

Melanie Gilligan

FILMS AGAINST CAPITALISM

3–13 Nov

The exhibition, FILMS AGAINST CAPITALISM, presents five video projects including sculptural video works, resulting from research conducted by Gilligan during her PhD studies at the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm. The works include: *The Common Sense*, *The Bay Area Protests*, *Crowds*, *Home Together* and *Health as Individual vs. Health as Social*.

With her video productions, Melanie Gilligan expands boundaries of film through proposing connections between experimental narratives, possible politics and fictionalized documentaries. She simultaneously incorporates a series of poetic and artistic gestures: a film becomes a sculpture, a documentary transforms into an installation and the plot offers possibilities for variations. Gilligan brings attention to often neglected effects of capitalism on people who are marginalized such as labourers working on low-incomes and older people, as well as to political conditions such as police and state violence. The exhibition at Index is an intense time of content, discussion, dialogue and urgency.

Gilligan's film, *The Common Sense*, is an experimental narrative drama telling the speculative story of a future technology that can facilitate feeling the physical sensations from another person. The film spans the period of a decade when this supposed technology transforms the conditions of work and social life, for the most part in accordance with economic demands.

The Bay Area Protests is a video work about three periods of protest in the San Francisco Bay Area that took place in 2009 and 2011: the 2009 killing of Oscar Grant by the police officer Johannes Mehserle in Oakland; the 2009 university student protests against the 32% tuition increase as a result of the California budget crisis; and the 2011 Oakland Commune encampment during the Occupy movement. With this film, Gilligan escapes from a traditional documentary format to experiment with fictional and speculative narratives, proposing other developments and actions during the observed period.

Crowds follows the subject of looking at an individual's life working in low-wage temporary jobs, the high cost of housing, the difficulty of transport and other living costs to chronicle an unbearable situation.

Home Together is an episodic video series that focuses on communities of older people who decide to live collectively and look out for one another in their aging years. The film is a docu-fiction drama examining aging people who find ways to fight isolation and the related issues impacting the elderly in a society that marginalizes people once they age. *Health as Individual vs. Health as Social* is a two-screen video work exploring health from two opposing perspectives: health seen as only a matter of individual responsibility versus health understood as related to social conditions.

The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation
Kungsbros Strand 19, 112 26 Stockholm, Sweden

www.indexfoundation.se

Index

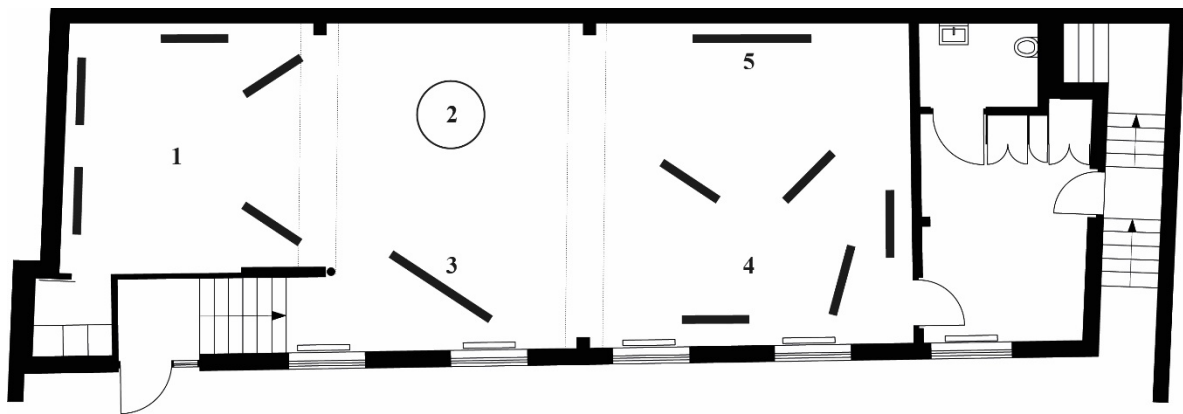
The collection of works by Melanie Gilligan offers a language and format to critically observe political and economic systems and the inherent individual and social difficulties usually erased from the victorious narrative constructions. The exhibition is an intense atmosphere and space for observing these specific places, individuals and situations that are ultimately visible everywhere in today's globalized society.

Melanie Gilligan makes video works that reconceive television drama and non-fictional moving images to investigate contemporary socio-political conditions, especially those systemic relationships between labour, economics, and politics as well as people's roles within them. She studied Fine Art at the Central Saint Martins College of Art and Design, London, and was a fellow at the Whitney Independent Study Program, New York. Selected solo exhibitions include: Kunsthauus Glarus (2017); The Wattis, San Francisco (2017); Trondheim Kunstmuseum (2016), Künstlerhaus, Halle für Kunst & Medien, Graz (2016); and de Appel Amsterdam (2015), Frans Hals Museum - Hal (2014) and Casco Art Institute: Working for the Commons, Utrecht (2014). Group exhibitions include Kunstmuseum Basel (2019); Kiasma, Helsinki (2017); Les Ateliers de Rennes – Biennale d'Art Contemporain, Rennes (2016); Okayama Art Summit (2016); Museo Jumex, Mexico City (2016), British Art Show 8 (2015), Dojima River Biennale, Osaka (2015); Fridericianum, Kassel (2015), and MoMA PS1, New York (2014).

Melanie Gilligan is a PhD candidate at the Royal Institute of Art in collaboration with Lund University and Stockholm University of the Arts. The public defense (disputation) will be held 9 November at the Royal Institute of Art.

Crowds, 2019

Courtesy of Monika Schnetkamp Collection



1. *The Common Sense*, 2014 – 2015
2. *Home Together*, 2020 – 2022
3. *Health as Individual vs. Health as Social*, 2021
4. *Crowds*, 2019
5. *The Bay Area Protests*, 2016 – 2022

The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation
Kungsbros Strand 19, 112 26 Stockholm, Sweden

www.indexfoundation.se