

# Danish Pavilion, 51st Venice Biennale

## Danish Pavilion at the Venice Biennale



May 11, 2005

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Eva Koch, Joachim Koester, Peter Land, Ann Lislegaard, Gitte Villesen

**Opening reception:** June 9, 4 pm

### Danish Pavilion

Giardini

[www.biennalen.dk](http://www.biennalen.dk)

Commissioner:

Danish Arts Council the Committee of International Visual Art

Curators: Sanne Kofod Olsen and Jacob Fabricius

### Exhibition

The artists, Eva Koch, Joachim Koester, Peter Land, Ann Lislegaard and Gitte Villesen all belong to the younger generation of Danish artists and were a part of the international breakthrough for Danish visual art during the 1990s. They have all been exhibiting internationally within the last 10 years. In their various artistic practices, they are all preoccupied with the representation of reality within or beyond the real.

The artists have produced new works for the exhibition in the Danish Pavilion.

Eva Koch will present the video installation Approach, which has its thematic starting point in Dante Alighieris famous epos The Divine Comedy, specifically an excerpt from Canto I of Paradiso. Kochs work often describes paradoxical situations as is the case in Approach. In this work, there is a focus on the contrast between two languages. Caught between these two languages, the visitor is sharply confronted by the fundamental situation of our relation to the surrounding world, the constant necessity of interpretation. The ideal of unambiguous communication does not exist. We are always in a field of interpretation, and even though we speak the same language, it is not given that we understand the same thing. Transposed into contemporary language and understanding Approach is an attempt to designate an experience grounded in but still beyond reality.

Joachim Koester has over the last year worked on the film installation Message from Andrée. Salomon August Andrée was a Swedish polar researcher and adventurer who wished to cross the North Pole in a hot air balloon. Unfortunately, the balloon crashed north of Spitsbergen on July 14, 1897, and Andrée with his crew, Nils Strindberg and K. H. F. Frænkel, started an exhausting trek across the pack-ice. Nils Strindberg was the expeditions photographer and took more than a hundred pictures during their 3 month journey. The negatives were found only 32 years later, when the remains of the expedition were discovered on White Island just off Spitsbergen. Koester has re-photographed these with a 16 mm film camera. The result is an animated film showing the stains etched into Strindbergs negatives during their Arctic incubation. The film installation does not document what happened in a traditional sense; rather it points to the twilight zone of what can be told and what cannot be told, narrative and non-narrative, document and error. A psychic reality suggested by immaterial black snow that appears on the film.

With his new work Playground, Peter Land has gone a step further in his search for the subversive self. He has left the practice of using him-self as a prime model to depict the outskirts of human psychology and has turned towards the imaginary reality of children. This move towards the depiction of children has been seen before in the scary drawings from an imaginary childrens hospital. Playground is not working on the same morbid level, but depicts two children rolling a ball back and forth. The wax figures and the repetitiveness of their robotic movements, however, being as monotonous as the suburban architectural background, give a feeling of uncanniness to the whole scenery.

Ann Lislegaard is working with sound and vision. Her work for the exhibition is an animation with the title Bellona. Bellona is the fictional city appearing in Samuel R. Delanys science fiction cult classic Dhal-gren from 1974. A city beyond reason, where time and space is out of joint and architectural fixities seem to be in constant flux and transformation. In Lislegaards installation, Bellona is a psychological space, a psychic reality, in which norms and standards seem to dissolve into a chaos of unhierarchical conditions.

Gitte Villesen has produced a documentary video installation for the exhibition with the title I capture you. You capture me. It could be characterized as a dialogue piece that stages the artist herself in conversation with her friend, Helene. Villesen has always used herself as the present author in her video works by marking her presence through the act of questioning. In I capture you. You capture me, this position is radicalised through the fact that it is as much about the dialogue and the friendship between Gitte and Helene, as it is a portrait of Helene. Focusing on the story of Helene, the theme of the video piece circles around the taboo of mental illnesses, that is becoming more and more common in the stressful era of late Capitalism.

The Danish Arts Councils Committee of International Visual Art has selected the artists for the exhibition in the Danish Pavilion at the 51st Venice Biennale. The Committee of International Visual Art of the Danish Arts Council consists of the following members: Chairman Anders Kold, curator at Louisiana, Kirsten Ortved, artist, Aasa Sonjasdotter, artist, Olafur Elias-son, artist (from September 1, 2004 resigned), Mikael Kvium, artist, and Peter Weinberger, gallerist.

The Danish Arts Council was established in 2003 and assumed responsibility for international cultural exchange as well as for the local public funding system for culture. The Danish Arts Agency functions as the secretariat for and executive body for decisions taken by the Danish Arts Council and its committees.

Responsible for the organisation of this exhibition is the Visual Art Centre/Danish Arts Agency. Curators of the exhibition are Sanne Kofod Olsen from the Visual Art Centre and freelance curator Jacob Fabricius, who is also the editor of the catalogue.

The catalogue is published by Pork Salad Press (Nordic distribution) in collaboration with Lukas & Sternberg, New York (international distribution).

For more information please contact: Sanne Kofod Olsen, [sko@danish-arts.dk](mailto:sko@danish-arts.dk).

Also visit: [www.biennalen.dk](http://www.biennalen.dk)

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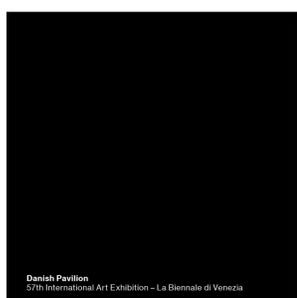
July 6, 2021

*Con-nect-ed-ness*



April 3, 2019

Larissa Sansour  
*Heirloom*



April 26, 2017

Kirstine Roepstorff  
*influenza. theatre of glowing darkness*



Jesper Juul

