

SABSAY

TRUST ME IF YOU CAN'T

20 May - 2 July 2016



Sabsay, the new art space in the heart of Copenhagen, is opening the exhibition of contemporary female portraits presented in diverse media: video, photography, painting, animated drawing, participative live installation, virtual reality and sculpture. The group show features artworks from a mix of established and emerging artists. The focus revolves around the subject of the present day female identity, exposed through the prism of new media art in juxtaposition to traditional techniques.

Exploring the nature of womankind, each artwork on show contributes to the puzzling image of a female creature. The title of the show brings about the sensation that we fail to see the depths of the female soul because we are always only seeing the mere representations instead. Kinder Album's Effective Reflection, plays on this much relied theme of representation and self-representation, viewing or being viewed, allowing the freedom of spontaneity and unpredictability in the way that live participative installation unfolds.

Reflecting on how female identity has been maintained and generated at all times, the show brings out a sense of the fragility of identity. In Christoph Schmidberger's painting Resist Me – That's all I Need the sickly sweet beauty displays an image of utter vulnerability and surrender. Through the meticulously executed surface of the painting, a photographic naturalism is achieved. While Schmidberger's intimate scene exposes an image-focused, self-consumed modern day society, Tracey Emin's striking animated

video installation *Those Who Suffer Love* immerses the viewer into universally timeless raw emotional climax of a woman being.

The *Dusk of Teheran*, the video by Tao Hui, recreates a dialogue originally performed by Hong Kong pop-singer and actress, Anita Mui, at her final concert a month before she succumbed to cancer. Like many of Tao's works, this visually poetical piece confronts the viewer's preconceived ideas about culture and identity and invites to reflect on one's own cultural history, way of living, social identity and the difference in opportunities for women in one culture versus another. Simone Leigh's female bust *Untitled V* (Anatomy of Architecture series) deals with the impact of culture as well in relation to the perception and stereotyping of the woman.

Culture – or rather the breakdown of culture – is thematized in Julia Beliaeva's digital creation, *The Last Human Mother and Baby*. Based on Henri Rousseau's jungle scene, *The Hungry Lion Throws Itself on the Antelope* from 1905, the lion and his prey are morphed into a post-apocalyptic scenario where a mother and her child are left alone in a dystopian world. Through virtual reality media the viewer enters a primitive two-dimensional digital space with smooth plastic expression, addressing the primitive beginnings of digital technology and reflecting on origins of female-human nature. Through this technological parallel, Beliaeva brings the viewer face to face with the bare primordial state in an eternal circular progress of life's rebirth, where the mother's primal instinct for protecting her child is the only life sustaining instrument.

The nature of mother's instinct is viewed at a radically diverse angle in the artwork of Mille Kalsmose. Having too early lost her own mother, the artist is able only in theory to understand both: the presence of the mother figure in one's life and the example of being a mother. Having different women perform the role of her mother enables Kalsmose to explore the mother-daughter dynamics she has never known for herself thus artificially recreating the ever missing part of her own identity.

No narrative and comparison, only an elusive expression. Intimacy, darkness, pain, emptiness, emotions, tears, absurdness, selfless love, the lowest bottom and the highest sky. All these are portraits of every woman. And yet, as with icebergs, their full being and power remain hidden, inviting to be admired, but in no way predicted.

Opening

20 May 2016

15.00 - 17.00 Press preview

17.00 - 19.00 Public preview

Store Strandstraede 19, 1255 Copenhagen, Denmark

Thursday – Saturday 12.00 - 18.30 or by appointment

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Press Enquiries

For further information on the exhibition, please contact Masha at SABSAY.

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With focus on emerging art, Sabsay aims at bringing to Copenhagen 3 to 5 exhibitions every year, enriching the Danish art scene with new names and practices as well as encouraging joint projects between international and local artists and curators. With professional appreciation of high quality Sabsay presents art which serves as an instrument of change. Delicate art selections transform into messages with powerful content, fostering a worldwide dialogue. Our mission is to push the limits, to examine the facts upside down, to shake the patterns exploring the unknown.

Artist biographies

Kinder Album (1982)

Based in Lviv, Ukraine, Kinder Album works in drawing, painting, graphics, street art, photography, video and installation. Kinder Albums most recent exhibitions include The Trap and L'albatros mon amour in Jujooceanija, Kotor, Montenegro both in 2016, Pinchuk Art Centre Short List Exhibition, Kiev and the solo exhibition, Anamnesis at the Piekno Panie gallery, Lublin, Poland in 2015. In 2012 the nickname, Kinder Album emerged as a part of an ongoing virtual art piece: Kinder Album. The artist describes Kinder Album as "a collection of the intentionally primitive drawings, depicting stories as if a child told them to the grown-ups." Naked bodies are left vulnerable for the viewers' eyes. The main subjects being sex and death; the bare essence of life.

Julia Beliaeva (1988)

Julia Beliaeva today lives and works in Kiev, Ukraine. Through ceramics, photography, digital art, installation and painting, Beliaeva's art poses questions about the nature of man: Why is it, that even in the face of globalization, the surcharge of information and environmental crisis, man is still concerned with beauty and eternity? Educated at the National Institute of Applied Art and Design of Mychailo Boychuck and New Art School, "Media Art for Practioners", Kiev, Ukraine, Beliaeva graduated in 2013 with a Masters'Degree in Graphic Deisgn. Her works have been displayed at a number of group shows in the Ukraine, and the solo show "...The Last" at Bereznitsky Aestetics Project in Kiev, 2015.

Tracey Emin (1963)

Since her studies at Maidstone College of Art and the Royal College of Art in London, Tracey Emin has won international acclaim. Her works are both tragic and humorous, inspired by her life's events, ranging from drawing, painting, video, installation to photography, sculpture and needlework. Emin's works are often provocative with a definite sexual attitude. Using traditional handicraft techniques Emin explores the realm of femininity with a feministic agenda making the "personal political". In painting, drawing, neon, installation and sculpture, Emin's works have been exhibited in solo and group shows in Holland, Germany, Japan, Australia and America. Among many distinctions Emin was awarded an Honorary Doctorate from the Royal College of Art, London after representing the Britain at the 52 Venice Biennale in 2007, and a Doctor of Letters from the University of Kent and Doctor of Philosophy from London Metropolitan University in 2008. Emin had a major solo exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, London in May 2011.

Tao Hui (1987)

Tao Hui was born in Yunyang, Chongqing in China. He graduated from Sichuan Fine Arts Institute, Oil Painting department, Chongqing in 2010. Tao's works focus on culture and identity using various

mediums including video, objects, and installation. Inviting the viewers to confront themselves with their own cultural history, ways of living and social identities, Tao's signature approach is to create bizarre and exaggerated scenes and metaphors to question the tenets of urbanization and hegemonic thinking. His works are provocative, yet enlightening and always imbued with a strong emotional power and a sense of "displacement". In 2015 Tao was awarded the Grand Prize at '19th Contemporary Art Festival Sesc_Videobrasil: Southern Panoramas', São Paulo, Brazil. His latest exhibitions include several group shows in Paris, Teheran, Shanghai, Guangzhou, Beijing, Istanbul and São Paulo, as well as three solo exhibitions in China. Tao Hui currently lives and works in Beijing, China.

Mille Kalsmose (1972)

From her base in Copenhagen and New York Mille Kalsmose investigates the way identity is constructed, posing questions about how an "I" come into being in relation to others, through her conceptual installation art in various media such as photography, video, light, sound and objects. Kalsmose was born in Horsens, Denmark and holds a Master from UAB, Barcelona 2009 and studied at School of Visual Arts, New York 2015. For the moment she is working in New York at Residency Unlimited (RU) and among others on a project to be shown in Fundación NMAC, Montseny and Fundación Valentín de Madariaga, Sevilla, 2016. Kalsmose's recent exhibitions include group shows at InCube Art Space and Chelsea Residential, New York, US 2015, School of Visual Arts, SVA, New York 2012, Copenhagen Art Fair, Gallery Rohde Contemporary, Copenhagen, Denmark 2011, Chelsea Art Museum, New York, USA, Galeria Ajolote Arte Contemporaneo, Guadalajara, Mexico, Museu D'Art Contemporani, Spain 2009, Gallery Karsi sanat Calismalari, Istanbul, Museum of Arts and Crafts, Hyogo, Japan and Zaim Gallery, Kanagawa, Japan 2008 and solo shows at Kuben, Horsens 2015 and Horsens Kunstmuseum, Horsens, Denmark 2014, Centre de Imagen, Barcelona, Catalunya 2013, Traneudstillingen, Copenhagen 2012 and WAS-Wonderland Art Space 2009 in Copenhagen, Denmark. She was granted by the Danish Arts Foundation, (2014, 2013 and 2008) Ajuntament de Barcelona 2014, New York State Council of the Arts 2008, New York City Department of Cultural Affairs 2008

Simone Leigh (1968)

Based in Brooklyn, New York, Simone Leigh creates mixed media sculptures, videos and installations informed by her interest in African art, ethnographic research, feminism and performance. Her practice is an object-based on-going exploration of black female subjectivity, based on her own identity as an African-American woman. Educated in philosophy and schooled in West African and Native American ceramic traditions, she crafts female busts and sculptural forms composed of items that have served as stand-ins for stereotyping the black body, like cowry shells and plantains. Leigh has exhibited internationally including: PS1/MoMA; The Walker Art Center, The Studio Museum in Harlem, Yerba Buena Center for the Arts, The Kitchen; Tilton Gallery; Contemporary Museum of Art Houston; Sculpture Center; Kunsthalle Wien in Vienna; L'Appartement22 in Rabbat, Morocco; the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh; and the AVA Gallery in Cape Town, South Africa.

Christoph Schmidberger (1974)

Painting, drawing and installation are the chosen media of the Austrian born artist, Christoph Schmidberger. Now based in Los Angeles, California, for more than a decade, Schmidberger had his formal training at the Higher Technical College of Graphic Art, Graz in Austria and the Academy of Fine

Arts in Vienna, MFA in Painting, from where he graduated in 1998. Schmidberger's painting nearly always depict friends and acquaintances in a series of domestic situations, with a hint of eroticism and a sense of self involvement in the subjects. Narcissism, success and intimacy are underlying themes in Schmidberger's pieces. His works have been displayed internationally in group- and solo shows in Belgium, Australia, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, South Korea, Italy, England and the US.