

Dining at the House of the Ocean

Why

Even though we live close to the ocean in Bergen we still live very far from it. When was the last time you stood at the edge of the ocean? We usually see it from behind two land barriers. From being a vital source of both nutrition and trade it has now been reduced to a pleasant leisure activity, at best. In Bergen, the seafood is either Michelin star worthy or something you pick up from a supermarket freezer. At the same time on a global scale we are over-harvesting the oceans natural resources while both local and national governments alongside supranational organisations seem indifferent to rectifying the problem with legislative means.

What

This project challenges the mindset of the older generations when it comes to what seafood can be, the market with what is available and edible and yourself by giving you an opportunity to learn how to engage with delicate ingredients.

Sailing from the innermost protected bay and out into the wild north sea. Reeling in your own fish, foraging your own ingredients along the shoreline, in the coastal forests and on the few farmlands in the west. The House of the Ocean is always open, but the ocean will decide when we are welcome to stay. Every Saturday the cooking space is reserved for a popup-restaurant hosted on rotation by local seafood restaurants, research/education institutions and other NGOs that promotes a sustainable harvest from the oceans resources. The rest of the week it is open for anyone who wants to come and cook by the ocean.

Where

Bølgekraftverket at Toft, in Øygarden, was built to harness the power of the North Sea, but failed twice to withstand the raw force of the ocean. The site inspires reverence for the natural force of the North Sea and shows us how we might use its rightful spoils. Declining fish stocks is not easy to spot with the naked eye when gazing at the horizon so using the ruins of a failed wave power plant helps bring in the seriousness of the situation. In this almost post-apocalyptic landscape we are literally on the edge of what we perceive as the relative safety of human civilization. On the wrong side of the ridge that protected the earliest settlements from the north sea. In this place we cook our dinner.

How

A safe harbour that welcomes you to dry land on the protected side of the island. Then a path that takes you through, over and across the rugged landscape that is scattered with the remains of the old power plant. Over the ridge you are greeted by a fortified shelter made to withstand the last embrace of the waves as they hit solid land. The construction and tectonics are inspired by what remains in place today after the failed power plant.

Enjoy your meal.

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