

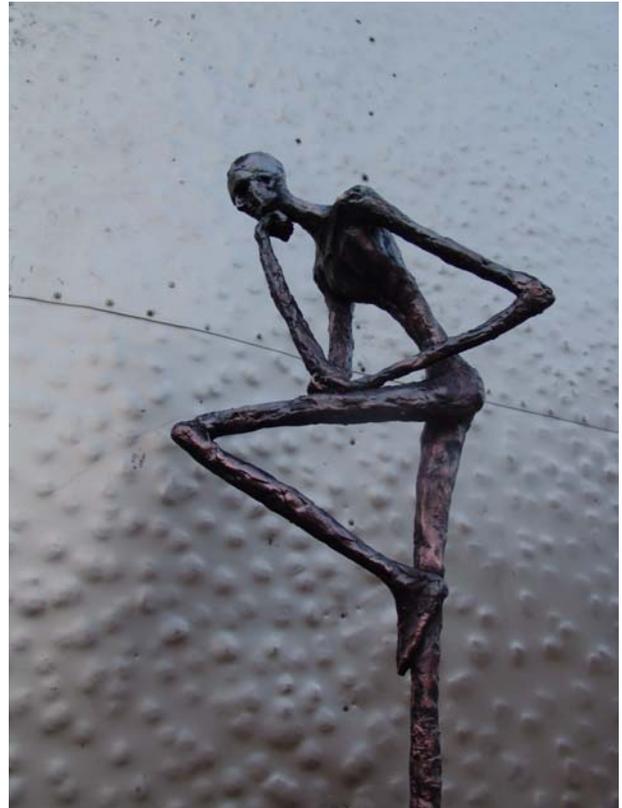
# Balancing Act

## A Sculptural Manifestation on Sustainability

In connection with the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development (2005-2014) a series of sculptures has been created by Danish sculptor Jens Galschiot to function as a logo and eye catcher for the many events. The exhibited sculptures are just models. The originals to be used for manifestations in the public space will be much bigger. Galschiot is a controversial artist who has often joined international NGO activities for a world in global balance.

The sculptures will be lent to campaigning NGOs – in the first place at local level, later worldwide. All over the world local artists are spurred to back the initiative by creating balancing sculptures according to the concept.

The idea will be launched at the UN conference *ESF - Education for a Sustainable Future* in Ahmedabad, India, 18-20 January 2005 by Lars Myrthu from Eco-net, a Danish NGO joining the campaign.



### **Idea**

The sculptures represent human figures performing an apparently impossible balancing act on the top of a very tall pole of carbon fibres. Some of the figures will be in perfect equilibrium, standing on their head or on one leg at the point of the long poles. Others are on the brink of losing their balance and falling down.

The sculptures are cast in copper in various sizes and placed on the tip of poles of carbon fibres 5 to 20 metres high. They can be placed indoors or in the open. The sculptures will sway to and fro on the point of the poles. They seem to be constantly on the brink of losing their balance and falling down or breaking the pole. However, due to the resilience of the carbon fibres the poles will return to perpendicular and recover their balance.

## Symbolism

The manlike sculptures on the point of the poles symbolise a fine-drawn balance. A sudden unintended movement may cause their falling down with a mortal end. Only by constantly compensating the imbalance are they able to keep themselves in balance at the point of the pole. 'Balance versus imbalance' is the core issue of the UN Decade for Education for Sustainable Development. The aim is to incorporate the concept of 'sustainability' in all levels of education.

The figures on the high poles symbolise sustainability as well as lack of balance in a funny and visually poignant way. In the spectator's mind they will find an evocative benchmark for sustainable development.

For many people the sculptures will not immediately evoke the concept of sustainable development. But in the mind of the spectator they will create icons and spark considerations, that later as the initiative becomes better known will create an increasing awareness for the campaign about Education for Sustainable Development.

### For further information:

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ESF Conference, Ahmedabad, India:

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**Jens Galschiot**, born 1954, sculptor. He stakes his art to defend the ethical values of our society, regardless of political, religious or economic interests. His sculptures suddenly appear in public areas and start the performance. Politicians, the press and the public are drawn in as the actors.

Galschiot has often acted as a NGO on international conferences. His sculptural manifestations appear in the public scene. *The Pillar of Shame* (8 metres) was put up in Hong Kong, Mexico and Brazil as a remembrance of bloody massacres. *The Messenger* was part of the Jubilee 2000 campaign for debt release.

The happenings are prepared in the artist's several thousand square metres workshop and foundry. The projects are implemented in cooperation with many helpers from Denmark and abroad. They are financed through the sale of bronze sculptures to art collectors.

