

Jill Maurah Leciejewski

THIS IS OSLO

Jill Maurah Leciejewski is an art historian based in Berlin. She writes about the work *This is Oslo* located on an electricity mast at Bjerke.

In the work *This is Oslo*, Hlynur Hallsson resorts to one of his tried and tested artistic formats. Three passages of text in different languages are brought together as a continuous volume of text in contrasting colours under a connecting title. In this piece he uses Icelandic, synonymous with his origin; English, as a world language understood by billions of people; and Polish, as a symbol of discovery, learning processes and understanding.

This is Oslo. The title of the work reveals the thematic context linking the individual sentences, even though the viewer may not speak all three languages. Hallsson locates the texts using Internet search engines. This endows the selection with an element of chance, but at the same time selection is subject to the omnipresence of search engine optimisation. The aim is to create contrasts between language, content and form, which can reach a level tantamount to provocation. The contents themselves act as fragments of information that set out to provoke curiosity and raise questions. Hallsson is less concerned with the actual informational value of the lines of text, which in any case are removed from their original context, but rather with a mental point of departure for the recipient. This is Oslo.

Spray-painted onto surfaces, Hallsson's technique holds these otherwise volatile elements in union. He has consciously dispensed with large canvases or monumental panels in favour of the simplest means of production. In doing so, he deliberately runs a risk of being misunderstood. Especially when it comes to installations in urban areas, where his work is not always understood by the general public as art. Apperception demands an attentive eye and an alert mind. This is Oslo.

