

2011 Franchise Proposal by

Corina Oprea, Valerio Del Baglivo, Misbah Deeb, Isabel Lofgren, Judith Souriau, Carolina Rito, Milena Placentile

Franchise location: Stockholm, Sweden

### *Washed out*

The setting is a typical Stockholm suburb built in the 1930s according to the utopic urban vision of social-democracy by its early planners. The exhibition venue is a community laundry house ‘tvättstugan’ initially intended as a place for fostering friendly social interactions in the community. Today, this laundry house has been partially transformed into a publicly funded art center, Konsthall C, and the other half still functions as a laundry and also contains a small museum of vintage washing machines. In Swedish culture, the community laundry house as a meeting place is symbolic of the social democratic value of a self-organized and harmonious collectivity. However, these community laundries exposed a contradiction in their very inception. While people were expected to meet, wash and talk, the rather private act of washing one’s dirty laundry created an individualization of these spaces to the extent that people have to book their own times as to avoid one another.

The last parliamentary elections in Sweden have signaled the demise of social democracy and has ushered the country into a neoliberal model based on individual values, generating an unprecedented political debate among the population. To us, this transforms the ideals of community embodied in the ‘tvättstuga’ into a symbol of the past. The metaphor of the community laundry room and the act of washing can be extended far beyond a critique of the Swedish model to encompass the action of ‘washing’ the ‘dirty’ portions of history that have been hidden from collective memory. This site-inspired exhibition invites artists to enter a dialogue with this art space and its history as a laundry house.

As a collective of international young curators, we are interested in artists who deal with the social history within their own cultures. Specifically, we would like to focus on the conscious concealment related to society and politics as an extension of the metaphor of community activities, failed utopias, and the act of historical ‘washing’ itself. These artists lead practices that use their own personal experiences to reflect upon historical moments that have been “washed out,” or purposefully erased from collective memory.

Intended artists are among others: Estefania Peñafiel Loaiza (Ecuador), Andrea Hvistendahl (Sweden), Stefan Constantinescu (Romania), Raeda Saadeh (Palestine). The collective curating group is formed by: Valerio Del Baglivo, Corina Oprea, Misbah Deeb, Isabel Lofgren, Judith Souriau, Carolina Rito, Milena Placentile.