

Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg: *The Gates of the Festival*

17 September – 1 November 2014
52 Bell Street, London

A new series of works and a new direction marks this inaugural exhibition of Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg at Lisson Gallery. Sculptural interventions, projections, neon, film and music are interwoven throughout the spaces in an immersive installation, eschewing video screens or static objects for animated surfaces and pulsating environments. Merging audio-visual and multimedia elements, Djurberg & Berg's debut show with the gallery melds together as one continuous or total work of art, albeit constructed of discrete events and individual experiences.

One room presents an installation of 10 waist-high urns, standing in two rows, entitled *Gas, Solid, Liquid*. Each pot contains a small, unique animation relating to the possible contents, as well as a specially composed piece of music, which vibrates and resonates deep within the ceramic vessel. In another gallery, light, projection and beat-laden musical soundtracks transform four functional-looking white tables into luminescent, performing sculptures, collectively known as *Fever Dreams*. Their horizontal tops are impregnated and enlivened by flowing depictions of amoebic organisms, malleable matter and clouds liquefying back to rain and seawater, while the table legs appear to be leaching out the film's corresponding colours. Both of these bodies of work relate to a previous exhibition called *The Black Pot*, shown at the Garage Center for Contemporary Culture, Moscow in 2013, when the artists began experimenting with newly abstracted animations and ambient electronica within a darkened, womb-like environment, in order to depict the cycle of life.

The central installation at Lisson Gallery, entitled *The Gates of the Festival*, reveals the importance of Berg's music as a unifying force for their collaborative work, his scores and compositions having accompanied Djurberg's work for the past decade. In this exhilarating, multi-sensory, surround-sound work, 12 neon shapes hung from the ceiling are illuminated according to notes or tones programmed by Berg, with different frequencies performing certain actions – the sounds seemingly controlling or 'playing' the installation. Across the walls, three abstract, crayon-drawn video animations add to the all-enveloping atmosphere, punctuated by the moving image of a gangly claymation bird, being projected in the round on a slowly revolving carousel.

Feathery, flying creatures of this kind – created from wire, foam, clay and fabric – featured in Djurberg & Berg's previous touring exhibition *Parade*, which featured 80 bird-like sculptures as well as stop-motion films, but also represent their abiding interest in the darker niches of the natural world, further glimpsed here in a smaller animation of the morphing wings of a butterfly, given a psychological depth by its visual relationship to squirming Rorschach blots. Just as Djurberg & Berg produce art symbiotically to create their own singular and beguiling world, the ideas, sounds and images they conjure also propose a synaesthetic interrelationship between the realms of the visible, the audible and the imaginary.

52–54 Bell Street
London NW1 5DA

T +44 (0)20 7724 2739

Via Zenale, 3
20123 Milan
Italy

241 Eldridge Street
10002 New York
USA

lissongallery.com

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About the artists

Mixing animation, sculpture and sound, Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg create psychologically charged scenarios dealing with human and animalistic desires. Since 2001, Djurberg has developed a distinctive style of filmmaking, using clay animation to dramatise the basest of natural instincts from jealousy, revenge and greed, to submission and lust. Her partner, the musician and composer Hans Berg, creates the atmospheric sound effects and scores the hypnotic music for Djurberg's animations and installations. In 2004 they began working closely together as a duo to create transgressive narratives rich in symbolic meaning and emotional reach, mining allegorical myths and grotesque, nightmarish visions in humorous, carnivalesque pieces such as *Tiger Licking Girl's Butt* and *We Are Not Two, We Are One*. The artists' interdisciplinary collaborations increasingly blur the cinematic, the sculptural, and the performative in installations that pair moving images and musical compositions with related set pieces or built objects.

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Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg currently live and work in Berlin. Born in Lysekil, Sweden in 1978, Nathalie Djurberg received her MFA from Malmö Art Academy in 2002. Hans Berg was born in Rättvik, Sweden in 1978 and is a musician, producer and composer, working mainly with electronic music. They have exhibited widely together in group shows, including the 53rd Venice Biennale in 2009, while recent solo shows include *The Parade* at the Yerba Buena Center for the Art, San Francisco; New Museum, New York and Walker Art Center, Minneapolis (2011-12); *A World of Glass*, at the Camden Arts Centre, London (2011) and ICA Boston (2014); as well as *The Black Pot* at The Garage Center for Contemporary Culture in Moscow (2013).

About Lisson Gallery

Lisson Gallery is one of the most influential and longest-running international contemporary art galleries in the world. Established in 1967 by Nicholas Logsdail, it pioneered the early careers of important Minimal and Conceptual artists, such as Sol LeWitt and Richard Long, as well as those of significant British sculptors from Anish Kapoor and Tony Cragg to a younger generation, led by Ryan Gander and Haroon Mirza. Lisson Gallery represents 45 of the most innovative and exciting artists working today, including Allora and Calzadilla, Ai Weiwei, Gerard Byrne, Tatsuo Miyajima, Rashid Rana, Pedro Reyes and Santiago Sierra. In addition to its two exhibition spaces in London, one in Milan and a fourth gallery to open under the High Line in New York in early 2015, the *Lisson Presents* programme also extends a legacy of curatorial innovation beyond the galleries, working with institutions and artists to present new initiatives around the world.

Exhibition Facts

Opening Hours: Monday-Friday 10am-6pm, Saturday 11am-5pm

Location: 27 Bell Street, London, NW1 5DA

Tel: + 44(0)20 7724 2739

Website: <http://www.lissongallery.com>

For press information and images please contact:

Gair Burton or Diana Babej at Rhiannon Pickles PR

Tel: +44 (0)7402 784 470

Email: gair@picklespr.com, diana@picklespr.com

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