked to one specific external concept - written by me. It is not part of the Municipalities normal procedure. And I so to speak only come with a package.

The realisation is overlooked by a group of professionals from different city administrations and professions.. It is like a board for the project, consisting of 5 civil servants - Peter Krarup, Lisbeth Østrup, Holger Vilbøl and Peter Schultz Jørgensen. In addition the director Roskilde Contemporary Art Museum, Marianne Bech had a great importance for my work. *The Art Plan Group* met every two month or so, giving feedback to me and Peter, and approved new projects suggested by me. During the entity of the realization, the urban planner Peter Schultz Jørgensen administrated the Art Plan Group and connected its activites to all other planning in Roskilde.

But the Art Plan is also based on a second basic condition. Apart from my honorarium, , the Trekrøner Art plan is realised without its proper funding. We were always funded one project at a time. We have not had an office of our own. I have had no assistants. No homepage either. Also in this sense you could say that we operate from within and from the outside of the Municipality. We were perceived as the outside in the eyes of the politicians in Roskilde not granting any larger sum to realize the plan. We were perceived from within in the eyes of the normal art funding organizations, not wanting to support municipal urban devoppements.. External funding has only been granted to the expenses for the bridge by the British artist Nils Norman and to an exhibition about the project in the Museum of Contemporary Art in Roskilde in 2003 In the end, funding was obtained for one project at a time, and only rarely from other sources than builders (about 1 percent of building costs) and from the Municipality.

This places the Art Plan Project in another context, than that of many other projects with similar aims. All possibilities for additions or interventions lies in finding the cracks through a long time strategy of nomadic negotiation

In this perspective, the members of the Art Plan Group were immensely important to

me. They could act as “translators”. Translate the intentions of the different art projects to the Municipality. Translate the intentions and the decision-making procedures within “the system” to me. I could then translate between the system and the artists involved.

Another important aspect of translation in this group was, that is was horizontal. The administrative system of the City Council is vertical. If you read the Plan it clearly states the need for an executive organisational capacity to challenge existing plans. I wished it to be a sort of hub, that actually could mediate ownership and facilitate the realisation of art projects from within the administration.

However I do not think that this actually became the case. There were too many and too deep conflicts between the different administrative departments of the Municipality, to open up to any mutual ground. They all acted within a friend / enemy reality – and I was never allowed openly to raise this fact as an issue.

But we should have. We were literally on bare ground., We should have had a chance to evaluate regularly. This had not been done before. And regular planning of and producing new urban areas is so far away from the art world. The optics and faculties of visual artists are outer space to planners. But this was to risky for the participants..

PON As you understand it, what are the reasons for the durational/ long-term approach underlying this Trekrøner Art Plan, which has led to developing the curatorial process over time?

KB: The short answer to this again is, that they asked for a plan with this very 12 year span. So in the very invitation the durational is a preset..

But in the commission the durational approach was understood as a *List of Different Suggestions for Different Stages* of a 12 year urban development. An actual durational art praxis was not a notion to any of the commissioning organisations until it appeared in my response.

But let me add a deviation to this: When I was first introduced to the new area, it was by means of an image – the master plan .A master plan is the visualisation of the goal that all the subsequent planning will be aiming at. This plan, made by the 3 X

Nielsen Architects, basically visualized a sensibly mixed modern city mounted on an open farmland through the subdivision of the open land through a grid of large lines of planted forest. Hereby it would be possible to establish a “sound mixture” of differences and similarities both in population segments and in architecture.

My first impression of the future Trekroner was in fact the frequent use of the word “modern”, whenever the future urban area was described.. It seemed that there was an underlying specific version of modernity in play. It is a well known problem for any urban expansion to attract the right kind of inhabitants, the ones bringing with them different kinds of surplus. Modern materials. Modern style of living Modern schools. The intention to integrate visual art appeared in this context to be one of the more or less obligatory elements connected to this ambition.

I used about half a year to research the compulsory effects of this masterplan before writing any text. As I had no prior experience from planning or building, I had to rely on others to explain the plans and principles for me. The alteration of the landscape was in fact initiated when I was given the commission.. The main road and several other roads were already half-built, and some a few settlements were already finished. In addition the future social housing areas, private housing areas et.c. were appointed. The main features of the future architecture - which kind of roofs, what kind of materials - major aspects of the coming 12 years of change was already fixed through this one image.

During this process of me asking questions and all the different architects and planners patiently responding, I recognized how some solutions or qualities, that actually had been a part of the earlier planning, but was squeezed out of the current plans was mentioned again and again. The same qualities I were described as lost in the reading of different planners. Several these exclusions were explained as a result of compromises and a result of geographical, professional or hierarchical distances between different professionals, contributing to the planning process. My questions opened up for somewhat sad recognitions, that these exclusions were a severe loss. But no action was taken to reenter them in the plan again.

An extended process of realisation including reduction and prioritisations is a basic condition for urban planning. But it seems organised through differentiated segments of knowledge with little collaboration and no joint core vision other than the master plan. In these groups, all seems reduced to the practical concrete. And all decisions are set in relation to economical frames. Planners are not expected to

integrate non material values in their plans such as organical identity, (keeping the old threes when former farm houses are demolished) conditions for parenthood (plan by letting children create the safe passages between houses and settlements) spaces for the unplanned (to keep non planned spaces for play and invention) All of these aspects of local identity are never an issue.

So I end up having – and this is constant throughout the project –the feeling that there are more options and ambitious intentions for the urbanisation among both the civil servants, the architects and the new inhabitants than those that in the end are folded out.

A city that could have been. This could be possible role for the artists in this otherwise too huge context.. We could just behave as a reason for rethinking. Shielded by the very word “art”, we could ask for, legitimise, insist upon and visualise a spectrum of optics and qualities that possibly could enhance the sense of local particularity – mentally and physically.

And this would only be possible, because of the long time span.

So to get back to your question: One core essence of the durational in the Tre Kroner Art Plan is that it in fact is realised as a planned long time process, appearing within a larger planned long time process. Please feel free to see the role of the Trojan Horse here – it was in the invitation. But I am just not sure if this aspect was apparent to the ad hoc committee.

PO’N: So why do you think that you were invited by the Municipality? Why do you think that they selected your Art Plan?

KB: Maybe because it was written specifically with the intention to speak directly to the very people I had used so much time to interview. It responded to their explanations. Their input had qualified my response.

Maybe also because it was structured in a way that was compatible with the municipal way of structuring, and in addition had a lot of images to add layers of information to it. That’s one possible reason. A second reason could be less

flattering for me. It's possible that my response appeared cooperative towards the intention of the masterplan –mounting a city as was it a wide range of *functions*. There were no plans for and no wish for monuments, as these tend to create problems with citizens. Maybe they were relieved by the fact that artworks also could act as functions. Not pure function, of course, but as something that could be explained and motivated economically. Maybe this sounded less risky than bringing in a huge monument. But this is my interpretation

PO'N: I mean, as you understand it... Well, I'm going to rephrase this question. What are (your?) reasons for the durational approach underlying the Trekrøner Art Plan which has led to developing a curatorial process over time?

KB: I've never seen a city grow from scratch before. It's a fantastic opportunity for me to see how it's done. I'm taken by with the images inside the head of these politicians, planners, architects, and the tools they use to realise these images. And I'm absolutely stunned by the fact that they can recreate the physical world around me in 90 days, and in such a scale.

Or rather - I feel intimidated by the normality of haste and scale. It calls for a resistance. From me, from you, from all of us.

Not a resistance against building good unexpensive homes for ordinary people. I am not opposing the new city in it self. But I have serious doubts concerning the basic notion that the only way it can and should be done, is by maximum streamlining of all processes along the way, maximum building size from the start in order and completion of the building all in minimum time. I understand of course, that by doing it this way, lower levels of rents could be secured. But I regard these basic conditions for building as gestures of power, that gradually alters the perception of what the options are. And alters how we regard initiative of individuals in the contemporary society .

The majority of the new flats in Trekrøner are built for the heterosexual lifestyle with two adults and children and two cars. If you happen to be granted the luck of four or five children – or just regard it as a shame to put your old parents away in an institution - you would have to buy a house. If you can not afford one – Trekrøner is not for you.

With the commission I was given time and a vehicle to travel this field.

Approved by the Municipality, the plan gave a fragment of a possibility to establish some first hand experiences of how far this kind of vehicle could go. As it turns out, I can not go very far or fast. But parts of the work has been like reading a really good book – you have to have the next chapter too.

But I have never actually imagined that the project could lead to a substantial change of how urban areas are planned and constructed. The criteria of success was rather on a discursive level. Create situations and experiences, or counter images of how it also could be regarded.

And no matter what, every part of the project is

If you look at the masterplan and the first plans for each of the areas where we have been involved, there are significant changes made. They do not look like art. They are often not decorative. Some of them appear only at night. Most of them are reduced in relation to the first draft from the artists

different Plan, and I know that all these settlements has been given sort of a point of, you know, it's like having a little mud under your... so it couldn't go so smoothly and 'business as usual'. And I think that, by pushing in, not the 1% work of art for every settlement, but the artist. They have to have an artist on board. And, by doing so I just simply give work to a lot of good artists and it's not the same artist except ((32:36?)) but it's very many different artists who're now involved. And the greatest change is that almost all cities now in Denmark use artists in planning.

REALISATION

PO'N: And what as the first project?

KB: The first worked my way into the planning processes from within.

Seminar 1 – presenting the plan – creating discussions a discursive seminar which was delivered in May 2002, where I raised the questions, “Why the hell are we out there?” and “What can be done in presenting the Art Plan?” This was then we had guests from... different philosophers and discussions discussing the fact that you can ‘think’ a city. The politicians were sort of inclusive in this. So it was a pathfinding part publication. In that I included a tour, which ended up being a discussion similar to the one today: several hours where we discussed choice of Plan strategy and stuff like that, and that really changed a lot of the discussions because the people I brought in were strange to them and strange to their way of planning, so they were heavily criticised

Workshop 2 – five day joint planning process

Process 3 during the planning of the lake, I was a dialogue part.

make So a half a year after that..

four projects were Jakob Jakobsen, Katya Sander, Jonas Schul and Marianne Jørgensen Then, after that, we started working with the four projects, **KB:** When delivered, the Art Plan was surprisingly well received. The City Council decided from one day to another to realise it over a periode of 12 years.

The process from there evolved rapidly. And rapidly - too rapidly, in fact four projects were chosen by the planners as test areas. as four examples the first track, There were no citizens to introduce to the second track – the temporary artforms. The two other tracks could not be implemented at that stage. There were almost no houses buildt. There was not even sewage

The hasty implementation of course was a surprise to me. But moreover and more significant, it was definitely a surprise to the builders, the architechts and the landscape architechts in these foru productions..

They had long ago completed and regulated their internal relations through contracts, which not mentioned one word about being a part of an art plan. As I was to learn, these contracts regulates in detail what to expect, and how to deal with each momentum of a building process. The costs are huge, and the expense as well. Now they would not only be disturbed by me. They were to open up their collaboration to an unknown player - the artist. and it was like a total... I mean it was... I cannot describe how much work it was. And half of the work was only to understand... what Katya summarised in her sentence saying, "It's so frustrating because, while you're sitting with one architect speaking about a solution about something, you know that the five others are drawing also and they don't hear this." So, instead of working together and collectively reach the aim, they all work parallel like the teeth in a comb. And this means that what ever you decide today, can be distorted or excluded by others the next day. And all that was something we learned the hard way.

There were massive conflicts on the first four projects, and the artists were angry with me. But now we should take it the right way. All the artists were invited with the sentence, "Would you like to participate and help?" You were invited for a rather good some of money –250,000 kroners is a lot of money – "...to participate in something where you will have no say; you will be fucked up, you will be thrown to the side, and nobody will listen to you, but it's good for the principle. Would you like to try it anyway?" So they were all informed about the bad sides of it. And they were chosen by the architects even though the architects were not in it from the start.

PO'N: So you didn't choose those artists?

KB: I chose which ones to give as a selection.

PO'N: And that was the shortlist or there was one other?

KB: There was a shortlist. There was three – always three artists – always chosen after I had had long talks with the architects about how they work; always speaking about what would be a problem, how can we meet this problem, in different ways. The clear problem was that the architects were underpaid, so they were actually given the job because they had dipped their bid, or their honorarium. So much that there was one and one solution only for them, is to re-use solutions from other earlier projects.

Having an artist on those projects therefore was logical: it could only end up with sort of pushing them to work for little, but of course mechanically this would mean a

resistance because every hour extra they put in, instead of pressing the button, getting 15 apartments ready from last time, that meant going, you know, in a minus. So there were problems that way. Also the people who were builders: these were buildings that were social welfare housing. So, for them, it was, "Business as usual, create as many square metres as possible, so that you could have a rent that somebody actually could pay." So if artists come in and make specific solutions, they create extra expenses, and therefore higher rent.

And finally, the other discussion was that the people who worked with me from the City Hall slowly got educated in a new way of reading, and they accepted because they had their released dreams for quality. And their machinery also fucked them up. So when they started working with me they used this freer space to have an agenda for our quality. So they went after the builder who then was very angry and went to the politicians. So the first four projects was really learning by doing. And this took...

PO'N: Why did you decide to give the architect the choice of three artists rather than deciding upon the artists yourself?

KB: First of all because the choice of artists were... I mean there are many good artists in Denmark. As I've said before, I think respect: for the dialogue situation to be at least tolerable between the architect and the artist, I had to treat the artists with respect enough to make a voluntary meeting. So if I had punched in the artist, just like that, the situation would have been dreadful for the artist.

PO'N: And did you ask the artists to give you a proposal?

KB: No.

PO'N: No. So there were no proposals at that stage?

KB: No, only what they've done before. And my mediation of what was this character, why was this good? The only person I didn't mediate, I just chose, it was Nils Norman: he was the only one to be told that. But Jakob, for instance, I could also read from the work of the architect what was necessary; so Jakob was chosen as a complementary person for that architect. They said, "Maybe you should pick somebody who does not work like you at all." So there I chose somebody who's opposite, but it was always done after dialogue with the architect.

...

PO’N: And they are positive about that, that it can’t be recognised as Art?

KB: They can’t see what it says. From my balcony it’s ((underhand?)) and I would prefer to have sculpture on the surface so I can point at it and show it to my friends and say, “Look, we have Art.” This is a quotation from one of the social democratic politicians who says, “Well, we could have designers doing the same job.” And Jan Bille and his department has been... I’ve heard quotations that they have shown around and people of their clients, shown them Trekrøner and, when they ask about the Art Plan – it has been written a lot about it – they say, “Well, you know, you can see which is the building and what is the Art.” Then somebody called me and told me that. If I hear that again I’ll go, you know. So that kind of disappointment that you feel; that it was not decorated or it didn’t turn out to be different in the way that would be decorative.

PO’N: So it wasn’t distinctive enough from...

KB: No, it’s not... it was just not beautiful. It was... I mean the balconies are not beautiful. It looks just like any stairway and why should they have so heavy legs? It is a question of... Art is connected to an expectation of beauty.

PO’N: But they still... they still have... The balconies, like all the other projects, they still have a particular visularity attached to them.

KB: But that’s not enough for politicians who want to say I could have used something else. No, it wasn’t their money. As long... The citizens have not complained, but... the inhabitants I mean haven’t complained, but they feel a little... I think one of the things that I have very much respect for and I think should be the Plan again is, if we go out there, we’re not in a gallery, we have to make sure that our faculty is obvious. Not that we have to do what they say or please them. Look at encounter statements like these, that if we do it in a way that we don’t leave them stranger to our ways of speaking. I think I am more and more sensitive to... if somebody knows his shit so much that they can speak simply about it, then I think it’s possible that we can also address... And I think it is... if we want to work like this you have to be prepared to give a lot of time just to talk to people. And when we talk to them – this is also in the evaluation – that he says that after I had explained the stuff he would say, “Oh, it’s a good thing.” But they were angry before. So it is a question of respect for the people who live in the houses, for the people who build it, for the

design, and that in itself can make it doubtful if it's good Art that comes out of it. But we decided it was worth a try.

PO'N: Because there's... because you're trying to please so many people?

KB: No. Because those people do not have... I mean I clearly mean that you do not have to make an Art that pleases people, but you have to take upon yourself the responsibility of explaining why you do what you do. It has to be clear why the decision is taken. Today Jurgen says, "Well, I hang this net of wires. I hang them up there because, when you look at the sky, you can just see a ((phone?)). You see a wire going up there. It's like a drawing in the sky." And then, if you add more drawings, more lines, the whole thing becomes like half a roof of drawings, so it's a graphic, it's a sky graphic. But then, after some time, that doesn't work, so I have to hang something that gives them something more to chew on, more density, so I hang a drawing made in some ((29:04?)) so you get some kind of ((29:06?)). And they stand there and they say, "((29:07?))." Because, when he speaks his way of explaining why he did is obvious, even though they might think that we would have preferred to have something more beautiful but, as long as he is saying why he's doing things, they're prepared to accept it as a solid work. But for many people it's not understandable why the parking places should be leaf formed or... so we have to take the work to explain a little more, but we don't have to please them with our work, and that is important I think.

PO'N: I mean, as you understand it... Well, I'm going to rephrase this question. What are your reasons for the durational approach underlying the Tre Kroner Art Plan which has led to developing a curatorial process over time?

KB: Because the city grows slowly. So I've never seen a city grow. It's a fantastic opportunity for me to see how it's done. By who? And how would I think? I'm obsessed with the image inside the head of these politicians, planners, architects, and I'm absolutely stunned by the fact that they can recreate the physical world around me in 90 days, in such a scale. And then I'm scared by it, which is the second phase. It demands a resistance from me, from you, from anybody; that the only way they can do it, now they have decided that they should do it, is by streamlining all processes, meaning that they, in the true sense of Rosalyn Deutsch, they have to squeeze out so many possibilities. And all of it it's done on the desk by somebody who has nothing to do with the city. And I was given a chance to affect those, and also to affect the builders, and I had this skateboard that I could go

around in, and to investigate how did they do, and then to ask all these questions. I don't know if I can affect a lot but I know I have been involved in affecting together with other people, how the east side has been done.

If you look at the Plan it's a very different Plan, and I know that all these settlements has been given sort of a point of, you know, it's like having a little mud under your... so it couldn't go so smoothly and 'business as usual'. And I think that, by pushing in, not the 1% work of art for every settlement, but the artist. They have to have an artist on board. And, by doing so I just simply give work to a lot of good artists and it's not the same artist except ((32:36?)) but it's very many different artists who're now involved. And the greatest change is that almost all cities now in Denmark use artists in planning.

PO'N: And does... In your view, does the Trekroner Art Plan, both in terms of how it was written and how you now perceive it, demonstrate an interest in sustaining a long term engagement with its specific context?

KB: That is a tricky question, because I have acknowledged that the Plan – different and separated tracks – that were supposedly intertwined and supporting each other, so that it could create a complexity, normally lies within organically grown cities, could sort of be constructed, or at least initiated. And, of these three tracks, only track one has been partially realised. And its result, that is the specific spaces, has not been conquered by the people, because they have not had any guidance in how to use these spaces differently. Today you saw how these people are reinventing the same space as Nils already has invented. If there would have been a support for the second track, with the cultural planning that is to use these differentiated spaces, and sort of to ((tiss?)) the territory in for social activity or meeting points, Trekroner would have looked very different.

But now... In the start there were no places; that nobody would know how they looked like. And they are different; they don't look like a square. They don't look like a cultural house. They look just like a leaf shaped parking place. So somebody has to teach them that. And I don't... Long term commitment is made for me now more connected with utopian work, meaning I have to do it without getting paid. I have to go out there and preach and I have to... The long term commitment means coming every now and then just on my own, just to linger and start chatting and to do stuff. And I did that for several years. And then I became the persona of the Art Plan for some people, and I tried to make them become personas too. But they are – that's

the second part – they are consumers of the city. So it was a lonely project to be a one, somebody building a place – different from other places – a sense of place, because there were so many other much more important agendas, as for instance if the bus would come or...

So I'm not sure that the long term commitment... No. Everything in this whole process is Yes and No. And this split vision I think is ((my?)) history because it is... I have tried it on my own body; I've tried it in the planning process and with politicians and with all others, and I still have very much doubt that this is a productive... No, not productive: that this is the – I hate it when you have to speak not in your own language – I think that I have my doubts about if it's possible, when everything else is planned. And then, as you heard Peter Krarup, the Plan is realised as it was planned, and with very few changes, to work in a non-planned way, because the force and the power of the Plan is so big that the inhabitants themselves sort of back off. And therefore, even though I am utopian, even though I really work and come every now and then, I really put in... maybe it's not possible to change so that's strong. But I sure will try, I will stay here for another 12 years.

PO'N: But Nils Norman's bridge wasn't in the Plan.

KB: No. That was my idea. That was in my Plan. And, there we are, yes – now we're back to the Yes. So against, well the pattern is very strong. Pro is that Nil's bridge and also the whole fact that I could create conflict... God knows how many conflicts has come out of my Art Plan. And, afterwards, many of them say, as you can see also in the ((imbarvation 38:29?)) they say, "It was really really hard, I wouldn't do it again, but on the hand I learned so much from it."

And the planners from Trekroner who were my opponents, they come to my exhibition. So, I mean, they have gained, they have learned. So, in many different levels, it's absolutely good that you come and that you get to know them. And then the third part, which is also an important answer to your question: that's memory. Actually me, Peter Krarup, Peter Schultz Jørgensen and Jan Bille, we are carrying the memory, because we have been there for such a long time. There are very few people who have been out there, and I less than the others, who can carry the memory of how it was in the beginning of the city. And the longer I stay, the more important that memory is. So in those workshops, for instance the workshop where we were discussing what to do with Trekroner East, I was the memory for... Then I can execute this memory, and therefore make the solutions or put it into the solutions

from these people who come from the outside, and activate it. That's very important with the long term and challenge the same industry.

PO'N: What are the challenges to sustaining a long-term approach?

PO'N: Can you identify a set of core conditions/ basic prerequisites that are necessary for the project's success?

PO'N: What did not work, what went wrong, what could have been done differently?

PO'N: How do you decide upon what is the rationality or what is the thinking behind your decision of artists, but also the decision of certain sites? I mean that's two questions. Let's leave it at those two questions.

KB: Artists.

PO'N: Artists to begin with.

KB: I tend to use artists... If you were from Denmark you would see that Jurgen is the first artist I've used that I know before. So I have used artists that can widen my own perspective, but whose practice has addressed issues that are similar to the issue in question.

So I... my private part is that I get to know them and I get to know their practice and have to get into their work. And the more curatorial part is that they will put into the project, the totality of the project, their experience, so that it will be loaded. So the Tre Kroner Art Plan is not a product of my work and thinking. It's, you know, the total product of the architects and the artists. Then the artist has to be interested in collaborations. If there is no mutual interest for dialogue, the dialogue will die. So their practice is relevant to the question, their interest in dialogue, and also their interest in taking conflict; if they are capable of taking conflict and pursuing their point of view. So they have to be affirmative and decisive, and also be able to defend their position.

PO’N: And in terms of the process, do you, when an artist is invited, do you ask them for a proposal or do you invite them before you ask them for a proposal? When they’re invited, are they in?

KB: Yes.

PO’N: Completely?

KB: Totally.

PO’N: And then you ask them for a proposal?

KB: Well, you see, I have... I never mingle in the proposal. I don’t touch what they come with. That gives me a lot of problems in some ways. I can criticise it. I am well-known for my – in any art show – for my ask for debate and discussion about our profession and the notions that ((42:52?)) what we’re doing. So... and I do. I can qualify what they’re doing by asking, “Why did you do this? I don’t understand this.” But if they insist on making just one line on the wall, I wouldn’t mingle in that. Then I will defend them. And there was a tricky situation, coming out of that, which I don’t have in here but I can take it. I did a lot from here and ((43:23?)). I have never... I’m always on the side of the artist, and... with my colleagues. I’ve had reason to force some processes, because the artist had been taking a position that was not possible to pursue, twice. But it has not been about cutting the project. It has been... some things could just not look the way they wanted it to or, like in an exhibition, that wall cannot carry or can ((44:13?)).

PO’N: And why and how are particular sites are contexted or situations decided upon for that particular artist – or for any particular artists?

KB: Why are...?

PO’N: Are you given the site context or situation, or is it something that you identify and then secure and then bring in the artist?

KB: Yes. To begin with, I never... The first thing: I’ll sort of tell it like this and then you can...

KB: My first contact is always with the builder. It’s my experience that the builder has to understand fully his own world. He is the buyer, so he has to really accept that it’s an artist he’s going to buy, and he has to back up this artist. So twice, when I

find out that the buyer, or builder, really doesn't want an artist I've ((inaudible – 45:30)) because, if the buyer, the builder...

PO'N: And is that... Are they still built?

KB: Yeah.

PO'N: Those environments are still built but there's no artist in place.

KB: No artist.

PO'N: ((laughs))

KB: Because that was an experience from the first four. And, as the focus was not to create conflict unnecessarily, but to create artworks that could go in conflict, then we need the builder to be fully clear what it is. So I start with a meeting with the builder, where I explain what it's about, and around me are sitting people from the city, but it's me who conducts these meetings. And I tell them, "This will be a problem, that ((46:16?)). This cannot be a problem too," and, "If you don't do what we say, we will be..." So, by the end of that dialogue, the builder go and talk to the architect. So the architect can say Yes or No. There have also been occasions where the architect said he doesn't want to build for that builder if he has to work with an artist. Because it's no use in pushing artists through what happened with the first four. That is just not good for any dialogue, so. But mostly, even with projects that haven't turned out to be anything, the dialogue is welcomed by the architect, and the higher quality of the architect. Then I meet with the architect, and most of them I know. But in the start I didn't know some architects. Then I got to know their expression and what is important for the architect. And then I speak to them about what artists would they like. So, out of the suggestion, often there can be one artist which I recognise. If I recognise that that's a good choice, I include that.

In one specific occasion that we have talked about, I left it for the architect to point out. But if we don't speak about that particular incident, which is an important mistake, I add two artists with... And then I explain their practice and I explain why I would point at that artist in relation to specifically there. So I go quite deep into the architect's work and say, "You work like this and this. And I can see that it would be fruitful, and here can be a conflict and here can be something that you could build on. And this artist has worked with this and this and this." If we take the case of Jurgen

in this, the architects were thrilled, and the builder didn't understand at all why I chose that artist. But, as long as the architect was happy, result.

I am always very aware of the situation for the landscape architect, because most of architects keep the artist outside of these architecture. So then this means you sort of ((48:55?)) them on the landscape architect. So I can have... several times I end up saying... The architect says, "Yes, fine. I want to work with this artist." And the project ends up with the landscape architect who has never heard about the artist, who doesn't know anything, and the compatibility between the two of them has never been discussed.

PO'N: Okay. Yeah.

KB: So I have to follow up all the way to contract, and I want to see the contract, and in the contract it's really really important what it says between them, you know. But when... in the choice of artist there is also indirectly a way of deciding where is it really room. So you can say that in a way I designate the territory, but I am the one who keeps it really open because what they do, and quickly they say, "Oh, and she can paint here," you know. And then I would say, "Well, it's all over, let's see, and our capacity is this and that, she can do this and this," so sort of keep it open. But sometimes we don't have the time. I told you about ((Franz's?)) project. I got three hours and he got three hours and it was really absurd, but he was on. He was on. He was the only... There was not the... I think it was only two artists that could take that, and I had to call them both and ask, "Can I appoint you on these conditions?" And then they said, "Yes."

PO'N: And is the durational approach... your durational approach in terms of the investment that you have and the belief in that particular durational process, demonstrated... sort of demonstrates itself to be different from more short term or itinerant or nomadic ways of working, that also respond to a particular context, place or situation?

KB: Yes, they do. And, again, there's a pro and a con.

The con first. It's demonstrated in the fact that I get more and more... not instrumentalised but assimilated. In a way I know now what can be done and not done, so I can also find myself squeezing out options. So, in a way, I am sort of 'used up' and that's extremely important when talking about durational problems, that

you cannot survive unless you develop strategies for viability. But that's also a minus in the durational, because you cannot then insist on the conflict side.

On the other hand, I get more skilled in negotiating, so I can take almost any situation with any people, any... I mean I don't mind. I can go out in whatever and I will be able to remember what it was I wanted to say because I have been 'in the fire' now for several occasions. So in that sense, the longer the better. So it's a question of meeting criticism and of staying in contact, you know, the matter.

But then in this project there has been – when we speak of durational, those of cities – so Roskilde became three cities that it was included in. And during that almost two years of time, there was a vacuum and I had no mandate, so that our plan was on ice, and I lost a lot of territory because developers had changed. A lot of the people I worked with, they stopped being there or stopped working with each other and so on. So architects changed. I couldn't build on in the same way. But today I felt that they know who I am and so that there's... it's still there somehow.

PO'N: I mean it does strike me – and I'll try and frame this question as coherently as possible – it does seem to me that there is a certain sense that the Trekrøner Plan necessitates your presence and necessitates your investments. And, on another level, that might almost be sufficient in itself.

KB: What does 'necessitates' mean?

PO'N: Is the Trekrøner Art Plan more about the necessity for an individual like yourself...?

KB: Any.

PO'N: ...any individual like yourself who has an investment in these debates and an investment of working through a long term process within a particular context that is difficult? Is that more important than the effectual realisation of Art itself?

KB: Well, it's a question about the 'hen and the egg' really.

PO'N: I mean I know that that debate could only happen if Art was brought into the mix because that's the subject matter and its possibility of being realised or not and the difficulty that that creates, that enables that debate and that discussion and that longevity in that investment on your part to develop. But, if there was no more Art made for the next four years, or how ever long it is...?

KB: Would it have meaning anyway?

PO'N: Yeah.

KB: Yes, it has the same meaning as it has to have a grandmother.

PO'N: ((laughs))

KB: I have another time with me. I have other eyes. Not just me personally – the artist has. I can think of a lot of colleagues that could be there in my place and it would be the same development. It could also be there.

PO'N: But it would be different Art.

KB: It would just be different expressions. But, I mean, if they stayed as long as I do, they would smile and remember the funny oak tree in that corner, and they would say, “Do you remember that farm we had to move?” And, “Do you remember that conflict about that road sign?” And they would be able to make a reference, just because they are a strange... I mean an element strange to the two systems. We are neutral ground. When I sit there today I'm neutral ground. I can ship off questions that doesn't touch Jan. I can take upon me to say, “No, there is no money,” but you have a bloody responsibility to react to your neighbourhood. Things like that come up. I can say a lot of stuff that cannot be said, or I can ask questions, I can pose opposition that cannot be done by anybody else. And that's not my persona ((testing?)); that could be done by Ása Sonjasdottir or Katya Sander, or anybody else.

So I think that the role of the artist... but there must be a mandate. If they don't agree upon why you were there, you're just a dilettante. You have to have – and this is important – they must read your knowledge; they must notice that you do have a knowledge. And so they're giving you the right of speech, if you understand what I mean. You can't just send somebody in. But you can gain that right of speech from the engagement.

PO'N: And do you think it's important that the... is it important to you that the works get built or the works get made? And is it important that they have a permanence?

KB: Permanence is absolutely not important ever for me. I'm much more interested in change.

PO'N: That's why... because that's why, because even when you're reading... when one reads the Plan, you know, that the word 'temporary' kind of sticks out in relation to what one... in comparison to what one actually experiences...

KB: Yes.

PO'N: ...through the built works.

KB: Yeah. And, in that sense, it's a failure. But it's never a failure to try something that's failed. I mean it's...I... let me put it in order that – this is not for quotation, but it's something really important anyway. My whole career I was too late, or I was out of order or I was in the wrong line or I was... you know. I never came to England for the opening and... and I mean... who cares? I'm given the opportunity to try something and therefore also my colleagues can try, "What happens if we do this?" So, in a sense, there is such a joy to know that Jan is there and Tom is there and ((Constraid de Reim?)) is there and ((Katrin Bro?)). We are some people who would try this, well knowing that's it absolutely impossible to conquer such a system, but we can try out our strategies.

And what you're pointing at now is also the fact that maybe the success criteria is not the physical space but the fact of how they build next city or how the citizens might take responsibility for their local area. Or maybe it's just an even more private process that, as an artist, I have an obligation... No, I don't have an obligation. I have an option to mix... to mix into... not mixed... make a statement, through the working. And when I walk around and I'm engaged, and I say, "You should have this," or "Why don't you...?" and so on, I make it... I am a prototype for how they could be citizens. And, in that sense, I'm an image in myself.

KB: So the Art Plan is just the mandate. Any city could therefore construct an Art mandate and then let the person find the path how to solve it, in relation to precisely the individuals and the situation that occurs. So maybe the focus shouldn't be on the plan and how much that it's realised, but on the actual ((1:00:24?)) perspective of one place after another. That there is a continuous loop of events that I take part in, in this ((1:00:36?)) and we say, like that, maybe some other time I would really want it to be visible that we have changed. I would... I strongly believe, from the experience of Nils Norman's bridge, especially today, that the physical form – and the ((1:00:55?)) is totally right – the physical form is power.

And I like to make the power play, resistance, with the physical form, to create other kinds of knowledge and other kinds of 'being' in the world, but I can only do that if the trust in my work, my judgement for the artist, the trust in the artist, is present. So the builder has to be there, the city has to back up behind it. If they don't, we shouldn't be there.

PO'N: So you said that you very much thought that Tre Kroner Art Plan and your investment within it is different to itinerant, nomadic or short terms ways of working that also engage with the context...

KB: Yes.

PO'N: ...in the situational place. In your view how is it different? And, if it is different according to that definition, that you're about to give, is it intended as a critique of a more itinerant and short term way of working?

KB: Very clearly I have to be understood in this interview, that I come from the short term. I just happen to end up on a banana shell in the other one. So of course I believe in the short term. But the short term is not addressing people. It's an event situation. The short term is me pursuing my vision. It's sort of a parallel to the mandate that we were given in Public Space to express ourselves in painting and in sculpture on the square. Then we can do performance or we can do an intervention or we can do something else. But it is parallel. It could be a monument in a way.

PO'N: So Tre Kroner is your canvas. Is that what you're suggesting?

KB: No, I'm saying that that's the short term. So when I... with ((Taco?)) I open up an old factory hall and I end up making it looking totally different for five weeks then it's gone, it's a gesture that's sort of the opposite of making a monument. But it's also giving me an experience. It's a 'teaching myself' situation. I try something and I learn from that. Then the long term: it's a commitment to a listening position, because there are... it's like, from the start, a dream that it's not sure that I can add... a "Let's see what happens," kind of thing. So it's a more receptive listening, even playing... I mean playing is in action when you are in the short term. It's like you open up a parallel reality and it's open until it collapses. So that's the same with my children when they play: they do precisely the same. But when I walk around in the long term process, it's... the role is to be the other eye from the outside, especially if I do my work well.

PO’N: But you’re also inside.

KB: Yes, I’m coming to that. But the other... that’s what I said before, that I get used up. But you are the other eye coming from the outside with a set of different tools to cut the cake with. But, over time, you become the inside. ((Interruption))

After some time you are inside and you grow more and more: they are accustomed to you, you grow accustomed to how they do it and, as I said before, you can become somebody who squeeze out opportunities that would be obvious for you in the start.

But there’s also – again, on the other hand – possible for you to intervene. You can be like the mouse with the virus in a computer system, so you can create notions and ways of doing things. I’m totally sure that today I have changed Jan Bille’s way of perceiving interactions with the users. So I can show in prototype different ways of production, or of ideas. And I’m absolutely sure that both Katya and Nils and Jakob, by their reading, have changed ways of working for the architect. So I think that it’s... there are pros and cons. The artists and the architects work in short term. That we have to remember. For each time I create a meeting, that’s a short term.

PO’N: So what evidence is there of the Trekroner Art Plan or your presence in Trekroner over a period of time, having had a transformant of effect on the place, on the situation, on the context?

KB: The fact that there at all are artworks... no, I mean additions to the settlement. The way, part of how the East is planned according to other. Even though it’s not the Plan that we... utopic plan, but a lot of the utopic plan has entered. The identity of Trekroner had a... In the period of the beginning of the city where people moved out, they made this exhibition called “*Overview*” where they were introduced, and it was introduced as a city who’s not there yet. That process made it clear and lifted up a lot of what’s underneath the planning: hopes and notions, and those were discussed and they were present even in the discussion today, in the way artists are invited to collaborate with architects in all of the lots that are sold, so in the specific contracts for the buyers of land in Trekroner; in the way artists are invited to take part in how... in making district plans; and in the way that artists are at all considered in the rest of Denmark, in how it’s become natural to engage artists in dialogical workshop situations, for planning new urban areas.

PO’N: And that wasn’t the case beforehand?

KB: Oh no, no, not at all. I wouldn't say that...

Unknown speaker: Only to me.

KB: I would say that it was in the time. But that we became the example.

PO'N: So, what went wrong? What failed? What could have been done differently?

KB: Oh ((1:09:24?))

PO'N: I'm not really asking the questions about the specifics.

KB: No, generally.

PO'N: I'm asking the question about this idea – which is something that I would agree with – but this idea that... the possibility that something could be learned from Trekroner, and transferred elsewhere. Not in the same form but that could be transferred elsewhere.

KB: Yeah?

PO'N: So, if there are things to be learned through failure, through collapse, through difficulties, through things that went wrong, as a learning process, what would those things be?

KB: That a plan is already frozen. A plan freezes all development from the start. The fact to call something 'a plan'. So the definition 'Art Plan', I would never use it again. I would speak about possibilities and then let them collapse one by one and learning by doing. Because every development is a recognition of a specific moment of time in a specific place, and I think that the word 'Plan' implies a specific foreseeable result, and that limits those views of the knowledge of Art.

Secondly, I think that the Art... the presence of the artist in different processes: it should be a great respect for the art of architecture, the art of planning, the Art... And I think that it should be a totally natural point of departure, that the artist, by not knowing these things, they do 'business as usual', can actually activate and support aspects of these other professions that are pushed out or pressed out through the way...

So I think I will have a major focus on the contract.

. Oddly enough, now and here almost seven years later, many of the same politicians and planners express their deception towards the results with the very same one sentence: “But you can’t see this is Art.”

PO’N: And they are positive about that, that it can’t be recognised as Art?

KB: It is a kind of disappointment that is expressed; the contributions from the artists did not add an expected a level of decoration or difference. In the evaluation process, I was invited to sit in during a dialogue between the researcher from the Statens Byggeforsknings Institut and the inhabitants from a social welfare settlement where the artist Marianne Jørgensen had added one of the most decorative and classically poetic art elements produced within the art plan project. She uses tread stones normally used for walking paths, to write the singular words *Happiness, Listen* and *A Circle*. Several of the present inhabitants state how this is not art, because they can’t see what it says from their my balcony. And that they much would have preferred to have “normal” sculpture or a painting on the wall surface “so I can point at it and show it to my friends and say, “Look, we also have Art.” One of the social democratic politicians says, “Well, we could have designers doing the same job.”.

PO’N: So it wasn’t distinctive enough from...

KB: No, it’s not... and not beautiful. For most people, the notion of Art is connected to an expectation of beauty.

PO’N: But the projects still have a particular visularity attached to them.

KB: But not enough. And this is , if we go out there, we’re not in a gallery, we have to make sure that our faculty is obvious. Not that we have to do what they say or please them. Look at encounter statements like these, that if we do it in a way that we don’t leave them stranger to our ways of speaking. I think I am more and more sensitive to... if somebody knows his shit so much that they can speak simply about it, then I think it’s possible that we can also address... And I think it is... if we want to work like this you have to be prepared to give a lot of time just to talk to people. And when we talk to them – this is also in the evaluation – that he says that after I had explained the stuff he would say, “Oh, it’s a good thing.” But they were angry before. So it is a question of respect for the people who live in the houses, for the people

who build it, for the design, and that in itself can make it doubtful if it's good Art that comes out of it. But we decided it was worth a try.

PO'N: Because there's... because you're trying to please so many people?

KB: No. Because those people do not have... I mean I clearly mean that you do not have to make an Art that pleases people, but you have to take upon yourself the responsibility of explaining why you do what you do. It has to be clear why the decision is taken. Today Jurgen says, "Well, I hang this net of wires. I hang them up there because, when you look at the sky, you can just see a ((phone?)). You see a wire going up there. It's like a drawing in the sky." And then, if you add more drawings, more lines, the whole thing becomes like half a roof of drawings, so it's a graphic, it's a sky graphic. But then, after some time, that doesn't work, so I have to hang something that gives them something more to chew on, more density, so I hang a drawing made in some ((29:04?)) so you get some kind of ((29:06?)). And they stand there and they say, "((29:07?))." Because, when he speaks his way of explaining why he did is obvious, even though they might think that we would have preferred to have something more beautiful but, as long as he is saying why he's doing things, they're prepared to accept it as a solid work. But for many people it's not understandable why the parking places should be leaf formed or... so we have to take the work to explain a little more, but we don't have to please them with our work, and that is important I think.