

Kari Ósk Ege

THE FENG SHUI PROBLEM

Kari Ósk Grétudóttir Ege is an Icelandic/Norwegian visual artist and writer, based in Oslo. She writes about the work *The Vigeland Park* at Huk, Bygdøy.

In the work *Berlin Childhood around 1900*, Walter Benjamin wrote that to a child the city is a labyrinth. To get as close as possible to 'the truth' about childhood in the city, Benjamin tried to relive the city from the child's perspective. An important part of growing up in Berlin was getting lost in the Tiergarten.

Although it isn't as easy to get lost in Vigeland Park as it is in the Tiergarten, I am nevertheless unable to get clear a mind's-eye view of the park. I have recurring dreams about the park. It grows and spreads everywhere, like the Manchurian mushroom that lifestyle gurus use to brew their *kombucha*, which can grow as large as an inland lake.

But in reality nothing called Vigeland Park exists. The park in question consists of two parts. On one side there is the Vigeland complex – that is, the sculpture complex – and on the other side Frogner Park. Vigeland Park is therefore a misunderstanding. Nevertheless – or perhaps for that very reason – Hlynur Hallsson chooses to call his work *The Vigeland Park*. The work consists of three different texts about the park that the artist has found on the Internet. The Internet has long since become the ultimate lost property depot. Physical searching is today reserved for archaeologists and for people who are unable to put things where they belong, either physically or mentally. The past is not so easy to place, and the nose is the eternally open portal to memory.

Vigeland Park smells of flowers, dog poo, grilled food, alcohol, perfume, coffee, mouldy or new-mown grass, metal, juice warm and frozen, and the scent of a kindergarten teacher – the vague but exciting odour of bleach. The sensory experience of the past invades the present, irrespective of the season. And somewhere there is the sum of all the times you have ever visited the park.

Fortunately, the Vigeland sculptures, riven as they are by forces and feelings, can play out any psychodrama from the archives of memory. In the meantime, we can safely paddle in the fountain and eat a bursting sausage.