

WHAT IS IMPORTANT.

THE PIECES.

Waiting for Tumbleweed ¹	2007
Allt (är (viktigt (Apophenia))) ²	2008
Korrespondens med Inkognito ³	2009
Under konvalescensen(s)/Under konvalescensen(a) ⁴	2010
Metamorfossyndrom ⁵	2011

WORDS.

Sometimes, certain words stay with me. It makes me think about why. But why isn't always the only thing of interest. Certain words have a wider meaning, give rise to more images than was perhaps intended. Maybe it has to do with associations. Maybe analysis. Maybe semiotics. Maybe it's a misunderstanding.

I create contexts for those words that stay. Often very controlled contexts. Controlled by me. Even when I invited the audience to participate in the piece *Under konvalescensen(s)/Under konvalescensen(a)* [During the Convalescence(s)/During the Convalescence(a)] this occurred under very strict restrictions. But they were perhaps not as obvious to others as they were to me.

My titles often include the words that I based the pieces on. These are the words I have worked with during my time at the Malmö Art Academy:

TUMBLEWEED

APOPHENIA

INKOGNITO [INCOGNITO]

KONVALESCENS [CONVALESCENCE]

METAMORFOS [METAMORPHOSIS]

TALLKOTTKÖRTELN [PINEAL GLAND]

If someone else was to think about these words as much as I have, they would probably come up with completely different pieces. But this is just speculation on my part.

In addition to the words, I have worked with the creation of different characters and voices.

VOICES.

To keep the different voices in my texts apart, I've used different ways of visualising them. Examples of the voices I use are:

CURSIVE & HANDWRITING (Since I hardly write by hand anymore it feels as though I no longer have a personal style of handwriting. At the very least, it's been forgotten. But I know it was beautiful once, because my teacher told me so, back when having beautiful handwriting was still something desirable. Now my handwriting is easily manipulated. I use cursive as well sometimes, both the old-fashioned kind and the newer style. You can see the difference in the letters "t", "z" and "r", for example. I like to use handwritten text to emphasise that the text was written by an actual person. Supposedly, your handwriting can reveal who you are. Graphologists claim to be able to determine whether someone has forged a document by analysing the handwriting. There is a widespread notion that it is impossible for one person to write exactly like someone else. Hence one's handwriting is strongly bound up with one's identity. This makes it interesting to use handwriting to build up different identities in a piece. I have used my own handwriting in two diaries. The handwriting also changes somewhat in both of them:

THE DIARY in *Under konvalescensen(s)*

At the beginning of the diary the style is controlled and hard. The writing is neat. Later, it becomes more careless. On the last page (which is torn out of the diary) the last line is so long that it needs to wind its way up to the top of the page. The ordinary rules of writing have been broken.

THE DIARY in *Metamorfossyndrom* [Metamorphosis Syndrome]

At the beginning of the diary the style is controlled and soft. It is written with care. As time passes the writing becomes less precise. The letters become bigger, the lines are uneven, and the writing is lighter, since the pen isn't pressed as hard against the paper.

(MY NAME.

I use my own name in the diary in *Metamorfossyndrom*. It's written on the first page of the diary. It even has my correct birth date, further verifying that it's my diary. I have previously used my own name for characters/voices in *Korrespondens med Inkognito* [Correspondence with Incognito]. In this piece there were several "Joruns". The piece is structured on a number of different levels:

1. The letters between *Inkognito* and *Jorun*³.
2. The diary where you can read about a *Jorun*² who initially controls but is later controlled by the narrative.
3. The artist *Jorun*¹ who has produced the work.

One reason for using my own name is to lend the piece a certain authenticity. The viewers have usually seen something to inform them that I made the piece. By using my name from real life (the world that the piece exists in) I establish the connection between the two. However, it's unclear what belongs to the piece and what is real.*)).

TYPEWRITERS (I have used two different typewriters so far. One is from the early 1900s. It produces text with an old, nostalgic feel to it. I used it when I wrote *Kafkas brev till Felice* [Kafka's Letter to Felice] in the piece *Metamorfossyndrom*. The other typewriter is probably from the 1970s. It has a nostalgic feel about it too, to some extent, but it also has a certain sense of authority. The font isn't particularly beautiful. In fact it's rather ugly and squashed. But it suits some voices. I can even use two colours with it:

black
red

This means I can vary the tone, but it can also be used for different voices that are somehow similar. My piece *Allt (är (viktigt (Apophenia)))* [Everything (is (Important (Apophenia)))] exemplifies my use of this technique.)

D Y M O (a little plastic machine that stamps letters onto a strip of plastic. DYMO makes things look neat. It is mostly used to put labels on files or drawers – it makes a very orderly impression. The plastic strips that are used come in different colours. I most often use:

black
red).

*REALITY.

What happens to all the things that can't be measured. There's no room for them in reality.

THE PHOTOGRAPH.

One can always question the verisimilitude of photography. It looks like reality. But it isn't reality. Nowadays it's easier than ever to manipulate photographic images. However, there is a kind of photograph that still bears witness to some sort of authenticity. The Polaroid. But on the other hand, it's easy to forge Polaroids too. In *Korrespondens med Inkognito* I worked with two series of Polaroids. One was real, and the other was forged. I'd made the latter by using scanned Polaroid frames and inserting photos I'd taken using ordinary film. Initially, it was quite difficult to tell the two series apart. I don't think anyone noticed the difference when I exhibited the piece.

THE STAGE.

The space in which I show my pieces can be regarded as a kind of theatre except that the performance has either left the space to continue elsewhere or an intermission has allowed the audience to come up and take a closer look at the stage set or the performance itself takes place behind closed doors and the things that remain to be seen are only traces and fragments left there and one could say that the viewer takes on the actor's role entering the stage and interacting with the objects and that this in turn makes me the artist a kind of director of all of this or one could interpret the whole thing in a completely different way.

ANALYSIS.

"I have not always been a psychotherapist. Like other neuropathologists, I was trained to employ local diagnoses and electro-prognosis, and it still strikes me myself as strange that the case histories I write should read like short stories and that, as one might say, they lack the serious stamp of science."

SIGMUND FREUD The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud
Volume II, STUDIES ON HYSTERIA by Josef Breuer and Sigmund Freud, Fräulein Elisabeth von. R,
p.160

Analysis depends on the use of the imagination. I sometimes deliberately over-analyse – going beyond reason in my analysis. Minor details become inflated. Connections form between different things. The seemingly trivial can become very important. Everything bears meaning. Everything is important. I tried to imitate Freud by writing a case study in the form of a short story. The result was the text *Björnkvinnan* [The Bear Woman], which is part of the piece *Metamorfossyndrom*. It was interesting to construct an analysis where I already knew what I wanted the symptoms to signify and where I could create my symbols accordingly. But what's the real difference between a constructed analysis and any other analysis. Analysis rests on an agreement that something always corresponds to something else and doesn't change its pattern. In order to conduct an analysis one needs a basic agreement that something means something else. But is it the case that everything follows the same pattern. Can previous lessons be applied to new events. Things could accrue new meaning. Or might details be precisely that, mere details, maybe even completely insignificant. How can one know whether one has analysed or over-analysed something.

The activity of analysis is a search for meaning. It's nice when events in your life or things you've learned come in useful in new situations. Meaning is important. Because what can you do with nonsense. Things can't simply happen by chance, that would make them seem insignificant. There's a sense of safety in things having a purpose. A thing that lacks purpose is hard to place. That's not the way the world works. Everything is supposed to be sortable. And then archived. Certain people are supposed to be able to find their way back to all the important stuff. Certain people are to be allowed no access to it.

THE ARCHIVE.

"Thus the life of a collector manifests a dialectical tension between the poles of disorder and order."

WALTER BENJAMIN
Selected Writings 2:2, p. 487

In the archive, objects are collected and organised. However, the nature of the order followed varies. To me it's not always the objects in the archive that are the most interesting, but rather the actual order/chaos itself. For my work on *Metamorfossyndrom* I visited the Nordic Museum's archive in Stockholm, looking for the description of different kinds of *björndanser* [bear dances] in Sweden. I noticed there that the information hadn't been gathered in accordance with any particular system. Some of those who had done the research had clearly followed the same set of questions, while others had not:

63

Region: Dalarna

Parish: Älvdalen

Topic: D a n c e

Transcript of a letter to Mats Rehnberg from weaving teacher Liv Trotzig, living in Älvdalensåsen, 23 July 1941

Björndans

"I asked my good friend Säl Gustaf, c.a. 65 years old, about bear dances. At that stage I hadn't heard of this other than in connection with tame bears. Someone else that I spoke to said that children used to play a game by that name. One would stand wide-legged while the other would crawl between his knees whereupon the first boy would grab him and they would roll around together." [own translation]

Or:

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Region: Dalsland

County: Lundal

Parish: Erikstad

Topic: Dances

Source: A.J. Lundgren in Erikstad, born there in 1863.

The term *björndans* is not known here and no such costume etc has occurred here (at least not by that name).

Erikstad, October 1941.

A.J. Lundgren

Sometimes the answers are long and detailed, sometimes there are follow-up questions, sometimes nothing at all (and the selection of places visited seem to have been quite random). One can only assume that this was due to the different characters of those taking the notes, as well as those who answered the questions.

The degree to which deviation/disorder/chaos is permitted to exist in the archive is interesting. The choices made in designing the structure speak for themselves. This generates more information. It isn't always easy to explain deviation/disorder/chaos. The choices aren't all fully conscious. But they are always important.

BIG OTHER/BIG A.

There is a cupboard in my piece *Under konvalescensen(s)*. This cupboard is referred to as ARKIVET [THE ARCHIVE]. During the exhibition the cupboard is locked and

cannot be opened. It contains objects that are not seen by the viewer, only suspected. On the last day of the exhibition, however, the cupboard could be opened. If you found the right key. However, when the cupboard was opened, there was nothing in it except a greeting from *den lilla sjuklingen* [the little sickly one]. The contents had found a new home.

The entire work is based on Jacques Lacan's ideas about the mirror stage. ARKIVET stands in for the unconscious (*le grand Autre*). Although we can't access it, it is a part of us.

"At the end of these two sets of memories he came to a stop. She was like someone transformed. The sulky, unhappy face had grown lively, her eyes were bright, she was lightened and exalted. Meanwhile the understanding of her case had become clear to me. The later part of what she had told me, in an apparently aimless fashion, provided an admirable explanation of her behaviour at the scene of the discovery. At that time she had carried about with her two sets of experiences which she remembered but did not understand, and from which she drew no inferences. When she caught sight of the couple in new impression and these two sets of recollections, she began to understand them and at the same time to fend them off. There then followed a short period of working-out, of "incubation", after which the symptoms of conversion set in, the vomiting as a substitute for moral and physical disgust. This solved the riddle. She had not been disgusted by the sight of the two people but by the memory which that sight had stirred up in her. And, taking everything into account, this could only be the memory of the attempt on her at night when she had "felt her uncle's body"."

SIGMUND FREUD

The Standard Edition of the Complete Psychological Works of Sigmund Freud Volume II, STUDIES ON HYSTERIA by Josef Breuer and Sigmund Freud, Katharina, p.131

The patient Katharina starts recounting two of her memories. She is unaware of the fact that they are relevant for the original account of her ailments. Freud lets her talk freely and later realises how the two memory sequences can explain her symptoms. The fact that she chooses to talk about her memories in this context reveals the link between them and her *hysteria*. These kinds of links are important for the analysis. It's important to see how people assemble things, it's the systems they use that reveal what they are looking for. An analysis strives to decipher codes. THE ARCHIVE is the code. Psychoanalysis is the only way to open THE ARCHIVE and obtain insight into the unconscious. An analysis is the only way for us to open the archive and possibly begin to understand the world.

EVERYTHING IS IMPORTANT.

K L A U S
11+12+1+21+19=64
1 11 20 2
10 9 18
1 9
8

CONRAD

3 15 14 18 1 4

12 1 4 17 3

11 3 13 4*

8 10 9

2 1

1

FRANZ

$6+18+1+14+25=64$

12 17 13 11

5 4 2

1 2

1

KAFKA

11 1 6 11 1

10 5 5 10

5 0 5

5 5

0

APOFENI

1 16 15 6 5 14 9

15 1 9 1 9 5

14 8 8 8 4

6 0 0 4

6 0 4

6 4

2

APOPHENIA

1 16 15 16 8 5 14 9 1

15 1 1 8 6 5 8

14 0 7 2 1 3

14 7 5 1 2

7 2 4 1

5 2 3

3 1

2

A P O P H Ä N I E
 1 16 15 16 8 28 14 9 5
 15 1 1 8 20 14 5 4
 14 0 7 12 6 9 1
 14 7 5 6 3 8
 7 2 1 3 5
 5 1 2 2
 4 1 0
 3 1
 2

APPENDIX.

Waiting for Tumbleweed¹ 2007

The piece consists of three fans placed on the floor along one of the walls of the room. Pots with tumbleweed growing in them have been placed on the floor. The plants grow over the course of the exhibition. The fans are switched on and they generate wind in the space.

Allt (är (viktigt (Apophenia)))² 2008

One thousand yellow index cards have been mounted on one wall of the room. They bear text written with a typewriter or a DYMO. Words and numbers written with the DYMO have been attached to the other wall, as well as a photograph behind a pane of glass. Seven library cards, also behind glass, have been placed on the third wall. The cards placed furthest to the left and furthest to the right bear authentic titles and their authors, i.e. Franz Kafka, *Die Verwandlung* and Klaus Conrad, *Die beginnende Schizophrenie*. The cards between those two reflect a kind of transition from the one to the other.

Korrespondens med Inkognito³ 2009

Part 1: On one wall are letters from *Inkognito* that have been received and opened by *Jorun³*, except for one that she has left unopened. There are also letters from *Jorun³* to *Inkognito* that haven't been opened. They hang in front of lamps so that the viewer can hold them against the light to read their contents without opening them.

Part 2: Receipts, a copy of *The Trial* by Franz Kafka, pages from that book with certain letters cut out (particularly observant viewers will notice that these are the same letters used by *Inkognito* in his letters), a scalpel, envelopes, medicine packaging, Polaroids, a bottle of Portuguese wine called *Incognito*, typewriter ribbon, photographs, a cardboard envelope used to post photos, a diary and a bus ticket to Oslo, with the same departure date as the opening of the exhibition, the day the piece was shown.

Under konvalescensen(s)/Under konvalescensen(a)⁴ 2010

(s) stands for a lower case "s". In the piece the small "s" becomes the character *den lilla sjuklingen* [the little sickly one]. I play the character myself and move into the exhibition space, but the character is only there when nobody's looking. *Den lilla sjuklingen* communicates through the diary. The audience can read the diary to follow the course of events. The beginning of the exhibition also marks the beginning of *den lilla sjuklingen's* convalescence.

Prologue/Letter from *doktorn* [the doctor]: there is a letter from *doktorn* that sets out the premises for the introductory phase. *Doktorn* asks *den lilla sjuklingen* to document all states experienced in a diary that will form the basis of a diagnosis.

(a) stands for lower case “a”. In the piece, “objet petit a” becomes the character *antagonisten* [the antagonist]. The role is enacted by the audience and by me. The audience can write letters to *den lilla sjuklingen*, but the introductions for the letters are set by me. I have a predetermined message in mind that I want to communicate. If the viewers write something else I reserve the right of interpretation when I assume the role of *den lilla sjuklingen*. Two boards of MDF are mounted on the wall of the room where the audience write their letters. There’s a photo on one and a mirror on the other. The mirror has been painted over except for two gaps in the paint where you can still look yourself in the eye.

Although the role of *antagonisten* is played by many different people the image that *den lilla sjuklingen* has of them remains constant. The view that *antagonisten* has of *den lilla sjuklingen* is already determined.

Through a large window one can see into the room where *den lilla sjuklingen* lives. Every day, changes occur in the room: the bed is sometimes made, sometimes not, the lamp is switched on or not, letters are opened and new pages are added to the diary.

On the last day *den lilla sjuklingen* has visited the space where *antagonisten* works. It has been destroyed. The room in which *den lilla sjuklingen* lives has been emptied of furniture. But the letters, the diary and THE ARCHIVE (a little cupboard on the wall) are still there. For the last day I even changed the descriptions in the titles of the pieces. The new list of contents depended on what was left, what had disappeared and what was new.

*Metamorfossyndrom*⁵ 2011

Booklets:

Maxi & Schnute; interviews with Berlin’s city bears, attempt at a correspondence with them, as well as photographs.

Dance: description of “björndans” or bear dancing, descriptions of different forms of bear dancing in different parts of Sweden with drawings, photos and transcriptions of narratives of the bear ballet.

Björnkvinnan: case study signed *Sigmund Freud*.

Tendenser [Tendencies]: various news clippings and Polaroids.

The diary:

Joruns dagbok [Jorun’s Diary] over the course of one year. Contains text, photos, Polaroids, blueberry prints, hair, a tooth and an x-ray. The text is handwritten in pencil, in cursive. It changes over the course of time.

The letters:

Letters to Felice Bauer from Franz Kafka, dated 17 November to 8 December 1912, the period when he was writing *The Metamorphosis*.

The objects:

The Hair, the Bear's Tooth, the String Mute, the Rope, the Mask and the Bullet Casings.

All of the above are presented on a table. There's a tree stump at the table for the viewer to sit on when reading/viewing/touching the piece. Around the tree stump are traces of blueberry bushes. The room is dark but there's a lamp on the table that can be switched on as needed. There are also thin cotton gloves on the table to be worn when handling the objects/booklets/diaries/letters. The table is at one end of the room and at the other end there is a door that can be opened or closed as desired.