

Salon des Refusés



In Horsens Art Museum's collection the large installation *Salon des Refusés* from 2016 by Tina Maria Nielsen can be experienced. The piece was originally created for the exhibition space in the basement of Den Frie Udstillingsbygning in Copenhagen, where it was presented in 2016. The work was acquired for Horsens Art Museum's collection thanks to a generous donation from Ny Carlsbergfondet. *Salon des Refusés* relates to the rejected and is expressed both through the installation's theme and title. But the rejected is not present as a strictly dictating didactic grip on all the objects and narratives of the installation, but should rather be seen as a loose net which both connects narratives and at the same time branches out into multiple levels.

The title, *Salon des Refusés*, refers to an art exhibition in Paris in 1863 that showcased the art that had been rejected by the jury of the "Paris Salon" in the annual official showcase of French art. The rejected artists created the exhibition *Salon des Refusés* themselves. Furthermore, the installation points to the basement as a room as the work was originally created for a basement.

With the installation, the rejected must be perceived in a broader sense, both as a psychological mechanism; that which we as individuals reject purely mentally, and which therefore lies latent and simmers beneath the surface and as the physical space the basement is. A room where you place items that there is no room for, that are broken or that no longer fit in the house. Symbolically the basement is connected with what we perceive as a dark and gloomy hiding place.



With the artwork Tina Maria Nielsen points to the stories of life. What do we chose to tell through a certain story and what is it we hide in the basement? Every time we tell a story thousands of stories remain untold.

Are we aware of all the selections we make when telling stories, both as individuals, but also as cultural institutions whose purpose it is to store objects from the past that will serve in the future as testimony from a bygone age.

In Salon des Refusés, an accumulation of things that might not stand the light of day and are thus hidden away, can be experienced. The sculptural elements, such as the mobile phones, the blinds, ostrich eggs and an umbrella cast in bronze, spiders in silver, a whale's vertebra in plaster and paraffin, cardboard boxes in powder-coloured plaster, as well as highly symbolic figures such as Thorvaldsen's Jesus, helplessly and carefully glued and put together anew, are all included as storage in the archival system of the basement, staged in metal constructions, illuminated only by a few light sources.

With Tina Maria Nielsen's circling around the rejected, an ambiguous image is evoked which is, on the one hand, dark and gloomy, but even more so is full of possibilities. In the work with the installation, Tina Maria Nielsen clearly shows that she has worked with twisting and altering the materials and our understanding of the chosen objects. The objects do not point to a uniform narrative with strong symbolism, but to multiple narratives and multiple symbolic starting points that balance between the immediate and recognizable and the more incomprehensible and complex.



Among other things, we meet the blind, whose actual function is to separate the private from the public, but in the installation it is experienced as an archaeological find.

Tina Maria Nielsen (born 1964) graduated from The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in 1999. She has had several group and solo exhibitions on the national and international art scene. She received Statens Kunstfonds' three-year work grant in 2007. She is furthermore one of the co-founders of the exhibition site Skulpturi, which won Kunst Kritikprisen in 2012.

Tina Maria Nielsen works with sculpture and installation, where 1:1 objects from everyday life are cast in new materials such as bronze, cement, wax and rubber. The objects are taken out from their usual applicability and transferred to a more fluid state between image and process.

