

Patterns of the Family

Book by Erla S. Haraldsdóttir

Publisher: Óuns and Listasafn Reykjanesbæjar

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The game of painting

Erla S. Haraldsdóttir is an artist who uses rules and instructions to generate artworks. These instructions may emanate from her colleagues when she works collaboratively, or from the artist herself. Because of these hidden rules, her approach to figurative painting aligns her with conceptual artists from the Oulipo movement to Yoko Ono, whose classic artist book Grapefruit provides instructions on how to make conceptual art. The rules are 'hidden' because in many ways the instructions behind the paintings are not apparent in the final result on the canvas. Patterns of the Family reiterates some but not all of the attributes of previous works by Haraldsdóttir. Ndebele patterns, which appeared in her work as early as 2012, return as prominent backdrops to the family portraits. Photos from the family archive are further elements this series shares with Day Four from her series Genesis. Plant life, featuring prominently in Sulla and Family, 1948, also played an eminent role in previous works such as The Mangrove Tree and The Ocean and Sun. Patterns of the Family is a new and convincing addition to Haraldsdóttir's work, which explores the complex structures of multi-generational Icelandic families in a novel way.

Erla S. Haraldsdóttir works with painting, animation, video, and photomontage as a means to appropriate and restructure reality. An academically trained painter, she currently focuses on painting where the physicality of paint and color create space, light, and shadow. Her work combines figurative motifs, abstract color, and patterns with painterly finesse. The works often explore how memories, emotions, and perception interact. Methodology is central and Haraldsdóttir's process-driven work is often

based on a combination of rules and restrictions, places or stories, and tasks assigned to her by other people.

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The Bag Factory Artist's Studios and LL Editions Lithography studio in Johannesburg, South Africa.

Erla S. Haraldsdóttir worked on her oil paintings and lithographies for Patterns of the family at The Bag Factory Artist's Studios in Johannesburg, South Africa. She worked on her lithographies with Joe Leshoka Legate at LL editions Lithography studio in Johannesburg.

Bag Factory Artists' Studios has been a space for visual artistic creativity since its inception in 1991. Established in an old bag manufacturing warehouse converted to provide studio space to artists from different racial, cultural and educational backgrounds, over more than two decades the organisation has grown to be synonymous with inclusion and diversity. The building contains 17 studios, a fine art lithography printing studio, as well as a workshop and exhibition space. The Bag Factory has provided one of the few dedicated spaces for visual arts studios in Johannesburg. The organisation's programmes continue to stand for inclusion and diversity, built on an idea of open access. Key elements to the success of the Bag Factory have been the ability to attract and maintain relationships with local and international artists to its various programmes.