

T H E P L A C E

PORTLAND

CONTEXT

Since 1889, the production of cement has transformed the grounds of Aalborg Portland beyond recognition. The most evident traces are the intensive chalk excavations which have lowered the ground level most places by 30 meters. Today's machines dig even deeper leaving behind a huge hole in the ground; an artificial lake flooded by fresh water. This is a vast landscape of industrial monolithic structures; ovens, smokestacks, silos, machinery and storage buildings.

The sheer dimension of this place is impressive. In size the area of the Portland grounds is about similar to what is inside the ring road of Aalborg.

Centrally located here is Dybdalsbakken, a hill of 30 meters in height. This hill has never been excavated, thus it forms a small secluded enclave of highland in the landscape of production. On the flat hilltop grows a small and dense forest of beech, maple, hazel and pine trees. The only human activity on the hill is the occasional visit from the lumberjack. Besides the forest is home to a rich variety of wild life e.g. deer, hare and partridge.

From this point the excavation of chalk to the south and the production of cement to the north-west is clearly visible.

The hill is the site of Industrial Bath.

DYBDALSBAKKEN

ESSAY

Blæsten rusker i toppene på de slanke træer. Stammerne står tæt sammen, som om de derved kan holde varmen i det kolde vejr. De mindre grene i trækroneerne rasler og skaber et lydtæppe, der dækker den lille skov.

Skovbunden er tildækket, mest af tørre blade, men også af mange små lyse sneglehus dekorerede med spiralformede aftegninger. Deres tilstedeværelse på skovbunden minder den besøgende om, at denne høj, som træerne borer deres rødder ned igennem, indeholder lag på lag af disse småskaldyr. Det er svært at gætte sig til, hvor mange snegle der ligger begravet derude i dybet. Skal disse forkalkede forfædre tælles i millioner, milliarder?

Tyve skridt fremme springer en hjort og er inden længe forsvundet ned i kløften. Mon den har et kid, der ligger og trykker sig ned i de rød-brune blade på skovbunden?

Den besøgende på dette sted følger hurtigt en fortrolighed med dets afgrænsning. Det er, som om skoven indeholder et ude og et inde. Udenfor er lyset skarpt, mens lyset inde mellem grenene filtreres. Udenfor er aktivitet; der graves i undergrunden, mens jord og kalk transporteres og brændes af, så regnen står op af de store skorste. Hvis profil ellers kan forveksles med træernes stammer. Indenfor er alt denne aktivitet kun en svag baggrund for skovens lyde.

Den besøgende forundres over dette særlige sted og alle dets hemmeligheder. Her dybt inde. Som at åbne op for lag efter lag på en russisk Babushka dukke.



Directions in the landscape. Collage. The verticality of the smoking chimneys meets the vastness of the Portland landscape.

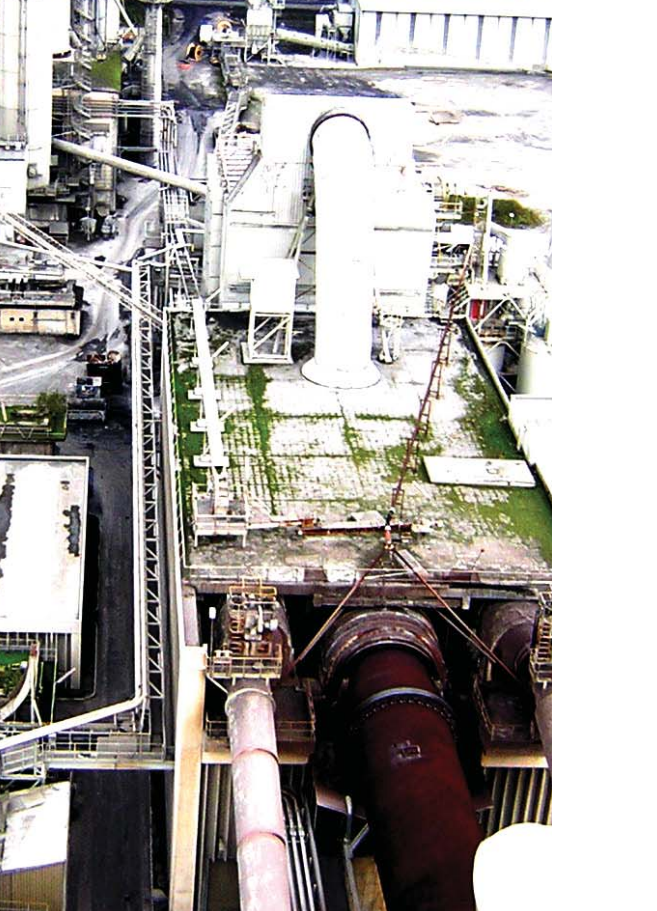


Orthophoto. Aalborg. The Aalborg Portland grounds are clearly visible from the air, particularly the artificial lake from the chalk excavations.



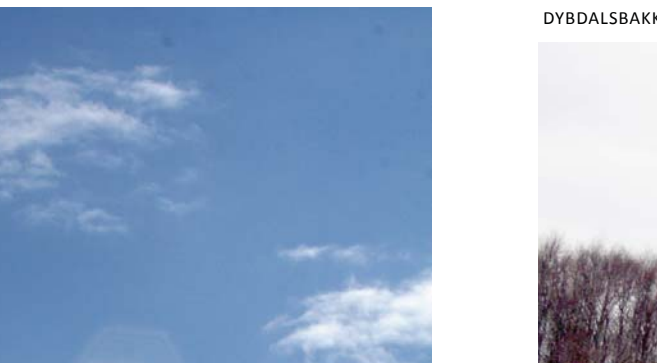
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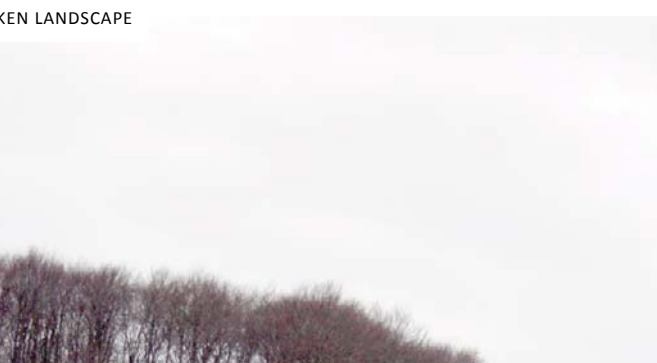
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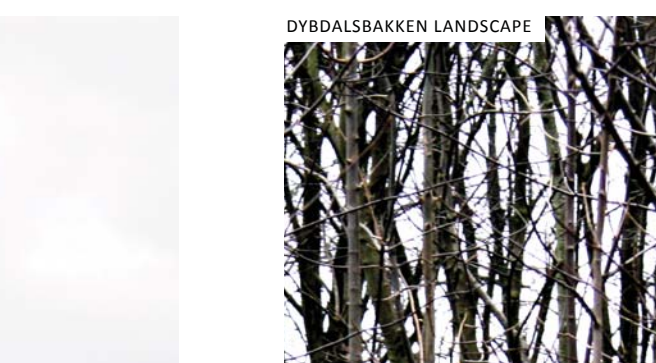
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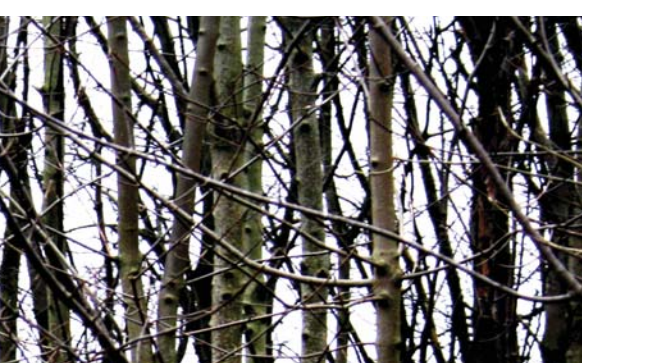
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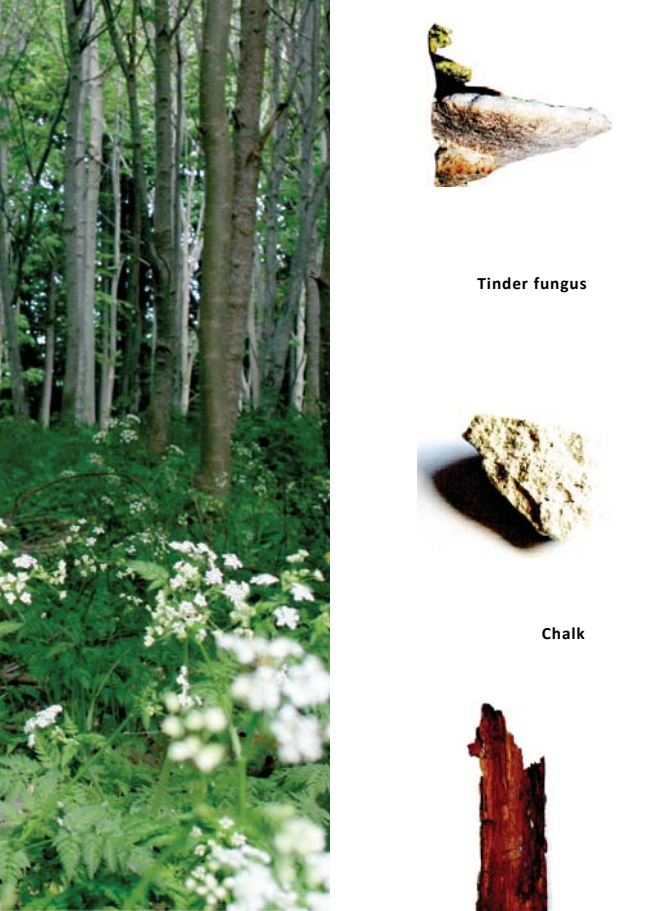
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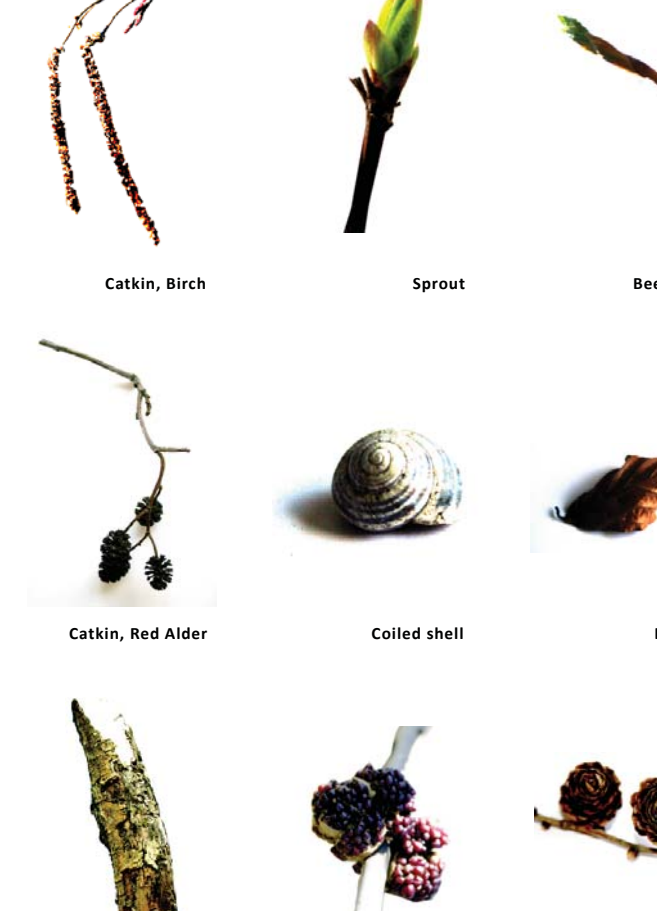
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