

Erla S. Haraldsdóttir: "Langenhagen" September 28 to November 26, 2006,
Kunstverein Langenhagen (Solo), Germany

You and your friends are cordially invited to the opening on Thursday, September 28,
2006 at 8 pm.

Greetings: Holger Graab, Chairman

Introduction: Veronika Olbrich, Curator and Dr. Annette von Stieglitz

Erla Haraldsdóttir (born 1967 in Reykjavik/Iceland, lives in Berlin and Reykjavik) studied art at the Royal University College of Fine Arts in Stockholm, the San Francisco Art Institute, and the Valand Art Academy in Gothenburg. In 2005/2006 she had a stipend in conjunction with the international studio program in the Künstlerhaus Bethanien and lives in Berlin since then.

Erla Haraldsdóttir began to manipulate photographs of her familiar environment over five years ago. With subtle interventions, she transformed pictures of the main street in her hometown Reykjavik, for example, into a kind of Chinatown for the project "Here, There and Everywhere" (together with Bo Melin, 2001). Other pictures recall an oriental bazaar. The known architectural features of the Icelandic capital remain recognizable. But upon closer examination, the signs, posters, and Southern European-looking people and goods that cannot necessarily be found in Iceland leads to a considerable disorientation of the viewer as migrants from Southern Europe are usually not found in Iceland's small monocultural cities. There are no fruit stands on the streets and the advertisements found in public spaces are by no means as aggressive as they are in Western Europe. In further projects realized in small Swedish and Norwegian cities, Erla Haraldsdóttir (in collaboration with Bo Melin) tracked down the atmosphere of each town and drastically altered them.

In her most recent computer animated film "Sad with Satie" (2006), she makes the emotional torments of a woman crossed in love by portraying the protagonist's everyday life sensuously comprehensible.

For the exhibition "Langenhagen", she produced a series of photo collages and a computer animation that cast an analytical view of a typical small German city and its heterogeneous architecture. The project for the Kunstverein Langenhagen is her first project of this type to be realized in Germany. For these works, she utilized photographs and drawings after pictures she took in Havana/Cuba, Berlin, and Reykjavik. She seamlessly combines the pictures from completely different worlds together, which we do not notice at first sight. Erla Haraldsdóttir consciously thwarts our patterns of perception. She thus created playful possibilities of alternative ways of seeing our familiar surroundings.

Text by Veronika Olbrich