

# If one could read them, one would know everything 0502–16.04.26

## Introduction:

Inspired by Virginia Woolf's *The Lady in the Looking-Glass: A Reflection*, the exhibition *If one could read them, one would know everything* explores the shifting boundaries between identity and perception. Woolf's story examines the tension between appearance and reality, showing how outward details invite speculation while inner life remains inaccessible. Through a mirror, an observer projects depth, emotion, and meaning onto an absent woman, only for these fantasies to collapse when reality is revealed as empty and indifferent. The mirror becomes a device that exposes the gap between imagination and truth, and questions whether inner identity can ever truly be known.

The exhibition takes up these questions by asking how both outer presence and inner experience might be conveyed. Can a portrait exist when its subject remains partially unseen? Moving beyond visual likeness, the works approach portraiture through traces, gestures, atmospheres, and points of view. Like Woolf's story, the exhibition is shaped by absence and fragments, suggesting that what we perceive of others is always mediated by imagination, and that identity may be less something revealed than something continually projected.

## About the artists:

Kaye Donachie (b. 1970, United Kingdom) is known for her muted figurative works that reimagine Avant-Garde women through history, biography, and archival imagery. Her paintings drift between dream and reality, evoking time, memory, and the tension between outward appearance and inner experience.

Pati Hill (b. 1921, USA – d. 2014, France) used the photocopier as a tool with distinct formal and critical potential. Through life-size Xerox works of everyday objects, she flattened depth into darkness and developed a visual language of domestic labour that brought the private realm into public view. Her images are coolly attentive and analytical, rendering familiar things strange, opaque, and resistant to easy interpretation.

Melanie Kitti (b. 1986, Sweden) uses painting as a reflective tool to process her personal history and explore motifs connected to her identity. Working with limestone paint, she draws parallels between layered pigments and the excavation of memory. Her practice brings together fragments of past and present, allowing them to assemble in both planned and unexpected ways.

Joanna Piotrowska (b. 1985, Poland) examines the human condition through performative acts, photography and film, informed by family archives, self-defence manuals, and psychotherapeutic methods. Through small, restrained gestures that unsettle composure and balance, her work explores everyday roles and acts of resistance. Domestic shelters become precarious yet protective spaces—intimate self-portraits that reflect how we shape, and are shaped by, our environments.

Maaike Schoorel (b. 1973, The Netherlands) is known for paintings that inhabit an indefinable space between abstraction and figuration. The work aims to subtly reveal scenes and moments in life using the minimum of detail and indication. Her approach to painting is informed by a nuanced understanding of how colour and form are interpreted by the eye and mind.

Nicole Wermers (b. 1971, Germany) her work focuses on the public realm and its interactions with the (female) body. She examines hierarchies of materials, objects and the built environment and draws attention to the overlooked gestures and rituals we perform within shared spaces.

The exhibition is curated by Naja Bak Rantorp .