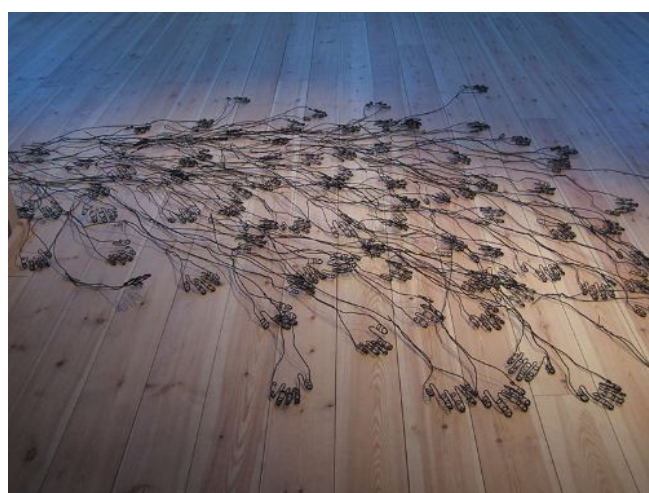


Kathy Desmond. Being and Times, 2006

Kathy Desmond (b. 1955 US)

Vuojoki Mansion / Lönnström Art Museum



In her art, Kathy Desmond investigates important philosophical questions. What is being? How do we exist? How does life present it itself to us? To address these questions, the artist uses materials ranging from light drawings to stories from interviews, and then combines these elements to form architectural spaces in which life and time take place. Using wire and line, Desmond fills these stories and spaces with people and furniture; the exhibition becomes a 3D drawing of life in Vuojoki Mansion when the building was a home for the elderly. The exhibition brings together simultaneously the austere beauty of classical architectural- the elegance of the ornate stove and chandelier- with the beds, tables, and presence of everyday life, captures by excerpts from interviews which women from Eurajoki reflect on their lives.

The perception on the viewer changes while she on he moves through the space on the exhibition. The wire sculptures seem to draw and then redraw themselves, appearing one way, and then another, depending on the angle. The stories shift, overlap and sometimes merge. The exhibition presents life in its many iterations: it is both fragmented and whole discontinuous and ever-present, imposing and modest. Being, viewed through the lenses on aging and the passage of time, is conceived of as a temporal, layered state. The animation Time gives voice and body to the shifting possibilities within being: is it found in the accumulation of the everyday.

For over 20 years Desmond's art has focused on women's lives and experiments. In this exhibition the artist considers women's memories and perceptions of life as they age. How do you experience life? What do you think in your everyday life? What does it mean when times go by? How do we celebrate the particulars of everyday experience, which is life in itself?

At the core on the exhibition is an ontological inquiry. Kathy Desmond's calls to mind concepts explored by German philosopher Martin Heidegger in Being and Time. Heidegger considers being in relation on time, space and language. For Heidegger, there is no fixed instance on being; rather, it is contextual, made up of individual experiences lived in relation to place, other people, history and dead. Being in itself is always incomplete, and can only be reached through listening to life and trough intuition. Desmond's exhibition is an act of intuitive listening for being. She describes this as "reflection": this condition sees life through a multitude of viewpoints- what has happened, what was anticipated, and the potential for future possibilities.

Kathy Desmond lives in Boston, MA, USA. This year, while a sabbatical from her position as visual communications professor at Endicott College, she participated as a guest artist in the Raumars artist-in-residence program. During February and March she interviewed elderly women in Eurajoki's Grandma's Chamber. Her exhibition is inspired by their lives and stories, the setting of the Vuojoki Mansion, and the many histories of women's life in Finland.

- Kati Kivimäki, Director, Lönnström Art Museum.

Kathy Desmond: "It is not often enough that women's stories are heard. I have enjoyed hearing Eurajoki elderly women share their memories and life stories. They seem to possess an awareness of time and an appreciation of the everyday."



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