



THE GARDEN OF STAIRS, THE NATURAL HISTORY MUSEUM 2011-2014

An artistic research project combining spatial and social experience in educational geology installation.

The Garden of Stairs' was launched in the Botanical Gardens of the Natural History museum, summer 2011 as part of the museums educational programme developed for the University of Oslo's 200 years anniversary . The project was concerned with exploring social and spatial experience in exhibitions.

The theme of the educational programme, 'Forskerspiren', is geological research, fieldwork and landscape. The project is concerned with the body as kinetic experience and the activation of pre-realized knowledge are important themes. The second aim was to explore how the spatial design can mediate for relations between people in the exhibition space, and how these encounters relate to, and enrich, the theme of the exhibition. The result of an explorative design process was the open installation Garden of stairs, among other elements, consisting of a hill with steps of stairs in a continuous mode of transformation, co-creation and re-creation. The project has resulted in new ways of engaging the school, engaging the visitor and new use of the botanical garden as museum space.

The steps were built by the inmates in Oslo Prison.
The installation has been set up spring and autumn 2011-2014

“In regard to the garden of stairs I am sometimes unsure about what is the exhibition. Seen literally, the exhibition consist of steps, signs and painted contour lines. Still, it is first in the instance when you start using the elements and the hill that it becomes clear what these elements are for. In a way, it is this experience, sometimes guided by the museum lecturer, that is the exhibit. This hill itself couldn't be called the exhibition? Its just there”.

Museumlecturer Anne Birkeland , March 2012.

BODY & SPACE



EXHIBITION & SPACE



EXHIBITION & OTHER VISITORS





Open staging allows for diverse visitor motivations.

