



Local Soil, Knitted Memory

Helle Bovbjerg and Birgitte Munk

The heathlands' soil serves as a living archive in which artistic interventions can bridge the seeming gulf between our present and the deep past. Ceramic and textile artisans Helle Bovbjerg and Birgitte Munk delve into how history is materially embedded in the heathland landscape.

Bovbjerg's modest earthenware honours the communities that have inhabited and worked on the heathlands over time. Munk explores the earth's strata, drawing parallels with the layers created in knitwear from heathland wool.

Together, their works illuminate the interplay between the natural environment of the heathlands and its historical and contemporary culture. Both materials and craft are rooted in the landscape.



HELLE BOVBJERG

Helle Bovbjerg is educated at Design School Kolding. She is a ceramic artist living and working on the ridge of Jutland close to Dollerup Bakker.

Her work is often related to a specific idea or theme. She uses method and expression that relates to a given concept.

Along her ceramic praxis she is also the co founder and runs the artist driven exhibition space 'The Operators Office' situated in a still running 105 year old cardboard factory.

Her latest work is a commissioned sculpture inspired by the Iron Age for the Hvolris Sculpture park under Viborg Museum.



Baskets, hand pinched stoneware h.33x 33cm , h.33x44cm , h52x34cm



HELLE BOVBJERG

'Five Heath Crafts, a tribute to the working people on the heath.' A greeting to the people living on the heath in the past.

My work is and a comment to the current situation where issues such as sustainability, lack of resources and silent knowledge are today's challenges.

The work is made from partly local found materials and with use of few or no tools other than my hands.

BASKET

A tribute to collected material, to carry and hold the foraged food. One basket is sunken and a symbol of a mission that didn't succeed, or general forfald.

VESSEL

A vessel for the common meal, a daily ritual eating from the same object in the household.

SPOON

A spoon of one's own' raw and modelled in clay. The spoon as a symbol of the individual in a communal life.

Top center: Research of materials 6 cm earthenware.
Top right: Red basket hand pinched stoneware

Left: Vessel local clay, earthenware with slips, hand build. h.12x 38cm



Spoons local clay, earthenware hand modelled let to right 27-32 cm long.



Dish II, local clay, earthenware, slip 40cm



HELLE BOVBJERG

DISH

Flat and formed by hands and knockels, all visible marks in the the object. The dish is slipped with coloured ball clay and oxides.

In the wet slip visible traces and marks from the black crowberry, (*empetrum nigrum*) can be seen in the surface.

WHEEL

The wheel is inspired by the working process from working with the baskets. A reference to the wagon, to transport and moment.



Wheels handpinched stoneware h 67, 30 cm .



BIRGITTE MUNK

Birgitte Munk is a visual artist working at the intersection of textile, photography and printmaking.

In site-specific works, she zooms in on details and materials to create works, installations and spaces with a focus on presence, time and history.

She curates and presents exhibitions of contemporary Danish and international artists in the artist-run exhibition space Enter Art-Space in Aarhus.

Birgitte Munk is trained at the Design School in Kolding and the Glasgow School of Art. Artistic investigations and collective processes are an important part of her practice. She has received numerous awards and grants from organizations like The Danish Arts Foundation.



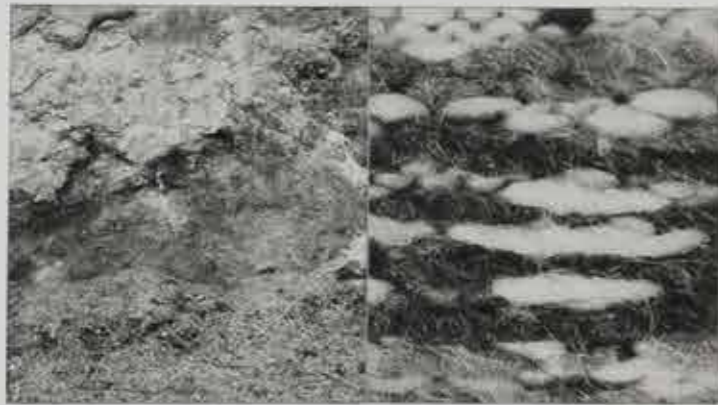
THREADS

In the project *Threads*, wool and knitting are explored and juxtaposed with layers of soil on the heath, presented as photographic close studies.

A hand-knitted woollen sweater from the 1970s is transformed into new knitted objects that can provide warmth, adornment, and protection in an unsettled and unpredictable time.









THREADS/ PHOTOGRAPHS

The back of the sweater is meticulously examined for joins, loose ends, and traces. Parts resembling landscapes emerge. Photographs are printed as graphic intaglio prints – a technique whereby the motif is pressed into damp paper and produces subtle details. Roots and threads converge into new motifs.



THREADS/ KNIT

The sweater is cut into smaller pieces, unravelled, and reknitted over time. Threads are plant-dyed with reeds and heather to create yellow and burnt hues.

What emerges from the process? Necklaces, bracelets, collars, chokers, and hats come into view.

The knitted objects can be experienced as a collection of finds from the past, yet they also point towards a future where the reuse of precious materials and the labour of the hand may become essential.

