



## **Viveka Kjellmer, Mot det oväntade – Akvarellen som tänkesätt**

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*Akvaremaskinen 2000 (The Watercolour Machine 2000)* in Aalborg's art pavilion is another example of investigating how pigment and water react under different conditions. Peter V. Nielsen, one of the seven participating artists, describes the exhibition as a laboratory where processes were started up to investigate the nature of watercolour and find new possibilities for the material.<sup>38</sup> During the exhibition that, inspired by the new millennium, wanted to examine new ways for artists to use their material, a real machine, among other things, was shown for producing watercolour paintings. The Watercolour Machine was not only the title of the exhibition, but also that of the group of artists, as well as the actual watercolour producing installation. Frozen watercolour paints, ice cubes of water and pigment, were placed in this "rain cupboard"; they melted and dropped paint on to the watercolour paper. As the heat in the cupboard could be altered and the grid on which the paper lay could be moved and tilted, the result was influenced by the acting artists. The aim was not primarily to create art, the idea was rather to be a source of inspiration for experiments and learning about material.<sup>39</sup> By exhibiting a machine where the process in creating art was the main issue and the resulting pictures were regarded as by-products of the actual event, questions arose about the creation of art and the artist's role in the creation process. The installation *The Watercolour Machine* points at some important issues in watercolour art, namely the central role of the pigment, its characteristics and behaviour in different situations, as well as the immediacy in the process of creating watercolours. A drop falls where it falls, a brushstroke can not be undone. Just there, before the paint has dried, can the artist make a line of the drop, a running line, by tilting the sheet of paper. Watercolour is momentary in its execution and builds on the ability to improvise, to utilise what happens in the meeting between the materials.

38 Nielsen, Peter Vilhelm, "Akvarellens værkstad" (The Watercolour Workshop), *Nordisk akvarel 04* Nordic Watercolour Society, Aalborg 2004, p. 59–60.

39 Press release "Akvaremaskinen 2000" (The Watercolour Machine), Aalborg's art pavilion. [www.kunstpavillon.dk/presse/mar2000.shtml](http://www.kunstpavillon.dk/presse/mar2000.shtml), 2005-03-23