



“To je Cage v času, ko kreacijo ogrožajo avtorske pravice.”

- Petja Grafenauer & Veljko Njegovan -

AN EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

CONNYY BLOM FROM ABOVE

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In Blom's work the story is taken away and only pure violence remains.

CONNY BLOM
FROM ABOVE

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Reach for the carrot, it is a weapon!

A conversation to accompany the works of Conny Blom

Petja Grafenauer, Veljko Njegovan

Desensitizer places us in an uncomfortable, fear and anxiety generating dentist's chair and makes us watch a ten minute video loop consisting of twenty-four images of murders (taken from movies) per second. As each image appears for merely a fraction of a second the images cannot be recognised, however they create a flow that at first silences us and then numbs us. This work poses questions to all believers as well as non-believers in sublime perception and the influence of television/film/video violence. Blom discusses the ways in which the contemporary society is interlaced with media as well as the effect information has upon the individual who sucks it all in. Media images are so incorporated into society that it is impossible for anybody living in the Western civilisation to escape their flow.

Desensitizer is a word game. It is a machine that robs us of our emotions. We are numbed by the repetition. From the initial disgust and shock that are a result of the moving pictures, we sink into a senseless state. The video and the dentist's chair lose their effect; we become immune to the

images and events that surround us. The experience is reminiscent to watching the daily bloody scenes on television.

It is possible that the total numbness is a result of the violence shown in the contemporary world. But why did *Desensitizer* choose film as a medium? Is violence most exposed in films?

We see loads of violent images in the daily news and reports. They are also shown with a special intention.

Maybe film was chosen because this project – similar to other works by Blom – also deals with the copyright issue. Once more he opted to use copyrighted material. However, agency shots shown in the news are also copyrighted. The decision to use film as the medium for the project is linked to the issue of pleasure, for people obviously enjoy viewing violent scenes on screen.

Mankind has watched executions since time eternal. In Rome the crowd would cheer as individuals were torn apart by lions. Today a similar opportunity for pleasure is offered by the media.

We do not enjoy the violence we watch on news, but when watching a film we derive a certain pleasure when good defeats the bad. The knowledge that we are watching a work of fiction combined with our morals allow us to experience this pleasure. In the film the show ends at some

stage, it is not real and you can permit yourself to experience pleasure. In Blom's work the story is taken away and only pure violence remains...

Another factor that numbs us so quickly is the quick succession of the violent scenes. We see twenty-four of them each second. As it is impossible to recognise the individual images the artist successfully avoids any copyright threats. On the other hand this is a project that offers two uncomfortable things – a dentist's chair and violence, how is it possible for us to be numb?

If you see an image repeatedly it can either stimulate or numb you. When film was invented people ran away when they saw the image of a train appear on screen, for they failed to realise that this was merely an image. Through repetition we have learned that this is merely an image, and today nobody escapes from the cinema. On the other hand former Yugoslavia used a red star to remind us of our belonging. And because this image spoke about reality its repetition strengthened our awareness.

The artist mediates the message through the unpleasant feeling. The intention of the work is to draw attention to the current state of society that is overloaded with a multitude of information. The media and artistic practices offer an array of violent scenes. This work does not

draw attention to the exaggerated production of violence in media, but tries to show how the general presence of media causes a state of numbness that appears after we experience our pleasure that we obtain from watching a violent scene.

Due to the frequency of images in Blom's video it takes roughly only 30 seconds for us to become numb. *Desensitizer* offers a condensed summary of the life of a contemporary individual. The condensed images are placed in front of us in the form of a pure fact. As if the artist wanted to say: 'See, this is how you live and the effect that you feel is the same to the one you carry within yourselves every day.'

And what is our attitude towards the presentation of violence in media?

The two of us are numb.

We are familiar with violence from films, television, the Internet and other media. However, we have never seen such bloodshed in real life ... But films also have violent scenes that are hard to swallow. One such scene is the long scene from the *Occupation in 26 pictures* (1978, directed by Lordan Zafranović) that shows partisans being killed on the bus. In this scene the violence does not mimic the classic film scenes, in which once a body

is hit, colour trickles across it. In *Desensitizer* the scenes change extremely quickly – the only thing that links them and makes them recognisable is the red colour of blood.

The thought that we are sitting in a dentist's chair and watching a video collage of the bloodiest scenes from the movie history no longer causes us discomfort. The chair is also merely an unavoidable fact that is offered to us by culture. We think about it. When we saw it for the first time we felt pressured and challenged. With its form it drew attention to the fact that something unpleasant will happen to us and then we saw a truly unpleasant thing and were under the impression that this is a collage of society. This is an appropriated image and portrait of our civilisation. We found it slightly reminiscent of *dial H-I-S-T-O-R-Y* by Johan Grimonprez (1997), a one hour documentary, which is however much more romantic than *Desensitizer*. Violence in itself is not problematic, the way in which it is portrayed is.

Man is an aggressive animal. Without civilisation violence is a means of protection, obtaining food... only with the appearance of civilisation does it become a means of terror and pleasure that merely intensifies through history.

In a slightly scary way the dentist's chair attracts the visitor with its robustness and technological appearance. The

work toys with the psyche of the visitor, but only in order to make him think. In this sense *Desensitizer* is a socially engaged project.

We stand up from the chair and listen to the *Copyleft Trilogy*, which consists of three sound projects. As we are in reality not yet at the exhibition, but at home, we are glad that all Blom's projects can be heard on the Internet. The sound trilogy on copyrights is comprised of the following projects: *15 Minutes of Fame*, *Rock and Roll Will Never Die* and *4'33 Minutes of Stolen Silence*.

What is Cage's 4'33"?

This is a composition that, when written in 1952, differed greatly from the musical tradition. The composer John Cage instructed the musicians not to play a single note. The listeners could only hear what usually appears in the background of music. Blom appropriated this famous avant-garde work and offered the listener the chance of hearing breaks and pauses within the recorded music. The sound created without instruments, music composed from random sounds that occur in the hall or on the recording during a song.

4'33" has often been used. Amongst those who have sampled this work were the German painter Gerhard Richter, the punk band Crass and the band Living Colour, who placed

4'33" of silence before their hidden track on one of their albums.

Blom also created a sound project that offers 4 minutes and 33 seconds of silence, however in his version the sound is not created live on the spot by the audience or musicians, but from a collage of silences taken from within various tracks on CD recordings. The pauses in the songs were chosen from various jazz, rock and classical music albums. This is a contemporary version of John Cage - it is created from the previously recorded and rerecorded. The music project that was created from various random sounds is – before it arrives in front of the contemporary listener – recorded twice and the coincidence can thus be merely listened to and not created. But this is Cage in a time in which creation is endangered by copyrights.

The use of copyrighted materials plays an important part within the project. The sound carriers from which the artist borrowed the silences are copyrighted as a whole. Until recently copyright laws enabled one to use short parts of other people's songs, today even this is questionable. An illustrative example of this is the song *Bitter Sweet Symphony* by the English band The Verve, from which the band failed to make a single penny as the copyright was given to The Rolling Stones due to the recognisable sample that was used.

Even more, if it is a recording of a concert, the shouting and clapping of the public is considered to be a constituent part of the recording. Blom researched this terrifying fact in the second part of the trilogy, in the sound project *15 Minutes of Fame*. This is a fifteen minute long recording compiled from ovations taken from concert recordings that belong to record companies.

It is interesting that the artist used various silences – the silences taken from rock and roll, classical music and jazz. Certain differences between these silences can be noticed. At some we can hear only the silence that follows the fade out, only the sound created by the recording technologies. But we also have to take into account the silence that remains from the recording and not only the sound of the recording medium. The silence of a rock song is different to the silence in classical music. In reality we are not dealing with silence, but with sounds that are found in the silence: for example in a rock band the drummer hits the drumsticks together before the beginning of the song – this is, of course, not the case in classical music.

The silences within the recordings on compact discs seem different also due to their environment. The difference is created by the music that surrounds the silence. However, within the project the sound frame of silence is taken out with the intention for the listener to focus on the silence

that surrounds him. The extracted silence is mainly the silence of recording frequencies together with recordings of individual unintentional sounds.

In order to communicate with the public this sound project demands a gallery environment. It is possible that it could work on the radio if it was accompanied with a prior notification, however it would have to be explained through words as to what the listeners were about to hear. In a gallery, a space into which the visitor steps with the intent of closely observing his surroundings (as the space is intended for art projects), this work can draw attention to itself in a different way.

The gallery enables for the work to primarily address the viewer through a visual element. The large speakers placed within an empty space draw attention to the sound that emerges from them. Following the initial discomfort, when we think that the sound of music or speech will appear – and yet it does not, we start listening to the silence.

Visitors started leaving the concert at which the pianist David Tudor performed *4'33"* for the first time. The composition was not understood at the time, because the audience was not prepared for it. Blom's project wants to draw the viewer's attention to what it is offering, with the

intention of offering something extra. It wants to attract the viewer and not repel him. The avant-garde pose of the misunderstood artist has been eliminated from this project. The image is here to draw attention to the work, and the work wants to communicate with the viewer/listener. The artist uses silence to warn us.

The work is intended for everyone since it addresses the copyright issue, which is important for everybody. The rights that are supposed to protect the artist mainly work in favour of the large record companies, agencies and other industries. However, the copyrights lead to much more than merely amassing large sums of money. Such legal provisions slow down the exchange of new knowledge and the flow of information.

One has to remember that sampling is an old music principle that has been regularly used in rock and roll. In the eight channel sound installation *The Complete Beatles* the artist once again attacks the issue of copyrights through music. In this project the entire Beatles back catalogue is mixed into a single song that forms an unrecognisable sound picture. The noise is total, for the recordings are compiled of thirteen albums and each one has an average of ten songs. While we are listening to the tonal noise created by the mass of Beatles songs that are all played at the same time we have to ask ourselves: Why the Beatles?

The Beatles is a group that has co-created the music industry. With their excellent organisation, the professionalization of their appearances and recordings and especially due to their capable manager Brian Epstein, The Beatles defined the way the music industry operates even today. For a while the copyrights for playing their works were owned by Michael Jackson, who purchased the company that owned these rights at the time he was working with Paul McCartney. Today the copyrights for publishing The Beatles songs have at least partially returned home, for they belong to the corporation EMI and Apple Corps., a company established by The Beatles in 1968.

The Beatles or Apple Corps. appeared in court due to copyright issues on a number of occasions. In 1978 they sued the computer company Apple, which supposedly started using their apple trademark. This court case was won in 1981. Apple Computer had to promise not to get into the music business, and they had to pay 80.000 US\$ in damages to The Beatles. In 1989 when Apple launched MIDI sound files into circulation, Apple Corps. sued again, for they stated that Apple was in breach of the agreement. In 1991 the companies reached an agreement and the Beatles' company received 26.5 million US\$ in compensation. However, they were still not happy and in 2003 they sued Apple once more, this time because iTunes and iPod

stepped onto the market. In 2006 they lost their court case. In September 2009 EMI records reissued the remastered collection of all albums published by the group, which they have published already in 1987, although allegedly in a very poor sound quality. The main problem for Paul McCartney and Apple Corps. (who together with McCartney own the copyrights of all joint songs by The Beatles) is represented by the issue of availability of their songs on payable internet sites, especially iTunes. Apparently these two companies are currently discussing the procedures and the business sides of the digital distribution of recordings, which is at least at this moment in time not enabled by the official payable digital distributors.

However, The Beatles did not come up with the beat music, at the time they skilfully remade the rather unprotected music and adjusted it to fit their expression – similar to many performers prior and after them. They took whatever suited them from the existing music and added their own bits and pieces to it. This can be clearly seen as one listens to their recordings from their first albums on which they played other people's music. Such is for instance *Please Mister Postman*, the first song with which The Marvelettes appeared on the scene, or Chuck Berry's hit single *Roll over Beethoven*, which was covered by The Beatles for their album *With the Beatles*.

Today copyrights are merely a business. The idea of protecting the rights of the creator has died out ages ago. Only the idea of gaining capital remains alive. The example of The Beatles, who – similar to music corporations – make money through copyrights, indicates that musicians also understand copyrights as a business. The idea of individualism and copyrights linked to it is anyway one of the characteristics of the capitalist system.

The sound project *The Complete Beatles* thus once again deals with the music industry. It challenges the music industry as all of the played music is copyrighted; however it is unrecognisable to the listener, similar to the film images in *Desensitizer*. The project tries to draw attention to the fact that currently the art heritage cannot be used without repercussions. And this can lead to total empty noise, to emptiness.

The project *Believe Me I Say Onto You* has a similar idea behind it, but it operates in a different medium. In this project Conny Blom took the lyrics of The Beatles songs and translated them back and forth through numerous languages (with the use of *Google translate*), until the lyrics could no longer be recognised. The seemingly almighty technology changed the contents of the song completely and similar as in *The Complete Beatles* it changed something that made sense into complete nonsense.

This work also deals with the issues of copyrights and ownership. The author of the translations that we are reading (*My Head is Full of Nothing to Say*, *Seven Conditions*, *I Love Girl Stuff*, *At the Bottom of the Foot*, *Are You Paying for the Work* and similar) is *Google translate*, for the translated texts have nothing in common with The Beatles' lyrics. The translator is always a partial author of the text, however the tool *Google translate* performs the work so thoroughly and without any feeling that a completely new song comes out at the other end, a song with no meaning whatsoever. In this case the technology – similar to the one used in the project *From Above* – indicates the destruction of the subject that is annulled by a modern software interface.

From Above shows the difference between digital and analogue technology. The signal that is present in the analogue medium, even when the flow of images and sounds is not, offers the opportunity to receive a different transmission. Digital technology cancels this signal. In the digital medium we face emptiness. Where there is no signal, there is nothing. Only the subject remains. This shows us how dependent on technologies we are. When the computer turns off, the two of us are alone.

However, we do not think that the problem lies in technology. Within the project we found it interesting that noth-

ing lies behind the digital, merely emptiness. However, we do not believe that it was digital technology that has shown us nothingness. The digital signal kills merely one of the possibilities of the belief in the idea that something exists. When the signal fails to exist, nothing exists.

People are afraid of emptiness and we always seek some sort of a meaning behind it. At first we thought that the spirit was hidden in the fire, then we searched for it in radio and television waves. We can hear or see the noise, similar to the way we can hear and see the background at Cage's piece and seek for meaning within it. This wish will not die out with digital technologies; we will only find different ways of finding what is hidden behind the emptiness.

The idea of the ghost in the machine is strongly present in the western culture. The first to pop into our minds is Hal from *2001: A Space Odyssey* (1968, directed by Stanley Kubrick). Blom also draws our attention to the films *The Ring* (2002, directed by Gore Verbinski) and *Ringu* (1998, directed by Hideo Nakata), in which the ghost is hidden in a television set, on a VHS tape and in a telephone. Then there is *Demon Seed* (1977, directed by Donald Cammell), in which the machine wants to reproduce, and the legendary series *Knight Rider* (1982 – 1986), which pacifies us with the idea that the ghost in the machine is not always scary.

All Conny Blom's projects are strongly linked to mass culture. The artist is – as are the two of us – a user. Because he lives with it and consumes it this is where he finds most of his questions and problems that he researches in his work. If he was isolated from it his work would not be marked by it to such an extent.

By using themes from the mass culture his art projects show us that knowledge should be accessible to all. The artworks draw attention to the distribution of knowledge. In *Desensitizer* the copyright idea is not in the focal point, however it takes over the central point in the *Copyleft Trilogy*, where already the title draws attention to the idea behind the work. *4'33" Minutes of Stolen Silence* poses the question as to who owns silence, *15 Minutes of Fame* speaks about the idea how the sounds of the public are seized, while *Rock & Roll Will Never Die* discusses how the music industry is changing music and killing rock and roll through the creation of fade-outs. *Believe Me I Say onto You* and *The Complete Beatles* also deal with copyright issues. As does the *Bunny Project*.

The *Bunny Project* is a work in progress that has been performed by the artist at numerous events. In his research of the rabbit phenomenon he ascertained that the northernmost spot in which autochthonous European rabbits

live is close to his home in Göteborg. He found rabbits on a golf course and placed carrots in front of the rabbit holes. Thus rabbits - who are known for their fast reproduction – would reproduce even faster and destroy the golf course – a symbol of the wealthy in the capitalist society. The rabbit has become a symbol of a fast reproducing, cute terrorist with a carrot as his trademark. Every now and then the carrot is connected to an alarm clock and thus turned into a bomb. The visual similarity of the latter convinced the security at the Kalmar Museum as well as the Minister of Culture to get the secret police to stop the invited art project of placing carrot-bombs. In another realisation of the project some of the carrot-bombs were confiscated by the police. In one of the project installations 100 VHS copies of the film *Night of the Lepus* (1972, directed by William F. Claxton) were exhibited. During the exhibition the visitors stole over 50 copies of the VHS with the story of gigantic mutant rabbits that terrorise the southwest USA. The copyrighted material started spreading uncontrollably. In another project realisation Blom allowed the viewers/users to download (using the internet site Kazaa) one hundred songs on the theme of rabbits. This was also a case of violating copyrights and uncontrolled distribution. In the same way as the rabbits the copyrighted material was fast to spread.

The carrots were wrapped into a recognisable shape. However, we are only aware of this form through the media, from films and television. The two of us have never seen a stick of dynamite in real life. We do not consider the threat with dynamite to be highly likely. It is much likelier that a pile of carrots lies in the middle of the street. We think that the society is in a psychosis, for it wants to see dynamite and not carrots. It is afraid of the rabbit that will come, eat the carrots and cause an explosion. But there will be more and more bunnies.

Korenje je orožje, vzemi ga v roke!

Pogovor ob projektih Connya Bloma

Petja Grafenauer, Veljko Njegovan

Desensitizer naju prisili k opazovanju štiriindvajsetih podob filmskih umorov na sekundo. Sediva v neudobnem, strah in tesnobo zbujujočem zobozdravniškem stolu in gledava desetminutni video v zanki. Podobe so zaradi kratkotrajnosti pojavljanja neprepoznavne, ustvarjajo pa tok, zaradi katerega sprva obnemiva, potem pa postaneva otopela. Delo zastavlja vprašanja tistim, ki verjamemo, in tistim, ki ne verjamemo v subliminalno percepcijo in vplive televizijskega/filmskega/video nasilja. Blom govori o tem, kako je sodobna družba prepredena z mediji in kakšen je učinek informacij, ki jih urbani slehernik posrka vase. Medijske podobe so tako inkorporirane v samo družbo, da se temu toku tisti, ki živimo v zahodni civilizaciji, sploh ne moremo izogniti.

Desensitizer je besedna igra. Je stroj, ki naju osiromaši čustev. Zaradi ponavljanja padeva v stanje otopelosti. Od začetnega gnusa in šoka, ki nama ga posredujejo gibljive slike, toneva v stanje brezčutnosti. Ne video in ne zdravniški stol nimata več učinka, imuna sva na podobe in na

dogajanje okoli sebe. Podobno kot med vsakodnevnim ogledom krvavih scen na televiziji.

Morda dejstvo, da je upodobitev nasilja v našem času tako pogosta, povzroča popolno otopelost. A zakaj si je *Desensitizer* izbral ravno filmski medij? Je nasilje v filmu najbolj izpostavljeno?

Veliko število tovrstnih podob vidimo tudi pri dnevnem poročanju. Tudi tam jih kažejo z namenom.

Morda je film izbran zato, ker se tudi ta projekt, kakor ostala Blomova dela, dotika vprašanja avtorskih pravic. Tudi tu gre za uporabo avtorsko zaščitenega materiala. A tudi agencijski posnetki s poročil so avtorsko zaščiteni. Odločitev za uporabo filmskega medija je povezana z vprašanjem užitka, saj ljudje očitno uživamo med ogledom nasilnih prizorov na zaslonih.

Človek si je od nekdaj ogledoval usmrtitve. V Rimu so množice navijale, ko so ljudi trgali levi. Današnja možnost za užitek ponujajo mediji.

Ko gledava nasilje po poročilih, pri tem ne uživava, v filmu pa je prisoten užitek, kadar dobra stran uniči slabo. Vednje, da gre za fikcijo, in najina morala nama tak užitek dovoljujeta. V filmu se predstava enkrat konča, ni resnična in užitek si lahko dovoliš. V Blomovem delu pa je zgodba odvezeta in ostane le še golo nasilje ...

Ob opazovanju hitro otopiva tudi zato, ker se prizori nasilja tako hitro menjajo. Na sekundo jih vidiva štiriindvajset. Zaradi neprepoznavnosti podob se umetnik izogne grožnjam o kršitvi avtorskih pravic. Po drugi strani gre za projekt, ki ponuja dve neprijetni stvari – zobozdravniški stol in nasilje; kako sva lahko otopela?

Če podobo vidiš velikokrat, te lahko spodbuja ali otopi. Ko so iznašli film, so ljudje bežali pred posnetkom vlaka na platnu, saj niso razumeli, da gre za podobo. S ponovitvami smo se naučili, da gre le za niz slik, in danes nihče več ne beži iz dvorane. Po drugi strani je bivša Jugoslavija uporabljala rdečo zvezdo, da naju je opominjala na pripadnost. In ker je ta podoba govorila o resničnosti, je njeno ponavljanje krepilo najino zavest.

S pomočjo neprijetnega občutka nam umetnik posreduje sporočilo. Namen dela je opozoriti na stanje današnje družbe, ki je prepredena z najrazličnejšimi informacijami. Mediji in umetniške prakse nama ponujajo različne nasilne prizore. To delo pa ne opozarja na pretirano produkcijo nasilja v medijih, ampak skuša pokazati, kako vsesplošna navzočnost medijev povzroča stanje otopelosti, ki nastopi po užitku nad senzacijo in nasilnim prizorom.

Zaradi frekvence slik v Blomovem videu že po kakšnih tridesetih sekundah ogleda otopiva. *Desensitizer* nama pred-

stavi zgoščen povzetek življenja sodobnega posameznika. Zgoščene podobe so pred naju postavljene kot golo dejstvo. Kot da bi rekel: 'Vidita, tako živita in učinek tega, kar čutita, je enak tistemu, ki ga v sebi nosita vsak dan.'

In kakšen je najin odnos do prikazovanja nasilja v medijih?

Tudi midva sva otopela.

Nasilje pozna iz filmov, televizije, spleta in drugih medijev.

V živo pa takšnega krvavega nasilja nisva videla nikoli ...

A tudi v filmih obstajajo nasilni prizori, ki jih je težko prenesti. V *Okupaciji v 26 slikah* (1978, r. Lordan Zafranović) je tak dolg prizor poboja partizanov na avtobusu. Tu nasilje ni podobno klasičnim filmskim prizorom, kadar se po telesu, ki ga zadane metek, pcedi barva. V *Desensitizerju* se prizori zelo hitro menjajo – edina stvar, ki jih povezuje in po kateri so razpoznavni, je rdeča barva krvi.

Misel, da sediva na zobozdravniškem stolu in opazuje video zbornik najbolj krvavih prizorov filmske zgodovine, nama ne povzroča več neprijetnih občutkov. Tudi sam stol je le neizogibno dejstvo, ki nama ga ponuja kultura. O njem razmišljava. Ko sva ga videla prvič, sva se počutila prisiljena in izzvana. S formo naju je opozoril, da se bo godilo nekaj neprijetnega, in potem sva zares gledala neprijetno stvar in pomislila, da je to kolaž družbe. Za apropiirano režirano podobo in portret naše civilizacije

gre. Zato naju delo rahlo spominja na *dial H-I-S-T-O-R-Y* Johana Grimonpreza (1997), enourni dokumentarec, ki pa je mnogo bolj romantičen od *Desensitizerja*. Nasilje samo po sebi ni problematično, način, kako si ga kažemo, pa je.

Človek je nasilna žival. Brez civilizacije je nasilje sredstvo za zaščito, za pridobivanje hrane ... šele z njenim pojavom postane tudi groza ali užitek, ki se skozi zgodovino vse bolj stopnjuje.

Zobozdravniški stol, ki je robusten, tehnološki, na nek način grozljiv, vendarle pritegne obiskovalca. Delo se igra s psiho gledalca, a le zato, da bi ga prisililo k razmisleku. Na ta način je *Desensitizer* družbeno angažiran.

Vstaneva s stola in poslušava *Trilogijo Copyleft/Copyleft Trilogy*. Sestavljajo jo trije zvočni projekti in ker v resnici še nisva na razstavi, ampak doma, sva zadovoljna, da je vse Blomove projekte mogoče poslušati na spletni strani. Zvočno trilogijo o avtorskih pravicah sestavljajo projekti *15 minut slave/15 Minutes of Fame*, *Rock and Roll ne bo nikdar umrl/Rock and Roll Will Never Die* in *4'33" minut ukradene tišine/4'33 Minutes of Stolen Silence*.

Kaj je pravzaprav Cagevih 4'33"?

Gre za komad, ki ga je John Cage naredil leta 1952 in je bil slišati precej drugače od ostalih del glasbene tradicije.

Od glasbenikov je zahteval, da ne zaigrajo ničesar. Poslušalci so slišali le ozadje tistega, kar je navadno glasba. Blom je apropriral to znano avantgardno delo in poslušalcu v poslušanje ponudil tisto, kar slišimo med komadi na posnetem digitalnem nosilcu zvoka. Zvok torej, ki nastane brez glasbil, glasbo, ki jo sestavljajo naključni zvoki, ki se v dvorani oz. na posnetku zgodijo v času trajanja komada.

4'33" so že mnogokrat uporabili. Med tistimi, ki so delo 'semplali', so bili nemški slikar Gerhard Richter, pank skupina Crass in skupina Living Colour, ki so na eno svojih plošč umestili 4 minute in 33 sekund tišine pred končnim skritim komadom.

Tudi Blom ustvari zvočni projekt, ki poslušalcu ponuja 4 minute in 33 sekund tišine, a tu zvoka ne ustvarjajo občinstvo in glasbeniki, temveč kombinacija posnetkov tišin z glasbenih ploščkov. Odmori v skladbah so izbrani z različnih albumov jazz, rock in klasične glasbe. To je John Cage v sodobnosti, sestavlja ga že ustvarjeno in ponovno posneto. Projekt glasbe, ki jo ustvarjajo naključni zvoki, je – preden pride do sodobnega poslušalca – že dvakrat posnet in naključju je tako mogoče le prisluhniti, ne pa ga tudi ustvarjati. Toda to je tudi Cage v času, ko kreacije ogrožajo avtorske pravice.

Uporaba avtorsko zaščitene materialov je zelo pomemben del projekta. Nosilci zvoka, s katerih si je umetnik izposojal tišine, so v celoti avtorsko zaščiteni. Pred kratkim si je bilo po avtorskih zakonih še moč izposojati kratke delce tujih skladb, danes pa je tudi to vprašljivo. Ilustrativen primer je skladba *Bitter Sweet Symphony* angleške skupine The Verve, od katere ni skupina zaslužila niti centa, saj so zaradi razpoznavnega sempla avtorske pravice do delili skupini The Rolling Stones.

Še več, če gre za koncertni posnetek, je zaščiteno tudi vzklikanje in ploskanje publike, ki sodi k posnetku. To grozljivo dejstvo Blom raziskuje v drugem delu trilogije, v zvočnem projektu *15 minut slave/15 Minutes of Fame*. Gre za petnajstminutni posnetek ovacij publike s posnetkov nastopov v živo, ki so prav tako v lasti diskografskih hiš.

Zanimivo je tudi dejstvo, da je umetnik uporabil različne tišine – tišine rock and rolla, klasike in jazza. Med temi tišinami se kažejo določene razlike. Pri nekaterih slišimo le tišino za 'fade outom', le zvok frekvenc snemalnih tehnologij. A tu je še tišina, ki ostane od snemanja in ni le zvok snemalnega medija. Tišina rock komada je različna od tišine v klasični glasbi. Pravzaprav sploh ne gre za tišino, ampak za zvoke v tišini: pri rocku npr. bobnar pred začetkom komada štirikrat udari s paličicami, pri klasiki se to ne zgodi.

Tišine med posnetki na ploščkih se zdijo različne tudi zaradi svojega okolja. Razliko ustvari glasba, ki tišino objema. Toda v projektu je zvočni okvir tišine izvzet prav z namenom, da bi se poslušalec osredotočil na tišino, ki ga obdaja. Izločena tišina je predvsem tišina snemalnih frekvenc s posnetki posamičnih nehotenih zvokov.

Obravnavani zvočni projekt za dialog s publiko zahteva galerijsko okolje. Morda bi s predhodno najavo lahko zaživel tudi na radijskih valovih, a poslušalcem bi bilo treba z besedami razložiti, kaj bodo slišali. V galeriji, prostoru, v katerega obiskovalci vstopajo z namenom pozornega opazovanja, saj je posvečen umetniškemu projektu, lahko to delo nase opozori drugače.

Galerija omogoči, da delo gledalca najprej nagovori s pomočjo vizualnega elementa. Veliki zvočniki v praznem prostoru naju opozarjajo na zvok, ki prihaja iz njih. Po prvem nelagodju, ko pomisliva, da se bo zvok glasbe ali govora šele pojavil, pa ga ni in ni, prisluhneva tišini.

Obiskovalci so zapuščali koncert, na katerem je pianist David Tudor prvič izvedel 4'33". Skladbe takrat niso razumeli, saj nanjo niso bili pripravljene. Blomov projekt hoče gledalca opozoriti na to, kar mu ponuja, z namenom, da bi mu ponudil še nekaj več. Gledalca želi pritegniti in ne odbiti. Avantgardistična poza nerazumljenega umetnika

je v tem projektu odstranjena. Podoba je tu zato, da opozori na delo, delo pa želi komunicirati z gledalcem/poslušalcem. Umetnik naju opozarja s tišino.

Delo je namenjeno sleherniku, saj govori o vprašanju avtorskih pravic, ki vplivajo na vse nas. Pravice, ki naj bi umetnika ščitile, večinoma delujejo v korist velikih založb, agencij in drugih industrij. A avtorske pravice povzročajo mnogo več kot zgolj kopičenje denarja. Takšno pravno stanje zavira novo znanje in pretok informacij.

Hkrati je 'semplanje' star princip glasbe, tudi rock and rolla. V osemkanalni zvočni instalaciji *The Complete Beatles* se umetnik spet spopade z vprašanjem avtorskih pravic prek glasbe. Celoten katalog Beatlesov sestavi v en sam komad, ki tvori nerazpoznavno zvočno sliko. Hrup je popoln, saj posnetke sestavlja trinajst albumov, na vsakem izmed njih pa je približno 10 skladb. Medtem ko poslušava totalni hrup, ki ga ustvarja množica skladb skupine The Beatles, vseh zaigranih hkrati, se vprašava, Zakaj ravno Beatlesi?

Beatlesi so skupina, ki je sooblikovala glasbeno industrijo. Z odlično organizacijo in profesionalizacijo nastopanja in snemanja ter predvsem po zaslugi sposobnega menedžerja Briana Epsteinia so Beatlesi vzpostavili način, na kakršnega glasbena industrija deluje še danes. Avtorske

pravice za predvajanje njihovih del si je nekaj časa lastil celo Michael Jackson, ki je v času sodelovanja s Paulom McCartneyem odkupil podjetje, ki je imelo te pravice v lasti. Danes so pravice za objavo skladb Beatlesov spet vsaj deloma doma, v lasti korporacije EMI in Apple Corps., podjetja, ki ga je skupina The Beatles ustanovila leta 1968.

Beatlesi oz. Apple Corps. so se zaradi avtorskih pravic že večkrat znašli na sodišču. Leta 1978 so tožili računalniško podjetje Apple, ki naj bi prevzelo njihov zaščitni znak, jabolko. Na sodišču so zmagali leta 1981. Apple Computer se je zavezal, da se ne bo podajal v glasbene vode, Beatlesom pa so izplačali še 80.000 ameriških dolarjev. Ko je 1989 Apple v obtok poslal MIDI zvočne datoteke, ga je Apple Corps. spet tožil, saj naj bi šlo za kršenje dogovora. Leta 1991 sta podjetji dosegli dogovor in podjetje Beatlesov je prejelo nadomestilo v višini 26,5 milijonov dolarjev. Še vedno niso bili zadovoljni in so Apple spet tožili leta 2003, tokrat zato, ker sta na tržišče stopila iTunes in iPod. Leta 2006 so tožbo izgubili. V septembru leta 2009 je korporacija EMI records ponovno izdala remasterizirano zbirko vseh albumov skupine, ki jo je v menda zelo slabi zvočni kakovosti prvič izdala že leta 1987. Posebno težavo za Paula McCartneya in Apple Corps., ki je skupaj z McCartneyem lastnik avtorskih pravic vseh sku-

pnih skladb skupine The Beatles, predstavlja vprašanje dosegljivosti njihovih skladb prek plačljivih internetnih strani, predvsem iTunes. Menda s tem podjetjem pravkar potekajo dogovori o postopkih in verjetno predvsem poslovni strani digitalne distribucije posnetkov, ki vsaj v tem trenutku pri plačljivih uradnih digitalnih distributerjih še ni omogočena.

Toda Beatlesi beat glasbe niso ustvarili, ampak so takrat še avtorsko precej nezaščiten glasbo spretno predelali in jo prilagodili lastnemu izrazu – podobno kot mnogi izvajalci pred in za njimi. Od glasbe, ki je že obstajala, so jemali tisto, kar jim je odgovarjalo in temu dodajali svoje. To nama postane jasno, ko prisluhneva njihovim posnetkom s prvih albumov, kjer so preigrali tujo glasbo. Takšna je *Please Mister Postman*, prva skladba, s katero so se na sceni pojavile The Marvelettes, pa hit singel Chucka Berryja *Roll over Beethoveen*, ki so ju Beatlesi predelali za album *With the Beatles*.

Danes so torej avtorske pravice le še posel. Ideja zaščite avtorstva je popolnoma zamrla. Živa je le ideja pridobivanja kapitala. Primer Beatlesov, ki podobno kot glasbene korporacije služijo z avtorskimi pravicami, pokaže, da tudi glasbeniki avtorske pravice razumejo kot posel. Ideja individualnosti in s tem tudi avtorstva pa je tako ali tako ena od značilnosti kapitalističnega sistema.

Zvočni projekt *The Complete Beatles* se torej znova neposredno dotika vprašanj glasbene industrije. Gre za izzivanje, saj so predvajana avtorsko zaščitena dela, ki pa so za poslušalca vendarle popolnoma neprepoznavna, podobno kot filmske podobe v *Desensitizerju*. Projekt naju opozarja, da umetniške zapuščine, ki je na voljo, ne moreva uporabljati brez težav. To pa naju lahko pripelje do popolnega praznega šuma, do praznine.

Na podoben način, a v drugem mediju, deluje projekt *Believe Me I Say onto You*, kjer je Conny Blom uporabil besedila pesmi Beatlesov in jih z uporabo programa *Google translate* prevajal v številne jezike, dokler besedila niso postala popolnoma neprepoznavna. Navidezno vsemogočna tehnologija je popolnoma spremenila vsebino pesmi in kakor v *The Complete Beatles* je iz smisla nastal popolni nesmisel.

Tudi to delo se dotika vprašanj avtorstva in avtorskih pravic. Avtor prevodov, ki jih prebirava in nosijo naslove *My Head is Full of Nothing to Say*, *Seven Conditions*, *I Love Girl Stuff*, *At the Bottom of the Foot*, *Are You Paying for the Work* in podobno, je v resnici *Google translate*, saj prevedena besedila nimajo nič skupnega z avtorskimi besedili Beatlesov. Prevajalec je sicer vedno delni avtor besedila, a orodje *Google translate* delo opravi tako temeljito in brez občutka, da dobimo

popolnoma novo pesem, v kateri zaman iščemo smisel. Tehnologija tukaj, podobno kot v projektu *From Above*, pripoveduje o uničenju subjekta, ki ga izniči sodobni programski vmesnik.

From Above kaže razliko med digitalno in analogno tehnologijo. Signal, ki je v analognem mediju prisoten tudi takrat, ko tok prenosa podob in zvokov izgine, daje možnost za sprejem drugega prenosa. Digitalna tehnologija ta signal ukine. V digitalnem mediju smo soočeni s praznino. Ko ni signala, ni ničesar. Ostane le subjekt sam s seboj. To nama pokaže, kako zelo sva odvisna od tehnologij. Ko se ugasne računalnik, ostaneva sama.

A ne misliva, da je težava v tehnologiji. Pri projektu se nama zdi zanimivo dejstvo, da za digitalnim ni ničesar, le praznina. A ne verjameva, da je digitalna tehnologija tista, ki nam je pokazala nič. Digitalni signal ubije le eno od možnosti vere v to, da nekaj je. Ko signala ni, ni ničesar več.

Ljudje se praznine bojimo in iščemo smisel za njo. Najprej smo mislili, da je duh skrit v ognju, potem smo ga iskali v radijskih in televizijskih valovih. Slišimo ali pa vidimo šum, podobno kot pri Cageu slišimo in vidimo ozadje, in v njem iščemo pomen. Ta želja tudi z digitalnimi tehnologijami ne bo umrla, našli bomo drugačne načine iskanja tistega, kar se skriva za praznino.

Ideja duha v stroju je v zahodni kulturi močno prisotna. Najprej se seveda spomniva Hala iz *Odiseje 2001* (2001: *A Space Odyssey*, 1968, r. Stanley Kubrick), Blom naju opozori na film *The Ring* (2002, r. Gore Verbinski in *Ringu*, 1998, r. Hideo Nakata), kjer je duh skrit v televiziji, na VHS kaseti in v telefonu. Potem je tu še *Demon Seed* (1977, r. Donald Cammell), kjer se hoče stroj celo ploditi, in legendarna nanizanka *Knight Rider* (1982–1986), ki naju potolaži, da duh v mašini ni vedno strašljiv.

Vsi projekti Connyja Bloma, ki sva si jih ogledala, so močno povezani z množično kulturo. Umetnik je, tako kot midva, tudi sam njen uporabnik. Ker v njej živi in jo konzumira, tu tudi najde največ vprašanj in težav, ki jih raziskuje v svojih delih. Če bi bil od nje izoliran, bi njegovo delo ne bilo tako zaznamovano z njo.

Prek tem množične kulture nam umetniški projekti kažejo, da bi morala biti vednost dostopna vsem. Umetniška dela opozarjajo na distribucijo vedenja. V *Desensitizerju* ideja avtorskih pravic ni na prvem mestu, zato pa je to ključna tema *Copyleft trilogije*, kjer že naslov opozori na stališče dela. *4'33" minut ukradene tišine/4'33" Minutes of Stolen Silence* sprašuje, kdo je lastnik tišine, *15 minut slave/15 Minutes of Fame* govori o tem, kako so prilaščeni zvoki publike, *Rock and Roll ne bo nikdar umrl/Rock and Roll Will Never Die* pa pripoveduje o tem, kako glasbena in-

dustrija z ustvarjanjem 'fade outov' spreminja glasbo in ubija 'rock and roll'. Tudi *Believe me I Say onto You* in *Complete Beatles* se ukvarjata s temi vprašanji. In seveda *Projekt zajček/Bunny Project*.

Projekt zajček je delo v razvoju, ki ga je umetnik udejanjil v več dogodkih. Raziskoval je fenomen zajca in ugotovil, da je najsevernejši kraj, kjer živijo avtohtoni evropski zajci, v bližini njegovega doma v Göteborgu. Zajce je našel na igrišču za golf in pred zajčje luknje postavil korenčke. Tako naj bi se zajci, že tako ali tako znani po hitri reprodukciji, še bolj hitro množili in uničili igrišče za golf, simbol premožnih v kapitalistični družbi. Zajček je postal simbol hitro množječega se, ljubkega terorista in njegov znak je seveda korenje. To je tu in tam prevezano z budilko, tako da korenje postane 'bomba'. Vizualna podobnost artefakta z resnično bombo je prepričala tiste, ki so skrbeli za varnost kulturne ministrice in Muzeja v Kalmarju, da mora tajna policija zaustaviti potek povabljenega umetniškega projekta nameščanja korenja-bomb. V drugi realizaciji projekta je nekaj primerkov korenja-bomb policija tudi zasegla. V eni izmed instalacij projekta je bilo razstavljenih sto VHS kopij filma *Night of the Lepus* (1972, r. William F. Claxton). Gledalci so v času trajanja razstave iz galerije ukradli več kot petdeset posnetkov z zgodbo o gigantskih zajcih mutantih, ki terorizirajo jugo-

zahod ZDA. Zaščiteni avtorski material se je tako pričel nekontrolirano širiti. V drugi realizaciji projekta je Blom gledalcem/uporabnikom ponudil, da si prek internetne strani Kazaa na nosilec zvoka naložijo sto pesmi na temo zajcev. Tudi tokrat je šlo za kršenje avtorskih pravic in nekontrolirano širjenje materiala. Kot zajčki se je tudi zaščiteni material hitro razširil.

Korenje je bilo zapakirano v prepoznavno obliko. Toda to obliko pozna le prek medijev, prek televizije in filmov. V živo dinamitne palice še nisva videla. Grožnja z dinamitom se nama ne zdi posebej verjetna. Mnogo bolj verjetno je, da na ulici leži kup korenja. Meniva, da je družba v psihози, saj hoče videti dinamit, ne pa korenja. Boji se zajčka, ki bo prišel, pojedel korenje in povzročil eksplozijo. Toda zajčkov bo vse več.

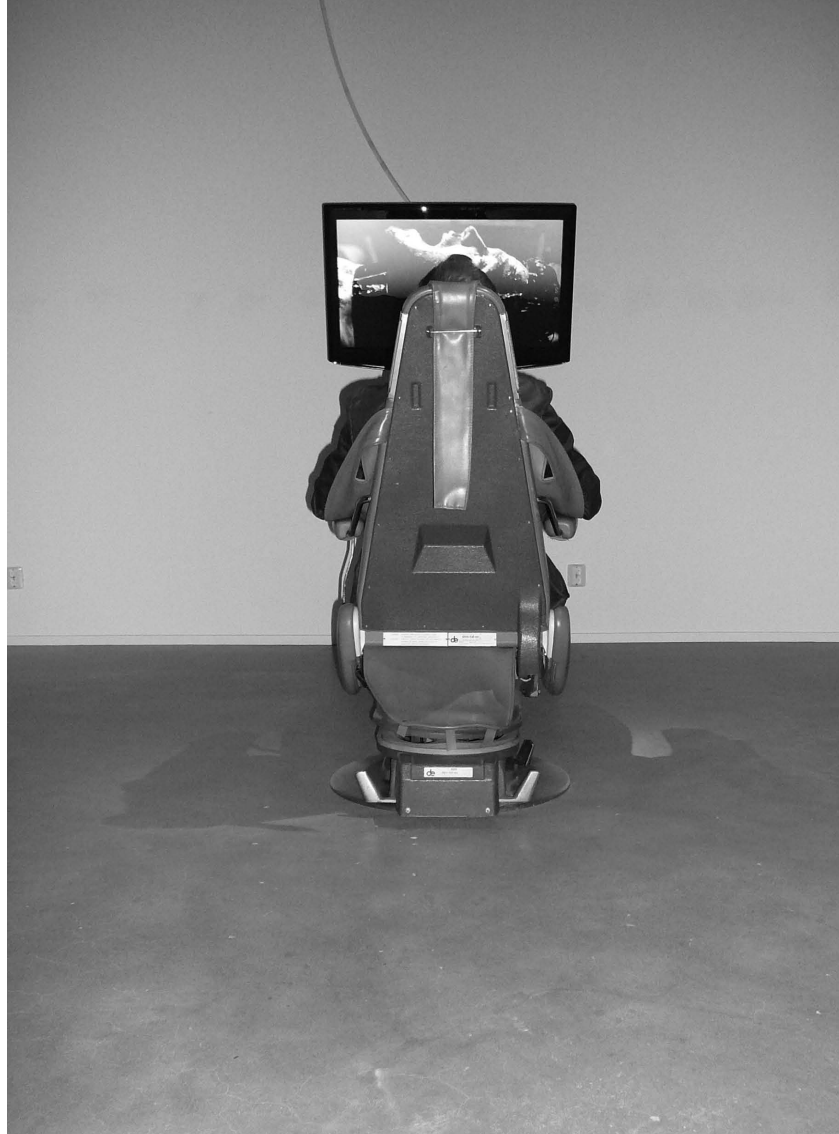




DESENSITIZER

10 minute video loop, dentist's chair

The video piece "Desensitizer" is a collage of thousands of stills from violent movies, every still depicting a scene of brutal killing. Together, frame after frame, they undoubtedly form the most violent piece of film ever. 24 murders per second. Individually indistinguishable to the conscious mind, but together a numbing, flickering odyssey through movie violence. A challenge for all believers or non-believers in subliminal perception as well as for the believers and non-believers in the effects of video violence.

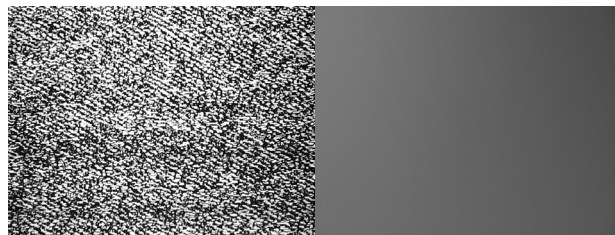


“Television is a gift of God, and God will hold those who utilize his divine instrument accountable to him.”

Philo T. Farnsworth, the inventor of the modern television.



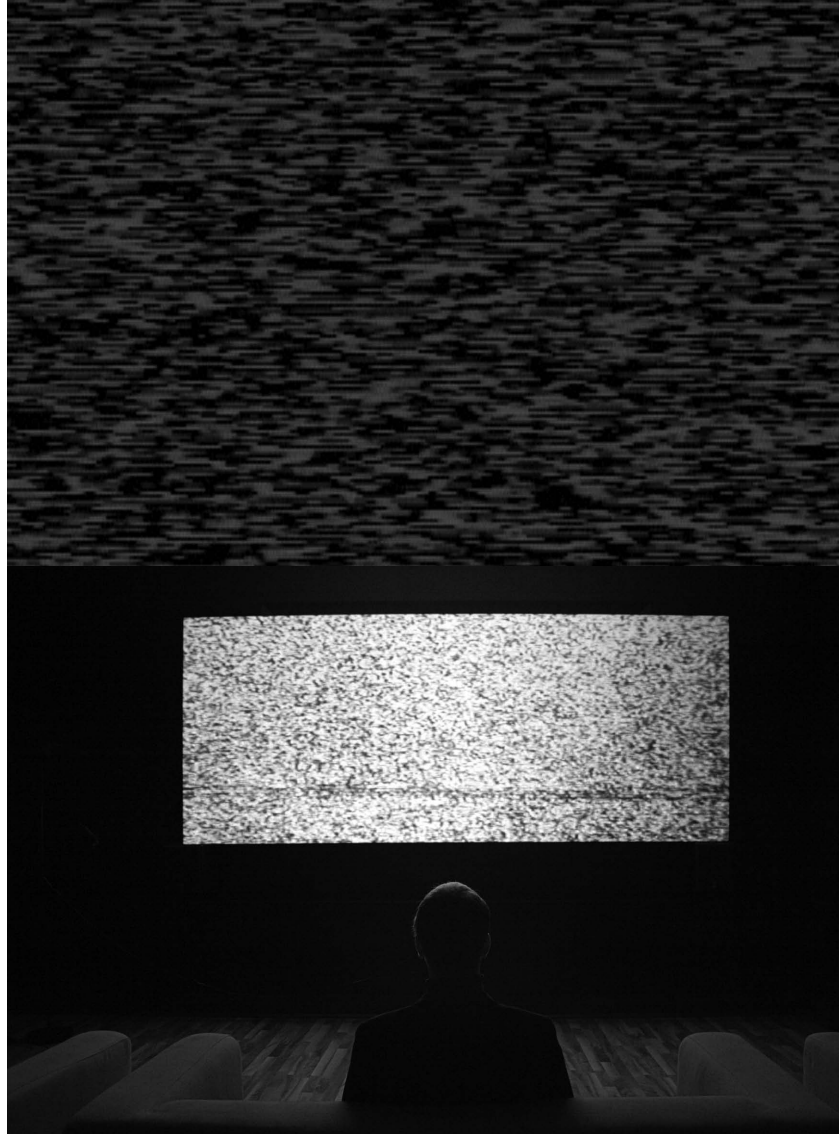
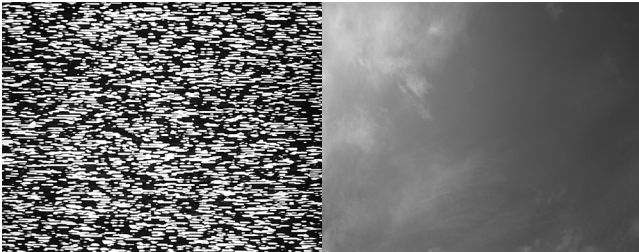
Desensitizer

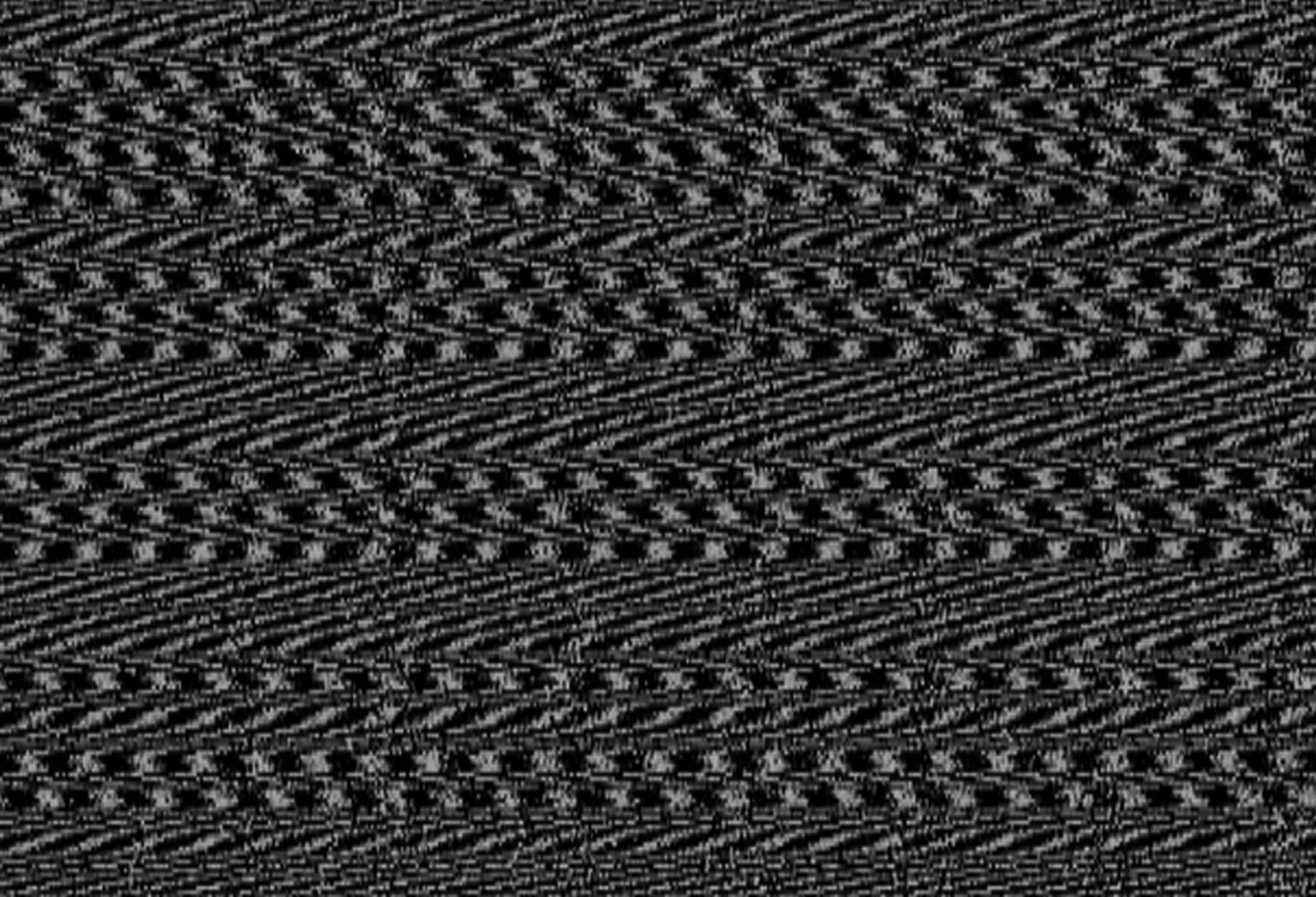


From Above

FROM ABOVE

When a television receiver is set to an unused frequency, the cosmic background radiation is picked up and visualized as static flickers. In the series "From Above," a section of the sky (at a specific time) is being portrayed partly with the aid of a camera and partly with the information obtained from a TV receiver.





“...it is possible to construct an apparatus which will be so delicate that if there are personalities in another existence or sphere who wish to get in touch with us in this existence or sphere, this apparatus will at least give them a better opportunity to express themselves than the tilting tables and raps and ouija boards and mediums and the other crude methods now purported to be the only means of communication.”

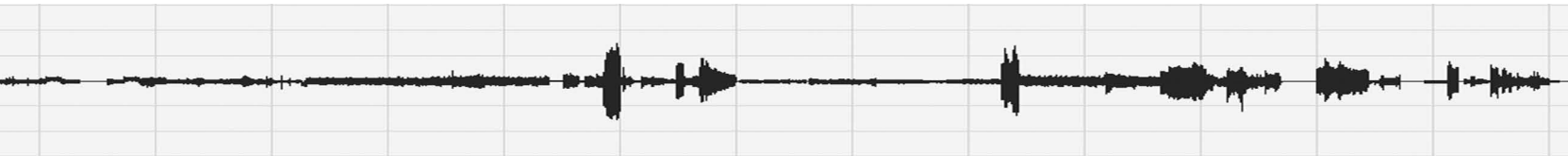
Thomas Alva Edison



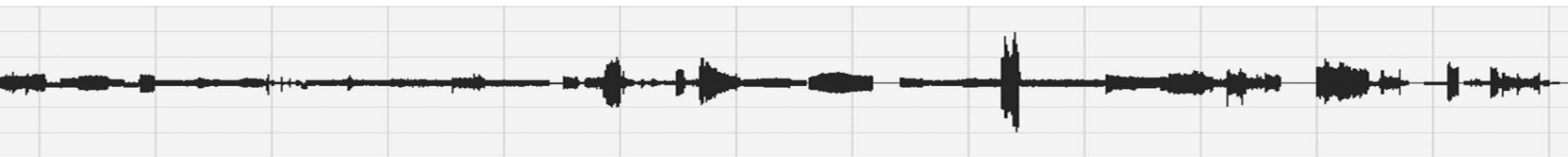
4'33 MINUTES OF STOLEN SILENCE

4:33 min sound piece

An obvious reference to John Cage's classic "4:33". The piece consists entirely of pauses within recorded compositions of rock, jazz and classical music. A silence that when enhanced proves to be far from silent. When the surrounding sounds have been edited out, it is possible to raise the volume and hear things hidden behind the background hiss: unintentional noises, lingering notes or perhaps even voices.



4'33 Minutes of Stolen Silence, left channel (sequence)



4'33 Minutes of Stolen Silence, right channel (sequence)

THE COMPLETE BEATLES

8 Channel sound installation

Parallel to the intensified blood hunt for file sharers, the music industry is screaming for strengthened copyright laws, under the pretext that this is to protect us, the creators (musicians, artists, writers). In fact these laws are obviously here to protect their own interests and with this the major record labels are trying to throw a spanner into the works of both development and creativity. Under the current laws, it would be impossible for genres like jazz and rock music to emerge since what has always been an integral part of musical development, namely references, borrowings and paraphrases, is no longer possible without financial backing from the music industry's major players. Instead of investing money into trying to keep up with the technological development, the money is spent on lobbying amongst politicians and legislators and trying to convince them that it is necessary to litigate against both file sharers and any creator who borrows something in order to create something new. Few have been protected more



fiercely than an old pop band from Liverpool, who themselves borrowed great chunks from old blues tunes. I am of course speaking of The Beatles, as this band is also one of the reasons why the copyrights for recordings have been prolonged.

In the sound installation "The Complete Beatles," things are turned on their head, as the piece consists in its entirety of music recorded by the band. As a matter of fact, every second of the officially released studio recordings by The Beatles is included in the piece, but none of the songs can be recognised. Each individual track is looped and played simultaneously, so that at any given moment of the continuous sound one can hear all of The Beatles studio recordings. The sound shifts as one walks through the room and comes closer to individual speakers. The overtones shimmer and vibrate. The production on the earlier and later albums differs and this is noticeable even though not a single note of the original music can be identified. This is not about sampling - The Beatles production is presented in its entirety - but is it The Beatles that we are hearing?

BELIEVE ME,
I SAY
UNTO YOU,

How bad can a translation be, and still be protected by copyright? In "Believe Me I Say Unto You," the Beatles' lyrics have been run back and forth through the EU languages in Google Translate, until the limitations of the software transformed the lyrics into absurd poems. Sometimes similar to teenage poetry, sometimes echoing Dada, these poems have little resemblance to the source, but still they are in their entirety based on the lyrics of the Beatles.

CONNOR BLOM

BELIEVE ME I SAY UNTO YOU



MY HEAD IS FULL OF NOTHING TO SAY

I mean
My head is full of nothing to say
You are here
All of these words becomes clear

When I was in your area, please
Top Games dropdown around me --
This is good
I hope the next one

But when I was still a hostile act
This is just for me, I think
This is some confusion. "

I mean
I posted, but I do not know why
I do not know
I do not expect to always have time

Sometimes I wish I know
Then we can say that I believe and say



Understand

I mean
I posted, but I do not know why
I do not care
I do not expect to always have time, I have
when I have time

SEVEN CONDITIONS

Close your mind, recharge
Bob and the lower
This is not confused
This is not confused

Seven conditions
Waiver Void
It's brilliant
It's brilliant

You can see





Meaning
 This is
 This is

I like everything
 And love is all
 It should be noted,
 It should be noted,

Aincolas and anger
 Could you give a dead
 Faith
 Faith

But listen
 The ink in your dreams
 Does not live
 Does not reside in

Or play
 Force until the end
 From
 From



From
 From
 From
 From

I LOVE GIRL STUFF

So sweet and cute,
 T-girl is very sweet and nice
 I want more women than ever before

I Love Girl Stuff
 I hope that if they are less than
 Enjoy every minute girl

Climbing, hiking cat
 Johnny the foot
 Nervousness as old as the bar and 12
 (James Elmore against children)

Good to see you





Search me, I do not want
In addition, we now know that

So sweet and cute,
T-girl is very sweet and nice
I'm younger than ever
I have nerves

AT THE BOTTOM OF THE FOOT

I am deeply
Ah, yes, oh yes. (which is correct)
I think that the poor can not hide the truth
Not. no. No! Not.
Yes! Yes! Sorry. Yes!
Oh, believe me, I do not like trains
Oh, yeah, yeah, oh yeah.
And if I continue to work to curb
Oh no, oh no, oh no.
Yes, yes, I do.
Sorry.



Over the years, I have company
I wonder why all the cases
I want people
Just like you ..

I have a faith that lasts
Oh yeah, oh yeah.
I think we all know.
Oh yeah, oh yeah, oh yeah.
Yes! Yes! Sorry. Yes!

Has always been easy.
I had a good time.
Dream is wet.
Solar Encore
Ah, yes, oh yes. Ah, yes.
This is a very good year.
Everyone has hair.
Everything was average. (Yeah.)
At the bottom of the foot.
Ah, yes. Yes! WOOOOHOO!

[Oh, my ... so hard.]





ARE YOU PAYING FOR THE WORK

Boy, are you paying for the work
Support tracking

Boy, are you paying for the work
Support tracking

I never have my knees
Recent calls
And among the festivities --
Horses

Boy, are you paying for the work
Support tracking

Boy, are you paying for the work
Support tracking

THEN THE SUN

Proud of the Sunday, the sun
rechem that all base



Precious little Dolgan a cold winter alone
Precious little as a year because Bílá
We are proud of the sun is going to them.
rechem that all base

Lite you laugh Honey returning face Navarra
Little seems spade, which was the time this Bílá
We are proud of the sun is going to them.
rechem that all base

The sun, the sun is the sun ...
The sun, the sun is the sun ...
The sun, the sun is the sun ...
The sun, the sun is the sun ...
The sun, the sun is the sun ...

Precious little, I think that the slow melting of
ice

There is little spade a time, because no clear
Proud of the Sunday, the sun
rechem that all base

This is OK





WHAT TO DO

What to do with their
No other lover
Nothing woos me
I do not want to stop the
You know, I think, and how

Somewhere in her smile to know
I need somebody love you more
Just me

I do not want to stop the
You know, I think, and how

I do not know what love is
I do not know
Yes, and in May
I do not know

What to do with what you have heard
And all that needs to be done, is to believe,
One of the things that show
I do not want to stop the



You know, I think, and how

OH! LORD

Oh! Lord, You Me
I will never damage your
Believe me, I say unto you,
I will never damage your

Oh! costly, should be left
Not only
Believe me, if I kerjama
Do not let

When I said you need me
But you know that almost cried out and fell on
When I said you need me
But you know, I crack and almost died

Oh! costly, should be left
Not only





Believe me, I say unto you,
I will never damage your

When I said you need me
But you know that almost cried out and fell on
When I said you need me
But you know, I crack and almost died

Oh! Lord, You Me
I give less
Believe me, I say unto you,
I will never damage your

**you can give
me money**¹

¹ Excerpt from "You Can Give Me Money", from the "Believe Me, I Say Unto You" series, 2008. More poems at www.connyblom.com/poems1.html

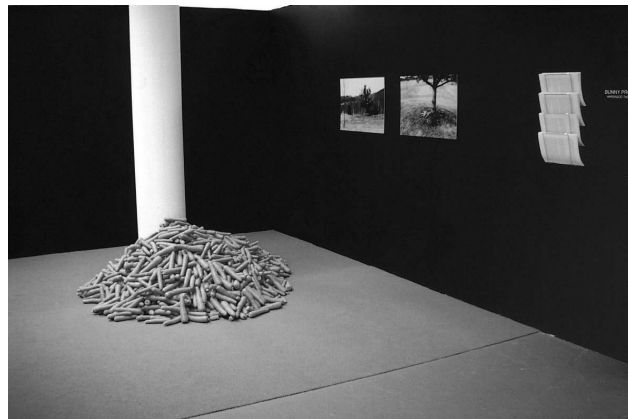




BUNNY PROJECT

In the "Bunny Project," Conny Blom uses the rabbit as a symbol for subversive activities, activities outside the reach of the control system. The rabbit has an almost unmatched ability to reproduce and spread uncontrollably and under the right conditions it can be almost impossible to stop. At his 2004 exhibitions in Galleri 54 and Röda Sten in Gothenburg, Sweden, Blom used the rabbit analogy to return to the issues of uncontrolled distribution of copyrighted material, pirating and downloading. For this project, the artist extensively researched and examined the concept of the rabbit. Blom studied the notion of the rabbit in a historical context as well as its symbolic use in myths, art history and popular culture. Some fragments of this material were put together into a text that was later used in several exhibitions. The text is not scientific even though parts of it are pure fact. Together with the factual parts, the personal episodes from the artist's life turn the end product into something different. During his research Blom found - to his surprise -

that the northernmost natural population of the European wild rabbit was not far from his home in Gothenburg. Blom decided to try to track down the rabbits. When he finally discovered rabbit holes and other traces of rabbit activity on a golf course in Hisingen, he left out a large amount of carrots for the animals to feast upon. This act might well be considered to be the very heart of the project. Laying out carrots on golf courses is quite obviously a symbolic gesture. It encourages rabbits to continue their underground networking, digging tunnels, undermining the hierarchies – golf, of course, being symbolically synonymous with upper-class entertainment, and thereby representing oppression. The golf course is basically nature turned obedient and impotent. Nature tamed and forced to entertain. There are always places for golf courses. Whether it is on locations with a sensitive natural environment or merely areas of common public interest, proposals to lay out golf courses always seem to get favourable reception from the politicians responsible (of whom a suspicious amount always seem to be golf players). The rabbit has a double nature and



Laying out carrots on golf courses is quite obviously a symbolic gesture. It's an encouragement for the rabbits to continue their underground networking, digging tunnels, undermining the hierarchies.



this was used by Blom to his advantage. The rabbit is - so to speak - a cute virus. It has an utterly harmless appearance, but beneath this cuddly surface lays a potential disaster, something that the British land owners in Australia got very well acquainted with in the nineteenth century, when they introduced the rabbit to Australia (for hunting purposes). A handful of specimens reproduced into a nationally spread pest within a couple of years. When Blom presented the golf course action at the Stockholm Art Fair 2005, he did this with an installation that not only presented the action with photographic documentation, but also with a 300-kilogram pile of carrots. More recently, Blom has been working on a series of bombs constructed from carrots. These bombs are clearly harmless; however, they mimic the equipment used by terrorists. The carrot bombs preserve the double nature of the rabbit even though the encouragement has now become an actual threat, and the rabbits are nowhere to be seen. Amongst other locations, these bombs have been presented as an installation on the large underground square under the Sony Centre and the Daim-

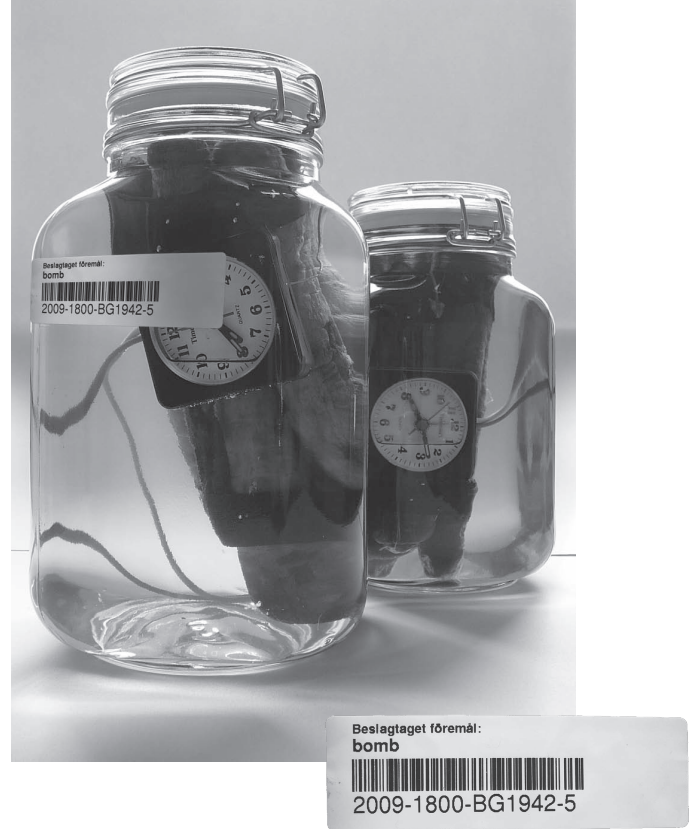


Bunny Project at Kalmar Konstmuseum, Sweden 2008
During the inauguration of the new art museum in Kalmar, a suspicious looking individual sneaked around the premises mounting sculptures made from carrots, alarm clocks, red and blue wires and tape. The performance was stopped on the direct orders of the Swedish secret police as the Minister of Culture refused to deliver her inaugural speech if it were to continue. As it later turned out the speech was about how art must be allowed to be free and provocative.

ler Chrysler building on Potsdamer Platz in Berlin. Blom placed carrot bombs on all of the supporting pillars, potentially undermining the whole of Berlin's economic centre. In 2008, one of Blom's performances was

stopped by SÄPO, the Swedish secret police. Commissioned by the Kalmar Museum of Art in Kalmar, Sweden, Blom was installing the carrot devices during the inauguration of the new museum building. The Minister of Culture apparently refused to deliver her inaugural speech if the action was to continue. The speech, as it later turned out, was about how art must be allowed to be free and provocative. In 2009, the police confiscated a number of carrot bombs when they were presented at the initiative of Örebro Konsthall during the Örebro Open Art Festival (Örebro, Sweden). The police were informed in advance as to the locations of the carrot contraptions and were given pictures of them, and at first the police gave the event the green light. However, after the exhibition was opened, the carrots were deemed to be too similar to bombs and the police confiscated some of them. The by then somewhat decaying contraptions were returned to the artist three weeks later. He pickled them.





Bunny Project; Jars

During the Örebro Open Art Festival in 2009, the local police confiscated 5 carrot bombs, even though the City Gallery informed them about the installations in advance. After a couple of weeks the confiscated objects were returned to the artist. The artist preserved the somewhat life-weary bunches in alcohol.



CV

CONNYS BLOM (1974)

Selected Solo Exhibitions:

- 2010: Gallery Vžigalica, Ljubljana, Slovenia.
 2009: Neon Gallery, Brösarp, Sweden.
 2009: Semai Gallery, Winnipeg, Manitoba, Canada.
 2009: Konsthall 1.0, Jönköping, Sweden.
 2009: *So Happy Together*, Tobačna, Ljubljana, Slovenia. Collaboration with Nina Slejko.
 2009: Kalmar Konstmuseum, Sweden.
 2008: Galleri Mors Mössa, Göteborg, Sweden.
 2007: Galleri Rotor, Göteborg, Sweden.

Selected Group Exhibitions:

- 2009: *Living in a Modern Society*, Kaliningrad State Art Gallery, Kaliningrad, Russia. With J Tobias Andersson, Jesper Nordahl, Karin Hasselberg, and more.
 2009: *Made in Arnhem: T.A.P.E. Invites*, Arnhem, The Netherlands. With Sako Kojima, Erik Snedsbøl, Fathi Hassan, and more
 2009: *Örebro Open Art*, Örebro Konsthall, Sweden. With Veronica Brovall, Jonas Liveröd, Peter Tillberg, Kent Karlsson and more.
 2008: *Qui Vive? - Moscow International Biennale for Young Art*, NCCA, Moscow.
 2008: *La Marge d'Erreur*, Centre d'Art Contemporain La Synagogue de Delme, France. With Daniel Buren, Simon Starling, Jonathan Monk, and more. Curated by Le Bureau.
 2008: *P2P*, Casino de Luxembourg, Luxemburg. With Jonathan Monk, Michael Elmgreen & Ingar Dragset, Nedko Solakov, and more. Curated by Le Bureau.
 2007: *Mellan realitet och sagoland*, Högsby. With Jesper Nordahl, Sofia Hultén, Kalle Brolin, and more. Curated by Martin Schibli.
 2007: *Miðbaugur og Kringla*, Reykjavik, Iceland.
 2007: *Projekt 07*, Alma Lövs Museum, Östra Ämtervik, Sweden. With Gilbert & George, Nathalie

Djurberg, Annika von Hausswolff, Jan Håfström, and more.

- 2007: Studio 44, Stockholm, Sweden.
 2007: *Valand 07*, Göteborgs Konsthall, Sweden.
 2007: *Bra Konst*, Vikingsbergs Konsthall, Helsingborg, Sweden. With Ninia Sverdrup, Matias Faldbakken, David Svensson, and more.
 2007: *Free Party 2*, L'Ecole Supérieure D'Art, Grenoble, France. With Lara Almarcegui, Critical Art Ensemble, Valery Chtak and more. Curators: Elena Yaichnikova and Nicolas Audureau (Agourtchik! Project).
 2007: *2:nd Moscow Biennale*, Matter & Memory Exhibition. Curators: Renee Padt and Stanislav Shuripa.
 2006: Galleri Pictura / Skånska Konstmuseum, Lund, Sweden. With Carl Johan Engberg.
 2006: *Free Party*, Moscow Art Center, Moscow, Russia. With Lara Almarcegui, Critical Art Ensemble and Dick Head Man Records. Curators: Elena Yaichnikova and Nicolas Audureau.
 2006: Alma Lövs Museum Biennale, Östra Ämtervik, Sweden. With Jenny Holzer, Jörgen Svensson, Petra Lindholm and more.
 2006: *Strategies of Revealing*, Röda Sten Kunsthalle, Göteborg, Sweden.
 2006: *Hard Revolution*, Nord Festival, Potsdamer Platz, Berlin, Germany. Curator: Mika Hannula.
 2006: *Topography of Social Commitment*, Social Forum Skåne, Galleri Pictura / Skånska Konstmuseum, Lund Sweden. Curator: Martin Schibli.
 2005: *Illegal Grafik*, Grafik i Väst, Göteborg, Sweden. With Esther Shalev-Gerz, Thomas Broomé, Clara Ursitti and more.
 2005: Helsingborgs Dagblad web-gallery, www.hd.se/kultur/galleri
 2005: *Stockholm Art Fair*, Sollentuna, Sweden.
 2004: Galleri 54, Göteborg, Sweden. Spring Exhibition.
 2004: *Abundance*, Röda Sten Kunsthalle, Göteborg, Sweden.
 2004: *Andra ljud*, Göteborg City Hall Museum, Sweden.
 2003: *Samlingarna - samtidskonsten i fokus*, Konsthallen, Dunkers Kulturhus, Helsingborg, Sweden. With Dan Volgers, Magnus Wallin, Sophie Tottie,

- and more.
- 2003: Galleri Box, Göteborg, Sweden. Spring Exhibition.
- 2003: *Art Moscow*. Art Fair in Moscow, Russia.
- 2003: *Cultural Terrorism*, Kulturhuset Valfiskens, Simrishamn, Sweden. With Anna Brag, Heath Bunting and Minerva Cuevas. Curator: Martin Schibli
- 2002: *M Art in(n)*, Helsingborg, Sweden. With Svetlana Heger, Juan Carlos Peirone, Oliver Ressler, and more.
- 2002: *(för-)brukad ort - global ort?* Konstnärbyns galleri, Rydöbruk, Sweden. With Max Liljefors and Juan Castillo. Curator: Martin Schibli
- 2002: Galleri Moment, Ängelholm, Sweden. (graduation exhibition).
- 2001: *M Art In(n)*, Helsingborg, Sweden. With Christoph Draeger, Christine Hill, Michel Majerus, and more.
- 2000: Galleri St Gertrud, Malmö, Sweden. (graduation exhibition).

Selected Screenings, Events, Actions:

- 2009: *VÅLD*, Skånes Konstförening, Malmö, Sweden.
- 2009: *send + receive 11*, A Festival of Sound, Winnipeg, Manitoba Canada.
- 2009: *Ersta Konsthalls ljudarkiv*, Krets, Malmö, Sweden.
- 2008: *Mikrofilm Festival*, Murska Sobota, Slovenia.
- 2008: *Art is Not Mute*, Uppsala Konstmuseum, Sweden.
- 2008: *Bunny Project; Bombs*, Commissioned performance for the inauguration of the new Art Museum in Kalmar, Sweden. Stopped by SÄPO (the Swedish Secret Police)
- 2008: *Swedish Video Art*, NCCA (National Centre for Contemporary Art) Nizhny Novgorod, Russia.
- 2008: *Art is Not Mute*, HIT, Göteborg, Sweden.
- 2007: *Art is Not Mute*, Botkyrka Konsthall, Botkyrka, Sweden.
- 2007: *Art is Not Mute*, Institute of Contemporary Art, Dunaujváros, Hungary.
- 2007: *Art is Not Mute*, Ersta Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden.
- 2005: *Vernissageorkesteren*, conducted by Sara Länner-

- ström, Göteborgs Konsthall, Sweden.
- 2002: *Rocket Queen*, Gottwalds (Ängelholms Musikforum), Ängelholm, Sweden.
- 2003: *Retro*, unofficial insert to Metro Göteborg, 31/10-03. With Serkan Özkaya, Sigrid Wallskog, Sara Lännerström och Jenny Eriksson.

Collections:

- Kalmar Konstmuseum, Sweden.
Helsingborgs Museum / Dunkers Kulturhus, Sweden.
The Alma Löv Museum, Östra Ämtervik, Sweden.
Tobačna Galleri Collection Ljubljana, Slovenia.

Education:

- MFA, Valand School of Fine Art, Göteborg, Sweden.
Nordvästra Skånes Folkhögskola (Munka Ljungby), Sweden.
Sundsgårdens Folkhögskola, Helsingborg, Sweden.
Art History, University of Lund, Sweden.
Philosophy, University of Lund, Sweden.

Grants:

- IASPIS Cultural Exchange 2009
Swedish Arts & Grants Committee, Work Grant 2008
Wilhelm och Martina Lundgrens Fond 2008
IASPIS Cultural Exchange 2008
Charlotte & Otto Mannheimers Stipendiefond 2008
IASPIS Cultural Exchange 2007
Nordic Culture Point 2007
Charlotte & Otto Mannheimers Stipendiefond 2005
Theodor & Hanne Mannheimers Fond 2005
Helsingborgs stads kulturstipendium 2003
Adlerbertska stiftelsens stipendium 2003

Selected Bibliography:

- 2009: *Living in a Modern Society (Young Art from Sweden)*, Publisher: NCCA

- Kaliningrad. (page 10-11)
- 2009: W.H.I.T.E.B.O.Y. Magazine #2. Author: Martin Schibli (page 54-55)
- 2009: Kristianstadsbladet, 14 November. Author: Simon Berg
- 2009: *T.A.P.E Invites, Made In Arnhem*, exhibition catalogue (page 26-27, 86)
- 2009: Helsingborgs Dagblad, 2 October. Author: Tjers-tin Thorsén (culture pages, page C4)
- 2009: Ystads Allehanda, 25 September. Author: Helena Stenkvis
- 2009: *Open Art 2009*, exhibition catalogue (page 45, 246-247, 265)
- 2009: Nerike Allehanda, 5 August. Author: K William Svård (page 6)
- 2009: Politiken, 15 June. Author: Sandra Brovall (Bagsiden)
- 2009: BBC News, 14 June. www.bbc.co.uk
- 2009: Nerike Allehanda, 13 June. Author: Simon Bynert.
- 2009: Östran, 18 April. Author: Rolf Ljung (page 22)
- 2009: Barometern, 17 April. Author: Gunilla Petri (Nöje & Kultur page 3)
- 2009: Helsingborgs Dagblad, 15 April. Author: Tjerstin Thorsén (culture pages, page C4)
- 2008: *Välfärdsbilder - Svensk film utanför biografen*. Editors: Erik Hedling and Mats Jönsson. ISBN 978-91-88468-09-3 Chapter: Videokonst: omtagningar. Author: Max Liljefors (page 246-259)
- 2008: Göteborgsposten, 3 May. Author: Mikael Olofsson (page 83)
- 2007: *Miðbaugur og Kringla; Leisure, Administration and Control*, Published and edited by: Berglind Jóna Hlynsdóttir and Bjarkí Bragason ISBN: 978-9979-70-310-5 (page 18-19)
- 2007: *Valand 07*, exhibition catalogue (page 6-11)
- 2006: Dagens Nyheter, 23 December. Author: Dan Jönsson. (culture pages, page 9)
- 2006: Helsingborgs Dagblad, 15 December. Author: Tjerstin Thorsén (Part 2, page14-15)
- 2006: Kommersant, No 210 (3541) 10 November. Author: Irina Kulik.
- 2006: Konsten.net, 29 May. Author: Mia Zeeck.
- 2006: Göteborgsposten, 8 April. Author: Astrid Von Rosen (page 95)
- 2005: *Hur man blir samtidskonstnär på tre dagar*. ISBN 91-578-0459-1 Authors: Martin Schibli and Lars Vilks (page 123-125)
- 2005: Helsingborgs Dagblad, 23 March. Author: Martin Schibli (culture pages, page 28)
- 2005: Uppsala Nya Tidning, 18 February. Author: Robert Stasinski (page B6)
- 2005: Sundsvalls Tidning, 16 February. (PM)
- 2005: *Konstmässan Sollentuna 05*, exhibition catalogue (page 8-9)
- 2004: *Konstperspektiv*, No 3, 2004. Article: *Är konsten en politisk kraft?* Author: Martin Schibli (page 33-36)
- 2003: Kvällsposten, 2 March. Author: C-J Charpentier (page 4)
- 2002: Helsingborgs Dagblad, 12 December. Author: Silvia Helperin (culture pages)
- 2002: Helsingborgs Dagblad, 7 June. Author: Silvia Helperin (culture pages, page 22)

Selected Publications:

- 2007: *The Landscapes of Vyshny Volochek*, limited edition photo book.
- 2007: *Ord & Bild*, No 6, 2006 / 1, 2007. (page 168-171)
- 2004: *Den äkta varan*. Editor: Attila László Urban, ISBN 91-975072-8-8 (page 31-33)
- 2003: *Heterogénesis - Tidskrift för Visuell Konst*, No 42, January 2003 (page 22-25)

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www.connyblom.com

Conny Blom
From Above
exhibition catalogue/
razstavní katalog

“Blomov projekt se igra s psiho gledalca, da bi ga pripravil k razmisleku.”

“Blom discusses the ways in which the contemporary society is interlaced with media as well as the effect information has upon the individual who sucks it all in.”

Petja Grafenauer &
Veljko Njegovan

Beslagtaget föremål:
Bomb



2009-1800-BG1942-3

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CONNYPLOM FROM ABOVE



“To je Cage v času, ko kreacijo ogrožajo avtorske pravice.”

– Petja Grafenauer & Veljko Njegovan –

AN EXHIBITION CATALOGUE

CONNYPLOM FROM ABOVE

Due to the frequency of images in Blom's video it takes roughly only 30 seconds for us to become numb.

In Blom's work the story is taken away and only pure violence remains.

Conny Blom
From Above
exhibition catalogue/
razstavni katalog

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