

Ron Saunders & Mackenzie Bristow. Repositioning Nostalgia, 2010

Ron Saunders (<http://www.ronlsaunders.com>)

(b. 1975 US) &

Mackenzie Bristow (b. 1978 US)

Syvärauma school 3. – 18.5.

Open studio 19.-20.5, 26.-27.5.

Biennale Balticum 2010 What's up Sea? – exhibition 12.6. – 19.9.

Time Bandits 3 Rauma – New York 5.6.

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Repositioning Nostalgia – An Emigration of Dormant Sentiments

Ron Saunders and Mackenzie Bristow came to Rauma to investigate identity and nostalgia through a number of events and activities. Coined as the Office of International Cooperation (OIC), the collective attempts to create situations, interventions, and environments where the audience becomes both participant and creator. While in Rauma, they spearheaded two community projects, a live video feed from their studio in Rauma during the Bushwick Open Studios, *Time Bandits 3* exhibition, in Brooklyn, New York, and an event at Syvärauma Bay culminating in a display at the Rauma Art Museum during the *Rauma Biennale Balticum 2010 – What's Up Sea?* exhibition.

One of the primary reasons for selecting Rauma was the area's reputation for its unique brand of Finnish. In April OIC visited Syvärauma school's 6th grade class, where members of Nortamo Seor, an organization dedicated to preserving the Rauma Language and texts written by H.J. Nortamo, joined them. Pulling from their interdisciplinary background, Bristow is a linguist, the OIC became interested in how mutually intelligible the old and current languages are. The children listened to the stories spoken in the old language and worked with OIC to create both drawings and watercolors.

In May, the OIC held open studio hours in Old Rauma and invited the public to draw an object that was closely related to their identity. When participants arrived, they were asked "If you had to leave Finland, what object would you take with you?". Simultaneously, the OIC visited the homes of several international residents in both Rauma and Helsinki to document objects that they had brought with them to Finland.

For "Nostalgia" part artists asked people: "Do you have a favourite story?" and recorded childhood stories or favorite Finnish folktales spoken in the Rauma language.

In an old skiff modified by the OIC these drawings, memories and Rauma dialect stories got to their maiden voyage. On 12th June a skiff launch was organized at Saharanta beach. As the OIC laid out the drawings they realized that they represented a group of people that they did not want to leave behind. Although OIC's first plan was to investigate the identity and nostalgia of the community, the topic had been turned inward. The OIC decided to help the emigration by mounting the drawings into an old boat fitted with a new motor. Since neither Saunders nor Bristow had ever used a boat, they used the recordings of the old Rauma Language (which has a long maritime history) they collected from community members as a good luck charm to guide the boat.

Time Bandits 3. Rauma – New York

Office of International Cooperation OIC (Ron Saunders & Mackenzie Bristow): *Time Bandits 3* invited local people to live New York Show event. In cooperation with Brooklyn based art collective 'Pioneers of Inspiration' artists held a conference call (video feed via Skype) during the opening of 'Time Bandits 3' at the Bushwick Open Spaces. By attending the meeting people got a chance to actively participate in an exhibition and interacted with other artists or art-minded people.

