

Inhabited places, continuously throughout time, store remnants from human activities. Some activities yield visible marks ending up layered on top of previous ones or they become intricately woven into the surrounding, contributing to define the identity of the place. Other events leave few imprints or no traces at all. However, all aspects of a place can not be visible to us at the same time. Rather, these aspects might be folded away and in order to become unfolded they somehow need to be mediated. How we perceive a place is very much a reflection of who we are, our background and where we are in life. When we encounter a city, village, or any kind of geographical site, we produce a certain image of that place in accordance with our previous experiences. Gilles Deleuze conceptualizes his thinking about the fold in *The Fold: Leibniz and the Barock* (1988), taking ideas of the 15th century philosopher Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz as his point of departure. To Deleuze the pleat as such could be a way of thinking and an operational move applied to any historical event. Although, there is very little resemblance between the Baroque and the exhibited artists discussed below, I find the principle of the fold inspiring as it is always followed by an unfolding. I use it here as a way to discover what potentially is contained within 'something'.

Ottilia Adelborg (1855-1936), Swedish artist, author and collector visited Gagnef for the first time in 1902. Struck by its culture and landscape; particularly the light and rich colors. In front of her appeared a place she described as fairytale-like in her diary. A rural village in Dalarna where she immediately felt at home and later came to stay the rest of her life. Devoted to a self-announced mission in company with peers: rescuing the old peasant culture and its craft traditions from dying out. Dalarna at this time was a region much appreciated amongst the upper class and highly educated people due to its rich culture embodying an heritage canon. Adelborg's work with portraying the people, mapping, documenting and assembling public collections, all relate to her particular view of Gagnef. Through her initiatives, gestures, writings and illustrations, still acknowledged in the region today, she unfolds a specific place.

The fold is not bound to conventional linear logic of perceiving time, rather the principle connects events that might be separated in time by folding history back or forth. Each pleat

contains a world of its own and leads to another, alluding to both continuation and multiplicity.

Gagnef Artist-in-Residence (GAIR) and its research orientated project *The legacy of Ottilia* (2017-2018) encourages participating artists to make acquaintance with their new temporary milieu, as a possibility to situate themselves and their work in a new place. The project also encourages the artists to take the opportunity to discover the seemingly overlooked artist Ottilia Adelborg. In Gagnef, traces from her initiatives with preserving the culture can be found, such as Minnesstugan, but there are not many signs telling us about how she used her home. What is less known to the public is that her traditional house in Gagnef became an attraction amongst artist friends and other less acquainted people who came to stay to work and experience a rural life defined as the core of Swedish culture. To Adelborg her home was also her workplace where she wrote, collected newspaper clippings and held a bobbin lace school in her kitchen aimed at young uneducated women to become professionalised. In fact, one of her last wishes in life was to make her house into a creative place with different craft workshops in each room. A wish that never came true.

A fold is not something cut off or something existing in isolation, instead there is a cohesion between all folds. To me, this could symbolize a bond between Adelborg's ideas and the artists' exhibited work. Newly created artworks and research conducted by the invited artists that in various ways reflect on today's society, about our own time, and through research simultaneously opening up for alternative views on her artistry. These works take on new directions, but also continue where Adelborg left a century ago.

As a person she was expressively engaged in the women's movement aiming for women's legal right to vote. With her books and pedagogical activities she contributed to strengthen children's situation. If she was alive today, would she engage in equal rights and oppose xenophobia? The leading question might not be totally unreasonable to ask.

Artist Marc Handelman has studied Adelborg's ABC-book *Prinsarnes blomsteralfabet* (1892), illustrations anthropomorphically merging letters of the alphabet with typical Swedish flowers. In this project, Handelman's wide scope of research spans from the use of nature to

typography used in various ways to communicate national identity, serving a system with native and non-native parameters. This puts Adelborg's work about Swedish culture in a larger context of belonging —of *who* belongs, and *what* is naturalized. Urgent issues today. Handelman addresses our blindfolded endorsement of nationalism both then and today. In a subversive way undressing Adelborg's Swedish plants in his artists book *Blomsteralfabet* by revealing the flowers' true origins. Here, a fold is opened up already existing within her flower alphabet, like a cavern in a cavern.

Kristina Bength's entry point to GAIR's research project is her ongoing collaboration with Maria Nordin. Bength has spent time reading Adelborg's collected writings about Dalarna where she describes her painting activity as an independent subjectivity, separated from her own. In the exhibition, Bength juxtaposes quotes by Adelborg with quotes from *Tudelad Chapter 1*, a publication by Bength and Nordin where they examine a third subjectivity. Here, folding can be imagined as a form of 'doubling', Bength's thought doubled into the thought of Adelborg. The quotes are accompanied by a large watercolor installation, a corridor of paintings that can be experienced from both inside and outside. Peepholes at each painting's vanishing point make visible the central perspective of the opposite painting in the corridor. A manifestation of a double perspective which makes the onlooker aware of its own viewpoint.

In her encounter with Adelborg Tatiana Danilevskaya found a shared interest in pedagogy, as well as a skill in storytelling. Both artists also possess a capacity in finding and collecting material. Danilevskaya has taken Adelborg's children's book *Pelle Snygg och barnen i Snaskeby* (1896) as inspiration and invited children from Gagnef to read the book out loud and tell their own stories in *Radio Ottilia*. Letting them become part of her radio production and giving the children a voice. Danilevskaya composes a soundscape of local voices, recorded sounds, contemporary music and archival audio material from Dalarna. Blending the present with the past and connecting events and people that are separated in time. By using different types of genres, narratives and languages; she unfolds a diverse place in counterweight to Adelborg's perhaps more specific view of Dalarna.

In *Fäbodvägar eller Buvägar* by Ottilia Adelborg, a short text about old rural paths in the region she writes about the nature, animals and human activities she encounters on these roads. It is a contemplative reflection of what happens to her when walking. Nuno Vicente's interest in History, nature and geology made him spend much of his residency period by foot acquainting himself with the historic and prehistoric surroundings of Dalarna. Performing research by physically experiencing and discovering the same landscape Adelborg once lived in. Collecting stones from different locations in the Siljan Ring, pieces that have been reworked and brought together in a sculpture shaped as a circle. An ancient sign of human cultural activities. In another artwork recording an action where he drops a sculpture from the edge of Dalhalla, a former lime quarry in the center of the Siljan Ring. Creating sounds when the sculpture hit various layers of bedrocks from different historical epochs.

To literally fold a sheet of paper produces an infinite number of variations that is still a part of the same paper. A fold leading to another fold resembles an associative potential kindred with art today. Anders Bergman's artistry and research draws on that potential and allows itself to do sudden and poetic connections, such as linking Dalmålningar to current Ethiopia and back again in history to the Finnish people living in Sweden in the 17th century. Bergman's work proposes alternative narratives and histories, not usually presented to us. Like a fold leading to a new fold, here one trace leading to a new trace leading to a third one shaping a spatial installation that step by step unfolds a place.

Malin Pettersson Öberg's interest in archives and fascination for collecting led her artistic process to Adelborg's collected images: newspaper clippings mounted on archival sheets and arranged into themes in several boxes. Newspaper images separated from their original context; hidden stories and places folded away from us. In close collaboration with Jacek Smolicki, Pettersson Öberg has reworked and assembled these fragments into a whole. Their exhibited newspaper *Ottilia Adelborg: Assembling the World* opens up to new ideas about Adelborg's collecting activity and unfolds these clippings by arranging them into new contexts. At the same time, Pettersson Öberg and Smolicki fold these fragments back and forth in history by transforming newspaper images chosen and cut out by Adelborg, originally produced to serve a specific newspaper context.

Perhaps unfolding could be an approach to sensations as History, places and artworks - to see them as ever evolving. Like folds, I would like to end by suggesting that each artist's presentation awaits new things to be discovered about them.

Sara Rossling

Curator