

CLOSE DISTANCE

Audrey Hurd and Gabriella Novak

23-25 October 2020

Address: Götgatan 85, 116 62 Stockholm

Vernissage: Friday 23 October, 17-21
Opening hours: Saturday-Sunday, 13-18
Artist talk: Sunday 25 October at 15
The artist talk will be held in English.

Curated by
Edit Fándly and Gabriella Novak.

Being geographically far from each other, and partially paused in many ways due to the current pandemic situation, the artists Audrey Hurd and Gabriella Novak have not yet encountered each other personally. Despite all this they have been in dialogue, sharing intimate, private and sentimental memories, exchanging thoughts on artistic creation and their own individual creative practices. They stand on a common ground, formed by physical or psychological anchors from the past, which had immobilised and temporarily imprisoned the body in a motionless solitude. This established a **close distance**.

The exhibition is a visual imprint, a sequence from a deep conversation between Audrey and Gabriella. A discussion via various channels unfolded in different forms: personal letters addressed to each other, shared images and photos of their individual artworks or phone calls. By emphasising the process behind the displayed works, the show aims to open up the artists' personal dialogue to the audience. Shifting the focus from the close to the distant, from the particular to the general, from the micro to the macro and back again to an intimate state. This circle of the open and private receives an additional tone through the exhibition venue, which happens to be the home of one of the artists.

The displayed works and the artists' dialogue itself encourage us, seemingly outsider viewers, to reflect upon our own motionless confinements: times when we all felt captured by our own body, in one way or another; moments when events, people or the life around us were so close, but still extremely distant at the same time.

Flat Octopus is an international artist- and curator-run collective in Stockholm, Sweden, initiated in 2019. It consists of seven people of different professional and cultural backgrounds. Flat Octopus organises exhibitions in different apartments located in Stockholm, as well as external collaborations and projects.

Flat Octopus are: Edit Fándly, Juanma González, Paulina Granat, Amr Hamid, Alice Mäselniková, Franziska Sperling and Erik Wijkström.

Audrey Hurd

Audrey Hurd is a Canadian artist living in Bergen, Norway. She received a BFA from NSCAD University in Halifax, Nova Scotia and an MA in Fine Art from the University of Bergen KMD. She has participated in group and solo shows throughout North America and Europe and is a founding member of TEXTSgroup in Bergen. She is the recipient of the 2016 Cox & Palmer Pivotal Point Award from VANL-CARFAC and the 2013 Emerging Artist Award at the VANL-CARFAC Excellence in Visual Arts Awards.

Informed by my background in printmaking, my practice has evolved into areas of sculpture, performance, sound and text. Everything I do is rooted in touch and relation, revolving around tactility, objects, body, emotion and the trouble of where to put what you feel. I am looking for the space that events and emotions occupy and the spaces, marks or shapes that remain after they have left. I am interested in creating moments of physical contact between bodies and ephemeral experiences. Sometimes contact is a collision, sometimes a soft stroke. In the way a memory can hit like a sledgehammer, or whisper like a breeze, my work explores the force and bodily consequence of the unseen.

www.audreyhurd.net

Gabriella Novak

Gabriella Novak, originally from Poland, lives and works in Stockholm. She holds a BFA degree from the Umeå Academy of Fine Arts, and is currently pursuing an MA at the same academy. She also has a background in physical theatre, art and film history, philosophy of photography and the psychology of religion. This year, Gabriella has also been awarded a scholarship by the Royal Swedish Academy of Fine Arts.

A central theme in Gabriella's previous work is violence and body as a social construct. She has worked with video, photo, performance and readymades where she used her own body and various objects linked to, or signifying violence, in order to illuminate its constructions. Recently, Gabriella has been focusing on painting, which also incorporates performance alongside other experimental working methods. During the creation process, the artist's body can be partially replaced by robots and machines, or 'artificial bodies' as she calls them.

A core element of my artistic practice is an ongoing exploration of the material and the intangible. The permanent and impermanent. What is consciousness? Can we exist without a body? What makes us humans? What happens when an artist's hand is replaced with an artificial hand? These are the fundamental inquiries, which I continue to consciously explore through my work.

www.gabriellanovak.com

Image on the other side: A conversation sequence, Gabriella Novak and Audrey Hurd, 2020



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Med stöd från Stockholms stad

