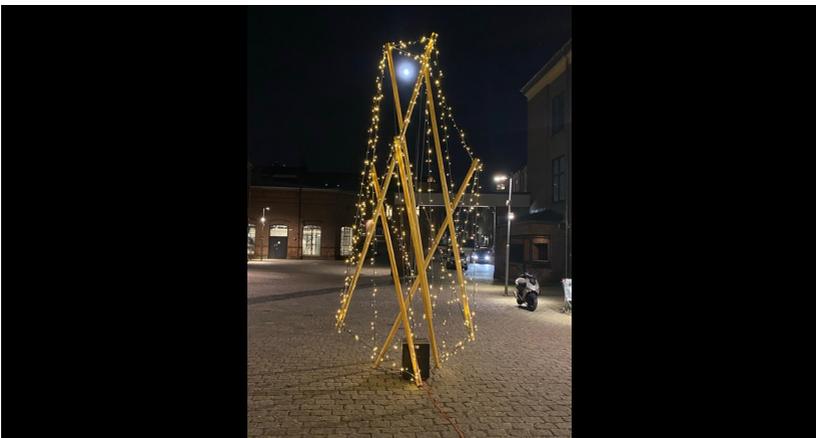




We are in [Belize](#). Through the streets of a seaside village, a white car—a *gas guzzler* to be sure—drives through on the local dirt roads. Someone has made a hand-painted board at a local inn, announcing a party with live music *Tonite*. The white car picks up a number of people. The lucky ones.

Transient passengers of the white guzzler. Not [Wátina](#) though (password: Garifuna Collective). The hard-working overweight local mama. A Belizian avatar of Brecht's *Mother Courage*. Perhaps. The passengers are band-members or people with some money to spend. Others are biking/running.

But only for so long. In the evening everyone is there. We even catch a glimpse of Wátina. During the entire video the weather is overcast. No-one is smiling. Perhaps there is bad weather in the air. At the inn locals groove into the live music. Some smiles. The white car passes. It drives into the night.



This xmas series will be devoted to how exhibitions—during the Corona pandemic—become similar to *sightings*: that is, *non-site* phenomena that emerge under conditions where the presence of a “questionable crowd” adds to the riddle/question of the nature of what is being seen/revealed.

The classic is of course the UFO-sighting: semi-clandestine gathering of crowds on a sites where the occasional appearance of light-phenomena, or unidentifiable flying objects (UFOs) have been claimed. The rumours of which have been passed on by word of mouth, to a rabble crowd of fans.

There are two reasons why sightings cannot be called ‘observations’: for one the crowd is not a scientific gathering; next, it is a teeming-space for an odd crowd: *fans*—who are always ambiguous because they are unpredictable friends/foes of what appears *here* alongside/onsite their own reality.

During the Corona pandemic gatherings like these have been commonplace, because a number of events—whether exhibits or performances—have been unannounced, and invitations spread by word of mouth, with crowds that are questionable to themselves: *are we following the rules?*

Even as they follow safety precautions in wearing face-masks and keeping the appropriate distance, nobody takes pictures at such gatherings. Maybe from the imminent threat of wrongdoing, being publicly seen in the act of near transgressing public health-security rules, remaining semi-clandestine.

Under such conditions art-works appear *differently*—in my experience—because they become sightings of *non-site* (Smithson) assemblages. Artwork which, under the current conditions, shift into *collective pieces*: social sculptures (Beuys) by crowds wanting to *remain* unseen-yet-present.

[Evergreen Corona](#)—the lit structure made of 6 wooden beams and wire, watching over the KHIO staircase outdoors—became a *piece* in this sense: a *sighting* of a crowd pledged to invisibility, and semi-clandestinity. The students who had helped and who lit ‘the tree’ were present on these terms.

There *were* media-people present (NRK). But they took it easy. Sensitive to the nature of what was going on. We all need to find out more. What’s going on. The buzz is spreading in our spaces, through the homes and on the streets. There is no shortcut. We need the time to mature. The work of time.

What is happening, what it takes, and how we can act to make it happen. Workshops, students, teachers even theoreticians. Everyone is needed. During the theory finals at MA-design this year, topics of feminism, ageism, gender-fluidity were ones concretely related to MA projects in design.

Small troupes came in and out of the MediaLab’s Black Box, wearing face masks. Along with a crowd of the entire MA-class participating on Zoom, the *professional staff* was contributing actively to the discussions. The works submitted by the students were called [theory-pieces](#). Sightings.