

Sara Björnsdóttir (1962)

Flying saucers I, II and III, LÍ 6234

Fruits, LÍ 6210

Sara Björnsdóttir employs a powerful visual language in her work, fully aligned with the concepts she explores. The piece *Flying saucers* is threefold. The first two parts consist of video and sound, in which multicolored plates are thrown one by one against a white wall. The third part is a deep armchair with a footstool, onto which the fragments seen in the video have been affixed.

Sara's choice of materials carries profound symbolic meaning, and the performance depicted in the video expresses the fury and explosive energy of suppressed anger. Violence and pain, contrasted with the irresistibly decorative surface of the colorful armchair, create striking opposites for the viewer. Here, the artist interprets the women's struggle in a broader context than is often seen. There is a certain irony in the work, structured across two moments in time and space: first, when the plates are shattered, and then when calm has returned, and the chair, potentially a symbol of peace and forgiveness, still evokes the earlier conflagration.

The piece also examines the idea that through destruction, creation becomes possible. The explicit reference to violence in the work is therefore not a fixed interpretation. If the viewer sets aside the strong associations of the plates and chair, and the domestic references implied, they gain the opportunity to experience the work in a wider conceptual light.

The work *Fruits* addresses a subject that, like *Flying saucers*, has been widely discussed in society and remains relevant. Here, attention is directed to food, specifically genetically modified produce cultivated today for consumer sale. The presentation is very clear: a portrait of a young woman holding two misshapen tomatoes that were for sale at a grocery store. Her expression is unreadable, yet she appears calm, and the staging elevates the tomatoes as though they were rare and valuable objects which they might have been, had human intervention in their genetic makeup not occurred. Her quiet demeanor also signals the lingering questions we still face about how genetically modified foods may affect the life chain and, potentially, human health over the long term.

Harpa Þórsdóttir, Art Historian-Exhibition Catalogue: National Gallery, Icelandic Art 1980–2000, October 2002