



Successful Concept: Throughout December, gallery owner Elisabeth Ramfjord had a full house for this exhibit, consisting of works such as Gitte Dæhlin's sculpture and Sol Kjøk's painting. She is now awaiting the return of its sister show, *Beautiful Maladies*, which was on view in New York in December and reopens in Oslo on Jan 19.

From Oslo to New York – and Back

by Maren Ørstavik

December 31 was the last day of Gallery Ramfjord's exhibition of Norwegian artists in New York. The somber-themed exhibit *Beautiful Maladies* will now return home.

The artist exchange between Oslo and New York has been one of the well-established gallery's major projects this fall. Gallery owner Elisabeth Ramfjord curated the exhibit *Beautiful Maladies*, comprised of eight artists from her own stable in Oslo, and introduced them to the New York art world at .NO Gallery in Manhattan. In return, artist Sol Kjøk, who is the prime mover behind .NO, put together *Out on a Limb*, a show of Norwegian artists residing abroad, for presentation at Gallery Ramfjord in Oslo. December 31 was the last day of the exchange, but now the New York leg of the show will soon be on view back home.

Artist Exchange Oslo - New York

Collaboration between Gallery Ramfjord in Oslo and the New York gallery .NO, founded by Norwegian artist Sol Kjøk.

The exhibit *Out On a Limb* on view at Gallery Ramfjord in Oslo featured works by expat Norwegian artists: **Ellen Bang, Gitte Dæhlin, Bjørn Hegardt, Anki King and Sol Kjøk.**

The exhibition *Beautiful Maladies* shown at .NO presented Oslo-based artists in NYC: **Ole Marius Jørgensen, Marie Kristiansen, Merete Løndal, Anja Niemi, Reinhardt Søybye, Morten Thyholt, Henrik Uldalen and Trygve Åsheim.**

The exchange ended on December 31, but on January 19, *Beautiful Maladies* will return to Oslo.

Popular Wolves

- *Beautiful Maladies* was very well attended over there. Many of the gallery's patrons belong to the Norwegian art community in town, but American visitors make up an even greater number. And obviously, a lot of people here at home would also like to see this exhibit. Not everybody was in New York in December," says gallery owner and artist Elisabeth Ramfjord.

While the somewhat melancholy exhibition, which deals with various forms of decay, was on view in Manhattan, Gallery Ramfjord hosted a show of works created by Norwegian artists residing abroad, including Ellen Bang's sculptural suite *Wolf Pack*, on loan from the University of Bergen, and Gitte Dæhlin's fantastical installation *Gryende Oppstand* [Dawning Uprising] from Lillehammer Art Museum. Anki King and Björn Hegardt showed drawings, while .NO's Sol Kjøk placed her personal New York stamp on the selection with, among other works, a large-scale mural.

Beautiful Decay



Mural by Sol Kjøk Photo: TOM A. KOLSTAD

But now the wolves have to go to make room for *Beautiful Maladies*.

"We borrowed the title from a Tom Waits album. It refers to the fact that many of the artists explore the subject of deterioration, and the beauty in decay, in various ways," says Ms. Ramfjord.

Ms. Ramfjord is proud of the fact that several of the artists in her stable are self-taught, while others trained abroad.

"Many of them are virtuoso painters. This is interesting, as Norwegian art academies these days are mainly concerned with installations and video," she says.

Among the featured artists is photographer Ole Marius Jørgensen, represented this time around with a series of photos from a closed-down mental hospital. Multidisciplinary artist and film director Marie Kristiansen (the creator of last year's *The Exteriors*) shares her oblique view of the representation of female bodies in fashion photography. (See fact box for a complete artist list.)

Win-win Situation

The gallery owner is very happy with the artist exchange, and is already planning another collaboration with .NO.

"As you know, Norwegian artists are dying to show in New York. And many of the Norwegian artists residing overseas would like to exhibit in their home country. In other words, this is a win-win situation," she says, and adds that the Oslo leg of the exchange, *Out on a Limb*, has attracted a great many visitors.

The *Beautiful Maladies* exhibit opens at Gallery Ramfjord on January 19.