

Kjersti Bache, 'Kristin and Sinta are behind a stunt that will be noticed:
- I just wanted to give something to Nevlunghavn!', ØP NO, 1 July 2022

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Kjersti Bache

July 1, 2022



The artist from Bali has painted walls, city floors and bridges in London, Korea, USA and China. Now she gets help from Synne and Martine to make their artistic mark on the old shrimp factory.

- I have had to change the blue color several times because it has to fit all the blue around me, she says and looks out over the fish reception, the sea and the bright blue summer sky.

Sinta Tantra has been inspired by the history of Nevlunghavn, and the people who lived close to the sea with the knowledge that the sea gave and took.

- Beate Jacobsen, who owns the old shrimp factory, has said that the fishermen in the old days did not learn to swim. If the boat went under, they kind of accepted their fate. It is fascinating, she says, who herself comes from an island in the sea.

It is the third summer Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery opens an art exhibition in Nevlunghavn. The Norwegian gallery owner lives in London, where she has two galleries, plus two in Berlin.

- In August, I have an exhibition in an 18th century castle outside Berlin as well. And in December, my biggest project is ready, says Kristin and smiles broadly.

- Then I open a 3,000 square meter art center in Palm Beach, Florida.

Celebrating 10 years anniversary

The seagulls sail elegantly in all the blue, the sea is flat and the summer guests swim from the boats that are next to the old, weather-hardened piers.

Kristin Hjellegjerde came the night before to Nevlunghavn from London. One of the tables outside the small gallery is the "home office".

- We are celebrating 10 years anniversary this week here, she says.

- In 10 years you have established two galleries in London, two in Berlin, one in Nevlunghavn and then Palm Beach?

- And that from nothing, she says and laughs a raw laugh .

- There is no one who thinks it is true. Because in this industry, people do not believe you can achieve anything if you are not a famous name.

But Kristin has her own method. She takes out the slightly worn notebook that is on the table.

- Every month I sit down and write down what I want in this, and then it happens.

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Writes down what she wants

She shows the handwritten pages at the back of the book.

- Every month I write a list of things I dream about and want. Next month I might tear it out and write a new one. Just like every month, I write down how much I have to earn to make ends meet.

A gallery in Palm Beach she has written in the book for a couple of years, every month.

- When I have written Palm Beach long enough, it materializes. The thought drives me.

- And then?

- My husband, Michael Wurzel, is an architect. He designed The Norton Museum of Art in Palm Beach, and when I told the museum's board chairman that I dreamed of starting an art center in Palm Beach, he said; I have a place for you.

She smiles triumphantly.

- He has bought an old warehouse building, which he is renovating exactly as I want, she says and shows beautiful drawings.

Love to find talents

But now we are in Havna, and the exhibition of Sinta Tantra opens this Saturday, and lasts until the month of July.

- Previously, the pictures you have exhibited in the old shrimp factory have been sold in advance?

- Yes, but this year it is possible to buy. I have to test Norway, she smiles. And says that she sells mostly to the US, and a lot to China and Korea.

- I love finding new talent, she says. The artists she finds become part of the "family".

It now consists of 45 artists from 22 different countries.

- I get tips and people who ask me to look at things, but I do not really listen to anyone. Just myself. And I can spend a year giving things a try, look again, before I decide. If the heart beats, then! says she engaged.

- And I do not give up. I started working with one of the artists ten years ago, and I sold the first pictures of him to a museum earlier this year.

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- A smile and a good energy

Sinta Tantra lives in London, and paints large murals and decorates public buildings. Kristin Hjellegjerde fell for her work and energy, and persuaded her to paint on canvas as well.

- I work hard, says Sinta, and smiles with gold on her face after painting the wall.

She has climbed down from the scaffolding and says that she likes the combination of art outside and inside.

- I was in Nevlunghavn in February to look around, and I got to see historical photos from here. The sky and the sea then had a completely different blue color. I have painted all the pictures especially with the shrimp factory and Havna in mind, she says.

In one of the rooms she plays audio recordings with stories about the old fishermen in Havna.

In the small rooms hang large paintings with large clean motifs in beautiful colors. Here, too, she uses gold leaf.

Kristin and Sinta admire the warm evening light.

- But to paint an entire wall?

They laugh, and Kristin praises Sinta for joining the "stunt".

- I just wanted to give something to Nevlunghavn. A smile and a good energy, says Kristin Hjellegjerde.