



**IMAG**

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# IMAG InSEA MAGAZINE N.º 9

InSEA ART Education VISUAL Journal IMAG intends to provide a visual platform, which, in line with the constitution of InSEA, will help foster international cooperation and understanding, and promote creative activity in art through sharing experiences, improving practices, and strengthening the position of art in all educational settings. IMAG is an international, online, Open Access and peer-reviewed e-publication for the identification, publication and dissemination of art education theories and practices through visual methods and media.

**Guest Editors: Tarja Karlsson Häikiö & Annika Hellman**

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JUNE 2020

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# TRACES

## Visual Arts Education in Sweden

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# TRACES

## Visual Arts Education in Sweden

### Introduction

This special IMAG issue, Traces – Visual Arts Education in Sweden, is published by members of InSEA Sweden, and include 20 visual essays and articles. The aim of this publication is to map the field of Swedish visual arts education by describing, exemplifying and discussing some of the issues relevant in current visual arts education, also of interest to the international art educational field. The InSEA members who are contributing with their work are visual arts teachers in elementary and secondary school, art pedagogues in preschools and museums, doctoral students and researchers in universities, from the far north to the south of Sweden.

In this issue of IMAG the content and the current national visual knowledge field is divided into five themes: Environment & Sustainability, Educational projects, Art & Museums, Gender perspectives and Teacher Education. Through the themes, the reader meets different practices and theoretical perspectives on visual arts education. The visual essays and articles give examples of discusses educational contexts and situations involving children and pupils, as well as visual arts teacher students work, through a combination of drawings, paintings, photographs and texts.

With this contribution – with an aim to trace and depict the Swedish visual arts educational situation on an international map – we wish the reader a pleasant and informative reading.

March 2020

The editors,  
Tarja Karlsson Häikiö & Annika Hellman



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Presentation of themes and contributions



*Photograph from visual essay Dissolving views, Anna Ramberg*

Theme ENVIRONMENT & SUSTAINABILITY

In the first essay, *Art-based Environmental Education and Ecological Literacy as a Foundation for Sustainable Thinking and Acting*, Margaretha Häggström present a study with an attempt to explain the phases of ecological literacy in relation to art-based environmental education based on a life-world phenomenological perspective. This visual essay give examples of how teachers and pupils experience and use the aesthetic values of plants and natural environments. The study is an action-research study that includes

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video-taped, participative observations and interviews, where art-based environmental education is used in order to achieve sustainable sensibility and plant awareness. The results of the study contribute with knowledge about ecological literacy development.

The unexpected, risk-taking and creative actions are core pedagogic concepts in a second-year module in a visual arts teacher BA course at a university in southern Sweden. In the article *From Non-site to Sustainable Design Challenged by Material Transformations and Oral Receptions*, Helena Malm present and discuss the work processes of three second-year visual arts teacher students. The students' processes are about sustainable site-specific design through visual and ethnographic methods which includes documentation and sketching processes in different materials. During the process, the students challenge each other through oral reception analysis, inspired by social constructivist semiotic analysis. This pedagogic design is based on interweaving theory and practice, and the idea that students should develop knowledge in, about, and through images.

### Theme SCHOOL PROJECTS

Oskar Lindvall's contribution is a visual essay called *Notes on lifting art - A creative school project*, that describes a collaborative project between a compulsory school in Sweden and two artists, focusing on strengthening the arts curriculum in secondary school. In the project pupils in school year 9 and the artists, with experience of working with collaborative site-specific street art projects, creates art works in the school environment. The project, that was financed with money from the Swedish Arts Council, was part of Creative school, a national investment in art in schools by the Swedish government. The art project is based on the curriculum for the subject visual arts for years 7-9, where the learning goals encompasses directives on meaning-making through art in society.

The authors of the article *Additional Adjustments in Visual Arts Education*, Lisa Öhman and Barbro Johansson, reports from an ongoing participatory project carried out in an upper secondary school in an Art program in visual arts. The two researchers and a



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visual arts teacher have jointly developed professional knowledge about additional adjustments in visual arts education. The overall aim for the project is to investigate how different additional adjustments can develop the didactic design in the classroom of visual arts. The documentation gathered in the study offers critical reflections on how the teacher can reorganise and provide new and different support structures for learning.

In the article *Performing Otherwise - The Classroom as a Nomadic, Material Space*, Paul Resch and Ulla Lind engages in what the production of differences can mean for pedagogy in knowledge-generation, meaning-making and educational creativity. The aim is to exemplify how open-ended ambiguousness can cross boundaries, propose newness, and unfold knowledge as something playful. An assignment involving an imaginative story used to introduce a Sloyd (Handicraft) classroom assignment for 10 year-olds. The authors argue that by engaging with classroom experience as nomadic, material and performative, we gain intriguing passages into learning where the unexpected, uncertain and ambiguous have the potential to un-fold learning activities in relation to everyday life.

The research by Elin Låby involves the phenomena of how child art intervene with different ideals of schooling and childhood in a historical Swedish context. Her article is called *Interventions of Time – Child Art Competitions in the 20th Century*. It starts with a discussion on the phenomena of child art competitions, where the images from the 1940's to late 1970's are analysed. In the end of the article, the author also discuss how children in the municipality in the city of Eskilstuna worked together with artists in an art project in 2017, creating a sculpture together.

Ulla Lind and Annika Hellman writes about young people's visual and verbal becomings through fabulations, in their article called *Visual Fabulations and a Thousand Becomings in Media and Art Education*. The empirical material draws upon two educational research studies from visual arts and media practices, conducted by the authors. They contribute with knowledge about the potentials of visual arts and media education to fabulate, speculate and thus generate future becomings, that might be realised. By analysing

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pupil's fabrications, the potentiality of visual arts and media education becomes visible; for example unleashing creativity through experimental and open ended learning processes.

Malena Wallin and Charlotta Gavelin present a study called *Teacher Students Meet Their Intended Target Group - Aesthetic Work on Tweenies as a Phenomenon*, with the purpose to investigate how visual representations of identity are created and perceived by future leisure-time center teachers. In the leisure-time center there are opportunities to focus on interdisciplinary, value-based work, not least through aesthetic and creative processes through use of storyline. Through using storyline as a method, the students dared to experiment with other inputs than the ones in traditional teaching. The storyline method helped the students to approach and deal with problems like how to take up difficult subjects in the teaching activities.

### Theme ART & MUSEUMS

In the visual essay *Children and young people meet the art at Moderna Museet*, Maria Taube, Ylva Hillström and Pernilla Stalfeldt writes about young people's encounters with art, and methods for children and young people to meet art. Moderna Museet was one of the first modern museums in Sweden to set up a workshop where children and young people could paint and draw inspired by what they saw at the museum. Since then, the pedagogical activity has developed further. Here three recent projects are presented, based on the museum's exhibitions on climate change, photography and guided art tours for parents with babies.

The visual essay *Project at Svandammsskolan Involving the Artist Marie-Louise Ekman* is written by Margareta Abenius Eriksson. The essay consists of images made by pupils in school years 3-6, as paraphrases on the expressive and colourful art by the Swedish artist Marie-Louise Ekman. In the autumn of 2017 the art project started from an exhibition with the artist at Moderna Museet in Stockholm. Some of the pupils were acquainted with her art works, but for some of them the art by Ekman was intriguing. With inspiration from the painting *Lonely lady*, the pupils talked about what the artist – but

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also themselves – could long for. As a comment to the visit at the museum the pupils painted pictures of what one can long for, which were presented in a school gallery.

Bitte Fossbo writes about a school project with two high school classes in the visual essay *Learn from the Artist!* In the project, the students followed a guided tour at the art museum Moderna Muséet in Stockholm. The students participated in art talks and worked with the museum's collection of 20th century art. The visual essay describes how artistic expressions can be used for creating an understanding of what the world was like in the time when the artists were living. In this way the art talks also functioned as an example of visual arts educational activities outside of school, where the museum functions as a societal arena for knowledge acquisition.

In the article *Acts of Performance - as Research Method and Entangled Ethics*, Camilla Johansson Bäcklund explore how specific processes of art-based research can be described as method using concepts from posthuman theory. She explores boundaries between acting and performing that also grapples with wider ethical aspects produced from, and connected to, artistic practice. She discusses the act of performance in relation to the role of artist, but also as a way to approach the role of teacher through "research led-practice". This, claiming art to be useful within the usually text-dominated context of educational science, and as a comment to how teachers can approach roles, frameworks and learning spaces through Deleuze and Guattari's philosophical theory.

Author Anna Ramberg explore and present the course of events of children performing as guides at guided tours at an annual visual arts degree exhibition in Stockholm. In her visual essay *Dissolving Views - Re-Visualizing the Art Exhibition* the participants made paper fortune tellers to guide visitors through the exhibition. The aim of the essay is to show how both gallery exhibitions and guided tours can be re-visualized, thinking with children. Magic Lanterns, contemporary art, researchers and paper fortune tellers enabled dissolving views and creative ways of looking and learning. The study shows that art is not only about the artefacts; it is about the continuous making of the space, becoming together with the art

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and other visitors.

In this article, *Art Pedagogy – Contemporary Visual Art Studies*, the authors Anna Widén and Hans Örtengren describe a collaboration between a university and an art museum. The Contemporary Art Museum in Umeå in northern Sweden is one of Sweden's largest art galleries for contemporary art. The collaboration involves a course called Art Pedagogy, where an art-pedagogical project is planned, conducted and presented. Two projects collected in the spring of 2018 were selected for analysis. The result show that a win-win situation may occur when actors with different competences and resources participate in a project. For this to happen the schools and teachers need to have an interest in, and be prepared for a project, with an initial understanding.

### Theme GENDER PERSPECTIVES

An image says more than a thousand words, but what does these words mean? Katarina Jansson Hydén gives examples of how art works can be analysed in upper secondary school, with and without a norm-critical perspective. Her essay *See more queer! to enable a broader perspective on existence through a norm-critical analytical thinking*, concerns notions pre-conceiving knowledge and the need of developing understanding through norm-critical image analysis in relation to a social gender context. Through examples with young people, the author discusses how image analysis is colored by normative pre-conceptions, often perceived and staged by gestures or choice of clothing, as well as glances of positioning, gender and spatiality.

The article *Perspectives on Equality and Assessment: Boys' Responses in Visual Arts Education* is written by Lova Palmér, and is centered around conditions for creating equivalence in assessment in the school subject visual arts. The study is informed by a socio-cultural perspective on learning, and the material presented is based on tasks in Palmér's own visual arts classroom from the study year 2017-2018 in the school years 7-9 in compulsory school. One of the main directives in the curriculum in Sweden is that school should be imbued with equivalence. According to previous studies, the

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subject visual arts has a strong female connotation, and according to national evaluations in Sweden girls have better average grades than boys in the subject. The aim of the study was to test and improve teaching practice, pupils' activities and assignments, and to improve the professional skills of the teacher.

### Theme TEACHER EDUCATION

In the visual essay *What happens to image teacher students who work with conceptual contemporary art methods and processes?*, Ewa Berg describes the use of conceptual, contemporary art methods in visual arts teacher education. She shows how visual arts teacher students' critical thinking and active agencies has been developed and empowered by working with contemporary conceptual artistic methods. Equally important is the presenting of students' art work in public spaces. The author further argues that since art-teacher-student inevitably will re-enact their experiences to pupils in secondary school, and thus are able to also carry over processes of empowerment to these pupils, it is of a vital importance to provide well thought-through learning process in higher education.

In the visual essay *Sketching and Drawing as Part of the Learning Process - Showing Ideas and Presenting Projects*, Anneli Martin describes sketching as a part of the learning process in different kinds of teaching contexts with university students at three different faculties and programs in higher education. In the essay, case studies are presented from design courses, teacher education and engineering courses at three universities. Pen and paper, as well as charcoal and coloured crayons, were introduced to the students as analogue tools for sketching and presenting ideas. The essay is a summary of a five-year long study where results are presented of the similarity and difference on use of sketching and drawing as means for thinking and expression in different kind of studies.

Maria Stam discusses the possibility of using artistic role models as a way of understanding Modernism in visual arts teaching in her visual essay *Modernism - Historical Perspectives in Visual Arts Teacher Education*. The author shows examples from several students' duplications and paraphrases of art work from famous

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artists. The visual essay is a narrative description of how modernistic art works can be used as tools in visual arts teacher education to create understanding of how artistic trends affects the society and the ways of seeing in society, creating an insight of art historic, artistic and educational knowledge through the students' art work and pedagogical reflection.

In the article *A/r/tography in Visual Arts Teacher Training Program Examination*, Annika Hellman and Tarja Karlsson Häikiö discusses degree projects in visual arts teacher education. Through the concept a/r/tography the authors aim to reflect and discuss the positions as artist, researcher and teacher, that are interlaced in the future position as, and becoming a visual arts teacher. One student's visual and textual degree project is selected to investigate the exams from artistic, research-based and teaching practice perspectives. The authors highlight and discuss the benefits and limitations of merging these three positions, and what implications these processes might have for visual arts education in general.



**ART**

**&**

**MUSEUMS**

# Art, Kids and Young Adults at Moderna Museet

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## Abstract

In the present text three recent educational projects at Moderna Museet in Stockholm are described in words and images. The first part of the text concerns looking at art and painting with babies. The second part focuses on *Acclimatize*, a website that seeks to stimulate creativity and reflections on climate change. The final section is devoted to children's creative responses to a Francesca Woodman exhibition.

Keywords: visual arts, museum pedagogy, educational museum projects, Moderna Museet Stockholm.

*Moderna Museet has a broad experience in introducing children and young adults to art. It was one of the first modern art museums in the 1960s to start a workshop where kids and teens could paint and draw with inspiration from what they had seen in the exhibitions. Since then, the educational activities have been further developed. Below we describe three recent projects at Moderna Museet.*

**Maria Taube:** Ten years ago, Moderna Museet decided to introduce guided tours for parents with babies aged 3 to 15 months. These tours are led by an art educator and address the adults, who are instructed in how to show the art to their baby. The tour is held at feeding pace, meaning that if a parent has just begun to feed a baby, we continue to study the work of art until they are ready to move on. We look specifically at how the presence of children is portrayed or could be interpreted in the works. “The Newborn” is an egg-shaped sculpture in white marble by Constantin Brancusi; it can be seen as the head of a newborn infant that is opening its mouth to take its first breath. In the painting “The Enigma of William Tell”, by Salvador Dalí, we see a foetus and an infant in a cradle, which could indicate the power wielded by parents, and how it can be abused. Vera Nilsson portrays her daughter Catharina in several paintings, in ways that differ radically from stereotypical images of children in advertising. In the workshop session afterwards, parents and their toddlers have the opportunity to make their own pictures together. Pictures are one of the many languages we are born with and have the potential to develop. To create pictures is part of our inherent desire to communicate. It is important to keep this visual creativity alive. I have met children who had been scared into “silence”. Well-meaning adults may have frightened them by saying that their pictures are ugly or pretty. Small children experience and absorb colours and shapes. When Marcus, aged 15 months, sees a Chinese dragon head, for instance, he starts imitating a cockerel. He has a cuddly toy that looks like a cockerel. It has a device inside that crows when you press it. Marcus has never encountered a real cockerel or heard one crow, but he knows what it looks and sounds like. Cockerels and dragons are really quite similar. He can already tell a dog and cat apart, but he hasn’t learned how to say dog and cat yet. We who know him can interpret his body language and noises and realise that he

knows the difference.

The smallest baby I’ve met who painted was a six-month-old boy. He lay on his stomach on a floor that was brown. Suddenly, a bubbling noise was heard from the floor, the baby had vomited, and a huge puddle of milk spread in front of him. His mother waited to wipe the milk up, and after a while the baby started making happy noises, and his body expressed joy and energy. The big puddle had changed, the baby put his hands in the milk and splashed, making long streaks. His motory actions left a graphic trace that his eyes perceived. That was what he was enjoying.

How and where we use paint, brushes and paper is a cultural construct. Small children paint with flour on the baking table, with suds from the kitchen sink or in sand on the hallway floor. They discover how red raspberry jam changes colour when it mixes with grey porridge. Kids explore different materials. Flour, suds and sand have very different consistencies. Anything can be used to draw.

In the workshop, we offer a palette they can use creatively, the colours are pale blue, brown, red and orange, consisting of dabs of raspberry and blueberry purée, mashed carrots and prunes. There is also spaghetti for “drawing” lines and piles of icing and pearl sugar.

All these materials have different colours and consistencies. Infants explore their different qualities. The idea behind the workshop is also to see how easy and fun it is to make a “mess”, discover and create together. There is no end of things to use for playing with a baby, even in our home environment.



Figure 1: Mother and child looking at Hilma af Klint's paintings. Photo: Åsa Lundén/Moderna Museet.



Figure 2: Mother and child contemplating Pablo Picasso's *The Arm* from 1959. Photo: Åsa Lundén/Moderna Museet.



Figure 3: A pair of shiny shoes in the *Fashionation* exhibition intrigues both mother and child. Photo: Åsa Lundén/Moderna Museet.



Figure 4: Exploring edible paint (yoghurt and food colour) together. Photo: Åsa Lundén/Moderna Museet.



Figure 5: Exploring edible paint (baby formula and blueberries) together. Photo: Åsa Lundén/Moderna Museet.



Figure 6: Vera Nilsson, *Grandma and Little Girl*, oil on canvas, c. 1925. Photo: Prallan Allsten/Moderna Museet

**Ylva Hillström:** Art can alter our perspective on climate change. That was the hypothesis underlying what was to become Moderna Museet's digital platform Acclimatize. The idea was to launch an open, inclusive internet forum for inspiration and understanding, where the focus was on art, creativity and the climate. From 10 October, 2016, to 10 January, 2017, anyone could upload their contributions to the platform. For instance a picture, a video, a text or a song relating to climate change and sustainability.

Some 250 contributions were uploaded to the website. They came from artists, pupils, researchers, animators, activists and inventors of all ages and from all over the world. Most formats were welcome, and there was no jury deciding what was good enough. Instead, we wanted to encourage people to apply their creativity in a broad sense to generate commitment to climate issues. The project was very well received, and many people were clearly longing to express their creativity in a larger context. Thanks to Acclimatize, Moderna Museet reached a new audience. Climate activists who were not familiar with the museum have discovered us, and art lovers who were not engaged in climate issues could get a greater awareness of sustainability through art.

In addition to contributions from the public, we also featured six video interviews with the artists Olafur Eliasson, Maria Friberg, Bigert & Bergström and Isaac Julien, the designer Bea Szenfeld, and the design studio Random International, who all shared their thoughts on creativity and sustainability. Olafur Eliasson talked about the installation Ice Watch, which he showed at Place de Panthéon in Paris in connection with the COP 21 climate meeting in 2015. This work, which he created with the geology professor Minik Rosing, consisted of a total of 80 tonnes of glacial ice from Greenland. Everyone could interact with the ice, feel how cold it was and how it melted under their fingers. Olafur Eliasson described how people could physically touch climate change and gain an understanding of the problem with their bodies.

Apart from the video interviews, the website had a blog – Acclimatize Journal, with in-depth information and various perspectives on the climate issue. Writers were invited and contributed texts on for example social sustainability, sustainable design and climate rhetoric. Hanna E. Morris, a doctoral student at the University of Pennsylvania Annenberg

School of Communication, raised the problems surrounding the prevailing visual climate rhetoric. Images of scientists in white coats, starving polar bears and melting Arctic ice caps cause a feeling that the climate problems are somewhere else, not where we are: "The problem is that doomsday, distant, and technocratic fails to incite public interest beyond the 'already converted' and does little to motivate dynamic policy." A physical experience of climate change, like the one that arose when people were allowed to touch the ice in Olafur Eliasson's installation in Paris, makes it harder to ignore facts than if they are purely intellectual. Emotional involvement is necessary if people are to start taking action and begin living in a more sustainable way.

To ensure that the website would live on after the three open months, the contents were symbolically handed over to four different "guardians": KTH Royal Institute of Technology, the Stockholm School of Economics, CEMUS (the Center for Environment and Development Studies), and the Stockholm Resilience Center.

We would love to see the website reopened for new contributions in the future, perhaps in association with some other museum in Sweden or internationally.





Figure 7: Anna Kristiansson, 2016. The image was uploaded to the Acclimatize website.  
© The artist.

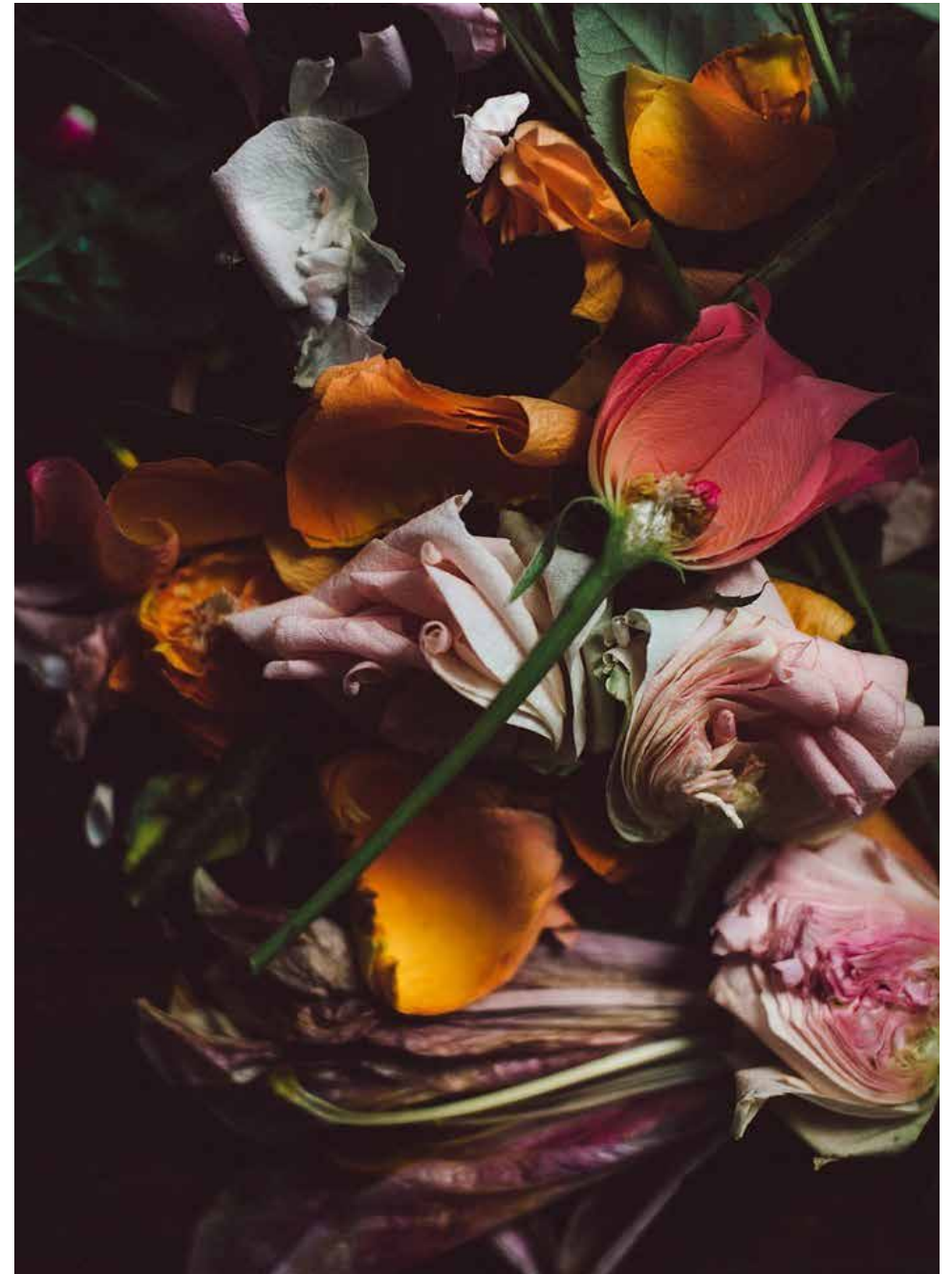


Figure 8: Babes in Boyland, 2016. The image was uploaded to the Acclimatize website.  
© The artists.







Figure 11: Adele Kosman & Hanna Westerling, *No One Notice* (film still), 2016. The image was uploaded to the Acclimatize website. © The artists.

**Pernilla Stalfelt:** In connection to a school holiday, we arranged a workshop linked to the photographic exhibition Francesca Woodman: On Being an Angel. We staged a milieu that was closely inspired by the photographs in the project room Verkstan, and a photo studio in relation to the project room.

Since Woodman is working mainly with black and white images we created an intriguing black and white milieu. The floor was painted in black and white squares and half of the walls in light gray, like a wainscot. We searched for appropriate furniture and found an antique wooden chair which we painted black. It became like a graphical sign, sitting against the light gray wainscot. An old, white chair without seat, from the Gustavian period also fitted in well, along with different sizes of mirrors. Furthermore, we placed a changing screen made by squiggly metal and very thin fabric. Alongside the museum there is a boat builder's yard, there we could borrow and use a large, rough plank from a tree trunk for props.

We looked for clothes and accessories that would resemble the ones in Woodman's photographs, in flea markets and in town. We found flowered dresses, black and white clothes in fur and silk with different luster, a white feather boa, a black boa made out of a fox, white and black angel's wings made of feathers, black high heels in velvet and other objects that could be used for bringing out the graphical expression in Woodman's photographs. We hung white transparent fabrics in front of the windows in the room, to refract the light, or for the children to hide in or to wrap themselves up with.

Before the workshop we did a tour of the exhibition, which is always in a dialogical form at our museum. This means that the pedagogue conducts a low-voice discussion with the children, where he/she listens carefully to what they have to say. The children look at the art and tell the pedagogue what they see and then associate freely. Since our pedagogical program is aimed for children from four years of age and older, there is often a wonderful mix of impressions and comments. Parents and grandparents also participate. Together the children and adults can help each other to catch sight of details and relations in the images. After more or less an hour of tour, it is time for the workshop. Children and adults can try out two different roles within photography

– to be a photographer or a model in the temporary photo studio. They got to choose props themselves. There were a large number of nice, wonderful images and happy visitors during this school holiday.







Figures 12-15: Photographs that children have created after having looked at the exhibition Francesca Woodman: *On Being an Angel*.

