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Lecture: What is it all for?

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ABSTRACT

In our collaborative work, we have had the opportunity to work in different ceramic factories and this has had an impact on our work and thinking. In our presentation, we will share our artist-researcher approach to these places and how they have influenced and inspired our process. We will also discuss the factories as a site for materials (Ifö Centre, SWE), a sensuous venue for workshops (Spode, UK) and look for aesthetics in ongoing factory processes (Keramia, FIN).

Our presentation builds around Ifö Center (SWE) where we undertook an artist residency together in 2019. At Ifö, the story begins with the ground – with raw materials. Gradually the factory site began to build around this site – houses for factory workers, a village, families and working lives. Today, the factory has ceased its operations, and after a failed attempt to take the factory down, it still stands and new forms of work are evolving. Artists are beginning to work within the abandoned spaces, where all was left untouched after the last day of work.

During our residence at Ifö, we were breathing with this atmosphere, exploring peculiar found items and materials of the site and surrounding area. The pressing question which formed in the back of our minds was, what was it all for in the end? Thinking of the community and the materialized site that was created, our work reflected on human labor and the value of physical effort in our work today.