

Inter-species Encounters at the "Hexa-Hives"

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The Hexa-Hives illustrate how an outdoor live installation (landscaped garden installation) can serve as incentive for inter-species encounters and at the same time challenge the paradigm of conventional beekeeping. The Hexa-Hive is an experimental hive, designed to both host honeybees and serve as outdoor furniture for humans. Since 2012, the Hexa-Hive has been a semi-permanent installation in Kaisaniemi Botanic Garden of Helsinki. A further development, the Hexa-Hive Village was first installed at the campus of Aalto University, in Otaniemi, Finland in 2013. Launched as artistic intervention, the Hexa-Hive village became a landscaped area hosting honeybees and inviting people to hang out. In 2014, a further development - the installation "Hexa-Hive Village with Airstrip for Bees" - was exhibited as part of the art exhibition "Semi-Wild Gardens" at Kouvola city art museum and in 2016, the installation was placed in Tarja Halonen Park, a public area in the centre of Helsinki. The article explores the effects of the installation assessed via a questionnaire. The findings include the emergence of a "garden quality" around the "Hexa-Hive", the increase of local faunal and floral diversity and the notion of wilderness in the city. The concept of urban acupuncture and the mental and psychological value of public gardens for humans are described as features of the installation. The Hexa-Hive is part of Melliferopolis and was launched in Helsinki in 2012. The activities comprise exhibitions, workshops, installations and lectures.
www.melliferopolis.net

Keywords:

experimental urban beekeeping; urban biodiversity; urban acupuncture; inter-species encounters; landscape installation

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