

Intervention: *A dollhouse in the window at Fisksätra museum*

(May/June 2020)

How to Make a Home: Stories of Here and Elsewhere at Fisksätra Museum

A neighbourhood can be a physical place in which people dwell together, or a threshold to other places, a portal to stories which allow us to inhabit a place we are no longer in or have not yet visited. Storytelling can give us a sense of being 'here and elsewhere', can transport us to other worlds, at least for a time.

In communities across the world, the everyday is something experienced both individually and collectively, in our similarities and differences; a kind of lived narration of routine and small surprises; a politics of our day-to-day lives; a series of stories we embody, whether we listen to them or not.

1. Poster made for the intervention at Fisksätra museum

“When a man rides a long time through wild regions he feels the desire for a city. Finally he comes to Isidora, a city where the buildings have spiral staircases encrusted with spiral seashells, where perfect telescopes and violins are made, where the foreigner hesitating between two women always encounters a third, where cockfights degenerate into bloody brawls among the bettors. He was thinking of all these things when he desired a city. Isidora, therefore, is the city of his dreams: with one difference. The dreamed-of city contained him as a young man; he arrives at Isidora in his old age. In the square there is the wall where the old men sit and watch the young go by; he is seated in a row with them. Desires are already memories.”

-Italo Calvino, *Invisible Cities*



It's quite hard to say exactly where a neighbourhood begins and where it ends, but generally it's the place that you leave when you go to work or to school and where you sleep, eat, rest, or play. Now, many of us are working from home and spending a lot more time in the house. Many of us are stuck sitting behind windows. Kitchen windows, living room windows, bedroom windows, bathroom windows, front porch windows, Skype windows, Zoom windows, WhatsApp video chat windows.

This spring, the Coronavirus pandemic has changed how we interact with other people. We connect to our loved ones in cities on lockdown, sometimes, half the world over. At the outbreak of the pandemic, we started talking to different Fisksätra residents on Skype and WhatsApp about home, feelings of worry, confusion, and longing for normality. Now, a dollhouse sits in the museum's front window, and behind its own windows, everyday scenes become stories. Stories from adults and children, of everyday life in Fisksätra and elsewhere. Some of them are our own stories, of our homes, which are often far away, or hard to grasp, and sometimes the line defining who exactly it was telling the stories has become blurred.

Modelled on Fisksätra's highrise buildings, the dollhouse is a way to explore thresholds between private and public spaces, and the physical and digital windows which provide an albeit limited lens through which we can see one another in this time. But at a time like this, what does it mean to sit in one room next to many other rooms? Does it matter that your room is in Fisksätra, Sweden or might it just as well be anywhere? How has our current situation changed how we inhabit the spaces around us, the private and the public spaces that our lives usually take place in? The spaces we dream up and fantasize about, and the spaces we remember, real or imagined? How has this changed our definition of what a neighbourhood is?

2. Poster made for the intervention at Fisksätra museum

berättelser från Fiskis och andra platser

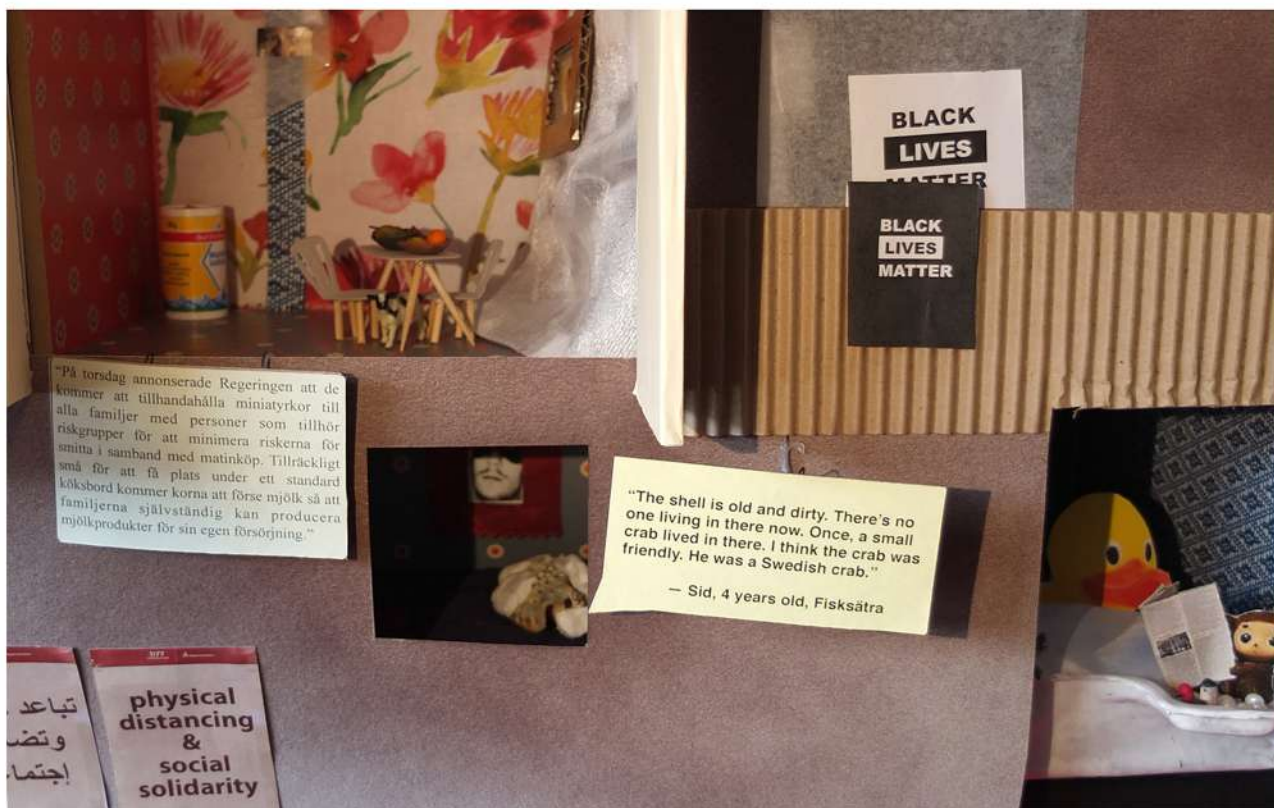
Ett Hus...



Fisksätra museum
21– 31 maj 2020

Visas i museets
fönster mot torget

4. Photos of the dollhouse.








“Vad innebär det att bebo ett rum?”

Att bebo en plats, är det att ta den i besittning?
Vad innebär det att ta en plats i besittning?
När blir en plats verkligen ens egen?



Är det när man har lagt sina tre par strumpor i blöt i en balja av rosa plast? Är det när man har värmt upp spaghetti på en campingkök?

Är det när man har använt alla udda galgar i garderoben? ... Är det när man har upplevt väntans kval, eller passionens hänförelse, eller tandväkrens plågor?

Är det när man har valt ut och hängt upp gardiner i fönstren, och tapetserat väggarna, och slipat parketten?”

— Georges Perec, “Rummets Rymder”



“What does it mean, to live in a room?”

Is to live in a place to take possession of it?

What does taking possession of a place mean?
As from where does somewhere become truly yours?

Is it when you've put your three pairs of socks to soak in a pink plastic bowl? Is it when you've heated up your spaghetti over a camping gaz?

Is it when you've used up all the non-matching hangers in the cupboard? ... Is it when you've experienced the throes of passion, the exaltations of passion, the torments of a toothache?

Is it when you've hung suitable curtains up on the windows, and put up the wallpaper, and sanded the parquet flooring?...”

— Georges Perec, “Species of Spaces”

5. Poster made for the intervention

“Placid small thought No1:

Any cat-owner will rightly tell you that cats inhabit houses much better than people do. Even in the most square spaces they know how to find favourable corners.”

-Georges Perec, Species of Spaces



“ Задумчивая заметка № 1

Любой кошатник резонно заметит, что кошки обживаютя в домах намного лучше людей. Даже в самых чудовищных по своей квадратуре пространствах они умудряются найти уютный уголок. ”



— Жорж Перек,

“Просто пространства: Дневник пользователя”

“Stillsam liten tanke nr 1

Vilken kattägare som helst kan helt riktig tala om att katter bebor ett hus mycket bättre än människor. Även i de mest ohyggligt fyrkantiga rum lyckas de hitta trivsamma skrymslen.”

—Georges Perec, “Rummets rymder”