

THE SETTLEMENT
2019.03.19 - ongoing

I don't have any theory really, but it's a big thing in our history in Iceland. I do think about this pretty much literally, that you are coming here for the first time and discover, finding out what to do and what to use. Taking a stand, observing and making things as you want to have them when you come to continue. It's important not to think of this as new found land nor a land of milk and honey, it's a new settlement in the ruins - sort of rebuilding the world :)
- Gústav Bollason

Initiated by Gustav Geir Bollason, Sonia Levy, Filip Tydén and Markus Bergström, The Settlement is a permanent spatial installation at the Icelandic art space Verksmidjan completed in March 2019 by a group of 13 designers, architects and artists including Sonia Levy, Filip Tydén, Markus Bergström, Claes Johansson, Marija Vuletic, Fanny Hansson, Emma Hansson, Philip Stiernström, Lisa Salvall, Klara Wahlstedt, Lovisa Stockman, Koralia Giori and Esbjörn Grip.

Located in and old herring factory in the small town Hjalteyri, Verksmidjan operates an extensive program of exhibitions and performances through a network of Icelandic and international artists. The herring factory was built in 1937 and closed in 1966 due to diminishing herring populations. The factory used to be the centrepiece in the small fishing village and provided the majority of the jobs. Now, the concrete hulk is occupied by Verksmidjan and although only employing a couple of people its presence has changed the demography of Hjalteyri to not only be a town of fishermen but also attracting a small but diverse group of local and international artists.

Most of the participants in The Settlement were at the time students at the course Between Design and Architecture at HDK, Gothenburg University. It was the course outcomes together with conversations with Verksmidjan director Gustav Geir Bollason that laid the foundational structure for the project. Dealing with matters concerning settlement and re-settlement in a time of social, economic and environmental change, 'The Settlement' acts to re-inhabit the old factory while simultaneously elaborating on the possible roles of design within planning and construction of living spaces.

On site, treating the 1937 concrete hulk as a natural landscape (or cave) rather than a building, The Settlement looked at how the old ruins of the fish factory could be transformed into new usages, such as living quarters for artists and spaces for cooking and eating. Using small scale and hands-on processes the project was structured around the combined making skills of the group and the local supply of materials.

During one week the participants lived and worked in the factory to establish ways to inhabit the old spaces. The outcome is a collection of simple furniture including beds, chairs, tables, shelves, kitchen and storages that together outlines a prototype dwelling within the existing building. The pieces have since been in regular use and added to by the people coming to stay at Verksmidjan.



Interior of old herring factory turned art space in Hjalteyri, Iceland



Verksmidjan sleeping quarters



The Settlement group photo. From left Sonia Levy, Filip Tydén, Gustav Bollason, Philip Stiernström, Klara Wahlstedt, Koralia Giori, Markus Bergström, Fanny Hansson, Lisa Salvall, Lovisa Stockman, Marija Vuletic, Esbjörn Grip and Emma Hansson



Table and stools for eating and working



Weavings for seats and beds using finishing yarn and ropes



Furniture production in exhibition area



Wood planing and dimensioning at a local carpenter





Eating area eyed out



Fishing supplies store



Meal preparations and furniture production in eating area



Supper



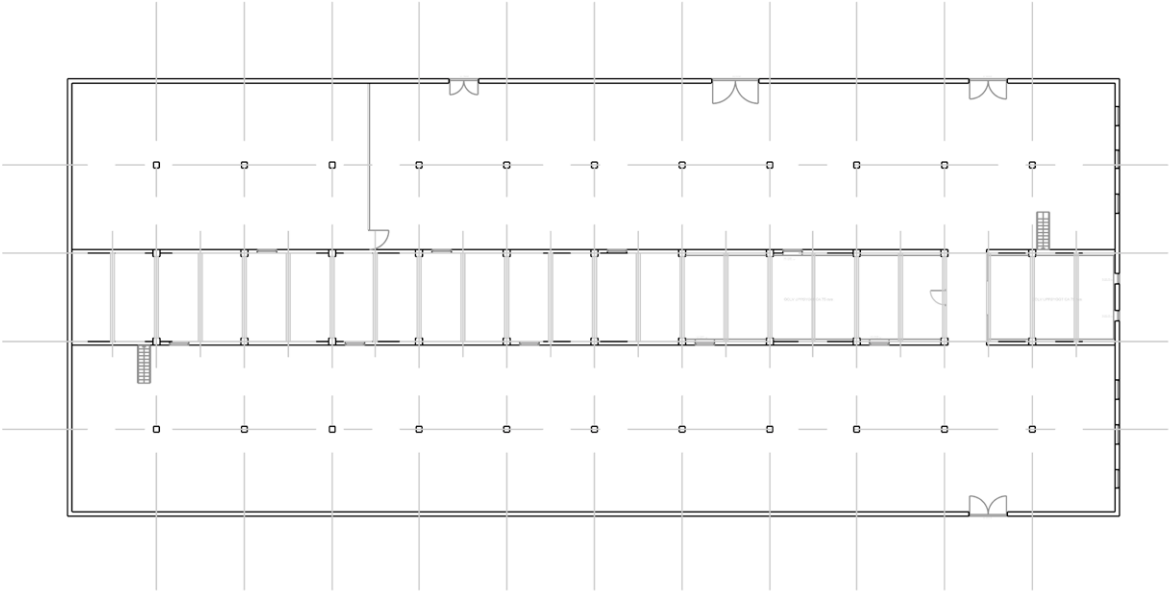
Work station studying and practicing different weaving techniques



Improvised work desk in sleeping quarters



Hjateyri fish factory



Floor plan of project space which makes up approximately one fifth of the total factory area