



Anne K. Senstad: *Gold Guides Me* – Capitalism in the Public Realm Pakhuizen

For the occasion of the Bruges Contemporary Art and Architecture Triennial 2015, the Norwegian artist Anne K. Senstad installed the illuminated sculpture *Gold Guides Me* on the roof of the *Pakhuizen* in Bruges. The work questions the ethical standards by which city dwellers live.

Gold Guides Me

As globalised urban citizens, we are subjected to a constant stream of information about money, commerce and materialism. We are surrounded by supermarkets, shops, trade fairs, banks and property developments and bombarded with advertising that tells us how to live, what to buy in order to be happy and successful, what we should believe in, whom we should vote for and so forth. We have become saturated with information and products and our daily lives circumscribed by the economics of the digital and virtual world. Such a tsunami of stimuli and data inevitably leads to ethical considerations.

Historically, cities were designed to meet the needs of trade and industry, production and transportation. They sprang up on the intersections of waterways that formed transportation networks. A city is always built on capitalist foundations. But the question is, how long can this continue? How will our ethical standards change in the city of the future and what is our worth as individuals and members of society right now? Have we been reduced to faceless consumers or do we still have value in the cultural, social and political fabric of the city?

Phenomena such as gentrification for profit, real estate manipulation and speculation lead to urban and societal restructuring, whereby more vulnerable demographics are driven out of their own neighbourhoods. Then there is the restructuring of cities to accommodate global migration. The value of the city itself and its public spaces is transformed into a financial and economic product.

The installation by Anne K. Senstad consists of a 3D LED word sculpture located on the roof of the *Pakhuizen* in Bruges. The title, *Gold Guides Me*, is a wordplay on religion, the history of finance and all the concomitant associations with greed. It questions our sociopolitical financial value systems and the psychological economics of advertising. *Gold* is interchangeable with *God*. In earlier times, we placed our faith in a higher power, thereby understanding our humble position in a hierarchical structure. In this work, the concept of an inner societal compass, of spiritual values and obedience, is replaced with a fetishism of property, power and wealth and the opportunities afforded by free market competition and dependence, personal freedom and fulfilment.

The sentence also refers to *Hope Guides Me* from Boethius' work *The Consolation of Philosophy*, in which the author speaks to Lady Philosophy. He talks about the transience of fame and wealth and the superiority of things of the mind. She contends that happiness comes from within and that virtue is the only true possession that a person can have.



Bio Anne Katrine Senstad

Norwegian multidisciplinary artist Anne Katrine Senstad (°1967, Oslo, Norway) lives and works in New York. She situates her practice at the intersection of installation art, photography, video and site-specific land art. Senstad plays with notions of architecture, space and time but also of light, word and meaning.

Senstad trained as a photographer and completed her studies at the Parsons School of Design and The New School for Social Research, in New York. In recent years, the focus of her work has been on intelligent but subtle social criticism, inspired by philosophy and literature.

Anne Katrine Senstad has an impressive track record on the international exhibition circuit, including a contribution to the exhibition *The Metamorphoses of the Virtual – 100 years of art and freedom* during the 2013 Venice Biennial.

Website: <http://www.annesenstad.com>

Blog: <http://annekatrinesenstad.blogspot.com>

Video library: <https://vimeo.com/user3150146>

Visitor information

Anne K. Senstad, Gold Guides Me – Capitalism in the Public Realm

20.05 - 18.10.2015

Pakhuizen, entrance from Wulpenstraat, 8000 Bruges

Open Tue-Sun 1 pm-6 pm

The best place to view Gold Guides Me is from Fort Lapin on the Bruges ring road.

Further press information

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Bruges Contemporary Art and Architecture Triennial 2015

20 May – 18 October 2015

What if the five million tourists who visit Bruges annually were to stay? What if a small, preserved, historic city should suddenly become a megapolis? This is the premise for the Bruges Contemporary Art and Architecture Triennial 2015. Eighteen international artists create new works that form an art trail through the city centre. Three indoor exhibitions provide the opportunity to further explore and contextualise the topics. Bruges will be transformed into URB EGG: the Triennial cracks the egg of Bruges in order to reinvent the city from the inside out.

Information and programme: www.triennalebrugge.be

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