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“The Ambush of the Goblins” (Hiitolan väijy)

The first year students of Art Education took part in an environmental art project called “Forest of Experience” (Elämymetsä). The project was a part of their course in Environmental Art and it took place at 7.-10.9.2004 in Kõngäs, Kittilä. It covered producing works of art into a small forest nearby the Skylights hotel.



1. The proces

Photo: Maria Huhmarniemi



2. The location was inside the forest

Photo: Maria Huhmarniemi

The course started with some lectures. Timo Jokela initiates us into the methods of working and the history. We acquainted ourselves to Finnish Mythology under Touko Issakainen’s guidance. Our group also found Elina and Kaisa Ranta’s book called “*At the Lands of Fairies, in the Cottages of Gnomes, the Crowd of Earth, Woods, Water and Mountains*” very helpful.

We were divided into 5 smaller groups and our group’s assignment was to build a work of art which was attached to the underworld, where everything is upside down. After small planning and sketching we started searching for the perfect

location. We wanted a space with impressiveness and finally found a place with two fallen trees which roots were proudly reaching for the sky.



3. Somebody has been walking here

Photo: Tommi Lahdenperä

The inverse world-theme gave us an idea of using stumps as our basic material. Although we weren't unanimous about the actual idea and appearance of our piece, we started our heavy work by collecting fallen trees and out-dig stumps from the road works nearby. Few of us started clearing of the land and cutting of a path to our piece from the main path. At first this path was made mainly for practical reasons, but in the end it became an insignificant part of our work.

In the beginning we were aiming for a look after an explosion - the spirit of woods, Tapio, had sneezed quite effectively. This still didn't please us and we continued developing our piece.

After all the hard digging and dragging the time was running out, so we began covering out our tracks of hard work with big pieces of fluffy moss carpet. Beautiful green moss cover emphasized the off-cut path and brought some fairytale atmosphere to our piece. This inspired us and helped to create a new story behind the work and idea.



4. Small house?

Photo: tommi Lahdenperä

The Ambush of Goblins (Hiitolan väijy) is an enchanting work of art. Deceitfully beautiful, winding path attracts the wanderer into the dark ambush, where the goblins will capture him to be their slave. The piece merges well into the environment, because we tried to act on nature's terms. We still wanted to avoid too natural look, so one could recognize the work of art. Small details made by hand give the impression of the presence of some creature. Although the work is conceptually closer to a place than a work of art we tried to increase the artistic image by the composition of the stumps.



5. There was many details in the work

Photo: Timo Jokela

We got positive feedback of the clarity and comprehensible expression. The atmosphere conveyed intensely: there was something unreal around. The idea worked in practice well; the path really lured the viewers to explore it.

Our group felt the main objective of the project was to create team spirit and make the getting to know each other easier. This carried out well. Working in the forest was rewarding but exhausting and there didn't seem to be enough time for a more defined design. But in the end everyone was pleased with the results.



6. The Ambush of Goblins

Photo: Tommi Lahdenperä