NORDIC NOMADS

eija-liisa ahtila
lotta antonsson / annika von hausswolff
knut åsdam
michael elmgreen / ingar dragset
simone aaberg kærn
joachim koester
ann lislegaard
annika lundgren
tal r
torbjørn rødland
annika ström
lisa strömbeck
Introduction

Paul Ha

I am tremendously excited to see NORDIC NOMADS being presented at White Columns. For close to thirty years White Columns has been introducing the work of emerging artists to our community. As much as we would like to be able to showcase art from all over the world, both the sheer number of local artists and budget constraints limit us primarily to artists who live in or near New York City. The Scandinavian artists in NORDIC NOMADS are a very energetic group who have traveled and even lived outside of their countries of birth. It is only fitting that a set so globally influenced should be able to show within an international context. While these young artists are beginning to achieve recognition in Europe, most of them have yet to show their work publicly in New York, and I am proud to be able to offer them the opportunity.

I want to thank Andrea Kroksnes, not only for her fine curatorial work, but for her ability to successfully adapt to a not-for-profit environment. I also want to thank Lauren Ross, whose valuable daily input makes the running of this institution possible. Of course, thanks are also due to the artists themselves for their hard work and enthusiasm.

It is only due to many generous funders that the presentation of NORDIC NOMADS at White Columns has been possible. Sincere thanks go to The New York State Council for The Arts, the Delaware Valley Arts Alliance, the American-Scandinavian Foundation, IASPS – the International Artists’ Studio Program in Sweden, The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, niica – Nordic Institute for Contemporary Art, FRAME – Finnish Fund for Art Exchange, The Swedish Information Service at the Consulate General of Sweden in New York, and The Danish Consulate in New York for their sponsorship of the exhibition. Funding for this catalogue was provided by nikk – Nordisk Konst- och Konstindustrikommitté, for which I am very grateful.

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topicality. Nordic art is topical. Some might say this is just another trend, self-generated by the dynamics of the international art world/market. But those sweeping generalizations are blind to the concrete context of the phenomenon. The topicality of NORDIC NOMADS arises out of an engagement with a specific topic, topos, site, and situation.

One sniff and we smell the fresh air, one look and we see that there is something going on in the Nordic art community these days. How can we explain this sudden spring spirit in contemporary art from Scandinavia – the tundra or arctic desert of the European art world up until only some years ago?

In the early nineties young Scandinavian artists realised that it was up to them to initiate a change. This generation, still in the art academies back then, witnessed the closure of the official art...
world. Neither the galleries nor the big institutions showed interest in their work, still clinging to the canonized established national artists. Light-years away, the international art world was not even aware of the existence of a flourishing art scene way up in the European north. Fueled by expectations of a bleak future the young artists started to create their own spaces and discourses. They gathered, exchanged ideas and showed their work together in artist-run galleries. Out of this communication grew a community that, from its very beginning, disrespected national borderlines. They are nomads, always in movement, not constrained to fixed cultural identities. Their strategies are crossing and networking remote sites in order to link and articulate positions that had no voice before.

*romantic myths*. When thinking of the Nordic countries we imagine Vikings and sagas; nature of extremes: fjords, mountains, ice and snow; long and lonely winters; summer nights full of light; and the people: headstrong individualists who drink a lot and do not speak much. Geographically and politically, the role of Scandinavia has always been a peripheral one. Like all smaller countries the Scandinavian nations are particularly proud of their cultural heritage. It seems the smaller the country the stronger the patriotism. In Norway – after Iceland the smallest of the Nordic lands – people put little flags on their Christmas trees and birthday cakes. Trolls and
Viking figures are more than tourist souvenirs and Disneyland mascots, they are delegates who officially represent the country's culture. Sick of the heroizing of goblins, Vikings and Edvard Munch young artists are resisting parent culture and tradition. The homogenized cultural heritage does not fit their own identities. So they explore other countries, look around, appropriating, abandoning and mixing diverse cultural bits and pieces, finally recreating themselves anew, right here and now.

Although rooted in a specific geopolitical context acknowledged as the foundation of their artistic production, these artists are not interested in romantic group identities. If there is a common trait in their diverse artistic articulations, then it is precisely their shared interest in crossover, the hybrid, and the impure.

**group identities.** When and why did I first think of showing contemporary Scandinavian art in New York? What is my secret motivation and agenda in this project? Being half-Norwegian and raised abroad — a diasporic Scandinavian so to speak — does not make things simpler. It does not legitimate me more than anybody else to engage in this topic. Cultural identity is a complex thing, and it could be precisely because I am missing a fixed frame of cultural reference that I reinvent myself as a true Scandinavian. People of the Diaspora often suffer from the loss of their roots and overidentify with what they think of as their authentic and shared cultural tradition. Did I engage in this
project in the search of some folkloric essence of myself, a sort of collective 'one true self'? I don't think so. Maybe I was in search of something but I surely do not believe in authenticity. In the late 20th century we are all chimeras, bastards, illegitimate offspring, marked by different languages, and cultural as well as sexual patterns, who can no longer draw upon an original comprehensive history.

Being aware of the danger of imposing a singular definition on something which isn't singular at all, *Nordic Nomads* stresses this ambiguous character of cultural identity: culture does not exist in its own right but rather arises out of the relationship between manifold groups.

**groups, articulation, and space.** There is a new requirement in representing the relations between local, regional, national, and international frames of action and experience – a way of mapping the new global system. Contemporary artistic and cultural production can attempt such mapping. *Nordic Nomads* calls for an agenda that would include groups, articulation, and space. In addition to the postmodern phenomena of interiorized group consciousness, identity politics, off-centered subject positions, and creative schizophrenia, there is a need for communication between different groups. Relations between these groups must be modeled on an external or spatial mode, which requires a geographic reflexivity or geopolitical self-consciousness. The national or geopolitical standpoint from which a statement is.
uttered has to be taken into account. But of course the concept of the geopolitical has to be reassessed as a merely relational term, mapping positions and the relation between them.

**cultural interfaces.** In this respect, exhibitions that represent the culture of one group within another are of interest. **NORDIC NOMADS** is not attempting a reconstruction of nationalist stereotypes but rather the articulation of culture as a complex structure in which the planes of ethnicity, gender, class and sexuality intersect. This process comprehends culture as a medium wherein the relationship between groups is expressed.

To hark back to beginning, I think that there is a particular topicality in representing Scandinavian art at this moment – a shared interest in a discourse that is due to the specific geopolitical situation of the Scandinavian art world. Nevertheless this show is not about representing a generic and singular movement but a diverse and complex one. Because almost all participating artists have been travelling, living abroad, allowing themselves to get mixed up in diverse cultural settings, we are looking in vain for the pure Nordic trait. The works shown have already internalised that interface with the Other. The culture articulated by these artists is hybrid, it is a subordinated culture that is incommensurable with the canonized tradition, making space for alternative practices. Refusing to restore the trimmed postcard image of Scandinavia – an image that has started to crack, these artists...
engage in cross-national projects, feminist and gay movements, political and cultural practices that can be aligned with local struggles somewhere else rather than talking exclusively about Scandinavian culture.

Why is a show like NORDIC NOMADS of interest for the New York art community? On the one hand NORDIC NOMADS is deliberately perspectival and not global – limited and not infinite. On the other hand, by virtue of being positional and not essentialist, its strategies are moveable. Its very meaning is the function of its travel and mobility. Many of the artists in NORDIC NOMADS talk about this logic of displacement.

Inger Dragset’s and Michael Elmgreen’s Powerless Structures poetically symbolize this attempt to connect people and movements. Always site-specific and performative, their work emanates the power of universal symbolization. The diving board Dragset and Elmgreen installed at the Louisiana Museum in Denmark in 1997, smoothly penetrates through the glass front of the institution, inviting us to look up and out, over the sea, contemplating the bigger referential frame, ignoring institutional restrictions. The board suggests the daring leap across the ocean – facing the unknown, making connections.

In later works gay cruising places, bars, and toilets resemble minimalist sculpture; beautiful and seemingly pure objects of contemplation. However, the two artists find their point of
departure in their own personal history. All structures are unstable and can be altered and often rendered into interactive sites. The lust-house pavilion they installed in a park of the small Danish town of Århus was a perfectly sweet pavilion that was immediately accepted and used by the park’s visitors. At night the site would transform and function as a cruising place for the local gay community. In this manner all their works suggest alternative structures and ways of life. Lars Bang Larsen writes: "michael elmgreen & ingar dragset perform the nineties’ way of interchangeing and replacing (and not deconstructing) structures; the gay science of challenging authoritarian and heterosexually dominated styles of art with their own idioms."

In the high-ceilinged entrance hall of White Columns lingers a gigantic paint drop above the heads of the audience. The slightly stretched plastic membrane is sagging with gallons of white paint. The pneumatic voluptuous quality of the drop triggers sexual desires but simultaneously the drop poses a threat – it could burst. The viewer is ambiguously caught between desire and the fear of getting messed up, dirtied, contaminated.

While dragset and elmgreen are queering purist notions of minimalist sculpture, knut åsdam is looking at the notion of modernist space in general. His work investigates the relation between space and identity. He is interested in how spatial and architectural codes influence the bodily
experience of the self and reflect upon social behavior. His walkable architectural sculptures turn into sexually charged cruising places, where the negotiation of bodies in space become physically stirring rituals.

Asdams installations suggest Foucault's notion of heterotopic spaces, spaces that have no official status in our world. They are non-spaces, mere ephemeral, floating sites for the articulation of marginalized voices. These sites have the potential for resistance and even subversion of the dominant structures. Adolescence, homosexuality, and otherness in general can be experienced as mental stages of heterotopia, which often get translated into real sites of heterotopia, like asylums, prisons, gay bars, but also discos, porn theatres and sex clubs. It is hard to imagine that porn theatres and sex clubs have transgressive potential in a world where sexual desires fuel a vast porn industry and sex clubs are practically institutionalized places for male business negotiations.

Asdams work captures this ambiguity. The spaces he creates emanate this tension between affirmation and transgression, a tension that characterizes our recent times, marked by the intertwining forces of global capitalism, cultural postmodernism and neoliberal politics.

His work critically investigates the subversive powers of heterotopic desires in the topos of modernist public space. It is the negotiation or clashing of individual and society and the
correlating relations between public and private spaces that interest Åsdam. Corporate skyscrapers, airport lounges, club aesthetics and sc-fi space shuttles become metaphors for the increasing pervasiveness of these two realms. The public space can be equated with consecrated societal rules, norms and institutions, while the private space in Åsdam’s work is the very personal, intimate world of the desire driven individual. The individual desires of the subject conflict with the common interest of an ordered society.

It becomes clear that Åsdam’s point of departure is a very personal one, it is about his own heterosexual male experience of the masculinist structures of space in a city like New York. His video projection Psychasthenia, 1997 shows reflections off the facade of a high modernist skyscraper that, under the stroboscopic techno rhythm of the projection, get more and more fragmented. The building breaks up under the fast beats, blurring and dissolving its restrictive surface while at the same time remaining impenetrable and becoming more fetishized. Åsdam refers to this image of the skyscraper as an ‘architectural crotch’ alluding to masculinist structures of power and authority. The viewer (along with Åsdam) partly identifies with, and even feels a desire to conform to these powerful structures (even to be dominated by them). On the other hand, he is appaled and wants to transgress these structures, break them open, and tear them down. We can
trace this desire for deformation back to Piranesi’s illogical designs for the Carceri where the dissolution of form and the void of the signified represent a utopia of deconstructed space or, as Tafuri puts it, a negative utopia. Again, one could apply to this obsessive technique of demontage Foucault’s definition of heterotopia. Where the utopia unites and reconciles by covering cities with structures of centrality, the heterotopia disturbs, secretly undermining language, destroying the syntax which holds the world together.

Many of the artists in *Nordic Nomads* deal with subjectivity and space. *Ann Lislegaard* creates spatial environments that send the viewer on both a physical as well as psychological journey. Her installations are time/space continuums that lead our perception into a meditative state between the sensory physical and the mental experience, the outside and the inside, illusion and reality. Space becomes nothing but a subjective construction: In her video projection *Nothing But Space, 1997* a room filled with people— in fact the artists own studio— melts and multiplies into psychedelic ornaments. This breaking up, distorting, multiplying, and disarranging, apart from the emotional reaction it elicits on the viewer, is— like *Asdam’s* work— a criticism of the concept of space, carried out by using the instruments of visual communication. But as pointed out in the title, her work is not a negation of space, but rather an opening up of space towards the infinite. It is

![Image](image_url)
within this opening up of spaces and the fragmentation of the spatial order that the role of the viewer gets manifested. The subject is forced to travel through the spatial labyrinth and give it meaning. On this voyage can be found a sphere, were everything is permitted.

Whereas the dizzy spells that the viewer experiences in lisleaard’s photographs and videos is created by a semantic void carried out by an excess of visual noise, her latest works in fact employ real noise. The sonic snapshots that she installs outside the gallery sometimes mirror the location’s own acoustics. Just slightly alienated they create moments of paranoia.

At other times the sound bites are more real, documentary snapshots of other places that create no less of a nauseating experience for the audience. They are but mere traces of what they seem to represent (or record) and fail to produce meaning. We can try to follow the acoustic clues, maybe the clicking of high heels in a corridor and put them together to form a narrative. But most likely we will be restricted to the materiality of the sound. Like in a schizoid moment, we won’t be able to decode the chain of the signifiers, and all meaning will get lost behind the overwhelming physical sensation of singular sound experienced in time and space.

Less interested in the power of space than the power of narration, joachim koester’s work is metaphorically situated in the blank space between fiction and reality. I am referring to
Derrida's notion of intertextuality that "thought is in the blank part of the text". It is likewise in this void between the piece and the viewer that *koester's* works take place. In this void the work looses its autonomy and transforms into a play of interaction. The result is a recognition of heterogeneity and multiplicity of meanings. In his video projection *Pit Music, 1997* shown at last years Documenta we see and hear a string quartet performing Schostakowitsch in an empty gallery space. While the sound track we hear is an unchanged recording, the visual track has been slightly altered by alternating slow motion and freeze frame with the real time footage. Tracing the jerky path of a narrative that dissolves and reappears between the frames, the viewer needs her own imagination to complete the work (of course a final completion will never be attained). Referring in its title to the orchestra pit – the space below the theatre stage where musicians conventionally play the music for a performance, we may also take *Pit Music* as a metaphor for the abyss of the infinite tracing of meaning. A single glance, a sip of wine, any gesture gets charged with drama when the music swells. *koester* smoothly navigates between straightforward documentary filming and highly staged psychodrama. The simplicity of the means that *koester* employs to achieve the drama in our heads suggests that even the simplest recording devices involve interpretation and are always subjective.
Similarly, Koester's photo series *Dawn of the Dead, 1994* alludes to the blank space between reality and fiction, viewer and viewed. The title of the works is taken from the classic horror movie by Romero. The photographs show boarded-up windows that trigger associations with horror and disease. On a more formal level these images play with the long tradition of painting as a window to reality. The life size photographs of the windows use mimetic illusion, while at the same time the tightly nailed crude planks are obstructing the viewer's access into an illusionary depth thereby restricting his gaze to the photographic surface.

Whereas the nomadic element in the works of Åsdam and Lislegaard lies in the dissolution of spatial order – the loss of fixed territory – Koester's nomadic project is the perpetual travel into the pit between fiction and reality.

More directly, Eija-liisa Ahtila's works encourage the viewer to be a nomad and take a journey through ego-loss. Her videos explore the borderless land of off-centered identity formations. Deleuze and Guattari's notion of schizophrenia might have served as a point of departure. All of the people inhabiting her narratives are schizoids that oscillate between binary poles: man-woman, parent-child, alive-dead. The schizo does not reconcile these contradictory elements into a synthesis, but remains in disjunction. He/she is not simply bisexual, or between the two, but rather transsexual. He/she is also – alive/dead,
parent/child. The Schizo does not reduce two contraries to an identity of the same, but acknowledges that we are not impermeable and autonomous subjects.

In the installation *Me/We, Okay, Gray, 1993* consisting of three videos shown simultaneously, *ahtila* deals with such transitory subjectivities. *Me/We* shows a family in their garden hanging laundry. The imagery, although black and white, speaks the language of commercial clips, it is fast, sexy, and sharp. What we hear however, is a middle aged man's account on his marriage and children – things you would tell your marriage counsellor. Then we see the daughter saying something, but it is still the father's voice who talks through her. At another point the son is calling out: 'Father, Father' – but it is again the same voice of the father. Letting the father speak through all the members of the family *ahtila* deliberately disrupts the fixed positionalities of 'Mommy, Daddy, Child'.

*Okay* shows a women pacing like an animal in a small room and compulsively telling the story about the disturbed erotic relationship to her partner. During her monologue her voice changes from female into male and thus blurs fixed binary gender patterns. She starts her story with: "I become numb from longing. When I no longer feel anything, I strike" and a little later goes on "I would transform myself into a dog and I would bark and bite everything that moves... WOOF WOOF WOOF". The polymorph perverse animal-like libido

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*ahtila*

*NEXT BUT SPACE, 1997*

2 channel video installation
of the woman epitomizes the explosive force of Deleuze and Guattari's desiring-machines capable of demolishing entire social orders.

In Gray, three women descend in a freight elevator into a dark underwater place. They talk in staccato about the nuclear disaster that just happened beyond the state border. The impersonal technical information about Cesium and Strontium values and emergency instructions is increasingly replaced by an eerie subjective tone “Fear keeps me in bed. I do not understand foreign languages, I do not know anyone, I do not hear strange voices.” The women’s dialogue is blurring the border between the ego and the other. We can no longer distance ourselves from this Other – whether it is nuclear radiation or the invasion of foreign languages or customs because it is something that is in the air and diffuses through us, eventually becoming part of our internal worlds.

The one-and-a-half minute clips imitate short commercials and investigate the strategies of narrative and use of drama within them. The rhythmic, almost disrupted, beats of tight visual and acoustic information cannot be read as a conventional linear narrative. Rather, the open-ended, fragmented, multi-climaxed structure of the commercials reflect patterns of the characters’ schizophrenia. Originally the clips were planned to be inserted inbetween TV commercials or between the trailers in movie theatres. In the gallery they are shown as endless loops on three different TV monitors in a
living-room like atmosphere. The repetitive, segmented, simultaneous, and serial character of the installation can be further aligned with Deleuze's guiding principle of horizontality, in which endless proliferation is considered a threat to unity, identity and order.

Nomad Space is smooth, or open-ended. One can rise up at any point and move somewhere else. The projects of Simone Aaberg Kærn may best embody this concept of nomadism. She is not only an artist but also a pilot. The element of 'flying' has over the last 3 years developed into a metaphor of female self-empowerment and liberation throughout her work. Aaberg Kærn's distancing of herself from dreamy escapism in her notion of flying also is already apparent in early works: the videos Wanna Fly, City Air and Royal Greenland, 1995 are animated videos where the artist herself is bouncing rather than flying through familiar land- and cityscapes like Greenland or London. The jerky flapping of her legs and the up and down of her bumping flight have nothing in common with the effortless sailing of eagles, transcendental faith of angels, or the heroism of superman but rather allude to physical work, free fall, and comical helplessness. Sisters in the Sky-Women Pilots in War Duty WW II, 1997 a painting and sound installation portrays women pilots during World War II is the result of sociological research into the history of female pilots. Aaberg Kærn visited some of these elderly women in
Russia, England, and Germany who had served as pilots during World War II. In her paintings she portrays them as young soldiers, copying from old photographs of war days. By hanging almost 50 portraits in a long row – like an ancestral gallery – aaberg kærn symbolically allocates them a place in the otherwise patriarchal history of flying. She illuminates how femininity is but a cultural production which may be recoded in situations of crisis, thus problematizing the binary description patterns of femininity and masculinity.

After a traumatic experience that for aaberg kærn felt like a free fall, flying to her has healing and therapeutic powers – it is about surviving an unforeseen and unwelcome situation and daring to tackle the unknown. This is not only in the sense of psychoanalytical symbolism, but in real life. Over the last few months aaberg kærn has discovered new horizons as she and her female copilot have been flying around the U.S. The sporadic e-mails that I have received from her are titled ‘Simone nomading’ and talk about exercising emergency landings.

Although inherently different annika lundgren’s work shares with aaberg kærn’s the investigation and expansion of the role of the artist. Both view the artist to be a joker who can be anything they want. For lundgren, to be an artist means to live the freedom of taking on and abandoning diverse and ever-changing occupations. She told me she doesn’t want to identify com-

SQUIRREL WITHOUT A HEAD, 1998
picture book
courtesy: Galerie Mikael Andersen, Copenhagen
pletely with one role, one career, or one life when I visited her in Copenhagen this summer. The privilege of being an artist for her means that she can be different things, have access to and explore as many roles as possible. As a concept artist she is not restricted to one medium but constantly pursues new topics and means of communication. Her latest projects have been an investigation of the relation between private self-understanding and a public world increasingly ordered into realms of specialization and expert knowledge. In these mostly performance oriented works Lundgren took on the role of experts in specialized fields like astrophysics, lecturing about these topics from a personal point of view. Her new project One Woman Radio, 1998 is a series of radio performances during the first week of the exhibition that visitors can follow live in the gallery or later on tape. The format of One Woman Radio is the educational radio program — of course tinted with Lundgren’s personal view of existence as the title of the program suggests. In One Woman Radio she also combines and navigates between the roles of the speaker, DJ, scriptwriter, anchorwoman, and reporter, featuring topics as diverse as science, politics, nature, pets, cooking, sports, hobbies, and health.

The video section of Nordic Nomads activates a particularly culturally coded feminine relationship to subjectivity expressed through female stereotypes such as hysteria, stardom and

EVERYBODY PLEASE GO HOME, 1997
picture book
courtesy: Galerie Mikael Andersen, Copenhagen
beauty. The works cross over subjects and objects in a chiasmic interweaving of self and other that highlights the circuits of desire at play among them.

_Iotta Antonsson & Annika von Hausswolff’s_ video _Slap Happy, 1995_ shows the two women at first Innocently performing a game of patty cake. The rhythm of their smacking palms grow faster and harder until the game culminates with the two women slapping each others faces and tearing each others hair in a fit of female hysteria. In _Slap Happy_ Antonsson & Hausswolff enact the body/self as always already implicated in borderless intersubjectivity. The work is slightly reminiscent of Acconci’s early body art projects, but goes beyond them. Because women are continually forced to take account of their socially inscribed lack, their intersubjective relations with others, their subjection to the gaze, they have a greater stake in challenging the myth of (male) subjective transcendence and a greater capacity to negotiate the incoherence of subjectivity.

In _Annika Ström’s_ video _The Artist Live 1997_, Ström herself performs as the female star, but is also in charge of script, music, and vocals. The piece resembles amateur home video with its shaky hand held camera, but _Ström_ also borrows from MTV’s aesthetic: quick cutting, overexposed colors, and jittery unfocused images. We follow _Annika_ through her days from the humble everyday life of slide-binding and office work to the
exhilarating moments of play, pleasure and fame: 
anika singing, dancing or doing handstands in
the garden.

ström's seemingly narcissistic obsession
with displaying her own image takes place through
a selfconscious and at times ironic alienation (for
the opening of the exhibition she planned to hire a
stand-up comedian who imitated her.) Who, after
all, is annika ström? Her videos and projects show
her ever-changing through the rhetoric of the pose:
singing and performing as pop star, provoking
and flirting with Latino boys in the streets of New
York, doing somersaults and cartwheels in the
backyard of her parents house in Sweden, her long
blond hair flowing, naked feet with painted nails in
thongs, suddenly all grown up and like her mother's
daughter talking in a practical house-wife's
manner about furnishing the home. We cannot fix
ström in her open-ended and shifting performance
of femininity.

Whereas annika ström narcissistically enjoys
to be the beautiful object of her own and our (male)
fixation with her, lisa strömbeck illuminates the
power hierarchies inherent in such dynamics by
juxtaposing the fetishized image of woman with
that of woman as abject. Carelessly dressed in a
worn out skimpy red T-shirt and most probably
suffering from PMS, lisa strömbeck frantically
cleans her apartment. On the video's sound level
Chris de Burgh accompanies strömbeck by
singing about his gorgeous looking Lady in Red,
his great '80s hit that also lends the title to strömbeck's piece. The song's fetishization of woman into supernatural beauty-object contrasts with the melodramatic domestic scene of strömbeck scrubbing the toilet.

tal r is one of the few painters of this generation of artists in Scandinavia. tal talks about his friends, music, and his childhood when asked about his art. His immediate environment, his lived experiences are both source and context of his work. Yet, to say he is not interested in the formal aspects of painting, but rather socially oriented, would be inaccurate. tal repudiates the old distinction between form as purely aesthetic and content as the arena for socially relevant issues.

He installs his paintings – which trigger associations of the work of Asger Jorn, Cobra, and the Situationists – together with arbitrary fragments such as found drawings, text and textiles. His neo-expressionistic paintings in all formats, colors and shapes mingle with bits and pieces of a different nature – less identifiable as art. They are scattered on the floor, slapped on the wall, or arranged in fragile mobiles that come to life as you approach them. These elements are saturated with traces of the artist's everyday life, they tell a personal story just like the photographic snapshots of his friends. Furthermore, these remnants of the vernacular seem to influence tal's paintings formally. Browsing through his picture book titled Everybody Please Go Home, 1997 we encounter spaced-out
people, dirty dishes, and a lot of close-ups of crotches juxtaposed with funny self-portraits in which the artists hides behind his canvasses. The images of the ordinary and everyday merge together, fast and rhythmic, until we rediscover their formal qualities in tal's abstract painterly compositions.

_Everybody please go home_ could be mistaken as a whiny outcry of the party host, who wants to kick out the last of the lost souls who still hang out in his living room and pretend to party. Or metaphorically, applied to the art world: calling out the end of art, and urging artists and participants to leave the already dull scene. Of course, if you know tal or just open the book you will understand that he is not one of the moralists and culture-pessimists who describe apocalyptic scenarios. And nobody in tal’s snapshots ever goes home. They all just keep on going - partying, I mean. Even though it is not always such a beautiful sight: the exhaustion, the sweaty, smelly bodies, and all the unhealthy aspects of this life abound. If they went home, nobody would notice that they exist. It is this sense of community, communication and networking that is not only the basis for tal’s work but one of the reasons why the young Scandinavian scene was able to create a discourse that finally was noticed in the international art world.

_torbjørn rødland’s_ photographs capture the hybrid spirit of the globalized Scandinavian life in the ‘90s. He merges contemporary fashion and
consumer culture with mythical Nordic romanticism, lonely wanderers, melancholia, dark forests, light skies and glistening water. In the series In a Norwegian Landscape, 1993/94 rondland strolls through the wilderness. The traditional Nordic theme of the lonely and alienated individual is undermined but simultaneously strengthened by the fact that he is carrying a plastic bag with the logo of one of Norway's biggest Supermarket chains.

His fashion photographs depict a young girl and a boy lolling— with legs dangling— on the sideboards of a Scandinavian wood design kitchen. The models— both incredibly blond and blue eyed— are scantily-clad in the latest couture by an emerging Norwegian fashion designer: a sexy and super hip creation out of curtains and tablecloth in the domestic Scandinavian style of the '70s, highlighted by Santa Claus napkins and other typical Norwegian Christmas decoration.

If there is a common denominator and driving force behind the works presented here it could be called 'Nomad thought'. Nomad thought does not immure itself in the structure of ordered interiority; it moves freely in the exteriority. It does not repose on identity; it rides difference. Rather than analyzing the world into discrete categories, reducing their manyness to one singular identity and ordering them by rank, it accumulates a set of disparate circumstances in a shattering blow. These artists do not reflect upon the world as a
given constant, but are engaged in the change and flow of things. Nomad thought is nothing new and goes by many names. To be in a state of nomadism is neither a novel nor an isolated phenomenon but increasingly permeates life on all levels - or as Donna Haraway put it: "We are all in chiasmatic borderlands, liminal areas where new shapes, new kinds of action and responsibility, are gestating in the world".

lisa strömbeck
LADY IN RED, 1996
video
eija-liisa ahtila
born in Hameenlinna, Finland in 1959
lives and works in Helsinki

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1998 Klemens Gasser & Tanja Grunert, New York
Museum Fridericianum Kassel, Kassel
Kunsthalle Giers, Giers
Galerie Arndt, Berlin
Saint-Servaix Genève, Centre pour l’Image Contemporaine, Geneva
1997 Galerie Gasser & Grunert, Cologne
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Kunsthalle Basel, Basel
Raum der Aktuellen Kunst, Vienna
1996 Galerie Cable, Helsinki
1995 Galerie Index, Stockholm

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
1998 Gallery Mot & Van Den Boogaard, Brussels
Edstrand Art Price, Rooseum, Malmö
Manfred 2, Luxembourg
Momentum: Nordic Festival of Contemporary Art, Moss
Nuit Blanche, Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
The King is not the Queen, Archipelago, Stockholm
Unknown Adventures, Städtische Galerie, Düsseldorf
1997 Nordic Female Art, Skanska Konstmuseum, Lund
Identités, Le Nouveau Musée Vleurbanne, Lyon
Istanbul Biennial, Istanbul
Spuren und Strukturen, Badischer Kunstverein, Karlsruhe
Zones of Disturbance, Steirischer Herbst, Graz
Sjödahl Museum, Amsterdam
Timeout, Kunsthalle Nürnberg, Nürnberg
Laco Motion, film section Venice Biennial, Venice
1996 NowHere,Louisiana Museum, Humlebæk
ID, VanAbbe Museum, Eindhoven
1994 Identity, Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki and Moscow

lotta antonsson
born in Sweden, 1963
lives and works in Stockholm

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1998 Tryloyisky Gallery, Vancouver
1997 My Elusive Dreams, Galerie Axel Moerres, Stockholm
1995 I like America and America likes me, Gallery Campbell, Oslo
1994 Anyway you want me, Gallery TRE, Stockholm
It’s my party (and I cry if I want to), Project ArtPit, Malmö
1992 Gallery Index, Stockholm

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
1998 Obscure Camera, 2nd space, San Francisco
Pleasure & Commitment, Gallery Index, Stockholm
Collections, Modern Museum of Art, Stockholm
Press & Expose (Nuit Blanche), Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
1997 Alike ness, Contemporary Center for Photography, Fitzroy
Bring your own Walkman, W139, Amsterdam
NDXLITE, Gallery Index, Stockholm
1996 Stay on your own for slightly longer, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow
Anita & Anita records a CD, In: Thomas Room, Lydmar Art Hotel, Stockholm
I Confess, Nikolai Exhibition Hall, Copenhagen
Triangula, Artagu, Guatemala/Le Merced, Mexico City/Faerfabriken, Stockholm
1994 Mediations, Le Bateau, Paris
New reality mix, Hoeghgsatgan 18, Stockholm
1993 Prospekt, Moderna Museet, Stockholm
Overground World Expo 93, Museum of Art, Gothenburg

knut åsdam
born in Trondheim, Norway in 1968
lives and works in New York

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1998 Contemporary Art Center, Vilnius
1994 Galerie Riss, Oslo

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
1998 Momentum: Nordic Festival of Contemporary Art, Moss
Nuit Blanche, Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
The UKS Biennale 1996, Henie Onstad Kunstcenter, Oslo
Elevator, Stephany Martz Gallery, New York
1997 Still, Salle de Bal, Institut Francais, Vienna
Odense Performance Festival, Odense Museum, Odense
DIY Mapping & Instruction, Bricks and Kicks, Vienna
XL Xavier LaBoullonnerie Galley, New York
Rum för Aktuell Konst presenterar samtidig konst fra Oslo, Konstmuseum, Gothenburg
Reality Check, Apex Art, New York
Kick Off, Akershus Kunstcenter, Strömmen
1996 Video Fax, Museo Regional, Guadalajara
Departure Lounge, P.S.1 Museum, Clocktower Gallery, New York
Compartments: Escape Attempts, GLOBO, Copenhagen
1995 One Night Stand, Nordic Video and Performance Art, Kunsthernes Hus, Oslo
DIXI, Oslo
Nord in America, Thomas Nordanstad Gallery, New York
Whitney Museum, I.S.P. Exhibition, New York

michael elmgreen & ingar dragset
Elmgren, born in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1961
Dragset, born in Trondheim, Norway in 1969
They live and work in Copenhagen and Berlin

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1998 Powerless Structures Fig.45, Galeri Ingoftschartsei & Reykaev Art Museum, Reykjavik
1997 To Ken Ishii..., Galleri Struls, Oslo
Powerless Structures, Gallery Campbell, Occasionally, Copenhagen
1996 It Takes a Lifetime to Expect Nothing, Galerie LXX, Århus

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
1998 Berlin/Berlin, Berlin Biennale, Berlin
Zoeke Franche, Grande Halle de la Villette, Paris
Warming, The Project, New York
Cool Places, Contemporary Art Center, Vilnius
Wrapped, Vestjasrellands Kunstmuseum, Soroe
Junge Szeno, Wiener Secession, Vienna
High Infidelity, Kunstraum der Universität Lüneburg, Lüneburg
Bicycle Thieves, Gallery 400, Chicago
Momentum: Nordic Festival of Contemporary Art, Moss
Nuit Blanche, Musée d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
Underground, Galleri Aabæk, Copenhagen
1997 The Louisiana Exhibition, Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek
Ex-centricos, Vordingborg
What is a guy from Leicester, a Swedish girl, a family father and a gay couple doing on a deserted island between Denmark and Sweden?, Middelemgaren, Copenhagen
1996 The Scream, Bonnalis II, Arken, Museum of Modern Art, Copenhagen
Between You & Me, Overgaden, Copenhagen
Update, Copenhagen
Meningsdannelse 2, Nikolai Exhibition Hall, Copenhagen
Gallery Campells Occasionally, Copenhagen
1995 Art Against AIDS, Galleri Nicolai Wallner & Michael Andersen, Copenhagen
Fan också (Danni), Formgalleriet, Malmö

PERFORMANCES
1997 12 Hours of White Paint, Galerie Tommy Lund
The April Sessions, ICA, London
1996 TRY, Young Bloods Performance Festival, Antwerp
Love Act, Galerie Campells Occasionally, Copenhagen
1995 Listen to... Charlottenborg, Copenhagen
One Night Stand, Kunsthernes Hus, Oslo
joachim koester
born in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1962
lives and works in Copenhagen and New York

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1998 Institute of Visual Arts, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee
Gallery Mor & Van den Boogard, Brussels
Index Gallery, Stockholm
1997 Greene Naftali Gallery, New York
1996 Galleri Nicolai Wallner, Copenhagen
1994 The agency, London
Ynglingegatan, Stockholm

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
1998 H-Min-Sec, Kölnischer Kunstverein, Köln
In Visible Light, Museum of Modern Art, Stockholm
Out of the North, Würtembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart
This Side of the Ocean, Kiasma, Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki
Something Rotten, Museum Fridricianum Kassel, Kassel
Narrative Urge, Upsala Konstmuseum, Uppsala
Nuit Blanche, Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
Extirminating Angel, Galerie Ghislaine Hussenot, Paris
Twilight, Contemporary Art Center, Vilnius
Come Closer, Liechtensteinische Staatliche Kunstmuseum, Vaduz
Blow up, ICI Traveling Exhibition

1997 Documenta X, Kassel
The Louisiana Exhibition, Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek
Johannesburg Biennial, Johannesburg
1 Minute Scenario, Printemps de Cahors, Cahors
Alikeness, Center for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne
Heaven, P.S. 1, Contemporary Art Center, New York
Human Conditions, Helsingfors Kunsthall, Helsinki
Mapping and Instruction, Bricks and Kicks, Vienna
Double Bind, Enkelhuset, Stockholm
In Synch, Spot Gallery, New York

1996 Disneyland After Dark, Kunstamt Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin
Escape Attempts, Globe, Copenhagen
Brecht Bein, Contemporary Danish Art, Kunstenes Hus, Oslo
Beyond the Borders, Kwangju Biennial, Kwangju
W.A.H., Galerie Jousse Seguin, Paris

ann listegaard
born in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1984
lives and works in Copenhagen and New York

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1997 Galerie Tommy Lund, Odense
1995 Galerie Shaper Sundberg, Stockholm
Galerie Tommy Lund, Odense
1994 Lageret, Kunstformning Gamle Strand, Copenhagen

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
1998 Something Rotten, Friedericianum Kassel, Kassel
Do All Oceans Have Walls?, Brønnøysund
Nothing But Space, Dortmund
Out of North, Kunstverein Stuttgart, Stuttgart
Nuit Blanche, Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
Threshold, The Power Plant, Toronto
Here and Now, Art Space, Sydney
Come Closer, Liechtensteinische Staatliche Kunstmuseum, Vaduz
Twilight, Contemporary Art Center, Vilnius

1997 Blind Date, Luthinger Strasse, Munich
The Louisiana Exhibition, Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek
Clean & Sane, Eadsik Konstmuseum, Eadsik
Alikeness, Center for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne

1996 NowHere, Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek
In the Ruins of the 20th Century, P.S. 1, Museum, New York
Disneyland After Dark, Kunstamt Kuhtzberg Bethanien, Berlin
Exiles, Overgarden Nedenvandet, Copenhagen
Brek Bein, New Danish Art, Kunstenes Hus, Oslo

and anna von hausswolff
born in Gotthenburg, Sweden in 1967
lives and works in Stockholm

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1999 Casey Kaplan, New York
Institute of Visual Arts, University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Milwaukee
1997 Out of Reality, Andréhn Schiptjenko, Stockholm
Soros Center for Contemporary Art, Kiev

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
1998 June/July, Casey Kaplan, New York
Momentum: Nordic Festival of Contemporary Art, Moss
Spatiotemporal:Works from the Collection 1955-98, Magasin 3, Stockholm
Come Closer, Liechtensteinische Staattliche Kunstmuseum, Vaduz
Sightings, Institute of Contemporary Art, London
Filter, Galerie Almine Rech, Paris
1997 Alikeness, Contemporary Center for Photography, Fitzroy
Biazzarre, LICA, London
Funny versus Bizzare, Contemporary Art Center, Vilnius/Modern Art Museum, Riga
Purple & Green, Pretoia Art Museum, Pretoria
1996 I am Curious – Stay on Your Own For Slightly Longer, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow
The Biennale of Sao Paulo, Sao Paulo
1996 Processor/Processes, Kalmar Konstmuseum, Kalmar
Borealis 7, Nordic Art Center, Helsinki
1994 Nordic 90's, Stockholm Art Fair, Sollentuna
The Abjekt, The International Photographic Triennial, Oulu
1993 Overground World Expo 93, Gotteborgs konsthall, Gotthenburg

simone aaberg kærn
born in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1969
lives and works in Copenhagen

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1995 Air, The Royal Academy Art Foundation, Copenhagen
Wanna Fly, Saag Bassein, Copenhagen
1992 Pause, Shelter, Copenhagen
Diftong, Galerie Katharinas, Copenhagen

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
1998 Nuit Blanche, Musee d’Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
1997 Metabolisme, Museum of Contemporary Art, Roskilde
Fondazione Sandretto Rebaudengo per l’Arte, Turin
New Art from Denmark and Skane, Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek
10, Lunde Kunsthall, Lund
1996 Coming Up, Galerie Stalke, Copenhagen
meningsdannelse II & III, Nikolai Exhibition Hall, Copenhagen
Royal Greenland, Århus Kunstmuseum, Århus
Winter Collection, Galleri Struts, Oslos
Forum Galleriet, Malmö
Broken Leg: Contemporary Danish Art, Kunstenes Hus, Oslo
1995 RAM, Portalen, Køge
Simone & Tommy vs. gravity, Artspôle, Internet project
Royal Greenland, Raum, Zürich
5+1, Charlottenborg, Copenhagen
Wild at Heart, Galerie Jousse Seguin, Paris
2 Dimensional Theory, Nikolai Exhibition Hall, Copenhagen
annika lundgren
born in Gothenburg, Sweden in 1964
lives and works in Copenhagen

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1996 Meanwhile, back at the ranch..., Overgaden, Danish Ministry of Culture, Copenhagen
1994 Mission, Rum för Aktuell Kunst, Gothenburg
1991 Galleri Mors Møsa, Gothenburg

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
1998 Transposition, South African National Gallery, Cape Town
1996 Presenting Lab, Pineapple, Malmo
1996 Bomerang, Nikolai Exhibition Hall, Copenhagen
1997 Nuit Blanche, Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
1996 Mapping and Instruction, Bricks and Kicks, Vienna
1996 The April Sessions, ICA, London
1996 Compartment: Escape Attempts, Globe, Copenhagen
1996 When Shit Hits the Fan, Overgaden, Danish Ministry of Culture, Copenhagen
1996 3-Dimensional-Theory, Nikolai Exhibition Hall, Copenhagen
1996 Several Subjects, Stockholm Smart Snow, Stockholm
1996 Aus Hamburg und Copenhagen, Frankfurt am Main & Globe, Copenhagen
1995 Videoshow, Galleri LXX, Åthrs Albertslund Radhus
1994 Timeslice, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen

tal r
born in Tel Aviv, Israel in 1967
lives and works in Copenhagen

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1998 Bicycles Thieves, Beret International Gallery, Chicago
1997 DCA Gallery, New York
1997 Everybody please go home, Arts Center of Givat Haviva, Givat Haviva
1996 Tur rotur, Galleri Campsells Occasionally, Copenhagen
1994 Sugar paintings, Sugar Club, Copenhagen

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
1998 The White Loop, Archipelago, in collaboration with Fos and Kaspar, Stockholm
1998 Bonnen, Sculpture Museum, Stockholm
1998 Momentum: Nordic Festival of Contemporary Art, Moss
1997 Couples, Galerie Mikael Andersen, Copenhagen
1997 Carnegie Art Award, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Helsinki, Oslo, Reykjavik
1997 Come Closer, Leichtenschnellische Staattische Kunstsammlung, Vaduz
1997 Frisk-o, Körners Kontor, Copenhagen
1996 Tra-la, privat lokale, Los Angeles
1996 90'er Modernisme, Den Frie Udstillingsbygning, Copenhagen
1996 Update, Turbinehallen, Copenhagen
1996 Smile Now, Cry Later, Turbinehallen, Copenhagen
1996 Coming Up, Stalke Kunsthandel, Copenhagen
1995 Maleri etter Maleri, Kastrupgaardsmålingen, Kastrup
1995 The Grand Las Vegas Opening, Las Vegas, Copenhagen

torbjørn ranald
born in Stavanger, Norway in 1970
lives and works in Oslo

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1998 The deep, Tokyo
1997 Close Encounter, Arkipelag, Stockholm Cultural Capital, Stockholm
1997 Norttale Konsthall, Norttale
1996 Galleri Wang, Oslo

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
1998 Standard Keyboard, The Pineapple, Malmö
1998 Sipstream, Center for Contemporary Art, Glasgaw
1997 La Voe Lacée, as proposed by the Purple Institute, New York
1997 Wellescentralen, Cultural Production in Norway in the nineties, Kunstnernes Hus, Oslo
1997 Alkone, Canberra Contemporary Artspace, Canberra
1997 Rum för Aktuell Kunst presents 22 artist from Oslo, Galleri 54, Gothenburg
1996 Nor-A-Way, Junge Kunst aus Norwegen, Stadsgalerie Sophienhof, Kiel
1995 Alkoneks, Center for Contemporary Photography, Melbourne
1995 I am curious, Cubitt Gallery, London
1995 Voluptas, Galeria Mezuno, Bratislava
1995 Straight from the heart, Valokuvayhdistyeri, Helsinki
1995 Agenda 95, Copenhagen
1995 Call of the Wild, Transmission Gallery, Glasgow

annika ström
born in Helsingborg, Sweden in 1964
lives and works in Berlin

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1998 Seven Songs, Casey Kaplan, New York
1997 Windowpilow, Casey Kaplan, New York
1996 Video portrait nxx., Rooseum Museum for Contemporary Art, Malmö
1996 Rupert Goldsworthy Gallery, Berlin
1995 Anna Ström and Annika Ström, Rupert Goldsworthy Gallery, Berlin

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
1998 Out of North, Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart
1997 Mies van der Rohe Pavilion, Barcelona
1996 Bicycle Thieves, Beret International Gallery, Chicago
1996 Domesticity, Mehdi Chouakri, Berlin
1996 After the Orgy, Smart Project Space, Amsterdam
1996 Momentum: Nordic Festival of Contemporary Art, Moss
1996 Nuit Blanche, Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
1996 Wrapped, Vastajaanlants Kunstmuseum, Soro
1995 Boomerang, Nikolai Exhibition Hall, Copenhagen
1995 Do it, Nikolai Exhibition Hall, Copenhagen
1995 Art Calls, curated by Jacob Fabricius, Copenhagen
1995 The Louisiana Exhibition, Louisiana Museum, Humlebaek
1995 Double Bind, Galleri Enkehuset, Stockholm
1996 Tidsanda III, Nordic Art Konstnumseut, Malmö
1996 Electronic Undercurrents, Royal Museum of Fine Arts, Copenhagen
1996 When Shit Hits the Fan, Overgaden, Danish Ministry of Culture, Copenhagen

Lisa strömbäck
born in Andrarum, Sweden in 1966
lives and works in Berlin

SOLO EXHIBITIONS
1998 Hemma - At home, Galleri Box, Gothenburg
1997 Country, Galleri Campsells Occasionally, Copenhagen
1996 I'll do, with Andreas Creutz, Gallery Campsells Occasionally, Copenhagen
1995 In and Out, Raadkeiakeller, Copenhagen
1995 Loveliest, performance with K. Skansea, Galerie Saga Basement, Copenhagen

GROUP EXHIBITIONS
1998 Artgenda review, Stadtgalerie, Kiel
1998 Presenting LAB, The Pineapple, Malmö
1998 Moviebox, North Udstillingssted, Copenhagen
1998 Art Forum Berlin, with Galleri Stalke, Berlin
1998 Fijberhoilt, Körners Kontr, Stadens Museum for Kunst, Christiania
1997 Videorama - For Lovers Only, Depot, Vienna
1996 B&B Unlimited, Galerie des Archives, Paris
1995 Boomerang, Nikolai Exhibition Hall, Copenhagen
1995 Nuit Blanche, Musee d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris
1995 Zones of Disturbance, Steinerische Herbst, Graz
1995 Stofsikte, Museet for Samtidskunst, Roskilde
1995 Politisk Kunst, Körners Kontor, Copenhagen
1995 Video-97, Fyloking, Scandivanian musicdanceintermedia art, Stockholm
1995 Full Frontal Video, Statens Museum for Kunst, Copenhagen
1995 Films, The Club, Frankfurt am Main
1995 Hjnl, hvordan gaar det? Gallerie Eet me, Copenhagen
1995 Bank T.W., London and Manchester
1995 Mission Impossible, Bricks&Kicks, Vienna and Jerusalem
1995 Smartshow Artfair, with Galleri Artkred, Stockholm
1995 Convoy, Turbinehallen, Copenhagen
NORDIC NOMADS

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