

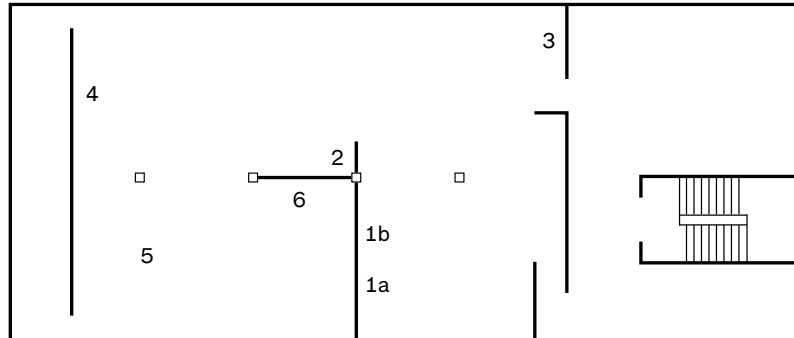
HAMLET Robert Ashley, Stephan Dilleluth & Nils Norman,
Trisha Donnelly, Easter, Marie-Louise Ekman,
Kristina Abelli Elander, Anne Haugsgjerd, Richard Vogel
Curated by Annika Eriksson and Fatima Hellberg

Hamlet is a group exhibition departing from a synonymous work by Swedish artist Richard Vogel. Taking the form of a video-assemblage of found and staged footage, Vogel's version of *Hamlet* (1997) is a melancholic and wry meditation on what it means to order a life. In his work, there is a continuous and ambivalent attention to the slippages between desire and survivalism – of the ways in which living, and especially living together, always involves attending to that which exceeds the necessary, but is still crucial. The tragedy as a designation in Vogel's *Hamlet* is the on-going and troubling prospect of trying to arrive at a form of life which can not only be tolerated, but described as a purposeful, perhaps even good, life.

This negotiation, and its pleasures and burdens, runs through the works in the exhibition, including filmmaker and playwright Marie-Louise Ekman's *Barnförbjudet / Adults Only* (1979). The characters of Ekman's work continuously speak across, over and beside each other, seeking and only momentarily finding ways of being together. How do we approach contradictions that seem shameful or disputable, or awkward, or uncomfortable? The tragedy is a container, a place where contradictions can unfold, be externalised and observed: a question of intimacy and distance that holds a key role in the works in this exhibition and its form.

HAMLET
1 October – 18 December 2016
Wednesday–Sunday, 12–6 pm
Künstlerhaus Stuttgart
Reuchlinstraße 4b
D-70178 Stuttgart
kuenstlerhaus.de

Level 2



1a Robert Ashley, *Perfect Lives, The Park (Privacy Rules)*, 1984, video, colour, sound, 24 min 25 sec



1b Robert Ashley, *The Living Room, (The Solutions)*, 1984, video, colour, sound, 25 min 08 sec



2 Stephan Dillemath & Nils Norman, *Cramer, we have an Armageddon*, 2008, video, colour, sound, 3 min 33 sec



3 Anne Haugsgjerd, *Upside Down Everything is Abstract... my father said*, 2014, video, colour, sound, 32 min



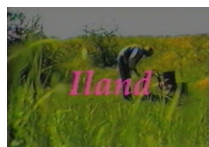
4 Trisha Donnelly, *Untitled*, 2004, video colour, no sound, 14 min



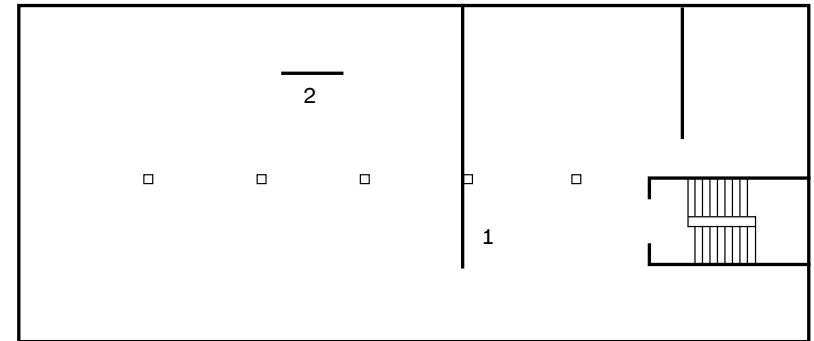
5 Annika Eriksson, *Something is here nothing is here (Horror)*, 2015, video, colour, no sound, 60 min



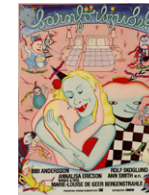
6 Richard Vogel, *Hamlet*, 1997, video, colour, sound, 50 min



Level 4



1 Kristina Abelli Elander, *Barnförbjudet / Adults Only*, 1979, poster, reproduction, 59 x 84 cm



2 Marie-Louise Ekman, *Barnförbjudet*, 1979, film, colour, sound, 82 min



Offsite

Performance by
 Easter
 Saturday 22 October 10 pm
 at Neue Schachtel
 Innerer Nordbahnhof 70191 Stuttgart

Awe, reverence, respect, self-respect, shamefastness, sense of honor, sobriety, moderation, regard for others, regard for the helpless, compassion, shyness, coyness, scandal, dignity, majesty, Majesty.¹

Hamlet, this *Hamlet*, is a long time in the making. We've been talking about a very particular understanding of art, one which is rooted in a form of survival that is not literal, but nonetheless fundamental. How do we speak about this form of belief in art, one which insists on that which is specific to life, but also on a necessary contingency? Desire, invention, imagination. It is embarrassing to utter these words. Yet this is crucial.

We have been talking a great deal about atmosphere, mood and attunement and the way in which these terms appear so central to the exchanges between us as artist and curator, in particular whilst negotiating decisions and spaces that willfully blur the boundaries between artwork and show. The spatial shifts and props have their own personality, yet we were looking for ways to gather, focus and attend to the artworks within the holding environment we provided. In fact, these notions of holding and containing kept coming back, as did care and obligation, and the feeling that these needed to be re-visited and re-negotiated in the process.

Many of the artists in the show are ones that we have a closeness to for different reasons. Richard Vogel was interested in art as a space in which idiosyncrasy could be played out, a space where the challenges of how you order and manage a life could be observed, subverted, at times, mocked. To find one's place – as Sarah Schulman would have it – is an existential but also political question. The gentrification of the mind is not merely a spatial and economic process; it enters imagination and space on a more existential level too. Vogel's *Hamlet* (1997) was the outcome of years of work, a compiling process of material that made sense to him, and the on-going and limping project of staging his own *Hamlet* with a group of his students.

We have been talking about the need for feminism to be practical. Being mother and daughter is important to this show; a closeness in exchange, but also a political understanding and statement of care and working practice. Curating an exhibition dedicated to an exis-

tential quest requires a sense of method, but also a fragility of method. In her writing on tragedy, Anne Carson confesses that her love for this form of drama is not so much to do with emotional pitch and catharsis as a question of system. That is, the system of moving between scales, from the intimate and mundane concern, to the deep and resounding problem – of things being out of joint.

So it starts with everyday problems, like not having enough money. It goes into more abstract things like world conditions that promote such problems, and then it goes into speaking in tongues. It starts with the sensical and through shifts in syntax and cadence, goes completely abstract. And this abstract status is associated with emotion, and what interests me very much (it's always interested me very much) is how this level of our feeling has to be approached in a sensical way: you can't just jump into it, you have to do it through a system of disorientation, that is rooted, specific, and then travels...²

This form of realism allows itself to be dedicated to the huge, too huge perhaps, and this has been a desire of this project too. It's called *Hamlet* after all.

Annika Eriksson and Fatima Hellberg

1 Anne Carson, *Grief Lessons: Four Plays by Euripides*, New York Review Books, 2006, p. 163

2 Mike Kelley, *Minor Histories – Statements, Conversations, Proposals*, MIT Press, 2004, p.5

ROBERT ASHLEY was an American composer, who was best known for his operas and other theatrical works, many of which incorporate electronics and extended techniques.

STEPHAN DILLEMUTH's artistic practice is committed to historical trajectories of liberation – of bohemia, lebensreform and self-expression – and the ways in which these intersect with new technologies of surveillance and control. He lives and works in Munich.

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NILS NORMAN works across the disciplines of public art, architecture and urban planning. He lives and works in London.

MARIE-LOUISE EKMAN is an artist, filmmaker and previous director of the Royal Theatre of Sweden. Her work, conceived since the 1960s recurrently combines science-fiction, family drama and tragedy.

KRISTINA ABELLI ELANDER is an artist and costume designer. She has worked extensively with Marie-Louise Ekman including on the costumes of *Barnförbudet / Adults Only* (1979).

ANNE HAUGSGJERD has been making films in her native Norway since the 1980s. Her films tend to be documentary in tone, often with biographical elements.

RICHARD VOGEL was a Swedish artist working primarily in video and photography. Vogel had an important role as a tutor of art, and a peripheral yet key, influence on generations of Swedish artists.

TRISHA DONNELLY is a conceptual artist working with video and installation. Her work tends to articulate slow, precise unfoldings of light, image and sound. She lives and works in San Francisco.

EASTER is a Berlin-based band consisting of Max Boss and Stine Omar.

With thanks to Abel Auer, Hans D. Christ and Iris Dressler, Pedro Cid Proenca, Moritz Finkbeiner, Johannes Hucht, Gitte Lindmaier, Natasja Loutschko, Johanna Markert, Steffen Osvath and Helmut Dietz, John and Aaron Skoog, Swedish Film Institute and Sandrews, Annabella Spielmannleitner and Benjamin Köder, Mike Sperlinger, Michael Schramm, Robert Steng, and Ulf Wrede.

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STUTT GART**