

# folk tror foxtrot

MFA Graduation show 2022



Benedicte Beldam, Patricia Carolina, Tansiyu Chen, Henrik Follesø Egeland, Chloe Elgie, Makda Embaie, Cirenia Escobedo Esquivel, Mattias Hellberg, Kaja Krakowian, Eli Mai Huang Nesse, Jonatan Nilsson, Hanne Nilsen Nygård, Lesia Vasylichenko, Hamid Waheed and Annalise Wimmer.

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Kunstnernes Hus



# About the show

*"Tror" is a Norwegian word that is somewhere between "think" and "believe". Folk tror foxtrot might not make sense because you can't think a dance, but it makes me wonder, how would I think or believe a dance? How does that thought move and feel? Foxtrot is based on how a fox moves, it makes me think about a fox trotting with short and quick steps through a forest. Dance is also a nice way people spend time together, and we can finally dance and be close together after two years with Covid.*

– **Eli Mai Huang Nesse, graduating student**

The working process leading up to this exhibition started with a curatorial question: if exhibitions generally are spatial expressions of the societies within which they are produced, what kind of collectivity does the format of the group exhibition represent?

Curated group shows are usually thematic compositions of individual artistic positions juxtaposed with each other, where each work is presented as autonomous and remains largely unaffected by the other works in the space. This image of collectivity could be interpreted as a mirror of a society where individuals are often brought together through abstract relations, such as wage labour, or by casting a vote in an election, consuming a product made by an unknown worker, or interacting on social media. These assemblages of seemingly autonomous individuals are supposed to look like freedom, but are they also representing a difficulty of coming together and being transformed by each other?

Artworks, or people, that are brought together in this way – being together without being together – seldom fall in love or become close friends, just as they do not argue, support each other or start a revolution. So what would it mean to construct an exhibition that starts from a different desire, striving for the artworks to get closer, to touch in some way?

A Degree Show is often thought of as an end point, but this is first and foremost a beginning. After two years of living and learning under pandemic conditions, this exhibition is an occasion to come together to interpret "touch" in the widest possible way, getting closer through sound, light and smell as well as spatial experiments and social interaction – rather than an answer to a question, it is the continuation of an ongoing dance.

**Artists: Benedicte Beldam, Patricia Carolina, Tansiyu Chen, Henrik Follesø Egeland, Chloe Elgie, Makda Embaie, Cirenia Escobedo Esquivel, Mattias Hellberg, Kaja Krakowian, Eli Mai Huang Nesse, Jonatan Nilsson, Hanne Nilsen Nygård, Lesia Vasylchenko, Hamid Waheed, Annalise Wimmer.**

**Curator: Lisa Rosendahl, Associate Professor of Exhibition Studies, KHiO**

## Benedicte Beldam

My practice is situated in whimsical narratives in which I myself perform as a protagonist. The narratives are inspired by perceptual experiences from my earthly life. The experiences are put together into enchanting sequences which are to be simultaneously processual and immaterial. The sequences are expressed through installation, drawing, sound, performance, text and instructions. I tend to apply site sensitive and auto fictive elements. Every work is following a meta narrative about my practice. Thus, the narrative of my practice will not end until the day I die. The works are structured in the following manner: The work - the chapter - the sequence.

“Sirens” is a chapter consisting of several sequences. The chapter took place inside and outside a floating sauna by the Oslo fjord over the course of two weeks, encompassing performances, happenings, a sound piece and a booklet soaked in saltwater. The documentation of the various sequences within the chapter is here presented as an installation.

## Patricia Carolina

Water gives shape, takes shape, and takes it away. I imagine time leaking through the open pores of things in our surroundings: sewage, sweat, and tears overflowing historic or domestic sites.

”El Durazno I & II” is a multichannel projection that contains moving images and the transcript of a conversation -past and present colliding with promises of progress and growth. The installation shares name with a village flooded by the Mexican state in 1958 to make a dam. This work interacts with a kinetic curtain that snakes through the space periodically.

## Tansiyu Chen

Donna Vitruviana is stuck in a corner of a false dilemma; her language of storytelling is escaping from the crevice of a book which is becoming narrower. She looks down on the surface of the water, her best friend Medusa is there smiling at her. She cannot see the future in the water that is around the corner, so she steps into the fog to search for it.

## Henrik Follesø Egeland

I have been thinking about landscapes more or less unconsciously for a long time. It is a concept I have had trouble placing; found difficult to relate to. Landscapes are our everyday conception of nature, but despite this there exists a sense of uncertainty. About the relationship, about the distance. They exist simultaneously very close, yet far away. For how does the defined landscape stand in relation to area, and other landscapes? These are questions I ask in my own artistic practice, and which the work exhibited here attempts to approach.

The work is part of the ongoing project Meridian Current. An examination of distance, in geographical and cultural, emotional and perceptual terms. A reaction against a fragmented reality; where the future is reserved a few culturally elevated centers, and which leaves previously active landscapes redundant and passive. Through an exploration of perspectives and reference points, the work attempts to sidestep topography. It looks for a new meridian line. A new point of reference from which it will be possible to understand landscapes in context of each other, and therefore also the areas in between.

## Chloe Elgie

A month ago I presented work under a blanket statement or title which was Pursuing Organ. It amounted to something in the high frequencies, like a field “pushing out” somebody later admitted to me. A scanned photo from this place and time reoccurs here in the light room. I will now present you with something in the mid-low frequencies. If then was the chorus now is the refrain. Pipes, stagnant windmills, a diagram of a ram, and pre-recorded then exposed audio tape suck in. Nakedness without instruments. I like telephone calls, blind soundtracking and organizing in units of senders and receivers. Previous to studying here I studied at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax.

## Makda Embaie

”Now, that we’ve been together” is a piece exploring the body as an archaeological container through a language and sound installation. The work invites you to listen through a number of yellow pillows placed around the building; provoking a sense of community that disrupts the lineage of life, sites and time. Can togetherness appear in the image of a tomato? With a daughter? In ways of layering lasagna? With someone’s first memory of care? And what is the potential of that togetherness? At the top of the staircase, you will hear the musician Kouame Sereba’s voice letting you in to some of the concepts that are part of my artistic practice. It will ask you to imagine, for the duration of your presence, that our lives and languages are ours, regardless of the nation state’s attempts to use it and us as properties to legitimize its existence.

## Cirenia Escobedo Esquivel

a.k.a Zirenia

What are we extracting from the veins of the earth? The mountain’s extremities, the fluidity of our days. The work “Stalactites - Stalagmites” is a visual and sound echo between the surface—what the sun can touch—and the depths of our caves; what is hidden in darkness but fervently lit.

Stalactites and stalagmites form due to a process called chemical precipitation. When water seeps through the cracks of a rock, its karstic minerals dissolve. Subsequently, when the water enters a cavity, the dissolution of the minerals changes again, turning solid into the form of a stalactite. If water continues to drip through it, a stalagmite will form below. For this reason, stalactites and stalagmites are generally facing each other.

The visual piece Stalagmites will be activated by the musical performance Stalactites by LivMor, a project by Zirenia and artist Coline Delozanne, taking us into the depths of the earth—the insides of the mountains, the spaces of fire

## Mattias Hellberg

The films “Narkomanerna I Munchs Gamla lägenhet”, “RAF-forestillingen fra kælder teatret på Nørrebro” and “Bjellene fra Ål” deals with what I call “Uchronic Memories”. “Uchronic” because I see them as subjective and collective memories that transcend perceived reality, authenticity, commonly accepted histories and illusions of truth. I’m interested in reenacting these memories because they all deal with alternative or unwritten histories which are then opened up for speculative interpretations. Rather than trying to literally reenact the material, I’m mostly interested in the unknown or undefined elements which create ambiguities about what is true and what has been added by me.

## Kaja Krakowian

Simultan sits in a car, so as not to sit somewhere else, and throws out words: hacer, robić, machen, to do. She measures a tooth hole with her tongue and slides a cherry stone in. A soft placeholder. A mass of words will cover her one day. A previous car levels the next one and they say on the radio that the appointment is canceled. Car seats stress the emptiness of the room, the door handle shoots in the air "nothing to hang on". This is a credible image because it is thrown off my hand, withdrawn, blurred, and gone. Szosa is a small asphalt road with trees on both sides. I rely on that. Dancing is a dog said Irene and I rely on that too. And one more. Karol is sitting alongside, and he can say whatever he wants, because his teeth are white and he speaks for them, because of them. His face is a face of chewing a pencil. Stones are tapping on teeth: Open a soda pop watch it fiz and pop, the clock is ticking, and we can't stop.

## Eli Mai Huang Nesse

I'm interested in ambivalence and the contradictory, not knowing if something is sad or funny, good or bad. I look for situations that seem ambiguous and try to describe them through the use of storytelling, video and installations. "Tusen takk" is a video work that centers around gift-giving. It is about trying to keep a straight face when your loved ones give you a huge and expensive gift you never wanted, about getting suspicious when you receive gifts without reason, and about too high expectations, disappointment and guilt.

## Jonatan Nilsson

"When she tapped him to show that the kid was sleeping, I don't know why that made me smile, that they shared that moment". It's not torque but close.

## Hanne Nilsen Nygård

"Around Me is a Room, I Take it Along with Me - an Alternative Audio Guide".

Through QR codes placed on 5 books – audio books – you can enter 5 short stories. The stories relate to the other works in the room, as audio guides, but also to the space and the room between people. In my work I am interested in parallel realities. I often use voice, speech and conversation to say something about human experiences, like the feeling of distance and proximity. The subject matter in my work often deals with the relationship between a parent and a child, motherhood and other human relationships. From what perspective do we experience something, and what do we bring with us?

## Lesia Vasylichenko

This constellation of works reflects upon solastalgia - the sentiment of experiencing the powerlessness and grief when your environment is under duress, when your sense of a safe place is being violated. "Simulated Sunrise: March 3rd" consists of metal sculptures and CCTV footage taken from a Telegram channel "Proof of war in Ukraine". A video poem "About Ruins" portrays disintegrating forms of Kyiv Crematorium, Socialist Modernist architecture constructed in 1968; and urban landscapes damaged by industrialisation and economic growth

## Hamid Waheed

In "I Think We've Waited Long Enough" there is a romance, a story between two entities. What these entities are is uncertain: human, plant, rock, mineral, or screens and wires. But what is certain is that they're communicating, out of wants and needs, intimately and mythically. In a similar way, digital technology is something intimate, which radiates energy through tangible bodies of glass, copper and rare metals. What does it mean, then, to relay a landscape through digital imagery? What is a desert, or life, in the way of marks, footage, abstractions and computer simulations? I don't think this is particularly conceptual either, because what is considered digital is close to the environmental. And I think a landscape is surface felt from one wash of sound to another. A dissolve between visions. A landscape is living, multiple and porous. And in every moment the world entrances and suggests.

This work is part of a larger process of exploring thematic interests through cacti, including the short film and website "Areoles" (for Ergi), as well as the theatre performance "Taking Root" (co-production with BiT Teatergarasjen).

## Annalise Wimmer

Popped Lipids is an amalgamation of sorts. A build-up of residual traces left to stew, from a stale selection of oils that have been milked from a chemically fresh selection of nondescript food stuffs from the local high street.

Playing on the notion of barriers and filtration - the oil is further processed and reappears as a cast grease trap on a rotisserie spit, and in the deep-fat beige «berries» that are keeping themselves warm atop of a few rebar caps. Each of which contains a memory of the original strain. The strain showing mostly in the precariousness of the objects at hand; objects and materials that are suspended, extracted, reconfigured and replayed as sculptural elements.

