



Press release: *Landscape Healing* (2019)

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***Landscape Healing* is a cinematic documentary following the largest act of rewilding in Norway, by BAFTA-nominated film director Richard John Seymour and produced by 3RW arkitekter.**

The film tells the story of how a multidisciplinary group of people has been quietly conducting a project that could set a precedent for humanity's next great challenge: the rewilding of our planet back to a sustainable level.

Since the early 2000s, 3RW arkitekter has used architecture skills to structure the process of restoring vast areas of land, owned by the Norwegian Defence Estates Agency (NDEA), who have used these for military training. After decades of efficiency adjustments, the NDEA's sites were left abandoned yet unsuitable for public use due to polluted soil and water, unexploded ordnance, and abandoned structures. Within a team of historians, archaeologists, scientists, engineers, politicians and soldiers, 3RW arkitekter play a central role in using architectural methods for the re-imagining of these spaces for restored nature and other societal uses. When completed, this national undertaking will constitute the biggest environmental restoration initiative in Norwegian history, and will free up more than 20.000 hectares of nature.

Landscape Healing follows the process of healing these wounded landscapes, the strange and curious practices that had to be pioneered for a project that has never been attempted before.



Film still, *Landscape Healing* (2019); a military band wagon drives through what seems like a pristine wintery landscape, yet this is at the heart of Hjerkins former firing range, which is still being restored into National Park status; copyright Richard John Seymour / 3RW arkitekter



Richard John Seymour (b. 1989). Director

Richard John Seymour is a British photographer, BAFTA-nominated filmmaker and designer based in Bergen, Norway. His work can be characterised as an attempt to reveal political, social, and environmental issues made manifest through the built environment and the increasingly blurry line between landscape and city.

In 2013 Richard began work on what would become a long-form photography and film project 'Consumed', which was nominated for a BAFTA Award in 2017. 'Consumed' is centred around China's role in the rapid growth of consumerism, and what this means for the landscapes and individuals involved.

Landscape Healing (2019) is an artistic film-work, borrowing on the visual language from the director's previous film-based work *Consumed* (2016). As a foreigner living and working in Norway, Seymour is inspired by the national romantic paintings and the significance these landscapes have in the Norwegian psyche. The documentary is a process-based work rather than product-based, much like the changing nature of the landscape. The cinematic character of Richard's work adds an aesthetic dimension that asks a deeper level of contemplation, and lures viewers into the subject in a visual and atmospheric manner.

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3RW arkitekter (est. 1999). Producer

3RW arkitekter is a Norwegian design practice based in Bergen, Norway, with an international team of architects, planners and urban designers. Since 1999, the practice has handled a wide range of commissions, from national plans for governmental agencies, feasibility studies, environmental impact assessments and masterplans, to housing, infrastructure, landscape, interior architecture and furniture design. It has earned a reputation built on practical experience, socio-cultural work and an award winning creative and innovative approach.

3RW arkitekter has retained an important endeavour to participate in the conversation about the role of architecture in society. It has participated extensively in speculative research projects that aim to tackle the agency of architecture in pressing issues of the world – namely, the environment. It is in this context that they have assisted in the production of *Landscape Healing*, which in many ways tackles the agency of architects in the environmental emergency.

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'Landscape Healing' — project description

The project 'Landscape Healing' is part of a body of work 3RW arkitekter has been engaged with since the early 2000s. It consists in the restoration of huge areas of land across Norway owned by the Norwegian Defence Estates Agency (NDEA), containing polluted soil and water, unexploded ordnance, and abandoned buildings, after decades of military activity. The purpose of the project has been to restore these areas back to a state that they can be accessible to the public. When completed, this national undertaking will constitute one of the biggest environmental restoration initiatives in Norwegian history, and will free up more than 20.000 hectares of nature.

In the early 2000s the NDEA engaged a multidisciplinary group to demilitarize former military training facilities and firing ranges. In this group, 3RW arkitekter has been a strategic consultant and has formulated visions for what the different areas can be in the future, carried out architectural investigations, and gathered knowledge to provide new kinds of evidence for the safe management and re-use of these former military sites. In order to do this, 3RW arkitekter's key role has been to bring input from different disciplines together: using the field experience from building contractors, ecology research from scientists, technical skills from engineers, academic knowledge from historians and archaeologists, and strategic visions of political actors.

3RW arkitekter's involvement started off with the making of a national plan for the NDEA to reduce the number of military training facilities and firing ranges at the time occupying thousands of hectares across the country. Since then, they have worked on 27 sites to be restored. Completed results include the delivery of Gimlemoen into an outdoor recreation area to the municipality of Kristiansand in 2015. Undergoing projects include Steinkjersannan, where 25000 tonnes of polluted soil have so far been removed.