



What is the relation between cheese-hollows in a Maasdamer, a hand-written letter of indulgence to the Pope from Mediaeval Oslo, a wooden bench from Fredrikstad Church, a piece of metal pipe cuffed with fabric at the two ends, a metal grate flooring an entire room, and a strew of Pacific oyster shells?

These elements have been collected in the sense that they are part of the same exhibit. But is it a *random* sample? A carefully *curated* collection of pieces? Or, alternatively, a random which is *not quite* random because the elements are somehow contemporary. In this sense contingent (not random)?

The cheeses are the pride of *nations*: the lions their sovereignty—never more. The lions conceal telescopic hollowards mark the transition from sovereignty to security. The giant cheese hollows feature chaos. The metal grate hovering over the oyster shells say “all hand on deck”. Oil pipe? Pakistani cuffs?



In the Norwegian legal provision for universities and colleges, it is written in the introduction—specifying the *intention* of the legal document—that it enjoins these institutions to *disseminate* knowledge of their activity and create an understanding of the principle of *academic* (discursive) *freedom*.

It also enjoins the institution to work for the application of scientific and artistic methods and results, both in teaching students, in its own organisation and otherwise in public management, culture and business enterprise. The reader will note that the law establishes *legal parity* between art and science.

As to the injunction to *apply* scientific and artistic methods and results, the legal text has a ring from declarative politics from an *other* era: that is, holding up ideals beyond pragmatism, with little hope of being ever realised. It should be noted that the track record of *application in public admin* is slim.

In actual reality, the arrow of application goes the other way around at an art school as KHiO: *from* public administration to the professional practice of work life (in teaching, researching and disseminating). Indeed, it has reached a point where it arguably/demonstrably determines a professional *material*.

Hence the present query on public administration as an *aesthetic* material. Recently, Stian Ådlandsvik exhibited at [Galleri K](#). The title of the exhibit: *items from an EEA inventory*. The EEA being the special agreement that Norway has with the EU. In Norwegian EØS. Norway, Iceland and Liechtenstein.

Switzerland was part of the negotiations but withdrew. Items from an EEA inventory is an historical retrospective by sample. The datum that acts as a reference system for other the elements of the work is dual: **a)** an account on nobleman Otto Ruch from Båhus Fortress [Oslo]; **b)** a metal-grate *flooring*.

The metal-grate provides the flooring for an *entire* room, in which other sculptural elements are exhibited. Under the grate there are Pacific oyster-shells. The letter by Otto Ruch is handwritten and is concerned chiefly with the matter of edible oils available during *quadragesima* (start of 40 days).

This reference to the first day of fast—on a Sunday exactly 40 days before good Friday (42 to Easter Sunday)—is a reference to the Catholic Church, which prevailed in Norway in mediaeval times. The account relates the nobleman's dilemma on keeping the Lent, vs. keeping a healthy body.

So, it is declared—in this *letter of indulgence* destined to the Pope—that the nobleman intends to eat dairy, butter and eggs during this period. The Lent is a cut into the quotidian; a hollow, a limbo, a between space. Then the letter of indulgence, again, cuts into the Lent, provides it with an exception, a hollow.

It describes the EEA agreement: both in the aspects that connect the EU to the tradition of jurisprudence of the Catholic Church—featuring subsidiarity and proportionality—and the EEA as a 'letter of indulgence' in its relation the EUs rule of law. *Cutting into the cut* is a principle visible from the margins.

More broadly, the our attention is drawn to how the relation between things and humans become managed in processes where everything solid has a counterpart in skill—or, knowhow—in a changing *ratio*. The relation between taste, value and surplus is part of an economic and administrative aesthetic.