

Master of Fine Art

2025



ROYAL INSTITUTE  
OF ART KUNGL.  
KONSTHOGSKOLAN







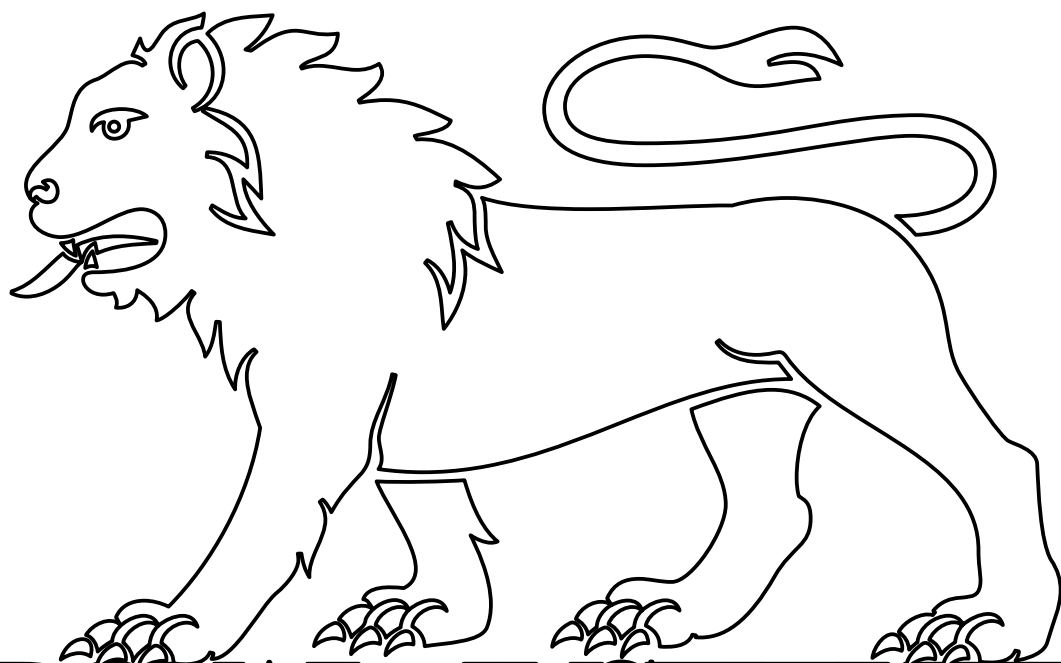






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## **Acknowledgment**

Warm thanks are extended to the Royal Institute of Art's faculty, staff, and all those who contributed to the exhibitions and the education surrounding them. Particular appreciation goes to Sarah Heuberger for her precise and generous coordination behind the scenes; to Natasha Marie Llorens, whose commitment to the text seminar extended well beyond the formal scope of her teaching; and to Elisabeth Alsheimer Evenstedt, who leaves her role as Permanent Secretary this spring. Her steady and generous support on behalf of the Academy—especially in connection with the annual hosting of the graduation exhibitions—has been invaluable.



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Jenny Olsson,  
Johanna Gustafsson Fürst  
and Silvia Thomackenstein

## *Potluck*

In Swedish, the word for potluck is *knytkalas*—a communal meal where everyone brings something to share. Rooted in *knyta*, meaning to tie or pull together, a *knytkalas* becomes a temporary and festive gathering. A moment to *knyta an*—to weave relations, to make something held in common. The use of this metaphor for the exhibition—a joint table made from many contributions, practical, symbolic, and otherwise—feels particularly pertinent at this moment in time, when we are eagerly and attentively following how the students' works take shape: how thoughts, feelings, preoccupations, concepts, and desires come together as proposals that will become works of art. The table itself became part of the conversation through the students' own reflections, as both a concept and something to be planned, placed, and returned to.

To follow this process—its sincerity, cheeky playfulness, and complex twists and turns—is a privilege. The students are about to leave us, on their way out of formal education. Our role, alongside and with them, is shaped by pedagogical care: offering structure, asking questions, sharing experiences. But more than anything, it is about reminding them that being an artist is a practice of lifelong learning

and experimentation, in which the exhibition is part of a process, not its final form. The exhibition taking shape is not built around a curatorial scaffolding or a singular voice. It is a joint project carried out by a group in which each member pushes their own processes while also acting as test audiences, sounding boards, and co-conspirators for one another. This publication is one such contribution. It extends the exhibition into print, and this year it also takes digital form—offering more tables to gather around, broadening access and reflecting the many ways in which students work today: across formats, across distances.

Still, curating is not absent. To curate is to care, and that care has taken many forms: being in conversation, thinking alongside, making room for doubt, attending to rhythm and timing, to how the works meet and move together. This exhibition does not ask visitors to search for a unifying narrative or read the works as parts of a cohesive statement. Instead, it invites attention to what is made possible by them and between them: the resonances, the tensions, the shifts and openings. Working together doesn't necessarily make the work easier. Often, it takes longer, becomes messier, more layered.

# POTLUCK

But that, too, is part of the process. We cannot emphasize enough that art is never shaped by the artist alone. It emerges through encounter, through talking, listening, and responding. Collaboration thrives on the interplay of distinct voices; it does not require dissolving into one. The preservation of diverse perspectives and spaces is essential. Within this entanglement, the relationship between the personal and the collective also shifts. These works may begin in proximity to lived experience, but they do not stop there. They open outward—towards questions of how we communicate, how we build meaning, how we are with others.

The context around this exhibition has also shaped its form. In the summer of 2024, the school began a major renovation. Walls came down, studio spaces were reduced, and communal areas became rare. In their absence, the exhibition space—and the extended space of planning meetings, studio visits, and working groups—gained new urgency. A table, metaphorical or otherwise, became something to gather around, to lean on, to hold things together.

What remains when “shared space” becomes scarce? What kind of work is possible, and for whom? In a time of infrastructural instability—within institutions and politically beyond them—it matters how, where, and with whom we sit down. And above all, that we do so in person. We learn by sharing space: tools, workshops, kitchens. What we bring to the table—questions, drawings, shared food, coffee cups, unfinished thoughts, and objects in progress—is only part of the story. The table matters just as much: not only as a place to gather, but as a form of infrastructure. A structure that holds, supports, and sometimes confines.

The influence of space on artistic process and practice becomes especially clear when looking at this year’s graduating students. Spaces appear here not as isolated zones, but as methods woven into a wider mesh of materials, gestures, and relations—circulating through how things are made, spoken, written, built, or broken down. Not in parallel, but entangled, interrupting and informing one another, in conversation rather than along disciplinary lines.



As part of the process, students were invited to engage with the Royal Academy of Fine Arts and its collection—not only as a host institution, but as a layered context with its own history and infrastructure. Through generous conversations, Svante Helmbæk Tirén shared archival material, anecdotes, and institutional knowledge, opening the space beyond its walls. What is often perceived as a white cube revealed itself to hold another story: earlier exhibitions with coloured walls, stage sets, woven textiles, plants, chairs—a different imagination of what a space for art could be. The rooms, with their skylight ceilings and absence of windows onto the street, suspend time in their own way. During group conversations, someone wondered whether the architecture had once been shaped primarily with painting in mind—a thought that lingered. And what does it mean, then, to fill it otherwise—not in opposition, but in addition? Though no longer hosting the school, this building still carries shared histories—between institutions, across generations, through shifting ways of working. And for this moment, it has become a temporary commons: a space of continuity, interruption, tradition, and transformation.

Thinking, dreaming, and making happen in proximity—in shared rooms, across difference, through gestures and repetitions. Collaboration is not always easy, but the willingness to try, to return to one another, is already a form of trust. This spirit of support and shared responsibility can be traced in the very materiality of the exhibition. As you move through it, think of the many tables that have shaped it: lunchroom benches, studio desks, workshop tables, coffee-stained surfaces, improvised digital spaces. Consider what has been exchanged on and around them—drafts, refusals, support, sound, doubt, conviction. A potluck of forms and gestures, assembled in shared time.

The Royal Institute of Art  
*Stockholm, 6 April 2025*

# SOLO SHOWS 2024

28 September – 6 October

Johanna Bjurström  
*MASS*

12 October – 20 October

Elmer Blåvarg  
*imagine possible*

26 October – 3 November

Lewis Henderson  
*No One Is Bored, Everything Is Boring*

26 October – 3 November

Sofia Romberg  
*Landscape with Suns*

9 November – 17 November

Alden Jansson  
– 8586

9 November – 17 November

Kayo Mpoyi  
*Creation stories*

Galleri Mejan is the Royal Institute of Art's exhibition space, located just across from Moderna Museet at Exercisplan 3 on Skeppsholmen. Throughout the academic year, Master's students in Fine Art present their degree projects there—typically two exhibitions run in parallel, each open to the public for around 10 days. During this period, a critical seminar is held for each show, where the graduating student's work is discussed by a panel including their professor, another faculty member, and an external advisor. Together with the written thesis, the solo exhibition forms the 30 ECTS-credit course "Independent project (degree project)."

Jaana-Kristiina Alakoski 23 November – 1 December  
*Trouble Looking for a Place to Happen*

Caio Marques de Oliveira 23 November – 1 December  
*À Feira*

Aron Fogelström 7 December – 15 December  
*The Failure of the Laryngologist's Dream*

Therese Norgren 7 December – 15 December  
*DECODER*

# SOLO SHOWS 2025

18 January – 26 January

Viktor Berglind Ekman  
*READ THE ROOM*

1 February – 9 February

Joi Wengström  
*jag låter mina fötter försöka lokalisera ett språk,  
ett försök att omförhandla marken under mig*

1 February – 9 February

Sanna Håkans  
*Blink of an eye*

1 March – 9 March

Andrea Larsson-Lithander  
*Älskad som en sluten fontän/Loved like a closed  
system fountain*

15 March – 23 March

Silja Beck  
*conditions of the second encounter*

15 March – 23 March

Maria Toll  
*Hud, naglar, hår och små bitar av gummisulor  
försvinner in i mönstret som är konstruerat för  
att dölja våra spår*

External critics participating in the examination panels between September 2024 and May 2025 included: Dimen Hama Abdulla, Karin Bähler Lavér, Loulou Cherinet, Marcus Doverud, Ann Edholm, Nina Emge, Emily Fahlén, Jörgen Gassilewski, Eva Löfdahl, Rita McBride, Jonas Nobel, Stina Nyberg, Roberto N Peyre, Olivia Plender, Silvia Thomackenstein, Peter Thörneby, Lisa Torell, Munish Wadhia, and Ashes Withyman.

Jost Maltha  
*Perforating the Shell*

29 March – 6 April

Cilia Wagén  
*Center*

29 March – 6 April

Niels Engström  
*Suddenly Real As Ever*

12 April – 20 April

Isolde Berkqvist  
*I got Bunked!*

26 April – 4 May

Moa Cedercrona  
*A Terrible Love Story*

26 April – 4 May

Marie Karlberg  
*(Title forthcoming)*

30 August – 7 September

Anton Halla  
*(Title forthcoming)*

13 September – 21 September

Esmeralda Ahlqvist  
*(Title forthcoming)*

8 November – 17 November

SOLO SHOWS 2025



# ESMERALDA AHLQVIST

A two-piece polyester lace suit (Light Salmon)—fragile today. Just a Breeze and she's struggling. Harvest season is coming, maybe it has something to do with it.

The air: sour. A breeze for sure, but sour.

The lace vs. the accelerating movement of nature. Piss-drained faux velvet (Once Falu, now sun-bleached to sheer chestnut) vs. the increased size of the seagulls. Apostrophising and opposing each other—confronting, then avoiding A stare-down of puritan distaste—next up: in consensus Conflict, peace—etc.

From the observer's view: autonomous interpretations of the biological struggle between life and death, one could assume, and it seems to be

spiraling spiraling spiraling. Very much a bourgeois catharsis, straight up: an opera. The violent kind, an intergenerational constitution—and the discomfort she feels is grief.

It's a complete understanding of: the decayed modern entertainment industry, the remains of its experimental biotechnology and all the other pleasures of the material world—not to mention, the deprivation of treating oneself with a neat festive set of factory-fresh nylon. Though the material world never got boring—nature was work, messed up, tbh. Unlike the ensemble of the opera, humbled by their endurance\* act of overstaying their visit (scent: hyrax, ambergris etc):

The menace of nature provokes in arrogant waves; Light to light white, off-white, to light light beige, to medium cream beige, to a deeper camel beige, to cheap mineral light, to light light gold, back to light light white—a gas-like white. To off-white, and so on. You could have—I know I would, expected a touché of blue (probably something like light pigeon) somewhere in there, but no.

Altogether: the uncanny conditions for a backwatered intermezzo—and gosh they'll get tired, They will get so, so, so tired!

*\* the capacity to maintain a certain level of physical output for a prolonged period without succumbing to fatigue*



*Europá* (2025). Cardboard, chicken wire fence, reused furniture fabrics, foam rubber, sewing thread, coffee, black bile, tinctures of hyrax- and goat hair, 99 x 200 cm. Photo: Esmeralda Ahlqvist



*Thomasinés* (2025). PVC pipes, chicken wire fence, faux leather, foam washcloths, reused blankets, duvets, rubber foam, tape, mesh, acrylic paint, hay, sewing thread, plastic chair, phlegm, tinctures of ambergris, 63 x 146 cm. Photo: Esmeralda Ahlqvist

# JAANA-KRISTIINA ALAKOSKI



*The King of My Show* (2024). Pigmented jesmonite, glass fiber, styrofoam, wood filler, crystal plate, paper collage and metal chain, 170 x 110 x 110 cm. *Best Girlfriend* (2024) Customized stuffed toy, 28 x 8 x 20 cm. Photo: Jaana-Kristiina Alakoski



*The Text That Ended Rape* (2024). Performance 12 min.  
Photo: Emma Øverland Dudlyke



*The Text That Ended Rape* (2024). Performance, 12 min.  
Photo: Emma Øverland Dudlyke

The problems I deal with as an artist envelop me. Seeing as they are mostly values tied up with language and aesthetics, they are also a part of me. Laying these problems bare is the work of my artistic practice.

After about ten years of articulating the above sentiment, I have also identified my everyday steroid-injection of inspiration. Harmful ideologies pile up in my idea collection. Universalism, competition, boobs, butt holes, ever-intensifying joy and glossy commodities swim around each other in my pools of words and images. Eventually, I scoop these signs up to scrutinize how I am so intimate with them. In all my work, an illusion of certainty appropriated from theory contrasts with the uncertainty that is enthralling in art, sustaining a tension that is crucial to my explorations.

The tension I seek comes from frenzy and confusion, which in turn comes from ethical self-contradictions and unethical desires.

Tracking my own and other people's sense of moral virtue, I dig up ways one might latch on to bad stuff thinking it will make life livable. Playing with depiction of forces greater than myself, I ask: how can a life surrounded by toxicity be so fun and inspiring? How can I synthesize conceptions of good and evil, to escape the binary bad-good stalemate?

I always search Good in Bad  
I also search Bad in Good  
So...oooooooooooo...  
... I am a Very Good Bad Boy

I am, indeed, a very good bad boy. I pretend to be a doctor identifying my own sickness. I make my own theories to sooth uncertainty, yet could never with good conscience present a stable perspective. The resonance of inconsistency so intimately linked with a desire for clarity is at once a form of self-harm and a remedy, my pharmakon.

*\* Vennu Malleesh in his song "It's My Life Whatever I Wanna Do"*

# JAANA-KRISTIINA ALAKOSKI



# SILJA BECK



*conditions of the second encounter* (2025). Arduinos, FM-transmitters and receivers, mp3-modules, sine tones and images, dimensions variable. Photos: Silja Beck



The material I work with can rarely be seen. It is mostly felt. It's shaking walls and bones and tickling the little hair bundles in our inner ears. I love how they actively amplify waves, allowing human brains to interpret them.

How do social dynamics manifest within groups? What pushes, what pulls, and what's in between? As an active observer, I aim to uncover hidden structures. I focus on small communities, where changes can be perceived and it is easier to understand how social constructs form us, as well as how we can shape them.

Before, during, and after I show, I mediate.<sup>1</sup> Conversation gives form.<sup>2</sup>

Moving to Stockholm in fall 2023, I encountered closed doors and, oddly, internalized a fear of knocking on them. So I turned to radio practice. Radio lets me send and receive, surrounded by waves carrying content—holding the potential to be identified, decoded, or beautifully imagined.

the room depicted contained

5 Arduinos controlling the energy flow of  
5 transmitter-modules connected to  
5 mp3-modules playing  
5 different sine-tones  
50 battery powered radios  
2 prints

The transmitter modules all broadcast on FM 95.7 Mhz., each turning on and off irregularly. Some of the radio receivers are on. The quality of a transmission can be influenced by lightning, solar activity, power lines and electronic devices, storms, ionospheric changes and temperature inversions as well as *the positioning of bodies in space*.

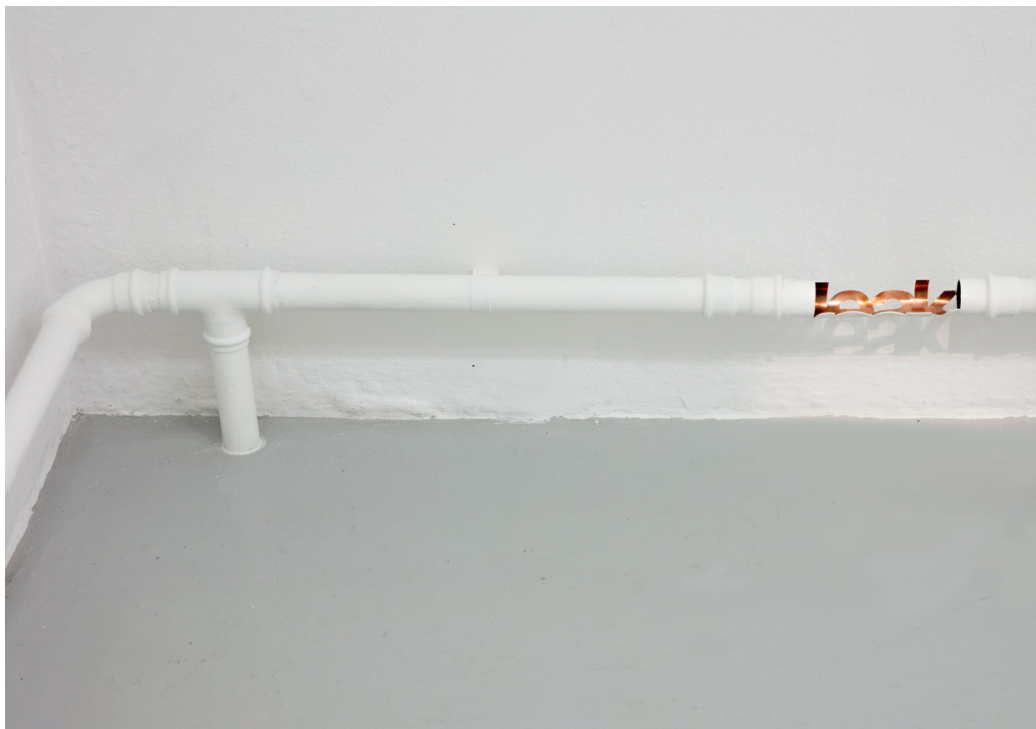
<sup>1</sup> as in German: *Vermittlung*, a word that is very important to me but can't be fully translated into English as it hints both towards space and movement. Knowledge is travelling and being transformed.

<sup>2</sup> as in German: *Bildung*, again something gets lost in translation here. It partly means to educate but also contains the word *bilden*, which is tied to the words for image and form.



SILJA BECK

# VIKTOR BERGLIND EKMAN



*Read the room, minority stress (2025). Copper, steel, pipe fitting, latex and wall paint, dimensions variable. Photo: Viktor Berglind Ekman*

I hate being aware of when someone enters the room. Sometimes I instinctively turn to seek eye contact, as if compelled. It makes me feel exposed, like I care too much.

And I do. I've always been ambivalent between groups. The in-between is both my obstacle and my safe space. In the in-between, I notice how attention shifts, how conversations redirect. A silent social hierarchy emerges, altering the dynamics of the space. Nervousness lingers, frustration builds. Bodies tense, and silence stretches.

The word *shibboleth* is used when linguistics becomes a test to distinguish between groups or individuals. The origin of the word tells of how one group had taken control of a river crossing, and to identify those trying to flee, they asked each person to say the word *shibboleth*. Those who couldn't pronounce the "sh" sound and instead said *sibboleth* revealed their identity and were then captured or killed.

Since then, *shibboleth* has come to symbolize the subtle linguistic markers that can be used to identify and often exclude people.

In my manic attempt to understand my inner self and surroundings, I create spatial objects. I work with repetition, construction, and deconstruction through sculpture, installation, drawing, scent, and sound. My processes are closely tied to materiality and spatial contexts. I'm interested in navigating power structures, and how semiotic objects and situations create a sense of inside, outside, and in-between. Bodies, places, and identities are represented and separated through welded metal, tractor tires, and urinal fresheners.



Installation view of *Read the room*, Galleri Mejan (2025). Welding material, urinal fresheners, steel, latex, copper, pipe fitting, wall paint, wire, pulley and aluminium bar, dimensions variable. Photo: Jean-Baptiste Béranger

VIKTOR BERGLIND EKMAN

# ISOLDE BERKQVIST

She got a computer, logged in. Clicked. Scrolled.

The pixels on the screen spread like a virus - infecting her brain and heart until it eventually ate it up. Bit by bit. Click by click.

Ten years ago, I lost my grandmother to the digital world of internet. She multiplied into avatars, dissolved into ciphers, until she became nothing but a blinking message, telling me about an energy drink called Bunk.



*I Got Bunked!* (2025). LED-screen and aluminium, 230 x 80 x 8 cm, showing *I Got Bunked!* (2020-2025) Video, 13:20 min. Photo: Isolde Berkqvist





*I Got Bunked!* (2025). Jacuzzi, epoxy, bottles, houseplant and MDF. Photo: Isolde Berkqvist



*I Got Bunked!* (2025). Leather armchair, plastic bottle, pump, pizza, LED-screen and decorative plastic. Photo: Isolde Berkqvist

# ISOLDE BERKQVIST



# JOHANNA BJURSTRÖM



Installation view of *MASS*, Galleri Mejan (2024). Photo: Jean-Baptiste Béranger

I went to music school as a child and this experience is reflected in my work today, when I find myself mimicking the disciplined aesthetics found in music theory, like precision, composition, and harmony. Long black skirts, white shirts, scores in our hands. Parents sitting on benches, taking a deep breath before we start.

I imagine music as it echoes in the air. It comes from a source that sets the air in motion, bouncing off the surfaces it encounters. It reaches the ear, the ear canal, the eardrum. Music is created first in the mind.

Instruments can be the potential birth of a sound, and the spaces it travels through. These static objects contrast with the inherent fleeting nature of sound and superstition. I once met an organ restorer who told me about the instrument's long history. I told him about an art project inspired by organs, and he kept trying to steer me toward the idea that I should make the piece sound through "a few simple solutions." But it was not important for me to make it sound, I thought about the piece as a starting point for sound to happen. A taut thread can break at any time. Until then it remains still, holds its breath surrounded by a loud silence.



*Sankt* (2024). Jute, vinyl and thread, 119 x 150 cm. Photo: Jean-Baptiste Béranger

JOHANNA BJURSTRÖM

# ELMER BLÅVARG



Installation view of *imagine possible*, Galleri Mejan (2025). Photo: Elmer Blåvarg

*Dis-claim.* —er ! All pictures, words and phrasings (c) Elmer Blåvarg unless stolen or stated otherwise.

~~Zeitgeist~~. Needless to say, we are a ~~zeitgeisty~~ vehicle of presentation. And no doubt about that. The effects of this for you, turning this way and that in an attempt to perceive 'us', is that an imaginary cuts through real life in multiple, criss-crossing planes of intersection, dissolving the status of you as you and instead instigating a field of heightened, activated perception that has no clear beginning or end; no indication of which side we might be on: and, one last story: If we close our eyes, for a second or two, yes, if we close them, we can still see him quite clearly in front of us. Our grandfather. He is around 60 years old with billowy white hair. He is smoking a cigarette. He wanders on and off at his office.

He is thinking. He says: "They are building some kind of fucking on-the-outside work that takes up more space than the actual act." We are sitting in the sofa watching him intently. We say: "Interesting." He continues: "For a second or so, you hardly believe it really happened... You know... That feeling... But..." He sits down, no, leans against his desk. He is tired. "But you have to move past that. Try to think over and under these small messages. You understand?" We say: "Continue". "They might be fooling with us. What if all these messages are fake?" "Fake?" "That it is a fantasy, imagination, that has nothing to do with the act itself. A deliberate misinformation." He looks at us. He looks away. Behind him a big print is mounted to the wall. White letters on a grey background spelling out the words: "Imagine being there without being there. It's possible."

# MOA CEDERCRONA

My fear of loneliness took root at a young age. Something else that is a constant presence within me is an attraction for the explicit and obscene. A combination of these two things—fear and pleasure—forms the core of my art practice, which I convey through storytelling and performativity.

I create scenarios with different characters and then reenact these in front of an audience. I make mechanical dolls as co-authors in my performances that also function as vessels where I embody my fears and pleasures. *Kulturmannen*, for example, embodied my fear of men with cultural capital, but also the thrill of having an old, sexy, intellectual mentor.

The idea for my master's project came when I was pregnant: to build a better version of myself, a supermum, a *Moa 2.0*. But becoming a mother was not what I expected.

The project changed. Instead of focusing on *Moa 2.0*'s brain, it became all about her body. After the birth of my daughter, I felt like a device, a feeding machine and a stuffed animal for her, my body no longer belonged to me. This new body image and the memory of an old favorite toy, Chico, sent me in a new direction. Chico was a Little Monkey Lost, his body a mixture of realistic details in combination with fake fur. When you pressed his stomach his mouth puckered and released, like performing a kiss. Sadly, some metal spring inside him broke and one day he stopped kissing me back.

The making of my dolls is a dynamic process in which I animate and build them simultaneously. They come to life. I thought *Moa 2.0* was going to be my spitting image, instead she became a caricature with a tense posture, pointy shoulders, and cow-eyes. A container for a newborn mother.

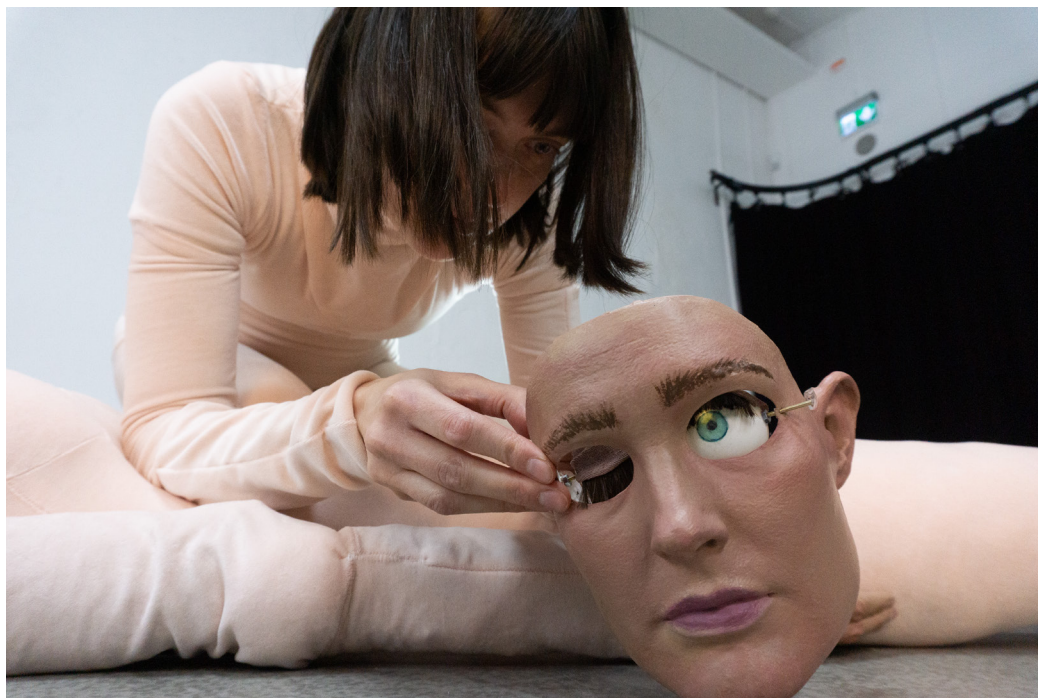


*The Mother Project* (2025). Video still, 15 min.





*The Mother Project (2025)*. Video still, 15 min.



Documentation of the performance *A Terrible Love Story* (2025). PLA, acrylic paint, human hair, ping-pong balls, LED diodes, fabric, cotton, zipper, foam rubber, rope and wig, scale 1:1 mirroring the artist's body. Photo: Benjamin Zemui

MOA CEDERCRONA

# NIELS ENGSTRÖM



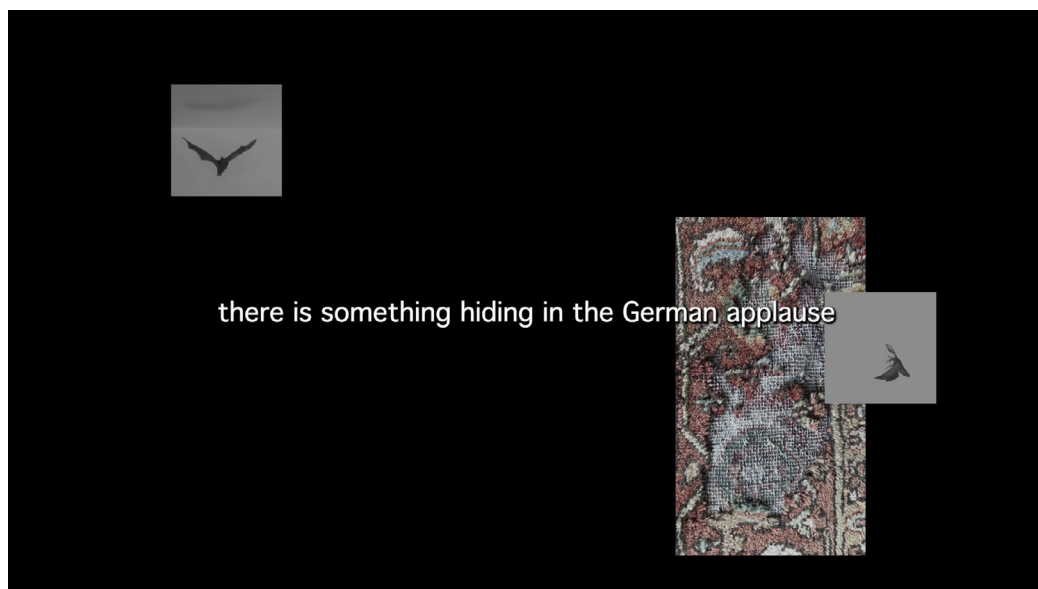
Installation views of *Suddenly Real as Ever*, Gallen Mejan (2025). Photos: Niels Engström



NIELS ENGSTRÖM



# ARON FOGELSTRÖM



*raum* (2025). Video still.

My first voice-breaker told me I had learned to speak incorrectly. She said I was stumbling through the Swedish language, out of step with its choreography. Holding my tongue between her fingers, she initiated the project of dismantling my voice. But in my attempts at returning to a mother tongue, I arrived at something else entirely, something I named linguistic science-fiction.

Later, another voice-breaker told me Swedish inhabited certain spaces within the human body. My speech was seemingly trespassing beyond the borders of Swedish, taking possession of organs it had no claim to. Or perhaps my body was sounding outside its jurisdiction, desiring verbal agency. Yet a third voice-breaker made me commit to my vocal exercises. At the dinner table, in rush-hour traffic, under the fluorescent lights of a Lidl store. I realized time and again that my voice was in fact not my own. Each space that received my tongue-twisters transformed them into their own.

Desperate, I instead gave my body to the German language, wishing it to mold me into something else. In Berlin, in exile, I met my last voice-breaker.

I kept finding myself looking for excuses to go to Lidl. The labyrinth of aisles lent a familiar choreography, an ominous feeling of home in the grocery store chain. I spoke in garbled German to the cashier. He smiled uncomprehending. Again, I was reminded that my voice was not my own. Enduring the stares of other shoppers I offered once more my German-Swedish chimera to the man at the counter. Hesitating at first, he then accepted. Together we stumbled through an emerging Lidl dialect.

The following week I returned to Stockholm, voice-broken. I was no longer speaking at the cavities of architecture, nor the skin and textiles of other bodies, but with them.



Installation view of *The Failure of the Laryngologist's Dream*, Galleri Mejan (2024). Concrete mold of oral cavity pronouncing [a] installed into wall, 32 x 30 x 16 cm.  
Photo: Jean-Baptiste Béranger

ARON FOGELSTRÖM

# ANTON HALLA



Photo: Anton Halla

ANTON HALLA



# LEWIS HENDERSON

I take objects—recycled screens, discarded windows, outdated algorithms—and reconfigure them, pushing them beyond their intended use. A round screen from a smartwatch becomes a digital eye; a SAD lamp transforms into a table; an algorithm is rewritten to replicate *Hamlet*. These acts of reconstruction challenge our assumption that function is fixed—reminding us that nothing is inevitable, and that even within systems of control, there is always space for reinvention—just as a broken object can be reassembled into something entirely new, so too can our understanding of the world. Modification is a way to reclaim agency, we can engage in it creatively in a myriad of different ways—breaking apart, reimagining, and rebuilding as an act of resistance—showing that, like function, technology isn't fixed—it's an active force that conditions our behaviors, shaping not only how we perceive reality but also how we relate to one another.

We live in an era where everything is at arm's length, and never actually held—media is streamed or hosted, friends are reduced to followers, even our search for romance is mediated. In this intangible condition, it becomes difficult to wholeheartedly commit to anything, including the future. My work resists this passive detachment by forcing seemingly static technologies to exist in new, unexpected ways.

I think that history increasingly suggests that human social change is more directly driven by technology than by ideology. In fact, ideologies could just be our collective attempts to deal with technologies that are banally driving us into the future. Art has the power to transform our collective use of technology in the present, and in doing so offer an avenue forward into a radically different tomorrow that we actually desire—one built on our own terms, rather than inherited by default.



*Eyes* (2024). Video loop 02:30 min, 2 x glass lenses, 2 x digital watches screens, Raspberry Pi, (x2) 6 x 6 x 5 cm. Photo: Lewis Henderson



*Turbine* (2024). Aluminium, steel, glass, wood, 3D print, generator and battery, 800 x 150 x 180 cm. Photo: Lewis Henderson

LEWIS HENDERSON

# SANNA HÅKANS



Installation view of *Blink of an eye*, Galleri Mejan (2025). To the left: *Sharp tip of an instrument* (2025). Steel and shadow, 110 × 2.5 cm. To the right: *Now, recall* (2025). Textile, pigment and epoxy resin, 160 × 40 × 35 cm. Photo: Sanna Håkans.

I remember watching Chantal Akerman's film *News from Home at the cinema*, I fell asleep for a few minutes in the middle of the movie. When waking up, I still could see a street in New York, and hear a letter being read from the director's mother. I did not feel that I had missed a major event in the movie or lost track of the story. I stayed with this feeling of not needing to understand everything. It allowed me to simply exist in the space, together with strangers.

Dust is visible in the light rays traversing across the room, it settles and accumulates. The day sets and time stretches as the shadows grow longer. Papers are yellowing, the books on the windowsill are fading... Here invincible and resting processes are becoming visible and in motion, over time.

One could say that I transform spatial gestures into sculptures, installations and images— the pleating of a curtain, the flickering sun spots on the wall, a sewing needle's diminishing into its sharp tip... They lean to a certain atmosphere—a continuous time of now. It is a praise of sensibility. A slowing down—a more perceptible state, that allows us to notice and remember the subtle changes in our environment.



*Detta har ännu inte hänt* (detail) (2025). Paraffin, wax, pigment, panel and photograph, 48 x 48 x 2 cm. Photo: Sanna Håkans

# ALDEN JANSSON

I hand carve my work from one solid piece of linden wood. The sculptures depict objects from my close surroundings that all stem from the same event, when I was assigned a new personal identity number as a result of legally changing my gender. I work with A4 papers, identification documents that I was meant to always carry with me, and a torn old jacket. The jacket's sleeves have holes where my wrist chafed against my hip. The objects are fragile, worn, and about to fall apart, but when I carve them, they become hard and stable, as if frozen in time.

My practice involves a way of documenting and preserving the traces of the old personal number/person. An attempt to save something that is slowly eroding, to remember something that is getting to be easier to forget. The handmade nature of the work offers a physical way of remembering, through the hands rather than only the mind.

I always have the original object in front of me when I carve the works. I measure, look, feel my way so that every scratch, hole, crease, and stitch is transferred to the wood. The process is repetitive and time-consuming, but slowly the object emerges, as if it had always been there.



Installation view of -8586, Galleri Mejan (2024). Photo: Alden Jansson





*A4* (2025). Linden wood, gesso and graphite, 29,5 × 20,5 cm. Photo: Alden Jansson

ALDEN JANSSON

# MARIE KARLBERG



*Eating a Banana* (2025). Performance. Photo: Oscar Carlson



Installation view of *Eating a Banana* (2025). Photo: Oscar Carlson

The performance begins with a scenario common to contemporary life. Here we meet the characters A, B, C, and D.

A can't afford to pay his rent to his landlord and friend B.

This puts a strain on their relationship, as B is expecting a baby with his girlfriend D, who wants B to stand up for himself and get the rent A owes him.

Meanwhile, A goes out and finds C at a bar. C has something to ask from A and suggests that she will pay A's rent if he does her a "favor."

-

In the second scene, B starts drawing a portrait of D, but instead of drawing her figuratively he starts writing down words including "WALK," "SOCIETY," and "BEER."

Slowly the pieces of papers with the words on them start to accumulate on the floor.

D starts collecting these papers but instead of picking them up she starts cleaning the floor with them.

As this is happening, A has become C's GPS, giving her directions on how to get to the train station while C is running late to the train screaming on the phone over and over again that "I hate this fucking city."

The performance descends into hysteria until I start singing while picking up the pieces of papers from the floor.

-

We are witness to a group of people who relate to one another under the dull compulsion of capital: tensions arise not in differences in personality but are derived from an impersonal and invisible power structure. The performance becomes a film production. The audience becomes a supporting player whose presence becomes an antagonism to the drama produced before their eyes.

As these characters are put in various stressful situations, like running late for a train or going through a security check at an airport, the performance breaks down, loses its grip on reality and spirals into chaos.

# MARIE KARLBERG



# ANDREA LARSSON-LITHANDER

My practice takes place in the wake of grief, in a convulsive need to remember and the simultaneous need for release. I am interested in loss and how it relates to domestic labor as well as materialization of memory and materials such as laundry, waste, photographs, papers and binders.

There is something similar about the way time moves in grief and while performing housework. You could describe its progression from point A to point B, whether it is hanging the laundry or deciding on funeral arrangements. But movement in these matters is not linear: there is transition rather than progression. Grieving and house work are time-consuming and often both go unrecognized.

There is infrastructure enabling remembrance, such as collections of photographs and birth and marriage certificates, which can be sorted into folders and binders.

Looking through such materials can feel as if the divide in time and space is narrowing, making life and death simultaneous, while structuring it can serve as a way of resurrecting a dependable linearity in grief's vortex.

I am also interested in the material conditions that set forgetting in motion. The cleansing of a body, or a space, is an exercise in forgetting. The physicality of decay, its stench, seems an intimacy which most often cannot be shared. In the drum of a washing machine clothes cease to smell of yesterday's effort, stop carrying the traces of traffic exhaust and sloppily eaten lunches. We put away the smell of our own decay. But every time textiles are washed free of stains and smells they also release a little bit of their pigment into the water, gradually draining the textiles of color. Eventually worn out textiles become light as bone or an overexposed image: dying and dyeing.



*Machine for making portraits (2025).* Washing machine washing constantly for as long as piece is exhibited, red t-shirt, detergent, motor, plastic and steel, 105 x 58 x 80 cm. Photo: Jean-Baptiste Béranger



Installation view of *Machine for making portraits and Portrait of K* in Stockholm och Barcelona, November twentytwentyfour, Galleri Mejan (2025).  
Photo: Jean-Baptiste Béranger

ANDREA LARSSON-LITHANDER



# JOST MALTHA



*Perforating the Shell* (2024). Soapstone, aluminium and silicone, 23 x 15 x 29 cm. Photo: Daniel Browne

Perforated shells, once mere remnants of marine life, became some of the first objects to adorn the human body. By piercing their surfaces, these forms shifted from the incidental to the emblematic – no longer seen only *as is*, but *as if*, holding the promise of something beyond themselves. This gesture, small but significant, marks a moment in which symbolic thinking began to crystallize.

Today, a similar movement unfolds under the fluorescent lights of the laboratory: horseshoe crabs, held in place, their blue blood drawn to test for contamination in new medicines.

Sea snail toxins altered into anesthetics. The surface is opened again, and with it, a lingering desire to access what lies beneath.

What unfolds is a persistent inclination to decode the world through surfaces – stretching the associative links that shape how objects are read, handled, and believed. Instruments of classification and preservation do more than register facts; they project narratives onto the natural world while concealing their own logics. Within these systems, myth persists – not as fiction, but as a mode of making meaning when certainty remains out of reach.



*Gnawing* (detail) (2025). Elm wood, aluminium, fossils, and a motor, 480 x 65 x 9 cm. Photo: Jost Maltha



Installation view of *Perforating the Shell*, Galleri Mejan (2025). Photo: Jean-Baptiste Béranger

# JOST MALTHA

# CAIO MARQUES DE OLIVEIRA

To my precious daughter,

Here is a short poem  
Made of breeze and sun touching your skin  
Your feet  
Feel the burning sand on the beach  
You cry  
I carry you in my arms  
Blow away the scorch.  
I am taking you there  
Where the cold is just a fine drizzle  
Or walking barefoot on tiles  
And there is the scent of orange trees  
And the *cica* taste of cashew apple  
The crunch of guava  
Hundreds of jackfruits smashed on the ground  
And the body is not constrained  
Everything is filled with  
savour and restlessness  
My lyrical self will only hold  
your hand and follow you  
Wherever path you choose.

I am a conduit of information, a bridge where you can move back and forth. So, when you hear my voice singing along with *Fundo de Quintal* or chitchatting with *vovó*, *vôvô* and *tia Maria*, you might feel the longing for my samba, your grandma's food, the beach, Carnival and a collection of other things. What can I do? I am soaked in what the salty Atlantic water carried south. I was always on that side of the bridge until I crossed to

this side, and I do what I can to show you the pillars that keep me upright. My intent is to keep the gates open for you so you can access both sides, because you deserve it all. You might be fifteen or twenty years old when these words begin to unfold for you. By then, the weight of this longing may not settle on you because you will grow up here, but I know you'll be able to see the tenderness my work carries toward you.



*Ternura* (2024). Video still, 7:09 min.



*Ternura* (2024). 35mm video still, 7:09 min.

CAIO MARQUES DE OLIVEIRA



# KAYO MPOYI



*A biography in charcoal (2024). Charcoal on canvas, 500 x 190 cm. Photo: Jean-Baptiste Béranger (cropped)*

My great-grandmother is said to have been captured pregnant with my grandfather. The family only paid for the freedom of my grandfather and she was left to die. My family has many stories of loss. My artistic process is an attempt to trace the shapes of a loss that is hard to name, unpleasant to remember. It is a gap in memory that is impossible to fill, and can only be related to. I am compelled to explore and search for ways to exist in this, so I tell stories. A fiction that may, in images or in words, help me glimpse where I (we) have been so I can understand where I am. For the last ten years I have been thinking about the Lukasa, a Luba hand-held, wooden mnemonic device used to both code and read history. Its shape resembles a body with the surface coded with pearls of different colors. A society of Mbudyé would be the only ones capable of reading them. Reading was remembering and performing history. My drawing practice is about reading my body, which I see as a Lukasa, a code

of history. I draw myself, objects from my family archive, and objects from the national archives. I see drawing as a decoding technique, the truest connection to stored memory, emotions. So my job is to expose my body to objects and do exercises like drawing silence and dancing words and see how my hand might “remember” Something.

I begin my work in drawing because the languages I know best (Swedish and French) are also languages that have no words for me. Language is filled with information. Information that commits violence, deflects, morphs, and frames the world.

The image in itself is language, I am aware of this and work within these different challenges. I use drawing to build stories. I am trying to enrich my personal language in my attempts to express history, stories and voices. Drawing is a way I can speak, bypassing language.





*My great grandmother's self-portrait* (2024). Crayon, acrylic and oil on canvas, 140 x 210 cm. Photo: Kayo Mpoyi



*Dressed up in our Sunday clothes* (2025). Drypoint and monotype, 40 x 50 cm. Photo: Kayo Mpoyi

KAYO MPOYI

# THERESE NORGREN

What is a corner? What happens if a corner is removed from its context? Does the removal of a corner not just create new corners? Is it possible for a corner to be an object? Why corners? Is it less about corners but more about the point where things meet? About the border between things? Room and not-room, wall and not-wall? Are there rooms without corners? What about spheres? Are spheres cornerless or are they nothing but corners? In what reality would a spherical room be possible? Does the idea of a spherical room have anything to do with the human function of a room? What is the opposite of a corner? Is there such a thing? Does a room create nothingness? Does nothingness even exist? If so, what keeps nothingness empty? What is the difference between nothingness

and something that is-not? Can everything be measured? If not, then what cannot be measured? What happens if a ruler is defective? How to know if a ruler is defective? What is a gömböc? How to pronounce the word 'gömböc'? How does quantum theory allow a rock to turn suddenly into a duck? What is the shape of an electron? How do rationality and spiritualism relate to the global economic system? What does urushi lacquer have to do with the stock market? What is BIP39? How to manually generate a crypto recovery phrase by using dice? Is it common knowledge that the singular of "dice" is "die"? Is it reasonable to say that I am working with corners no matter what I am working with because it all started with corners?



Installation view of *DECODER*, Galleri Mejan (2024). Photo: Therese Norgren

THERESE NORGREN

# SOFIA ROMBERG



*Wildflower Tales* (2025). Video still, inverted archive footage by Filmligan (1972), 05:34 min.

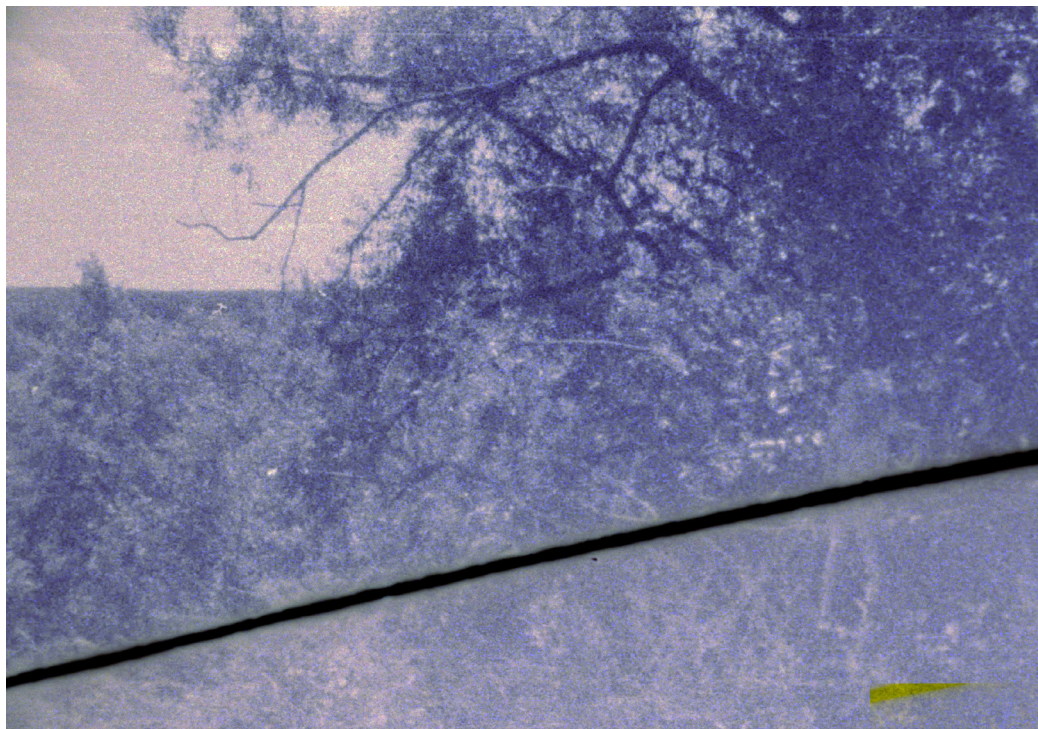
Life form: Rhizomatous perennial. Noun: the things that can be seen behind something. Fruits: yellowish-brown with short, five-toothed crowns. Leaves: Strongly scented, compound, up to 12 cm. Do not pick more than you need, place them in a vessel, pour hot water over, wait for the temperature to drop to 30 degrees Celsius. Set the clock and get to work. You must spin the film at a steady pace for 15 minutes then rinse thoroughly before the next round. Know your steps. Some days you will only see the cracks and grains. A human-made oblivion with exposed wiring and gears. A pile of debris growing skyward. Sirens everywhere.

The Futurist movement looked at the city like a backdrop not meant to last. It should pulse and shine, fall and rise with every shift. - The 1960s and 70s,

social and urban transformation en masse. Transgression and rebirth. Opposing forces. The storm still blowing. Other days a view in: red, blue, purple, black and white. Immense. Sometimes growing where it would not naturally be found.

Give yourself a task: perceive how parallel movements emerge. Be here and there. Near and far. Assemble lost with present. Rough with tender. Start all over. Let it hang and dry. Flowering period: July - September. Stems: Branched, erect, often purplish-red, and dotted with glands. *Tanacetum* from the medieval Latin name *tanazita*, in turn derived from Greek *athanasia*, “immortality”. Refers to the long-lived flowers of some species. English name: Bitter Buttons, Golden Buttons. Here you are. Fractured temporalities. It’s a strange flower is a flower is a flower.





*Wildflower Tales* (2025). Video still, hand processed 16mm film with plants and flowers from the Värberg peaks combined with archive footage from 1972, transferred to HD, 05:34 min.



Installation view of *Landscape with Suns*, Galleri Mejan (2024). 2-channel projection, plasterboards, discarded mirror carpet from The Royal Swedish Ballet in the 1970s, wilted flowers from the Värberg peaks, vases with water. Photo: Jean-Baptiste Béranger

SOFIA ROMBERG



# MARIA TOLL



Installation view of *Hud, naglar, hår och små bitar av gummisulor försvinner in i mönstret som är konstruerat för att dölja våra spår*, Galleri Mejan (2025). Linoleum, sealant, MDF, carpentry paint, screenprint paint, photo wallpaper, maple frame, art glass, screenprint paper and concrete. Photo: Laus Østergaard



Installation view of *Hud, naglar, hår och små bitar av gummisulor försvinner in i mönstret som är konstruerat för att dölja våra spår*, Galleri Mejan (2025). Linoleum, sealant, MDF, carpentry paint, 86 x 67 cm, 78 x 45 cm. Photo: Emma Signe Aarflot

Every weekday between seven minutes to twelve and twenty-two minutes past one, a constant pinging and buzzing can be heard through the corridors. The microwave ovens spin round and round as they heat up all of yesterday's dinners. Over the course of a day, the total distance is several kilometers. After a year, it's as far as three quarters of a lap around the globe. Although the dishes vary, the smell is always the same, with an overhanging note of coffee and burnt plastic.

At quarter to two, it's quiet again. At three o'clock we return for coffee. We nod to each other and say things like *in a few months it will be light again* or *on Tuesday it will be above freezing*. At seventeen minutes past three we go back to where we came from. At half past five it has already been dark for two hours and we have gone home to cook a new dinner to put in a small box.

In the corner of the foyer are tropical plants. This time of the year, they are facing the window in an attempt to catch the few hours of sun. As we enter and exit through the swinging doors, they whisper about our monumental inability to protect ourselves from being human.

One morning, the elevators start going horizontally instead of vertically. No one seems to notice. If you were to put your cheek close to the cold floor, a kind of sediment would appear. Skin, nails, hair and small pieces of rubber soles disappear into the pattern constructed to hide our traces.



Installation view of *Hud, naglar, hår och små bitar av gummisulor försvinner in i mönstret som är konstruerat för att dölja våra spår*, Galleri Mejan (2025). Photo wallpaper, 467 x 302 cm. Photo: Laus Østergaard

# MARIA TOLL

# CILIA WAGÉN



*Billy* (2025). Bookshelf, 80 x 28 x 202 cm. Photo: Cilia Wagén





*Untitled* (2025). Three hooks and Möbius strip made of paper, dimensions variable. Photo: Cilia Wagén

CILIA WAGÉN

# JOI WENGSTRÖM



*To leave trace (the boredom)* (2025). Styrofoam and wax, 186 x 102 x 63 cm. Photo: Alden Jansson



There are experiences and feelings that I have not been able to process in the moment when they occurred. Instead of "taking in" what happened, I "take in" the room where it happened. The space then becomes a storage for these experiences. In order not to lose the knowledge that I have stored if I am unable to return to these places, I take them with me. Not just memories, something more physical. I carve out a place for them under my ribcage. I carry them in my body, where they are saved until the time comes when I am able to return and renegotiate them.

A part of my artistic practice is to take these rooms out from my body to collect the experiences I stored there. I return to these places because it is there, in the red chair, in the radiator, the dirty yellow blankets, the bright

green sofa in the hallway, and the narrow beds, that I left something. I need to go back and get it.

So, I look inward. Gently and very carefully I pull out the specific rooms from my body and open them. To open the rooms means to re-examine and see if the material can be used for something else. It is an act of processing. I return with a deep feeling of gratefulness. A gratefulness that the rooms have encapsulated my experiences and taken care of them, so I didn't have to do it. Now when I open them, I use the substance from them to build landscapes in the form of spatial installations. I navigate around the sculptures and the drawings. To use the encapsulated material as some kind of building blocks for landscapes made of feelings. They're landscapes that reveal my refusal to disappear.

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Jenny Olsson, Lecturer in Fine Art with a specialization in Printmaking; Johanna Gustafsson Fürst, Professor in Fine Art with a specialization in Sculpture; and Silvia Thomackenstein, Head of Exhibitions.

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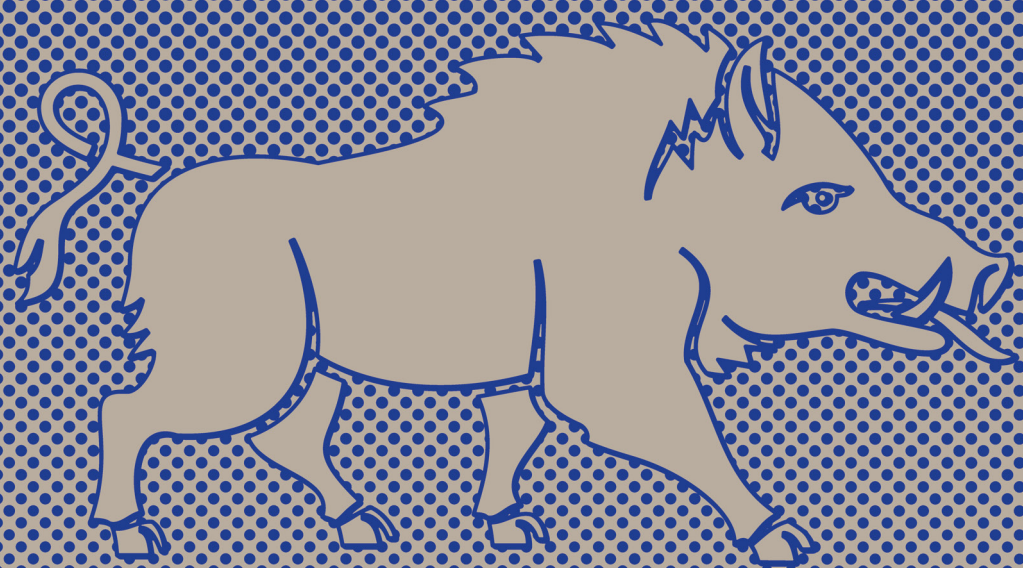












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