Augustas Serapinas Snowmen from Sopot

Personal encounter

I myself began to question the future of snow in this region in the winter of 2019-2020 when I was developing a project for the second edition of Riga International Biennial of Contemporary Art. I was supposed to collect and cast snowmen around Riga city erected by locals during the winter. I had a team ready. But the snow never came (same year was in Vilnius- my home town). It resulted in a change of my project for the exhibition. I can't recall any other winter without snow. Was it a result of climate change? I don't know. But it certainly helped to make some reservations that way.

The project

The ecological implication of my proposal is embedded in the project logic itself. The commission is only possible once there is snow in Sopot. Once we have it- there is a big chance that after a day or few we will see snowmen, snow castles or other snow built objects in town (*1). Then I intend to take negative mold forms out of found snowmen and other snow build objects. I will use the dry casting method (*2). Then I will cast it using eco-friendly concrete (*example). I will cast 7-10 real size objects. The composition and the casts will be defined by the found snowmen and other snow objects in Sopot. If there is snow in the upcoming winters- there is an option for the locals to build their own snowmen from snow next to my commission and thus change the original composition for a certain duration of time. Commission location-Sopot park near the beach. The exact place would be determined later after consulting with the city municipality.



General scheme



(Installation example)

(*1) I will ask the Sopot city municipality to communicate with the locals about my project. We might note the locals in advance and put signs in certain areas (like parks) in order to inform our intention to cast snowmen and other snow built objects erected in that area.

(*2). The "dry casting" method involves a series of 3-4 thin layers of dental stone that form a shell over the snow object. Using a sifter or strainer, dry dental stone is sifted onto the selected snow object area. Once the stone is sifted to form a layer approximately 3mm thick, water is lightly sprayed from a spray bottle held directly over the snow. The spray bottle should have a misting nozzle so that the water lightly settles onto the dry stone. The water is applied until it is uniformly absorbed by the powder but not over-saturating. The moisture content of the snow also mixes with the dry stone and will determine the amount of water needed. This is especially true with the first layer when the stone is applied directly to the snow. The more wet or slushy the snow, the less spraying is needed because the casting material absorbs the inherent moisture in the snow.

Between each of the 3-4 thin layers, wait approximately 15 minutes before sifting the next layer. Once the base layers start to cure, the remainder of the dental stone can be mixed with water and traditionally poured into the selected snow object area..

(*3) Snowmen details will be cast from bronze.







