

Kunstraum

Flirting, playing, eating, drinking, talking, laughing

CURATED BY METTE KJÆRGAARD PRÆST AND METTE WOLLER

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'In the beginning, a public museum was as much a rainy-day substitute for the park as a solemn temple to art; after the National Gallery first opened on [Trafalgar] square in 1838, people frequented the museum on bad-weather days to teach their children to walk or have a picnic.'*

Flirting, playing, eating, drinking, talking, laughing is a group exhibition that explores the gallery space as potential meeting place, and a place for flirtatious conduct and romantic encounters. Historically the role of the museum was that of a public space, mimicking the park, where various forms of public activities took place. *Flirting, playing, eating, drinking, talking, laughing* opens up the possibility for some of these actions to be reinserted into a contemporary context. The exhibition presents four Scandinavian artists' collaborations that each contribute with a different approach to the subject matter.

Flirting, playing, eating, drinking, talking, laughing is the first chapter in an ongoing examination of love, which takes shape as research focusing on different aspects of the phenomena: From nausea and narcissism to objectophilia, obsession and fan-love, the project looks into psychological conditions and disparate notions of love and their existence within society. The research examines heteronormative as well as unusual perceptions of the subject, starting with notes on flirtation and first encounters.

Stella and Florence's Syndrome is a filmic catalogue of the exhibition *Some Objects Are More Equal Than Others*, which was shown at Inter Arts Center, Malmö in 2013.

Depicting a rendezvous in the exhibition space, the film follows a loose trajectory, where the dialogue (or lack of it) serves as motivator for the camera. The Florence Syndrome also known as Stendhal Syndrome, which the title refers to, is a strong physical reaction that can occur when an individual is confronted with a great amount of art or with art of extraordinary beauty. Based on symptoms of the psychosomatic disorder – rapid heartbeat, confusion and dizziness – *Stella and Florence's Syndrome* moves into the realm of romance. Thus, the film investigates the romantic genre and its visual approach when artworks serve as backdrop for flirtatious encounters. Museum scenes from *Vertigo*, *Play it again Sam*, *Dressed to Kill*, *When In Rome*, and *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*, among others, are translated and appropriated into a single space.

Stella and Florence's Syndrome, 15:20 min., 2013, YEARS, published and co-produced by Woodpecker Projects.

(*Quote from: Diana Fuss, Joel Sanders: "An Aesthetic Headache: Notes from the Museum Bench", in Johanna Burton, Lynne Cooke, Josiah McElheny, *Interiors, Annadale-on-Hudson, Berlin, 2012.*)

Shall We Dance? is a video essay exploring how dance exists within society.

Combining the humoristic with a bone-dry seriousness, two different voices depict disparate aspects of what dance is and how it appears in everyday life. The film consists of a sequence of images and a voice-over text, which does not necessarily relate to each other. Noticeably the act of actual dancing is absent throughout the film, which underlines an intention of juxtaposing subject matter and form. *Shall We Dance?* plays with unfulfilled expectations in relation to both the viewer and the concept of dance, like when talking about the role of the wallflower, (in Danish; 'bænkevarmer', which directly translates to 'bench-warmer') as an either passive or active character. Thus, the film asks how dance functions as a form of communication.

Shall We Dance?, 20:00 min, 2009, Søren Aagaard, Magnus Frederik Clausen, Peter Larsen, and Jørgen Michaelsen.

SNIPER ON THE SUN is made using photographic stills taken in a souvenir shop. The ceramic vases acting as protagonists are crudely animated, scaled and rotated. *SNIPER ON THE SUN* makes use of a predictable narrative structure known from romantic comedies, starkly contrasting the static and almost unanimated style of the film. Besides the film projection, *SNIPER ON THE SUN* also consists of sculptural elements made of non-baked clay mixed with soil. The dirty clay and earthy smell play against the clean surface of the film and its romantic genre tropes. Film can be seen as a method to bring something to life equivalent to the myths surrounding clay as a dead material that can be breathed into life.

SNIPER ON THE SUN, 23:23 min., 2014, Robert Kjær Clausen, Steffen Jørgensen and Allan Nicolaisen.

Carl Palm and Fredrik Paulsen's *Bench* was inspired by sitting on a broken one – slightly rocking back and forth at an exhibition by Italian architect and designer Ettore Sottsass in Stockholm in 2010.

Bench is realized especially for *Flirting, playing, eating, drinking, talking, laughing* and is in its construction flirting with notions of unconscious bodily movement and rhythm. In this exhibition, the *Bench* is a possible space in which visitors can develop their own intimate and playful relationships based on mutual understanding of balance and direction while viewing the other works on display. If one person sits on the *Bench* the tilting is easily controlled, but as soon as two or three persons sits, a bodily conversation is required in order to negotiate the movement.

Bench, MDF and steel cylinder, variable dimensions, 2014, Fredrik Paulsen and Carl Palm.