

Baltic Horizons Competition
Proposal for Art Work

Lotta Mattila

“YOUR MOVE”

INSPIRATION

I was inspired by the visit in Sopot and by the two parallel but different outdoor areas by the seaside. Side by side you have the long shore line full on seagulls and swans. Next to it there is the park with beautiful trees and greenery with hooded crows. I was also very inspired by our visit to The Institute of Oceanology of the Polish Academy of Sciences.

We live alongside with the nature and animals and we are both affected by each other. With our actions we can destroy nature around us, but on a closer look, we are the ones close to a crisis. One way to think is that nature on the other hand will find a way of balancing itself. When we think of nature preservation it is easier for us to focus on iconic animal species that we would want our grand children to see in their lifetimes, but nature itself does not value one species over another. It is harder to see the complexity of ecosystems with micro-organisms and species living out of our sight. In the end it is our way of living that is in jeopardy when ecosystems break.

Our co-existence with nature is a complicated game of chess.

DESCRIPTION OF THE SCULPTURE

The piece consists of a 6m x 6m park chess board and life size bronze bird sculptures set on top of it instead of chess pieces. The selected bird species are local species of Sopot. To represent the white pieces there are swans and seagulls. For the black pieces there is a white tailed eagle, hooded crows and pigeons. Original chess game has two sets of 16 pieces. The number of birds will be 7-12 on each side since in the sculptures setup, the game is on and some pieces are already out. The bird species will represent different chess pieces and their value by their size and by commonness. For example there are two swans representing the white king and queen and several seagulls as pawns and other pieces. The endangered white tailed eagle serves as the king on the black side alone without a queen. Although the birds represent the chess pieces, they will be set on the board as if they were naturally walking on it and not in strict order of actual chess pieces. We are playing the game, nature has its own rules.

The bird species are also selected to have site specific value to the city of Sopot. Swans are a classic part of Sopot's beach imagery, the seagull can be found in Sopot coat of arms and the white tailed eagle is the national bird of Poland. Two sides of the chess match can also be seen representing the parallel areas of the beach and park in Sopot.

The chess board can be walked on, and the sculptures can be touched by the viewers. The piece will both serve the purpose of sparking thoughts and to also be enjoyable by viewers of all ages.

MAKING OF THE SCULPTURE

The bird sculptures will be hand-sculpted out of clay by the artist in their studio. The style of the sculpture will follow artist's simplified yet roughly naturalistic style with the emphasis on creating lively characters instead of photorealistic detailing. The birds will then be casted into bronze in Finland. Artist will use an art foundry they have worked with on previous projects. The colouring of the sculptures will be made by bronze patinating process to receive a beautiful finish of high artistic value. Surface will be coated by a suitable lacquer to protect the patina over wear of the weather and human touch. Patinating will be done by the artist in co-operation with the foundry.

The chess board can be produced out of natural stone tiles or coloured concrete. Chess board manufacturing will preferably be done in co-operation with a material supplier local to Poland. The material provider will be settled later on if the proposal goes on to be actualized. The budget for the chess set is calculated by the current market value in Finland.

In order to keep the chess tiles from cracking, there needs to be proper ground work made. Specific details of the materials used underneath will be specified after the final placement of the art work has been settled. The final material will also be decided according to the placement. The sculptures will be firmly attached to the board by welded steel rods that go through drilled holes in the tiles and are anchored underneath. Due to the nature of birds' narrow legs the underneath of the birds will be sculpted in a way that there will be additional bronze support. Support will make the sculptures more durable for people touching them and prevent stealing by sawing the thin legs.

MAINTAINANCE AND LIFE-SPAN

Due to the sculpture's materials, it is long lasting and low in maintainance. The bronze and tiles endure changes of weather well on their own. Patinas will be protected by lacquer but the artist sees natural patina due to touching and weather as part of the sculpture's life-span. Occasional cleanup from dupree should be considered. The lacquer surface should be inspected in case of wear by an art restorer preferebly every few years.

LOCATION

The sculpture is designed to be located at the Northern park in Sopot. Exact placement can be specified together with the artist and Baltic Horizons representative.

BUDGET

Bronze casting and patinating	45 000 €
Chess board	20 000 €
Sculpting work and artist fee	30 000 €
Total	95 000 €







