

Open letter to Sölvesborg:

Sölvesborg, you sent us, the art community, a series of provocations to get our attention. You succeeded: you have our undivided attention.

Your symbolic questions - as Louise Erixon described them - require our close attention, which we can only provide if we are by your side. Let us stand together and declare Sölvesborg our new Swedish Art Capital.

Relocating our art community's headquarters to Sölvesborg will take time; we will start gradually by setting up satellite programs for our top art schools, our major museums and biggest galleries. That way we will be able to organize major art symposia, conventions, seminars, exhibitions,... in our new art HQs. We will require some new infrastructures to house all these art activities; what you cannot provide, we can build together.

To celebrate our new Swedish Art Capital we are coming over to say hello! Artists, art workers, art lovers and art enthusiasts from all over the country, from Malmö to Göteborg to Stockholm to Sölvesborg and everything in between, will want to get a feel of the new art HQ surroundings. After the introduction, we will visit our new art capital much more frequently to get everything up and running.

As a community we are very connected internationally; we will want to show off our new art capital Sölvesborg to our international friends. As international tourists they will need food and beds. The restaurants, bars, hotels and B&Bs are going to prosper in the years to come.

For really big events, biennials or triennials, we'll need even more accommodations. Kassel attracts around one million visitors these days for Documenta - that's 10% of the Swedish population.

The investments will not remain without return, especially when we succeed in winning the ECOOC (European Capital of Culture) in 2026. We will be pressing our Minister of Culture to get the call started. More art, more tourism and more attention.

As for your policy makers: political policies come and go. Art however always remains. The first art works in the caves are still there, but we've forgotten who was the chief of the tribe then. Yes, you'll want to elect new policy makers. You'll want people in office that understand the return of investment on art. It's normal to embrace art and its gentrification effects: throughout history art has always made the regions where it's active more lucrative for everyone - to be brutally honest, mostly for the ones surrounding the arts; that will be you, Sölvesborg.

We are looking forward to this challenge: we finally got the right incentive to stand as one and show the strength of one of the oldest disciplines in human history; utmanande menskonst.

Sölvesborg is dead, long live Sölvesborg!

See you soon,

Warm wishes

Art