



Mette Rishøj was born in 1972 in Randers in Denmark. After studying at the Aørø School of Fine Arts, she took part in numerous collective and personal exhibitions in Copenhagen and other cities throughout Denmark. In 2007, she was awarded the Nbex Gallery Prize. Some of her works are now part of the City of Copenhagen's Art Collection.

Mette Rishøj: “Roads are symbolic of human energy”

Roads seem to be a recurring theme in your art. Can you tell us how your involvement with the Colas Foundation came about?

Mette Rishøj: When the Colas Foundation asked me to work on the theme of roads, I felt that I wanted to portray them in an optimistic light. They are a crucial part of today's society, providing a link between people, a network of communication, transport and exchange, a gateway to the outside world... but in order to build roads we first have to destroy something. In this picture produced for the Colas Foundation I focused on the destruction/construction cycle. Here, the machine is laying asphalt on the road. You would expect to see plumes of black smoke billowing out of the engine, but instead I've depicted the scene with a rainbow of flowers emerging from the vehicle.

I wanted to inject optimism, a sense of multicolored vitality, in order to demonstrate that although frightening, destruction is necessary.

You describe your art as “wild”, containing “brutal” action. Where do you draw your creative energy from?

M. R.: I've done an enormous amount of work on the themes of chaos, construction and demolition. I've always been fascinated by heavy machinery, industrial sites, steel, concrete and glass buildings. Together with acrylic, these materials form the original substance of my pictures. I'm especially fascinated by the endless pursuit of progress and the role and actions of man in this frenetic endeavor. ■