

Killing the Next Bin Laden / Steve Bannon's Russia Connection

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ONE MILLION DEAD*

**WHAT WAR WITH NORTH KOREA
WOULD LOOK LIKE**

(AND THAT'S IF IT DOESN'T GO NUCLEAR)

*MINIMUM PREDICTED CASUALTIES

WEEKEND

CULTURE, TRAVEL AND OTHER GOOD NEWS

THE PLACE TO BE

Stockholm, Sweden Art stays over in a new hotel

CARVED FROM striated marble, the sculpture does not so much furnish the staircase as emerge from its center, the rectilinear lines of the stone steps softening into the gently elongated curves of a woman's head. The Catalan artist Jaume Plensa has always been interested in how a sculpture or installation fills a space with its mass and energy, but for this piece, entitled *Mar Whispering*, the space in question is not a gallery or grand public square. It's a hotel lobby. And at least some of the energy it generates is redefining the relationship between art and hotels.

Art hotels are not new. For at least the past decade, upscale lodgings like Madrid's Hotel Urban, which displays Egyptian and Papua New Guinean works, or the Henry Jones in Hobart, Australia, which showcases contemporary Tasmanian pieces, have displayed serious art in an effort to distinguish themselves from competitors happy to hang a few John Singer Sargent copies in the lobby. But At Six, which has just opened in Brunkebergstorg Square, Stockholm, takes the trend further. The works displayed in its public spaces and guest rooms—

including pieces by Olafur Eliasson, Sol LeWitt and Kristina Matousch—constitute a genuine collection.

In 2007, Petter Stordalen, the owner of the Nordic Choice hotel group, hired Sune Nordgren—a former director of both the Baltic Centre for Contemporary Art in England and Norway's National Art Museum—to be his in-house curator. "It was a business decision," Nordgren says of At Six's choice to focus on works from well-known contemporary artists. "A way to make the hotel stand out, like offering an organic breakfast." A front desk flanked by the eerie wasteland in Tacita Dean's *Quaternary* photogravure is certainly more distinctive than a bowl of wholegrain muesli.

Converted by the London-based architects Universal Design Studio, the hotel softens the building's original brutalist architecture with fixtures from local designers. "For a long time, hotel art has had a bad reputation—it was associated with cheap paintings that matched the sofa," Stordalen says. "Here we want hotel art that surprises and delights our guests. The opposite of blending in." —LISA ABEND

At Six, rooms from around SEK 1,900 (\$212) per night;
HOTELATSIX.COM

A CLEAR HEAD: Jaume Plensa's *Mar Whispering* guards the lobby of the At Six hotel, newly opened in Stockholm.