



Ida Falck (screenshot)

There are *two* obvious artistic disciplines where *mirrors* have been part of the *standard* professional equipment: *dance* and *fashion*. Is it *reasonable*, on account of this, to assume that fashion and dance have developed *mirroring practices*, materialising in what we can intercept from their end-outputs?

This may be a question to ask *now*, since the mirrors are currently being *replaced* by technologies that can record and link *images* and *gestures*, in a way that *does the job* of the mirror—professionally—but, in addition, does something that the silver mirror doesn't: proposing a *two-way* traffic.

Featuring the two-way *phygital* traffic e.g. between *parcours* and *discours*. Thereby conjuring the *edgeland* between them (arrayed by emergent **X**-factors). On the back [*verso*] a case discussion from illustration is developed to query our new modes-of-embodiment: the [ethics of assumption](#).



Ida Falck (photo)

When the department was hosting a project featuring the Scandinavian Institute of Computational Vandalism at GI—with a Belgian group and the curatorship of Ellen Prestsæter—I was challenged by the notion of ‘computational *vandalism*’: vandalising the computer/the vandalising computer?

However, the Belgian group lugged a printed essay on scanning that caught my attention, and has been working on me ever since. The piece was inspired by Walter Benjamin’s essay *Unpacking my library*—as I recall—and later prompted my awareness on the iPad as an “archive crawler”.

The kind of attention to the surfaces of the scanner—and the way they meet the *glass plate*—is very similar to the way *scanned* items (for instance, studying the plates of B.M. Keilhau’s drawings from his field survey in the Norwegian mountains in 1820) are handled on the *glass plate* of an iPad.

Scanning and *archive-crawling* are instances of the *phygital*. It was a book, handed to me this week by Andreas Berg, that brought me *back* to these trails. A precious illustration book using *velum* as shirting and rough paper torn on the edges, to feature Småland artist Albert Engström’s syncretisms.

The materiality of the book invites a scrutiny of time: the publication date and the historical references featuring in print, on every page, throughout the book. The publication date is 1896. The book looks as though it has been remade much more recently. Some prints look almost contemporary.

It blurs the boundaries between real and fake. It peddles disbelief with a postmodern feel. Albert Engström himself was born in 1869—12 years Theodor Kittelsen’s junior, but comparable by his name and fame in Sweden. He was a member of the Swedish Academy from 1922.

Scanning it, page by page, in the ‘glass-plate mode’, the book appeared to me in the archive-way: which also appears to be the way the book itself is compiled and materialised. Oddly replicating the *participatory* mode of archive crawling: vitrines, plastic covers, white dust-gloves for care.

The iPad expands this mode of the phygital in which the ‘glass-plate mode’ materialises this realm of *exploration* alongside the materials to be *explored*. The glass-plate *haptics* of the iPad—where touch and screen arrangements are intimate—features a *mirror* technology without the remedia of *silver*.

Silver is replaced by *camera* optics: it works like a *mirror* because the camera works two ways—recording images *and* gestures. However, it connects images and gestures from *different* times: [a/synchronous](#) to the extent of col-lapsing them. It all happens in the [Golden Book](#) (Albert Engström).

It brings us back to *vandalism* (but beyond the Vandals as an ancient Germanic tribe venturing looting expeditions to Iberian peninsula & the shores of the Mediterranean basin): raising the question of the *price* we have to pay to make up for our incursions into the past, to call on a ‘glass-plate ethics’.