



Book release and conversation:

CURATING BEYOND THE MAINSTREAM / ASSUMING ASYMMETRIES

With Carlos Capelán, Max Liljefors
Introduction to the publications: Maria Lind and
Joanna Warsza
Moderator: Hanna Nordell, Ellen Suneson

A train wagon with rotten apples, an indoor greenhouse presenting an image of the horrific “perfect garden”, and the recreation of a garden that originally stood in the grounds of Auschwitz-Birkenau. The exhibition “Fem trädgårdar” (Five Gardens) took place in 1996 in Simrishamn and Ystad when the artist Carlos Capelán was invited to do a solo show at Kulturhuset Valfisken and decided to shift positions and responded by turning a solo manifestation into a collective experience and a group exhibition proposal.

Five Gardens is one of exhibitions presented in the publication *Assuming Asymmetries: Conversations on Curating Public Art in the 1980s and 1990s* produced by CuratorLab 2020-21. The book revisits some of the most groundbreaking yet under-researched European and US public art

exhibitions of the 1980s and 1990s, from “Konstrukcja w Procesie”, an artist-driven collaboration between the Solidarność movement in Łódź in 1981 to INSITE, an ongoing series of exhibitions in the border cities San Diego and Tijuana. The chapter on Five Gardens builds on interviews with participating artists and collaborators Carlos Capelán, Max Liljefors, Sissel Tolaas, Madeleine Tunbjer, Susan Bolgar and Thomas Millroth.

Curating Beyond the Mainstream: The Practice of Carlos Capelán, Elisabet Haglund, Gunilla Lundahl, and Jan-Erik Lundström is a sister publication to *Assuming Assymetries*. It focuses on decolonial and other non-hegemonic approaches to the profession of curating in Sweden from the 1960s to the early 2000s. The chapter about Carlos Capelán’s curatorial practice is put together by Giulia Floris, Edy Fung, and Hanna Nordell. Through a series of conversations with Carlos Capelán we follow his curatorial work through a wide range of projects, from experiments in the woods of Scania and Tuscany to small-scale international exhibitions at Café Ariman in Lund and



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larger interventions at museums and biennials, including the Venice Biennale. Rather than seeing curatorship as a profession, Capelán proposes it as a practice that is embedded in all levels of art and culture.

Carlos Capelán (Montevideo/Lund) is an artist, curator and teacher. Carlos Capelán participated in the exhibition “Fem trädgårdar” both as an artist and as the curator.

Ellen Suneson (Lund) an art historian and visual studies scholar with particular focus on feminist and queer feminist art and methodology.

Hanna Nordell (Uppsala/Stockholm) is a curator and art historian, currently working as the Managing Director of Swedish PEN. She was a participant in the 2020/21 edition of CuratorLab.

Joanna Warsza (Berlin/Warsaw/Stockholm) is the program Director of CuratorLab at Konstfack and an interdependent curator, editor and writer.

Maria Lind (Stockholm/Moscow) is a curator, writer and educator currently serving as the counsellor of culture at the Embassy of Sweden in Russia. Since 2012 she has been a guest lecturer at CuratorLab.

Max Liljefors (Lund) is Professor of Art History and Visual Studies at Lund University, and previously an artist. Liljefors was one of the artists in the exhibition “Fem trädgårdar”.

The two books are published by Konstfack and Sternberg Press and will be available for sale during the release.

The program is a collaboration between CuratorLab, Konstfack University and the Department of Arts and Cultural Sciences, Lund University.

Images

Left: Installation view, Förnuftets Sömn (The Sleep of Reason) by Carlos Capelán at Kulturhuset Valfisken 1996. Photo Carlos Capelán.

Right: Installing the work Parfym eller natur till kultur (Perfume or from Nature to Culture) by Sissel Tolaas. Photo: Åke Hedström/Malmö Museer