

## LIVING IN A SATELLITE TOWN

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*Living in a Satellite Town* (2004) was an art project and an investigation into the conventions and rhetoric of architectural photography. Over a period of time in the early 2000s, I went through a large amount of documentation from newly built housing areas in Scandinavia, mainly in issues of the architectural journals *Byggekunst* (Norway), *Arkitektur* (Sweden), *Arkitektur* (Denmark), *Arkitektnytt* (Norway), and others, ranging from 1920 to 2000. Images of these areas are remarkably similar within certain periods of time, although periods differ radically from one another: one can identify specific conventions for photographing the suburbs in the 1960s and, for instance, the 1990s. Why are there so many children in the pictures from the 1970s? Why are there always trees in the photographs from the 1950s? And what are the clouds in the sky doing, for the 1925 viewer?

Exploring these types of questions—and seeing all the material from various time periods in the light of changing political agendas—made my own artistic photography feel ever more difficult, as if everything I did was trapped in photographic rhetoric situated in time and space. *Living in a Satellite Town* therefore marked the beginning of a different approach to photography for me, whereby I moved away from “my own” photographic expression to an interest in found footage, archives, and a greater problematization of the documentary image.

The images presented on the previous pages are selected from a larger series that recycles and mixes these photographic conventions. In addition to about 30 images, *Living in a Satellite Town* also included a text, which took a closer look at historical documentary footage from housing areas in Scandinavia, seen against the political context of their time.

*Living in a Satellite Town* was originally presented at the Young Artists' Society (UKS) in Oslo in 2004 and has later been shown in a number of art institutions and journals. The title is taken from the second report on the satellite town of Ammerud, “Å bo i drabantby,” by Grete Bull, Torbjørn Hansen, and Ragnhild Haug, 1971.

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Photos taken in Oslo: Haugenstua, Kalbakken, Furuset, Ammerud, Tveita, Trøsterud, Bjerke, and Romsås.

