

*Holotopia is* (needs to be *seen* also *as*) an art project.

Vibeke Jensen has been its artist in residence.

Her grandfather owned a shipbuilding yard; her parents were professors at Norwegian University of Science and Technology; Vibeke continued graduate work in architecture at Architectural Association School of Architecture in London, and then at Cornell in New York; but having found the intellectual climate of East Side Manhattan (as it was then) more congenial to her passions, Vibeke surprised everyone by declaring that she would not be an academic architect after all; but an artist in New York.

Vibeke and I met in a quaint and scenic village on the West Coast of Norway; through an art project called “Silence”. The artist who created it heard me talk about *polyscopy* in a radio interview; and thought that—while *complete* silence might be a touch too much to ask—helping people come out of information jungle by climbing to a *mountain top* would surely be a step in the right direction; so she invited me in.

Vibeke and I stayed connected; and made sure to meet for lunch when she was in Oslo. On one such occasion I heard her say “If someone some day decides to take on this whole thing, I’ll be sure to join.” A few years passed, and I wrote her an email saying that our *prototyping* phase had been completed; that we were ready to take on this whole thing. Vibeke responded by creating an art project; at Kunsthall 3.14 in the old center of Bergen. Vibeke and her gallerist also had the good sense to invite David Price.

Vibeke does not interpret her art; she lets the meaning emerge through interaction. What I’m about to share is a *possible* interpretation.

The title of her project, “Earth Sharing”, anticipated *holotopia*’s core theme—the shift from competition over resources and “interests” to co-creative co-evolution.

That Kunsthall 3.14 used to be a bank was significant; so was Vibeke's act of turning an art gallery into a *culture*-transformative space.

Giving in to my bent for metaphors, I thought of the objects that populated the installation as 'furniture': On entering "a living room" one is inclined to engage in the activities it suggests; Vibeke's installation invited *polyscopic* 3D thinking and *new* ways to think and interact. At every step—beginning from the stairs—one was encouraged to use the big picture to contextualize details; a pyramid in the middle of the room represented the *mountain* and encouraged us to aspire higher; both chairs and tables had wheels; the tables also had drawing boards; they could be arranged together to compose circular surfaces, suggesting *wholeness*; and had earth and seeds to be planted, encouraging us to think long-term.

Vibeke turned the former bank's vault into "the safe space" for reflection.

One entered "the safe space" through a one-way mirror; its interior was dark and one had the chance to sit on a bench and reflect, while listening to a recording; the substance of which was *my* part of the project.

Which turned out to be its weakest side.

And showed me that we were *not* yet ready to take on this whole thing.

That a *book* was still missing.

Being (also) an accomplished academic, Vibeke *theorized holotopian* art. I'll let *her* do that; and put this theme on our map by only mentioning a couple of books I found on her bookshelf.

In *La Production de l'espace* (The Production of Space), in 1974, Henry Lefebvre characterized the quintessential political issue—that the *systems* our ancestors created hold *us* in check—by saying that "what is dead takes hold of what is alive"; and he asked:

“But how could what is alive lay hold of what is dead? The answer is: through the production of space, whereby living labour can produce something that is no longer a thing, nor simply a set of tools, nor simply a commodity.”

Vibeke’s *Earth Sharing* project produced a space where we can let go of what is dead—and empower art to *revive culture*.

In *La société du spectacle* (The Society of the Spectacle), in 1967, Guy Debord explained *how* our *minds* are held captive through immersive media.

The *dialog* in Vibeke’s installation *prototyped* an antidote.