

“As Above So Below”: Lisa Jeannin & Rolf Schuurmans
Österängens Konsthall / Jönköping Läns Museum
Jönköping, Sweden
September 5-October 18, 2020

Remove me from this hall of mirrors
This filthy glass
—“Sirens,” Jim Morrison

Taking the form of a condensed retrospective, Swedish artists Lisa Jeannin & Rolf Schuurmans present an eccentric array of charged works which reflect their sensitive practice and determination. The artists do not fit into one creative camp; they utilize ranging mediums and DIY methodologies, and they embrace difficulty alongside experimentation. Jeannin & Schuurmans are not readily constrained or manipulated by externality—unless their goal is to highlight or dismantle specific forces. Their work is often moulded by personal experience and a childlike curiosity, and their exponential ambitions prove resilient to nefarious criticism—they inevitably push forward, through discordant storms and surfacing plagues. With an irreverence for capitalism and no delight in exploitation, they glide through harsh currents holding a singular torch for themselves and others. At times, this world may appear 'doomed' and the era 'unprecedented,' yet these artists serve as catalysts for generosity, courage and transition. Not everyone is meant to surrender to the flow; some must swim upstream.

Physics offers two contrasting theories which argue that the notion of *free will* is either deterministic (general relativity) or probabilistic (quantum mechanics) in design. When unfolding events lead to both spectacular breakthroughs and cataclysmic disasters, it can prove difficult to identify any clear path towards freedom or manifestation. Such unpredictability leads many to consider alternate, less conditioned tangents for solutions and empowerment. As we make our way through this maze of stimuli, certain keys may open elusive doors or a familiar black dog may lead one away from a predatory minotaur. Veiled oracles, beasts and rogues are waiting to be exposed at every twist and turn; while some place faith in the wavering notion of hope, others take responsibility for their actions. There is a time and place for magic and its practical applications.

Via the works of Jeannin & Schuurmans, one is invited into their realm through alchemical recipes and machines, performance, video, installation, meditation and printed matter (e.g., *The Master's Work*). Multiple points of entry are given, but there is no promise that they will prove sufficient for viewer x. One is able to move between works such as *Spiritus Mundi*, *Drömin kubator*, *Alchemillas Apotek* and *The Unholy* in no prescribed order; one may follow the artists' time-based narrative, or one might locate joy in fragmentation and nonlinearity. A gamble of sorts—the decision to enter this metaphorical 'cupboard' and play, to move towards or away from actual or imagined opponents, to test out a tricky maneuver, to confront, to walk away and cut losses, to join those who own the streets. There is still time to turn to the elements; a strong wind pushes towards love, arctic water reminds one to embrace the cold, the earth promotes self-sufficiency, fire cleans the slate and eradicates despair. Astrological influences prevail; this exhibition serves as a portal for contemplation and evolution—both public and private. Do not forget your dreams.

Trusting intuition and recognizing timeless signs and symbols—they have always been here, in between spheres, repeated once the search begins—is paramount to appreciating cyclical energies. Ripples of causation are of no coincidence. An enigmatic medley of science, mythology, religion and the occult intermingle; the viewer is cajoled to move through each space with an open mind and unjaded heart. One should never lose the capacity to question what is real. There is a wilderness present, where inherited rules and dictations do not apply. To keep your house clean, take your scuffed shoes off at the door. To keep your soul clean, shed inherited assumptions and expectations which may have taken you hostage—keeping you from the truth. And what should be extracted from this unforeseen journey? Jeannin emphatically chimes in: WAKE UP CHILD! YOU ARE FREE!

—Jacquelyn Davis