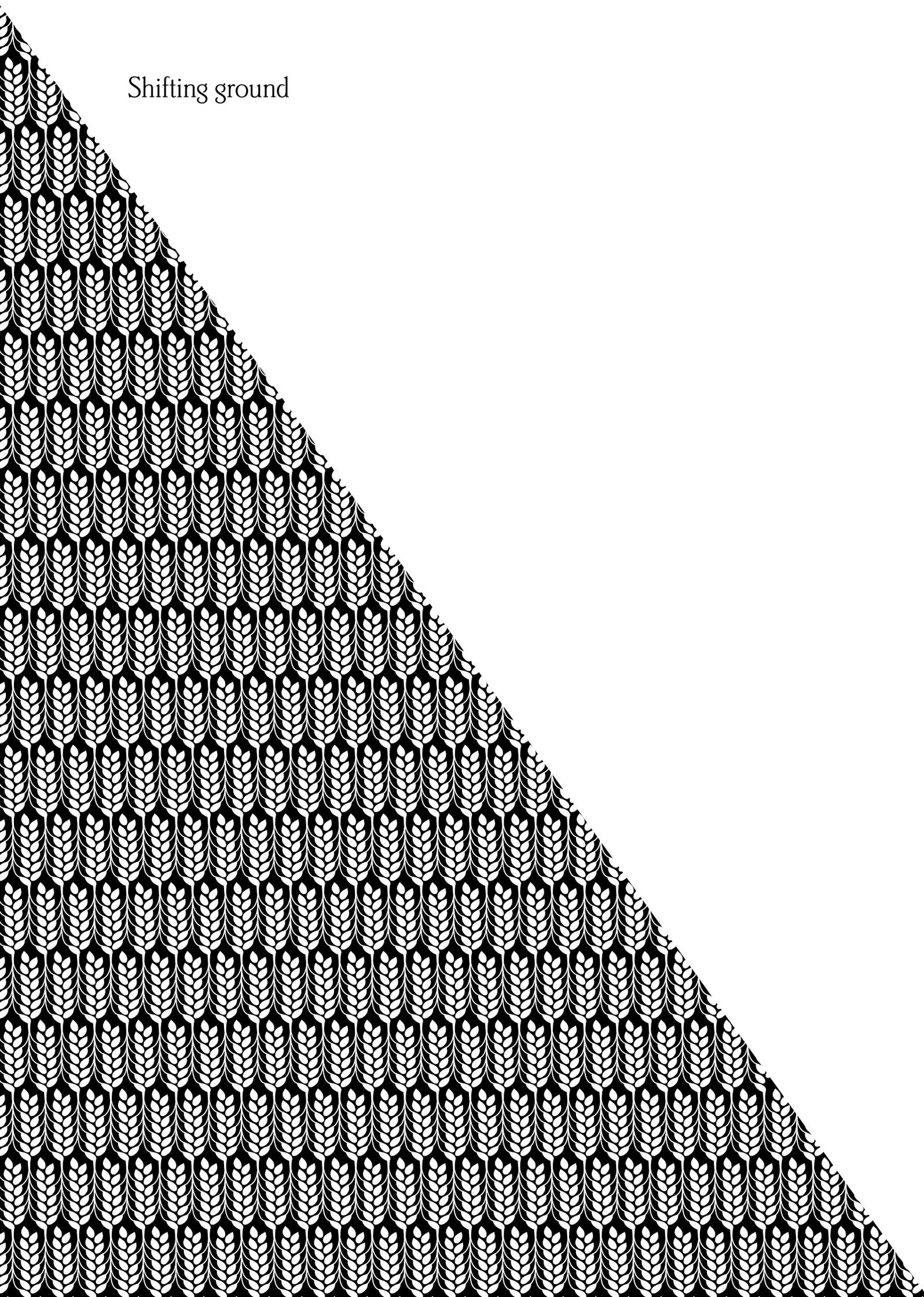


Shifting ground



Shifting ground

Goldin+Senneby with
Simon Lancaster (Speechwriter)
Charlotte Westenra (Director)
Tom McKay (Actor)



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Image on opposite page: Actor Tom McKay meets former
agricultural commissioner Franz Fischler in Absam, Austria
Photo: Richard John Jones

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'SHIFTING GROUND...'

A speech for Goldin+Senneby
To be delivered by an actor

Written by: Simon Lancaster

1. EXPOSITION OF CHARACTER, THEMES, PLACE AND EVENT... 1.

INT/EXT: LOCATION - DAY/NIGHT

GOLDIN+SENNEBY

"Farmers need fair trade, not just free trade."

"You can't preach the benefits of free trade abroad whilst practicing protectionism at home."

"We give two dollars a day for every cow in Europe whilst a billion people in the world survive on half that."

These words... To me, they are art.

They were put together by bureaucrats and used to build a coalition around reforming the Common Agricultural Policy.

But to me, they are as perfectly formed as any painting, sculpture or piece of music.

As precise in execution as a swipe of Monet's paint-brush...
As aesthetically pleasing as a Michelangelo sculpture...

As perfectly formed as a Mozart sonata.

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

This is the art of rhetoric. It is the art of persuasion. It is the art of shifting attitudes – and perhaps more.

I am also an artist – Goldin+Senneby. I am a Swedish artistic collaboration.

You have probably not heard of me before! That's ok! Most people have not.

I am only really famous for one work – a sculpture in my hometown.

So when I say famous I do not mean famous like Abba. I mean famous like an artist can ever be famous. I have 163 fans on Facebook.

I'm probably not an artist in the way that most of you would think of an artist. I don't make things. I'm not a painter. I'm not a sculptor. My art is not production-based.

And even when I do produce something, it is normally someone else who does the work.

I draw plans and contribute ideas. But really my work is more about putting people together. I sit back and watch...

And this lecture is a part of my art. This has been a collaborative project. I have explored recent changes to European agricultural funding

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

because I think that, through this allegory, we might discover new ways to think about European arts funding.

You might think this subject of agricultural policy is quite dense - an unlikely subject for an artist? After all, most people think artists are not interested in bureaucracy. That art and bureaucracy are like chalk and cheese.

But I am not one of these artists that sneer at people in bureaucracy. I admire them! Maybe I even envy them!

You see, I studied economics... but not very well. This is a shame to me because I am now spending a lot of time thinking about policy and economics. I wish I could do them justice like the bureaucrats!

So this speech will be different to most. I am not a bureaucrat. I am not a lecturer. I am no orator like Obama!

I have said this to my speechwriter! I'm not a politician, nor a preacher but an artist... No soundbites. No spin. No rhetoric.

But my speechwriter keeps saying to me, "You must tell me what it

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

is that you want your audience to think or feel! Then I will write a speech that makes them do this!"

But I say to him, 'Why should I want to make my audience do anything?'

He talks of speeches being about persuasion but isn't persuasion inevitably constructed on arrogance?

How can anyone ever be so certain in their judgements they want to inflict them on the rest of the world?!

To me, knowledge is never complete. There is never a finish. There can never be full stops.

This is the same in my art.

The sculpture I mentioned earlier, I made this three years ago, but it will never finish. It will keep on going until the day I die – and hopefully beyond.

So, in my speech, you won't find answers, but questions. I hope to open, not stifle debate. And, if I am honest, it is a desire to confuse, not persuade which guided the hand writing this speech.

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

But I am not without feelings!
I grew up in the countryside. I
care about the countryside. And
I live in the countryside today.

I think this is why Almost
Real asked me to make this
lecture. Perhaps I am the only
artist they could find in Europe
who does not live in a city!

But this has been a very
fascinating project for me.
I have been on a journey.

I did not know anything about
agricultural funding before I
started... But now I have spoken
to a great many people – in
governments, NGOs, the European
Commission and of course on
farms. And something in this
project has really got under my
skin.

I did not expect this.
Perhaps my friends at Almost
Real knew this would happen.
Let me tell you about this
journey I have taken...

2. WHAT IS AT STAKE? THE FUTURE OF OUR CULTURAL LANDSCAPE 2.

GOLDIN+SENNEBY

To start off with, I want to be clear about how much is at stake when we are talking about agricultural funding.

You see it's not just about the food we eat... the air we breathe... the livelihoods of farmers... our natural environment... the well-being of our planet.

It's also about our entire cultural landscape.

Our landscape and our culture are interconnected. It is called agri – culture for a reason.

We cultivate our minds, we cultivate our countries, we cultivate our landscapes. Our culture tells a story and so does our landscape.

You can go back to any point in history and read the landscape like a book. It tells you about the social, scientific, environmental, economic attitudes of the age.

In Ancient Rome, the roads were symbols of cultural progress!

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

They were cutting through the wild woods as a metaphor for their quest for philosophical truth and meaning!

In the Renaissance, the landscape was not something to be protected. It was seen as a wild beast - to be captured, caged and controlled!

So, the more we carved up the landscape, the greater the sense of national pride: think of the drained fields of Norway or the terraced rice fields of Malaysia.

But in the 19th Century, society changed and so did its approach to landscape.

This was a time of great upheaval - with the industrial revolution, population growth and massive urbanisation.

So much was changing that people needed something to cling on to.

They decided to cling on to the landscape - or some idea of what the landscape represented.

So, Britain established the National Trust; the USA established the American scenic and historic preservation society and France established a law for protecting natural sites of artistic character... In Sweden, also, at the same

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

time, we established the Swedish Society for the Protection of Nature. The oak tree became a national symbol!

A cut into the landscape was no longer seen as an act of progress but an act of self-mutilation! The landscape provided a sense of stability – of reassurance. The nation's landscape became a symbol of the nation's identity.

It was all about the aesthetics. We find this in the art, literature and philosophy of the time - from Rousseau and Goethe to Wordsworth and Hardy.

This was a time of relative indulgence... The countryside was a source of pride and pleasure.

But, then after the wars, attitudes once again changed once again.

Food rationing caused more pressing needs to come to the fore.

The people cried for the land to be used for production, not pleasure. The farmers cried out for subsidies, not sympathy. And the politicians were looking to protect vital industries.

And so the Common Agricultural Policy was born...

3. COMMON AGRICULTURAL POLICY — REFORM AND RESPONSE 3.

GOLDIN+SENNEBY

The Common Agricultural Policy soon became a victim of its own success! Europe's farmers produced and they produced and they produced!

Before long going hungry was the last thing on anyone's mind. We had a butter mountain, an olive field and a wine lake to contend with!

And it was no co-incidence the metaphor of landscape was used.

Because people said the landscape was being destroyed through this policy!

They said that farms looked like factories. Pasture land looked like a production line. Incentivisation had led to intensification!

No-one had anything good to say about the Common Agricultural Policy.

But within Europe the French are very powerful. And within Europe the farmers are very powerful. So French farmers are

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

powerful squared.

And the French farmers would not move. And no-one could shift them.

So, for four decades, reform was impossible..

The breakthrough came in 1992, when the Norwegians designed a new kind of payment framework which paid farmers not to produce, but to protect the land.

The European Commission saw this could provide a blueprint for reform in Europe.

Franz Fischler was the Commissioner who brought the reforms through in 2003.

This interested me very much. The crucial aspect of the reform, from my viewpoint, was the decoupling of funding and production. So farms would receive money regardless of whether or not they produced. They were entitled to subsidies regardless of what they did! I wondered where this had left us.

I was lucky enough to interview Mr Fischler. I visited his house in the beautiful landscape of Innsbruck. This is one of

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

those picture-perfect Austrian villages where you half expect the Trapp family to skip past you singing Edelweiss, at any second.

Franz Fischler was born and still lives here. So you can see why he would care so deeply about the countryside.

I was very interested to ask him about these reforms, which had transformed Europe's political and geographic landscape at a single stroke.

He told me all about the negotiations. He tried to pretend he was just the lucky man of Europe. He said that a number of different factors coincided to make the reforms possible: global pressure for open markets, an increased European appetite for cutting budgets and reduced support for the farming lobby.

But I suspect that this was false modesty.

This was an amazing political deal. He built a bridge between two previously irreconcilable positions - between the 'pro reform' British, and the 'pro status quo French'. And he managed to convince both sides that he was on their side!

But my question is what did

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

this political deal mean in practice? What did this mean for the farming community who were to be the main beneficiaries and recipients of the reformed scheme.

When we look at the issue from their perspective, it raises for me a set of far more complex questions, to which there are no simple answers.

4. WHERE DOES THIS LEAVE US? CAP REFORM FROM
THE FARMER'S PERSPECTIVE

4.

GOLDIN+SENNEBY

After reading all those books
and meeting all those policy
makers, my head was spinning. I
had only questions, no answers.
I felt like I was trying to
finish a jigsaw without all of
the pieces.

And then I started to worry
about this speech! I did not
want to look foolish in front of
you all!

So... like many of us do when we
are feeling a little bit worried
and lost... I went back home.
I went back to Norrtälje ... To
the farm where I grew up.

I thought that here I could
write my speech. I could look
around the farm and see what
the agricultural policy reforms
meant. I could speak to my
father - whom I had barely seen
in years.

My father was always a farmer
first, a father second.
I could just look at him and find
out how the farm was doing. He
lived and breathed farming!

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

When the harvest was good, his
cheeks were flushed and rosy!
When he was milking the cows,
his pride filled up along with
the tanks.

Whenever he completed a job, he
would say: 'Proper job!'
Wasn't sure what he meant. But
I knew I disagreed!

He wanted me to become a farmer.
He thought he was passing me
a baton from generation to
generation. He thought this
was my cultural and family
inheritance. But to me it was a
stinging nettle!

I always knew that I was an
artist, not a farmer.
This is part of the arrogance of
youth maybe, but I thought that
art was more nutritious than any
food. I thought that he was old
Sweden and I was new Sweden!

I didn't say this to him. Even
when I was young. But he must
have guessed how I felt! As soon
as I was old enough I left the
farm to go to art college.

But now, as I headed back to
Norrtälje, with all of these
ideas fresh in my mind about
landscape and so on, I was
intrigued to find how I would

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

feel about the farm where I had grown up.

I drove around the hills to get there. It is very beautiful and picturesque around Norrtälje. You go around this winding road and then my father's farm comes into view.

But as I drove around the corner the farm looked different.

I could see the fields – they were there. And I could see the wood at the top of the hill.

But the cows had all gone!

It turned out that my father could no longer afford them. Since milk prices crashed, it was only possible for the very biggest dairy farms – with two hundred cows or more – to survive.

Under the old agricultural policy system, the market had been rigged. Now it had collapsed. My father had been ejected.

He didn't mind so much about the money. To him, it was not about this. His loss was of a different kind. The loss was the way of life. The pride. Not being able to see the milk filling up the tanks.

Now, he got the single payment

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

no matter what. But this was not farming to him, it was failing. He'd gone from work to welfare.

He wasn't one to give up easily. He was still ploughing the fields and taking care of the hay, whether it paid to or not.

But his life had changed and so had the nature of the farm. It was the same with the neighbouring farms.

Some were merely 'pasture polishing'— cutting the grass once or twice a year to qualify for the single payment.

Others had set up side-businesses, appealing to the needs of the 'creative classes' who had moved in.

They were doing gardening for the stockbrokers. Horse-riding for their daughters. Showing the local rock stars how to make cheese.

'Was this so bad?' I asked my dad. 'You have to go with the times.'

But he wasn't having any of it.

'Next thing you know, they'll turn all us farms into theme parks. Come experience, old Sweden! Ride a horse! Feed the

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

pigs! They'll call it Nils-land.
And base it on The Adventures of
Nils Holgersson.'

At least you'll get a good
subsidy, I said!

But then he showed me the
forms he had to complete to
get his subsidy. They were
so complicated he had to pay
someone to fill them in for him.
He said the EU had scrapped
the butter mountain and were
building a paper mountain in its
place.

Since 2003, he'd been on a five
year plan where he got a few
extra kronor each year for
'landscape features' – for
keeping the ditches clear next
to the woods, for pollarding the
trees up the hill.

But he couldn't stand this! He
said it made him nervous. He
didn't feel he owned the farm!
He couldn't do anything without
worrying if he was doing it
the right way. Was he cutting
the tree the right way? Was he
moving the stones to the right
place? What if the inspectors
came?

For those five years, there had
been no inspections. But still

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

the headache became too much.
He opted out of the landscape
features scheme and moved only
to the single payment.

It was ironic. The single
payment he received for his one
man farm was almost identical to
the 'working grant' I had just
received from the Arts Grant
Committee - 120,000 crowns a
year.

'Dad! You're becoming an
artist!' I said.

5. DRAWING CONCLUSIONS...

5.

GOLDIN+SENNEBY

Now, dear audience, we have a slight problem. We have come to the point where I should wrap up this speech.

But words are failing me..
At this point, I had a bit of a disagreement with my speechwriter.

We all agreed that the central issue here was the power struggle and control between the funder and the funded.

But we couldn't agree what this meant.

My speechwriter said we should contrast the failures of public funding to the potentials of private funding. He said that to not do so was like walking into someone's house, seeing a body on the rug, and then turning around and saying, 'Ooh, I'm not sure those curtains go with the carpet.'

(MORE)

GOLDIN+SENNEBY (CONT'D)

But I am a publicly funded artist. I believe that public funding for art is an important part of a developed democracy. I am not interested in pursuing a perspective which suggests scrapping public funding.

And I can say no more because I am merely an actor, paid to play this publicly funded artist.

These have not been my actions – the speech was directed by a director, and she was paid to direct this speech.

And the whole performance was produced by Goldin+Senneby, who were also paid to produce this speech.

We all negotiated our funding.

Maybe we artists are now bureaucrats? Maybe it is the bureaucrats who are now the real artists?

Appendix

Field inspection photographs
of subsidized landscape features.
From the archives of the Swedish
County Administrative Boards.



Pollard willows

County Administrative Board of Skåne

Remark: —

Photo: Linda Paulin



Pollards

County Administrative Board of Stockholm

Remark: **Older pollards**

Photo: Per Karlsson



Pollard willow

County Administrative Board of Skåne

Remark: **Not pollarded**

Photo: Cecilia Nilsson

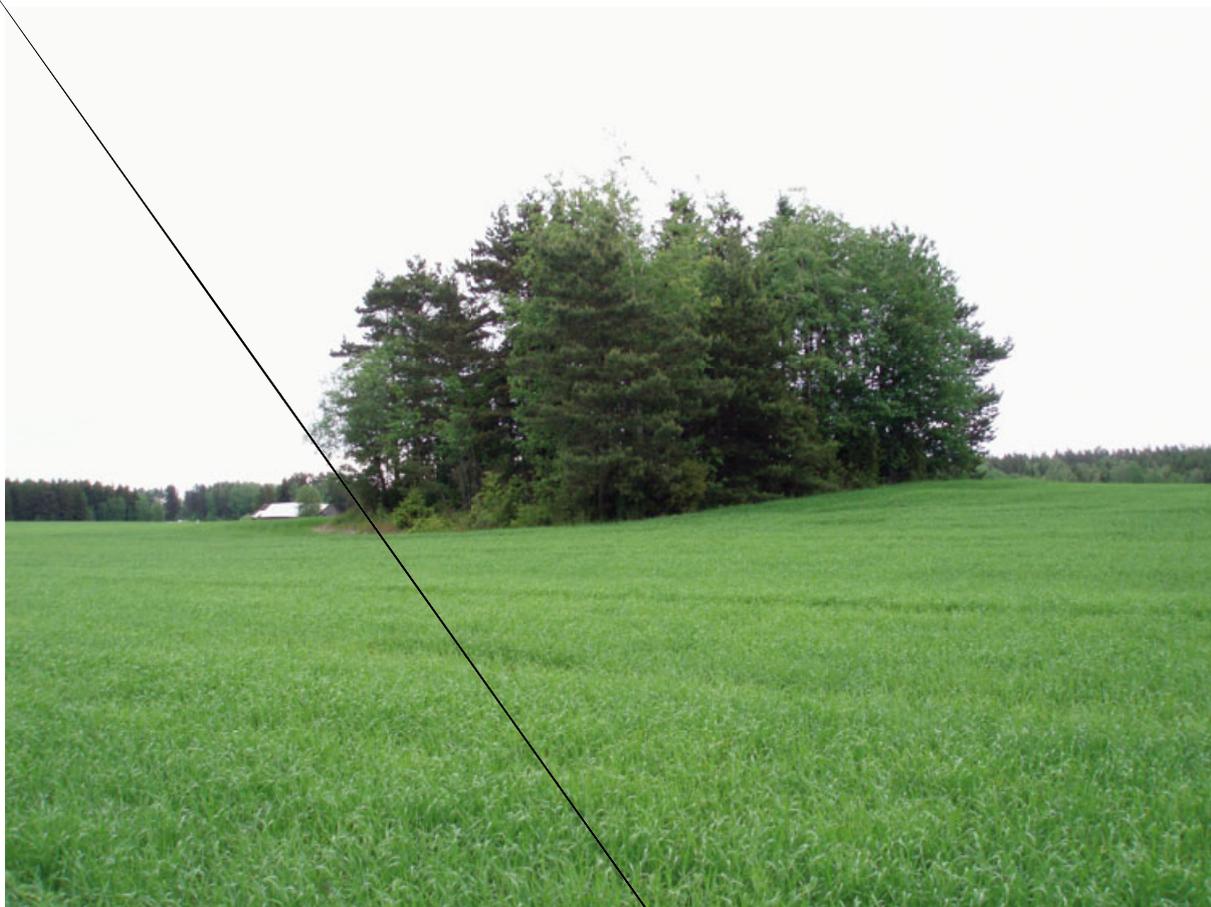


Field islet

County Administrative Board of Stockholm

Remark: **Not approved, overgrown**

Photo: Håkan Olofsson

**Field islet**

County Administrative Board of Värmland

Remark: **Not approved, completely overgrown**

Photo: Annika Westberg

**Field islet**

County Administrative Board of Stockholm

Remark: **Not approved, overgrown**

Photo: Emma Lenmo



Clearance cairn

County Administrative Board of Skåne

Remark: —

Photo: Cecilia Nilsson



Clearance cairn

County Administrative Board of Värmland

Remark: **Not approved, remove old stakes and brushwood**

Photo: Annika Westberg



Discussing restoration of traditional hay barn
in Värmland. Photo: Sara Bodin Olsson



Clearance cairn

County Administrative Board of Värmland

Remark: **Not approved, recent or dumped on unapproved cairn**

Photo: Annika Westberg

**Old farming road**

County Administrative Board of Stockholm

Remark: —

Photo: Håkan Olofsson



Old farming road

County Administrative Board of Stockholm

Remark: **Not approved, overgrown**

Photo: Emma Lenmo



Old farming road

County Administrative Board of Stockholm

Remark: **Not approved**

Photo: Emma Lenmo

**Solitary tree**

County Administrative Board of Skåne

Remark: —

Photo: Linda Paulin



Solitary tree

County Administrative Board of Stockholm

Remark: **Solitary oak trees, front tree not approved**

Photo: Emma Lenmo



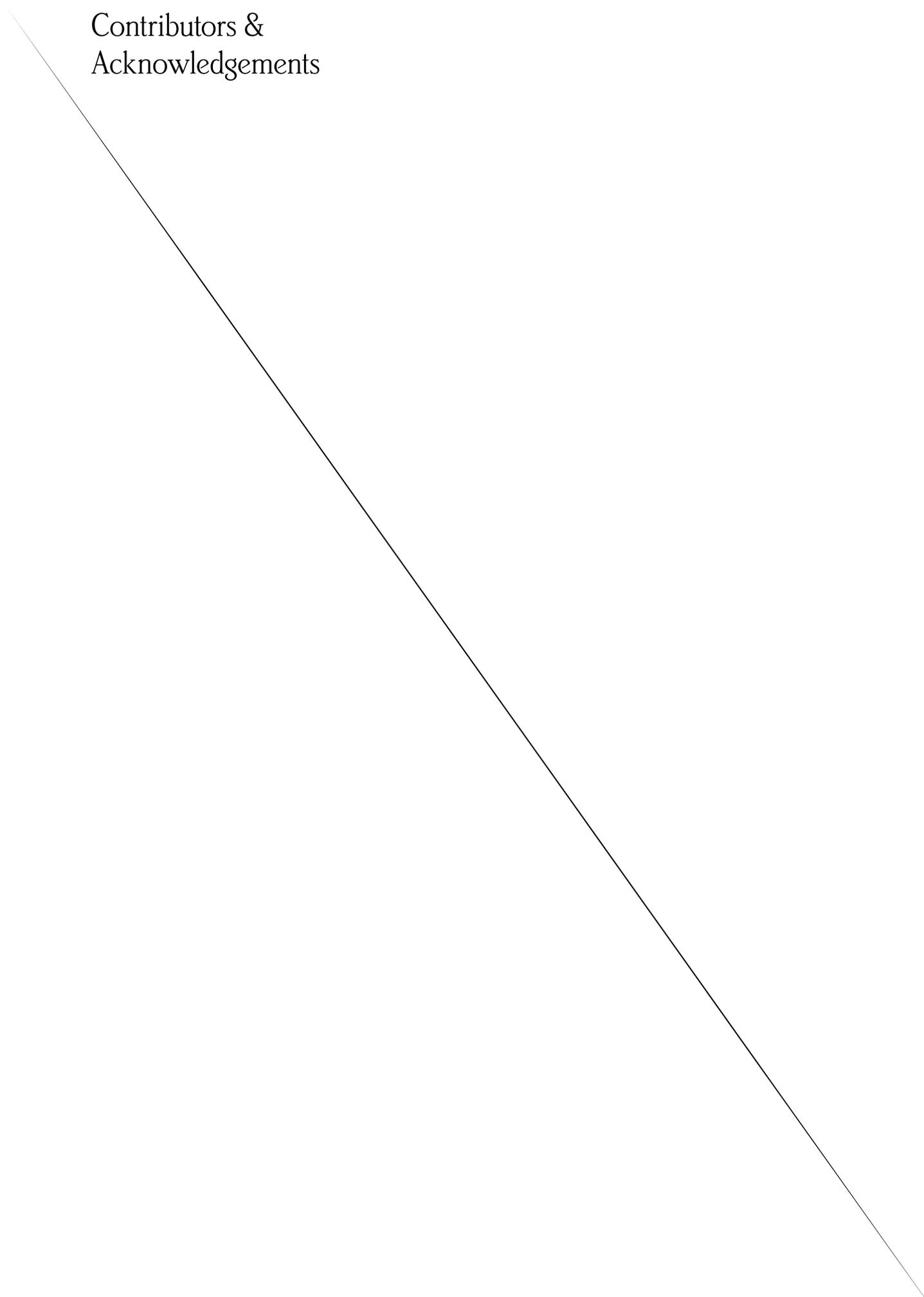
Solitary tree

County Administrative Board of Stockholm

Remark: **Not approved**

Photo: Emma Lenmo

Contributors & Acknowledgements





Goldin+Senneby (since 2004) is a framework for collaboration set up by artists Simon Goldin and Jakob Senneby; exploring juridical, financial and spatial constructs through notions of the performative and the virtual. Solo exhibitions: "Headless. From the public record" (Index, Stockholm 2009), "Goldin+Senneby: Headless" (The Power Plant, Toronto 2008-2009). Recent group exhibitions: "Feedforward" (LABoral, Gijon 2009), "In living contact" (28th Bienal de São Paulo 2008), "Reality Effects" (Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, Oslo 2008), "Data Recovery" (GAMeC, Bergamo 2008).

Simon Lancaster is one of the UK's top speechwriters. He has written speeches for several British Cabinet Ministers as well as the heads of major global corporations including HSBC, Cadbury and the BBC. Simon's company, Bespoke (www.bespokespeeches.com), is the UK's leading speechwriting agency and provides a range of specialist speechwriting services including training courses and recruitment services. His first book "The Art of Speechwriting" is due to be published in 2010 by Robert Hale.

Charlotte Westenra studied Drama at Manchester University and trained with Augusto Boal's Centre of the Theatre of the Oppressed in Rio de Janeiro. In 2004 she was the Resident Assistant Director at the Donmar Warehouse.

Her own work in theatre has tended to focus on political subjects and includes "The Obama Project" (National Theatre Studio, London/ Ingmar Bergman Festival Stockholm), "Kiss of the Spider Woman" (Donmar Warehouse),

"Darfur, How long is Never?", "Bloody Sunday", "Justifying War" (as co-director at the Tricycle Theatre), "Gladiator Games" (Sheffield Theatres), and "Widows" (Sherman/RWCMD). This year she directed two Shakespeare plays: "Romeo and Juliet" (Arts Theatre/ Cambridge University) and "As You Like it" (Oxford School of Drama), as well as her first children's show "Alice: Through the Looking Glass" at the Edinburgh Festival.

She is currently enjoying directing David Almond's magical children's play "My Dad's a Birdman", which is part of Daniel Evan's Housewarming Season at Sheffield Theatre.

Tom McKay trained at the London Academy of Music and Dramatic Art and has since worked extensively in British theatre, including productions of "Henry V" and "Mother Clap's Mollyhouse" (National Theatre), "Macbeth" and "Lord of the Flies" (RSC), "Frost/Nixon" and "On the Third Day" in the West End. He has also toured to Japan playing Romeo in "Romeo and Juliet" and next year will be transferring last year's London production of "The Great Game", an epic cycle of plays tackling the war in Afghanistan, to New York, Washington and Los Angeles.

He has also worked in Television in projects such as Stephen Poliakoff's "Joe's Palace", "Primeval" and the BAFTA winning "The Shooting of Thomas Hurndall", along with feature films such as "Clubbed" and the soon to be released "Wrong Turn 3".

Much of his theatre work has involved collaboration with Charlotte Westenra, including his most enjoyable job to date, "Gladiator Games" (the Crucible, Sheffield).

“Shifting Ground”

Artist: Goldin+Senneby

Curator: Maria Lind

Speechwriter: Simon Lancaster

Director: Charlotte Westenra

Actor: Tom McKay

Shifting Ground is a commissioned work, part of “Mountains of butter, lakes of wine”, the fifth and final stage of the project Almostreal, initiated by Igor Dobricic at the European Cultural Foundation. In Almostreal the relation between funder and funded has been a curious and driving mode. The final stage is initiated by STEALTH (Ana Dzokic and Marc Neelen) and curated by Maria Lind, who in turn invited the artist collaboration Goldin+Senneby. Goldin+Senneby in their turn commissioned speechwriter Simon Lancaster and director Charlotte Westenra to write and direct a speech based on a year-long inquiry into European agri-cultural policies. Charlotte Westenra chose the actor Tom McKay to perform this speech.

Shifting Ground is performed at the symposium “Mountains of butter, lakes of wine: Changing funding conditions for contemporary art”.



Informants

Viveka Appeltofft (County Administrative Board of Stockholm), **Corrado Pirzio-Biroli** (Former Chief of Staff of Commissioner Franz Fischler, 1995-2004), **Allan Buckwell** (Chairman of the Policy Group at European Landowners' Organization), **Franz Fischler** (Former Commissioner for Agriculture, Rural Development and Fisheries in the European Union, 1995-2004), **Per Juhlin** (Farmer), **Lars Lundholm** (Caretaker, Erstavik farm), **Carl af Petersens** (Director, Erstavik farm), **Anders Pettersson** (Farmer), **Jack Thurston** (Co-founder of farmsubsidy.org), **Rose-Mari Åkerström** (County Administrative Board of Stockholm)

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