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Henrik Plenge Jakobsen

A THING OF THE MIND

[Press Release]

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Opening Saturday December 1st 2012

Patricia Dorfmann Gallery is pleased to present the second solo exhibition of Henrik Plenge Jakobsen. The conceptual work of Henrik Plenge Jakobsen takes different forms such as sculpture, installation and performance about socio-cultural and political questions. In his work Jakobsen examines the space in between text, action, and the object.

A Thing of the Mind / Une chose de l'esprit

“For a long time I wanted to explore the Baltic Sea. Starting from purely idiosyncratic instincts, this investigation was to follow the most emancipatory approach possible.

I live in Copenhagen and the Baltic Sea is right outside my door. I have always been intrigued by its mix of fresh and salt water, and the vital role it has played in northern European history, as a place for fishing, trade, warfare, and later for the culture and leisure industries. This sea has many particularities when it comes to biology, hydrology and geology and has been through many stages since the Ice Age. While today the sea is in a brackish state, the rise and fall of water levels has meant the Baltic has shifted back and forth over the millenniums from a mere freshwater lake to a sea with a salt content close to the Atlantic.

I have instructed a series of sculptural actions that have been filmed during summer solstice on the shores of selected mythological islands in the Baltic Sea, both in Sweden and Denmark. Here, performers act with and against the main protagonists: the coastal landscape and the sea itself. Due to the prehistorical rise and fall of the water levels, all the actions happen on former seabed, as they are shot between the current water edge and the older coastlines further up the shores.

This voyage was a mental exercise, a romantic impulse and an intimation of freedom dealing with textures, rituals, alienation and the moment before and after language”.

List of works

Littorina Littorea, installation of six short films screened on two projectors. All filmed on 16mm black and white Kodak film and produced entirely by analog processes. All films are mute. Editions of 3.

First projection :

Littorina Littorea (Langhammars), 2011. 16mm black and white film, 2:10 min.

A filmed action shot on the Swedish island of Fårö on the shore of Langhammars, where 400-million-year-old limestone rocks created by tropical coral reefs form erect sculptural groups, the so-called raukar for which the island is known. Joekim transverses this landscape, carrying a three-meter-long, fertile ovary stick. He ends by the water's edge where he caresses a second ovary stick.

Littorina Littorea (Digerhuvud), 2011. 16mm black and white film, 0:38 min.

An underwater film shot from the shoreline and out through a shallow underwater landscape of rocks, seaweed and small fish. The sun's reflection is caught on the seafloor by an aluminum stick – a 'negative' (unfertile) ovary stick. From there, the camera descends into a much deeper void.

Littorina Littorea (Hammars), 2011. 16mm black and white film, 2:05 min.

Two women, Ann Cathrin and Suzette, walk. They seem to be in a conversation while moving from the edge of the sea, up over an inclined beach to the seaside house of Ingmar Bergman. Later, Ann Cathrin plays dead on the gray, austere, stony beach in front of the house – eyes wide open and with her iPhone in her hand.

Second projection :

Littorina Littorea (Lilla Karlsö), 2011. 16mm black and white film, 2:32 min.

Suzette arranges constellations of triangular mirrors outside a large cave on Lilla Karlsö (Small Karl's Island), an uninhabited island east of Gotland. Former coastline levels are exposed in the limestone rock. The cave is the result of erosion from prehistoric water levels. Later, Suzette throws stones from inside the cave.

Littorina Littorea (Tørre Ovn), 2011. 16mm black and white film, 1:40 min.

On the Danish island of Bornholm, Ulrik squeezes himself through a crevice in the cave formation Tørre Ovn (Dry Stove), which has been shaped by erosion from periods with a higher sea level. He makes it into the water. Facing the camera, he mouths the word "ANTIATOM".

Littorina Littorea (Salene), 2011. 16mm black and white film 2:13 min.

Where a small stream runs into the sea on the island of Bornholm at Salene Bay, Emil is constructing a shelter out of branches. He pours salt into the stream, thereby increasing the salinity of the Baltic Sea.

Littorina Littorea, 2011. Film poster, silkscreen print, 70 x 100 cm, Edition of 10.

A silkscreen print accompanying the 16mm film installation of the same name.

Photographs, digital pigment print from 16 mm, 30 x 40 cm. Edition of 3, 2012.

Littorina Littorea (Hammars) Suzette and Ann Cathrin

Littorina Littorea (Hammars) Suzette and Ann Cathrin on the beach

Littorina Littorea (Hammars) Ann Cathrin

Littorina Littorea (Langhammars) Joekim close up

Littorina Littorea (Langhammars) Joekim

Littorina Littorea (Lilla Karlsö) Suzette close up

Littorina Littorea (Lilla Karlsö) Suzette

Littorina Littorea (Lilla Karlsö) Suzette with mirrors

Littorina Littorea (Digerhuvud)

Littorina Littorea (Salene) Emil close up

Littorina Littorea (Salene) Emil

Littorina Littorea Interior, 2012. Ink on hot pressed paper, 31 x 41 cm, unique.

Littorina littorea is the name of a sea snail also known as the common periwinkle, which was named by the Swedish botanist and zoologist Carl Linnaeus in the 18th century after an expedition to Gotland. The snail has lived in the area for countless ages and lent its name to an earlier stage of the Baltic, the Littorina Sea, where, millennia before our time, the water level was much higher than it is today. The snail has been found in deposits in the geological intermediate zone that was then covered by the brackish waters of the Littorina Sea, but which now forms the coastlines of the Baltic Sea.

Orgone Receivers, 2009. Driftwood, gold-plated orgone box, 165 x 70 x 80 cm, unique.

Driftwood piece found at Salene Bay at the location where the film *Littorina Littorea (Salene)* would be shot two years later. The wood has had numerous channels carved into its surface by insects and an orgone ray receiver box has been inserted into its core. The piece has also been partially burned, likely at the beach where it was found.

Ovary, 2011. Driftwood branch, plaster, egg shells, 290 x 30 x 30 cm, unique.

A piece of driftwood found on the beach 500 meters south of Ingmar Bergman's house on Fårö. One end of the branch is coated in plaster into which two series of white chicken eggs are inserted.

Negative Ovaries, 2011. Two aluminum sticks, each 9 x 9 x 225 cm.

Two sticks with concave, egg-cup shaped holes drilled into the aluminum. One of the Negative Ovaries has been submerged in the Baltic Sea, the other has not been exposed to corrosion.

O O Coral, 2012. Steel wire, hemp rope, 45 x 25 x 8 cm, unique.

Fossil stone found at Langhammars on Fårö hanging from the ceiling.