

THE CRYING STATUES STICKING THEIR NOSES UP OUT OF RIVER STYX

an exhibition with John Andersson, Mattias Forshage & Niklas Nenzén
of the Surrealist group in Stockholm

for the event of the release of 4 M Forshage books at Styx
also including performances with Christian Andersson, Mattias Forshage, Michael Lundberg &
Emma Lundenmark

at ak28, Stockholm 23-27/5 2007
-documentation



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We were unaware that the day before the show was Hergés 100th birthday (but very aware that the opening day was Linnaeus' 300th!)



PAINTINGS

The paintings making up the larger twodimensional area of the exhibition and event, consist of drawings made by John Andersson and Niklas Nenzén for Mattias Forshage's Tintin plays in the book *Sex förslag till skrapansning*, printed in large size and handpainted. A dream painting of three Tintins by NN was added once the theme had set.

The drawings originally drew inspiration from a mutual interest in imagining new old Tintin adventures, an interest that the contributors have experienced is being more poetically fulfilled in dreams than in the over-determined fantasies of comics artists and other paraphrasers, contributors included. Hence, in the aggrandicized series of coloured tableaux, the Tintin character sometimes finds himself ambiguously set within seemingly randomly juxtaposed ghost-atmospheres, while sometimes being more strictly confined within the no less confusing occurrences in MF's new old plays. In either case, and as indistinguishable as these settings would be from each other for all but the readers of the plays, the Tintin character, steadily haunted by paternal miens and his own morphological reverberations, must always ramble unwittingly through those quiet atmospheres that - harboring impending savagery underneath - are so typical for the theatrics of repressed male sexuality and, thus, at least today it seems, reality in general, all the while remaining as ever heroically curious, baffled, empty and innocent, as if constantly on the verge of waking up were it not for exactly those admirable qualities.

NN

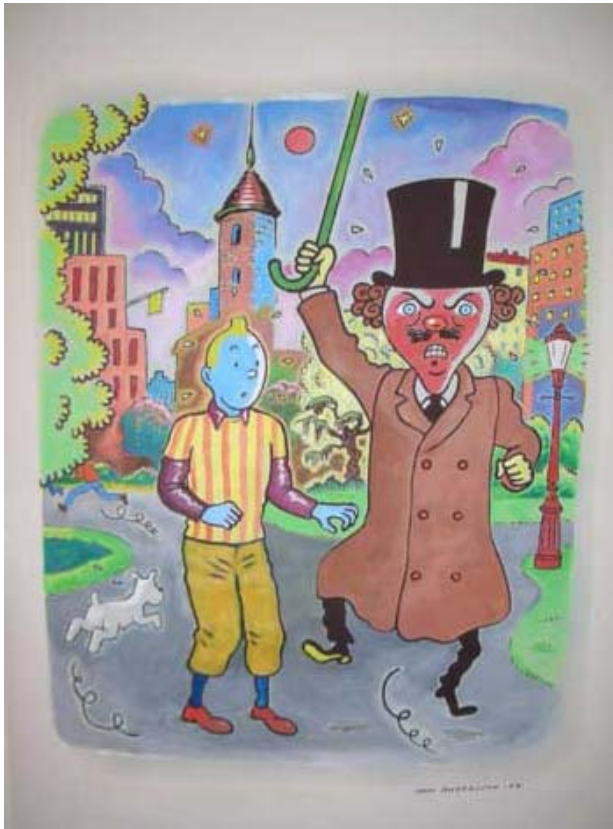


"...his own morphological reverbations..." (painting by NN)



"Giorgio de Chirico was a painter. In the so-called metaphysical school."

*"I thought your bathroom was a spaceship"
"A sea urchin"*



"Never! NEVER!"

*"So you actually like punks?"
"O yes I like all original people"
"Then you should meet Syntpuge. He's really original"
"I'd love to. Will this bus take me to him?"*



BOXES

Surrealist boxes are confined arrangements of *surrealist objects*. Primarily it is about invoking and/or investigating the poetical *accomplicity* and non-utilitarian autonomy of the objects. Thus the individual objects included are selected (or rather *present themselves*) to the extent that they produce real *encounters* (taking part in chains of chance events as well as mere glimpses of dynamic and elusive meaning-production and in the end in the radicalisation of *living*) first with



the finder/ boxmaker when they are found (*trouvés*) and then with each other within the box. (Philosophically, in the process the subject/ object-relation is addressed and challenged. The box format also brings in the notion of *portability* with everything relating to it regarding notions of freedom, repetivity and male sexuality at the same time as the box itself (*Büchse*) remains a traditional female sexual symbol and an obvious site for secrets, enigmas and treasures.) Thus, surrealist boxes can be characterised as snapshots of, or experimental setups for, *the secret lives of objects* in a portable arena.

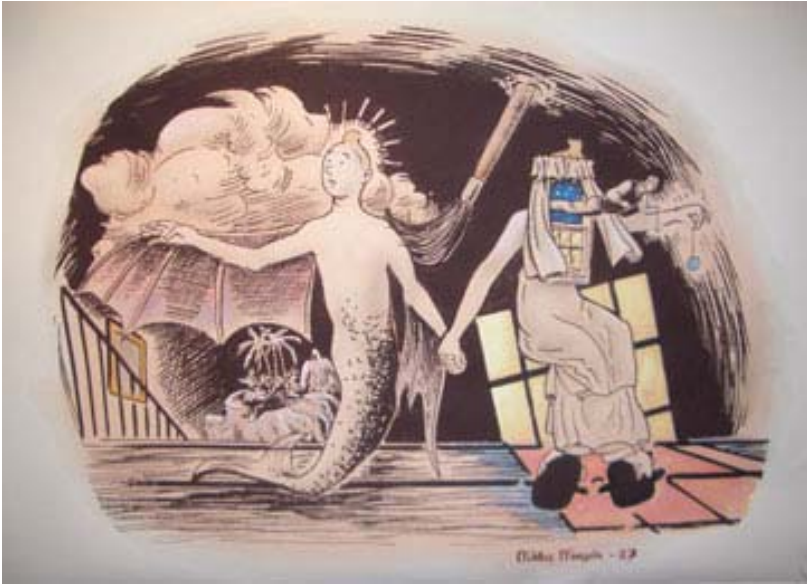


MF's boxes are mostly made in cigar boxes involving a lot of natural objects (relating to the natural cabinet tradition and sometimes to biological science) as well as various kinds of alienating or nostalgic artefacts and, as it were, by a lot of elements from Tintin comics. Some of them date back from the 80s (and are closely related to some of the stories and plays written at the time), others are more recent or only slowly settling over a long span of time. Many of them were also exhibited in 1992 at the Café Kaptén Haddock (now the Blå Lotus) in Stockholm. Especially for the present occasion was also staged a dreamt scene where Tintin is stalked by a huge tiger on a snowy stone mound of potatoes.

MF









POETIC IMPROVISATION

Reading aloud can sometimes be a very atmospheric as well as oddly communicative endeavour, but we find it a bit frustrating how comparatively little work has been going on with manifesting the creative possibilities in the very situation. The comparison with musical performances is not farfetched: executing a partiture can be worth doing, but more possibilities lie in a more comprehensive presence, experimentation, communication through improvisation and play.

On two occasions recently, CA, MF and EL have been working with poetic improvisation in a similar vein. With a not-very-loud musical track "backbeat", a preconceived particular thematic/ atmospheric subject area, and an additional track with chance elements taking an active part in the communication. At the first occasion, the chance sound track was a recorded walk by Riyota Kasamatsu in the japanese city Nagoya, with people, cars, cicadas and various noises passing and Riyota's comments to himself. At the second occasion, it was a chance live mix of excerpts from three Tintin records from the 70s with swedish actors. These were integrated along with the inner impulses in an automatic dialogue. At both occasions rather elaborate costumes have been used, as costumes and particularly masks tend to stress the ritualistic non-everyday-experience aspects of performances. Parts of the costumes (involving for example a lot of animal bones) also provide some live percussion.

This field of experimentation deserves to be more fully investigated, and certainly various ordinary surrealist games as well as simple practice will make richer results possible. We remind ourselves of the group's old game from 1986 of the "subjectively channelled selection of collective semiautomatic wordflow"...

MF



PUBLIC DISCUSSION

At the opening, on the insistence of the gallery representative, was staged a discussion about the books. Threatening to become a very internal and/or dull and/or superficial affair, this was instead manouvred to become more of a general discussion among several participants, partly on a more simple and pedagogic level on the general application of psychogeography, and partly on a more speculative level on the implications of the ongoing war for domination of the earth between bacteria and fungi.

merdarius





SURREALIST GROUP/ STYX RELATIONSHIP

Styx is an artists collective and a publishing house founded on spontaneous initiative, intuitive affinities and eclectic experimentation with traditional lowbrow or underground performance and genre-transgressing arts (including strong elements of philosophy, chance and play), strongly heterogenous in nature and often strongly and offensively poetic (offensively in both senses of the word). Most of the principal animators of Styx activities occasionally take part in surrealist games or meetings, though bonds are primarily on the social level. During more than a year now several members of the surrealist group of Stockholm have been partaking as individuals in various Styx events and publications (such as the big anthology *Autistisk Kilskrift*). The nature of the relationship between the Styx initiative and the surrealist group of Stockholm has been a matter of controversy and much discussion within the latter. As these collaborations have been individually based on intuitive affinities and experimental curiosity only, and thus lacking all explicit agreements, shared criteria, boundaries, and enquiries, they are clearly in many ways unsatisfactory from a surrealist viewpoint, but nevertheless just as clearly productive, and very enriching from a simple trial-and-error perspective – having included very good results as well as very bad. This must be regarded as an ongoing experiment and we don't know where it will end.

merdarius

BOOKS

This occasion was provided by Styx' release of four books by Mattias Forshage.

* M Forshage: *Frånvarande ur samma stim av bläckfiskar* (absent from the same school of cephalopods) An extensive collection of poems in different tones and subjects. A gallery of dream objects, poetic concretisations of eluding conceptions and instigations; weak fantasies about the turning of the seasons and blood shed and whatever could become a convincing form of appearance for the seductions of the unknown.

* M Forshage: *Drömgeografi Naturgeografi* (dream geography nature geography) A sort of novel exploring how space is constructed in the imaginary universe, partly by way of the dream, and partly by way of vigilance towards nature (flora, fauna, geomorphology, meteorology etc) involving both poetical accomplicity and scientific curiosity

* M Forshage: *Sex förslag på skrapsanning* (six suggestions to scraping truth) Dug-up drama for no good; charmingly pretentious closet dramas by a school youth, the bloodsteaming misanthropic Moment 23-suite as well as a madly babbling bundle of Tintin plays. Here furthermore unworthily gilded with original drawings by John Andersson and Niklas Nenzén.

* M Forshage: *Häxprocessens åskbetingelser* (thunder conditions of the witch trial) Short novel and lived adventure, an excited way of trying at the same time to decipher and radicalize the latent content of reality, concerning the haunted summer of 1986, when the surrealist group in Stockholm was proclaimed and mythological figures roamed the streets.

available from the author or (preferrably) from Styx at <www.styxforlag.com>

MF



with thanks to:

Jonas Enander (surrealistförlaget distro), Johannes Flink (styx distro, various assistance), Johanna Gustafsson Fürst (gallery contact), Linda Hofvander (costume), Niklas Jönsson (driving, photographic documentation), Diana Kaur (gallery representative), Lars Larsson (equipment loan), Iwo Myrin (equipment loan), Olof Pettersson (conferencier, partaking in arrangement), Stanislav Snäll (photographic documentation), Stina Stigell (equipment loan), Erik Sundberg (photographic documentation), etc.

For those readers who did not prefer to guess who was whom in the lineup at page 2, the order we suggest is: 1: JA, 2: NN, 3: MF, 4: a bony costume (temporarily uninhabited), 5: a costume with plastic animals (temporarily uninhabited), and for the lineup on the bottom of page 11 we suggest 1: MF, 2: MF, 3: ML, though other suggestions might be equally interesting.

arranged by John Andersson, Mattias Forshage, Michael Lundberg & Niklas Nenzén

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