

Simon Ferner: SLAGG

Sven and Ellida Hjort's Stipend Exhibition

15 Feb–23 Mar 2025

Publication release and artist talk: 23 Mar

In his artistic practice, Simon Ferner explores how the remnants from history tell stories of what has been neglected or forgotten. In the exhibition, he focuses his attention on LAMCO*, a former industrial syndicate with connections to Limhamn, Lomma and Grängesberg. Ferner follows the traces of the Swedish companies' massive mining project and colonial claims in Liberian Nimba, which during the 1960s and 70s was one of the world's largest producers of iron ore.

In search of what was left, Ferner, who himself grew up in the aftermath of the Grängesberg mine's closure, built up an extensive collection of found materials and images. Parallels and reflections capture his interest, such as stories about growing up in these different places, graffiti on walls left in the mining towns or common swifts that fly hundreds of miles between abandoned buildings near the mines.

In the exhibited works, Ferner combines the materials to make historical connections and emotional associations. In the small gallery, a landscape of bricks from Nimba and Ön in Limhamn unfolds. The artificial island, Ön, is built from slag from the nearby limestone quarry and the ground has long been polluted. The pieces of the large gallery's textile work, that takes the characteristic shape of the swifts' sternum, have been colored with blackberries, sea buckthorn and sly from the toxic terrain.

It was also in Limhamn that lime was taken from to an eternit factory in Lomma. The asbestos cement was used to build "Lomma Houses" in Nimba, where the mine's employees lived. Glimpses of those houses are shown in the video work and the collages with archive material and photographs, which connect the past and present of the places. The tall steel sculptures create a historical resonance as well. Their shape resembles a type of smelting furnace that has been used for centuries in refining iron in both Liberia and Sweden. With their skeletal appearances, they are reminiscent of a practice that stretches far back in time, long before the large-scale exploitation of the iron ore industry.

In the exhibition, materials and forms carry a larger story about what was left when the industry abandoned the places and the mining ceased. The scattered geographies meet in a common history; slag comes up to the surface and forms new stories that testify to both the memory of the places and the present.

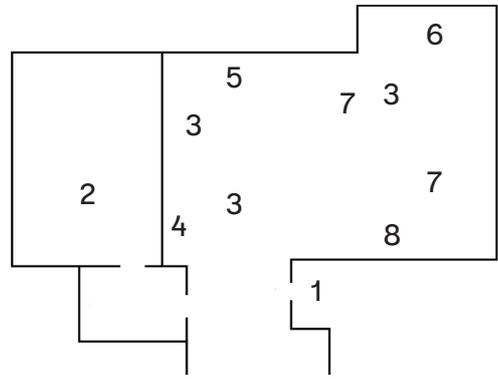
Curators: Albin Hillervik and Janneke Schoene

Technicians: Jesper Veileby and Linus Svensson

*Liberian-American-Swedish Mining Company

List of works

- 1 *Löftet*, 2025. Video, 4:28 min
- 2 Untitled, 2025. Cement, slag and brick from Lomma, Nimba and Ön
- 3 Untitled, 2025. Steel, charcoal
- 4 Untitled, 2025. Postcard from Grängesberg
- 5 Untitled, 2022/2025. Photography from Yekepa
- 6 Untitled, 2025. Collage with material from Grängesberg, Nimba and Ön
- 7 Untitled, 2025. Textiles from Grängesberg, Nimba and Ön
- 8 Untitled, 2025. Brick pipes from Lomma, steel



About the artist

Simon Ferner's artistic practice revolves around forgotten and hidden parts of our common history. Through research in archives, libraries and museum collections, he connects and maps unexplored stories together with site-specific investigations. His works raise questions about how these places bear their history and what traces remain today. Since 2020, he has been running Arkiv S, a collection of accounts of racist violence in Sweden, with a focus on the 1990s. Ferner studied at the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm and has previously exhibited at Vallentuna kulturhus, Lunds konsthall and Ställbergs Gruva, as well as in Malmö with the project Antirasistisk Monument.

About the stipend

The Sven and Ellida Hjort's Exhibition Grant is awarded annually to an emerging artist from Skåne. The awarded artist is chosen by a jury appointed by the board of Skånes konstförening. The 2024 jury consisted of Sofia Persson (Plattform KC Syd), Roxana Kaboli (Form/Design Center), and Ina Nian (artist). Previous recipients include Stacey de Voe, Matilda Tjäder, Cia Kanthi, Ikram Abdulkadir, LealVeileby and Hanni Kamaly.

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