

Liminal Spaces: a Midsummer Show

Opening: Wednesday, June 19, 18 – 23

Konsthall

Årsta Skolgränd 16°, 117 43, Stockholm

On June 19 Konsthall, with the support of Stockholms Stad, will present *Liminal Spaces: a Midsummer Show*, an exhibition of works by Weronika Bela & Ivar Hagren, Jasmin Daryani, and Karl Patric Näsman, co-curated by the artists in dialogue with curator Vasco Forconi. The opening will be followed by a party and DJ set with Art Alfie.

On the occasion of the show the artists present a selection of works, resulting from extended mutual conversations, in which the photographic medium and the use of found, appropriated, and archival images triggers broader reflections around the ever-changing visual, atmospheric and social identity of the Nordic and Swedish landscape. The artists, friends for many years yet exhibiting together for the first time, choose the summer solstice, a moment of transition and *liminality* characterized by extraordinary meteorological and sociocultural features, as the occasion to host a party celebrating the collective nature of their practice.

Weronika Bela's and **Ivar Hagren's** collaborative research is deeply rooted in the relationship between history of photography in science, darkroom development processes and the study of atmospheric phenomena. Drawing from Bela's family legacy, whose grandparents worked as meteorologists in Poland since the late 1940s, the artists investigate the methodological overlapping of photographic and meteorological research, recurring to *repetition* as both a conceptual and processual strategy of research. By collecting old black and white images documenting natural phenomena – mostly sunrises, sunsets and cloud formations – all with accurate descriptive captions to compensate the impossibility of capturing colors, the artists go back to that moment in history in which the absence of color film represented an obstacle to the full employment of photography in meteorological research. The study of these limitations becomes the source of inspiration for a wide number of darkroom experiments. On the occasion of the show, the artists present *Artificial sunsets* a series of photographs in which the bright shape of the sun is artificially reproduced by blocking portions of light during the developing process of the photosensitive paper. The representation of an idealized never-setting sun matches the extraordinary light conditions characterizing Swedish midsummer, as often portrayed in topical art historical representations.

In *The burden of the benefit / The benefit of the burden*, **Jasmin Daryani** reflects on the notions of state control and hospitality by juxtaposing fragments of bodies and flowers, portrayed as if they were floating in a dark homogeneous background. The lupin, a flower native of South America, was introduced to Sweden during the 19th century, as a decorative plant. However, in recent years its seeds rapidly spread over the country making it a highly invasive species whose thick roots represent a threat for other – supposedly *native* – plants. Under control by the Swedish environmental protection agency, yet still regarded as a beautiful flower, the lupin now represents a constant presence in the Swedish summer landscape. The artist photographs fragments of the flower stored in Bergius Botanical garden and dating back to the 19th century, the period of their introduction in Northern Europe. Their images are placed side by side with photographs of close-up body parts, printed in inverted black and white colors as if they were viewed through x-ray – a reference to forensic technique used to determine the age of undocumented migrants. Since 2015 the artist has been working with a group of unaccompanied refugee teenagers from Afghanistan and Iran, whose permission to stay in Sweden could be revoked upon reaching the age of majority. In such condition of vulnerability and displacement, the body in its physical appearance represents a precious capital, and a space of self-ownership and control, thus becoming a recurrent subject in the artist's photographic research. By associating images of the lupin flower to these fragmentary portraits, Jasmin Daryani seeks to question the notions of belonging and vulnerability in contemporary Sweden.

Karl Patric Näsman's recent practice is focused on the analysis of artistic image production in relation to the notions of original, copy, fake and authorship. On the occasion of the show, the artist presents two series of works in which the study of imitation and the tradition of landscape painting deeply intertwine with new strategies of delegated art production. *Altered* is a paradoxical homage to the Dutch painter Salomon Van Ruysdael. A photograph of his *River Landscape with Ferry* is sent by Karl Patric Näsman to a company in Xiamen, China, specialized in the serial reproduction of artworks, to commission a copy of the painting. At the same time, the artist travels to Nijenrode in the Netherlands, looking for the exact location where Van Ruysdael's canvas was painted in 1649, only to find out that the landscape has become almost unrecognizable. In the attempt to reconstruct the original perspective of the painting, the artist photographs the surroundings of Nijenrode and other fragments of Swedish landscapes, producing a digital montage – an ideal reenactment of the painting – that is then exhibited next to the copy of Salomon Van Ruysdael.

Cattle Resting in a Landscape with Riverside Castle and Rainbow Beyond is an ongoing project started in 2012 with the purchase on eBay of an 18th century Dutch painting, most likely executed by a follower of Aelbert Jacobsz Cuyp. As for the abovementioned piece, the artist commissions a copy of the artwork to a specialized Chinese company. After receiving the painting, he takes a picture of it and sends it to the same company commissioning another reproduction. The entire procedure is repeated several times. As of today, the artist owns a total of seven reproductions. Copy after copy, in a process of ironic *mise en abyme*, the overall composition, the color palette, and brushstrokes of the original artwork are slowly transformed, leaving room to the painterly gestures of tens of anonymous employees working for the several reproduction companies commissioned by the artist.

Weronika Bela (b. 1988, Baerun, Norway) lives and works in Stockholm. She holds an MFA in Fine art from Konstfack University. In 2017 she received Konstnärsnämndens assistant grant to work with artist Linda Fregni Nagler in Milan. Since 2017 she has collaborated with artist Ivar Hagren, and they have exhibited together in both solo and group exhibitions. **Ivar Hagren** (b. 1986, Stockholm) lives and works in Stockholm. He holds an MFA in Fine art from Konstfack University and a BFA from the School of Photography, University of Gothenburg. Since 2017 he has collaborated with artist Weronika Bela, and they have exhibited together in both solo and group exhibitions.

Jasmin Daryani (b. 1988, Tehran) lives and works in Stockholm. She holds an MFA in Art from Konstfack University. In 2016 she was one of the recipients of the Maria Bonnier Dahlin Foundation grant. Recent exhibitions include: Konstakademin (2019), Bonniers Konsthall (2017), Moscow International Biennale for Young Art (2016) and Galleri Riis (2016).

Vasco Forconi (b. 1991, Rome) is an independent curator and writer based in Rome and Stockholm. Among the curated projects: *Talent Prize VI*, Casa dell'Architettura, Rome (2013), *IT. Spazi di percezione tra intangibile e tangibile*, Galleria Nazionale d'Arte Moderna, Rome (2014), *Disrupted Drawings*, mhPROJECT, New York (2017), *Da Franco Senza Appuntamento*, Rome (2018), *A Messy Knot (in motion pictures)*, The Bioscope, Johannesburg (2018), *Italiani brava gente*, Fondazione VOLUME!, Rome (2018), *Shoegaze*, Italian Cultural Institute, Stockholm (2019).

Karl Patric Näsman (b. 1986, Örebro) lives and works in Stockholm. He holds an MFA from Konstfack University in Stockholm. His work has been shown in solo and group exhibitions in Sweden and internationally in Crans-Montana (CH), Shanghai, Tokyo and Utrecht. Recently in 2018 he partly initiated an exchange between Swedish and Japanese artists in Tokyo and Stockholm. In 2016, Näsman was awarded the Fredrik Roos Art Grant, presenting his work at Moderna Museet Malmö.

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artists: Weronika Bela & Ivar Hagren, Jasmin Daryani, Karl Patric Näsman

dates: 20 – 30 June, open by appointment

info: vascoforconi@gmail.com, +46 76 288 71 36

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