

# The Sixth Sorrow

## Sevenfold Pietà with Angel and Detours



In *The Sixth Sorrow – Sevenfold Pietà with Angel and Detours*, SIGNA explores the role of motherhood and specifically the Pietà motif. Pietà is known in visual art as the motif in which the Virgin Mary holds the dead body of Jesus Christ after his descent from the cross. The Sixth Sorrow is the one of the Virgin Mary's seven sorrows that refers to the tragic event.

In the exhibition, the Pietà motif unfolds through seven somber and carefully constructed tableaux set up in Horsens Art Museum's largest exhibition hall. These scenes are most reminiscent of natural history dioramas, museum tableaux or enlarged dollhouses, but their content is far from idyllic. In each tableau, we encounter a mother in an abandoned room, surrounded by traces of loss, despair and dissolution.

The bodies of the dead sons are made of various materials such as plaster, clay, crumpled towels and appear in different stages of the decomposition process. The installation's great wealth of detail places the scenes in its own temporality, where viewers do not know how long the mother has been waiting or grieving the greatest loss of all, the loss of a child.

The mothers and their expressive faces, resembling death or mourning masks, are, with their clothing, removed from any religious thought otherwise associated with the Virgin Mary. With their stained pajamas, used ball gowns, rubber gloves and kitchen elements, they are inserted into an everyday scene, where these objects arouse both recognition and discomfort at the same time. Lamentations flow from each tableau, which, like an echo-like background, reinforce the feelings of disbelief, resignation and defiance that the exhibition evokes.

At the back of the exhibition hall, three women (DK;Slæbekoner) walk towards the installation's large and fearsome tower, dragging all their belongings in a large bundle on their backs. They are worn, dirty and signal a sense of loss. The interior of the tower is completely black, while in the middle of the room there is a large well, while the exterior of the tower is covered with old textiles in many layers.

The exhibition challenges us to consider our own losses, our relationship to grief, motherhood and separation. The Sixth Sorrow reflects the universal pain in the encounter with loss, while questioning the transience of time, space and humanity. Horsens Art Museum and SIGNA invite you to enter a disturbing and captivating universe, where psychological motifs from our common cultural memory are examined.



Exhibition concept: Signa Köstler.

Exhibition design and construction: Arthur Köstler, Lorenz Vetter and Signa Köstler.

Artistic collaboration Tristan Kold.

*The Sixth Sorrow's* extensive soundscape is created by Elias Gottstein, Christian Bo Johansen and the Danscher Koret.

The exhibition is generously supported by:

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