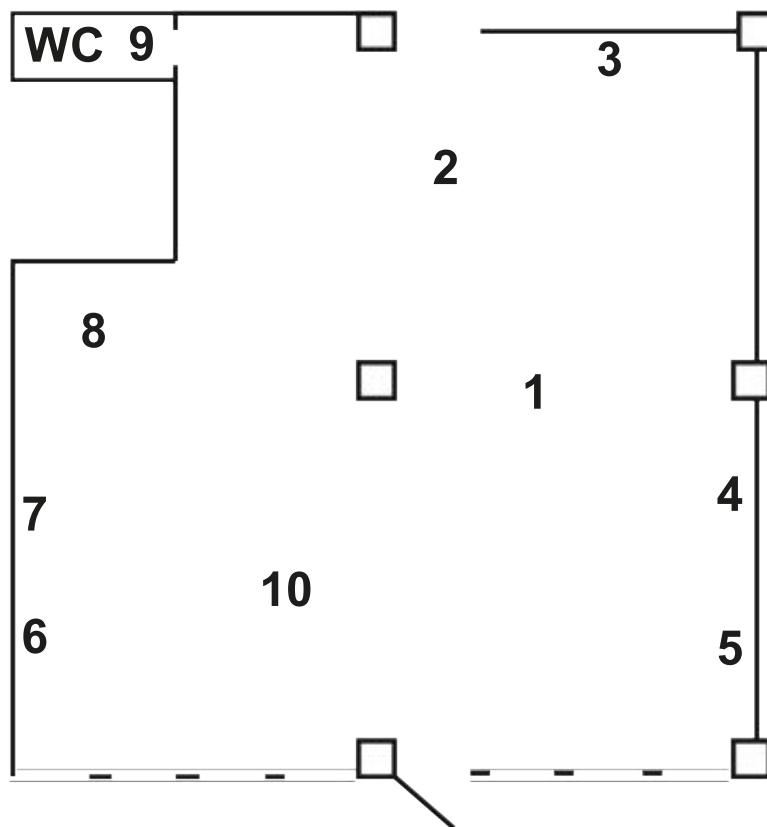


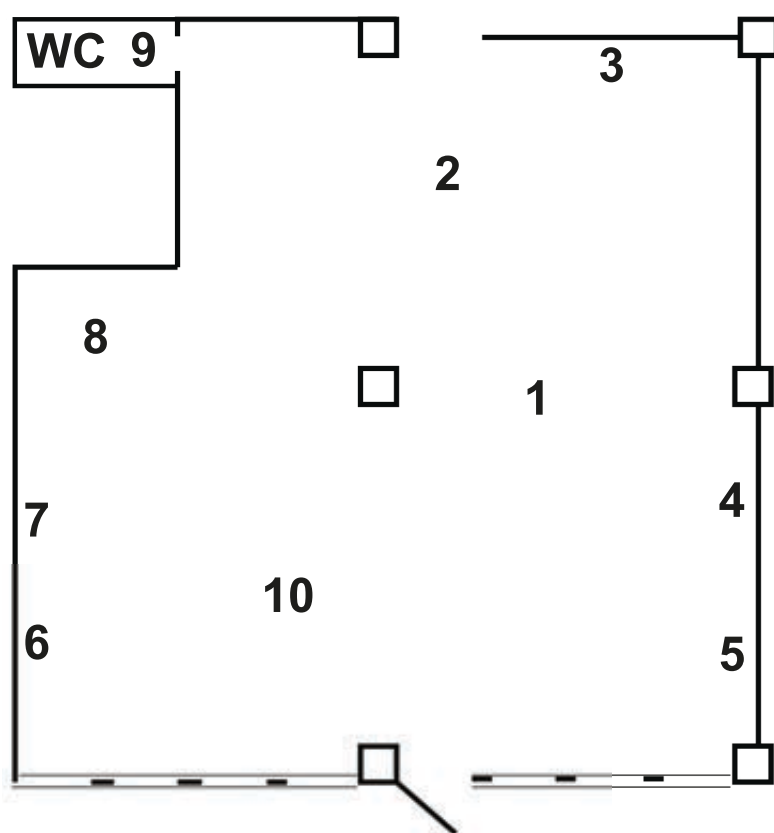
YTSPÄNNING

A bachelor exhibition by Erik Johansson



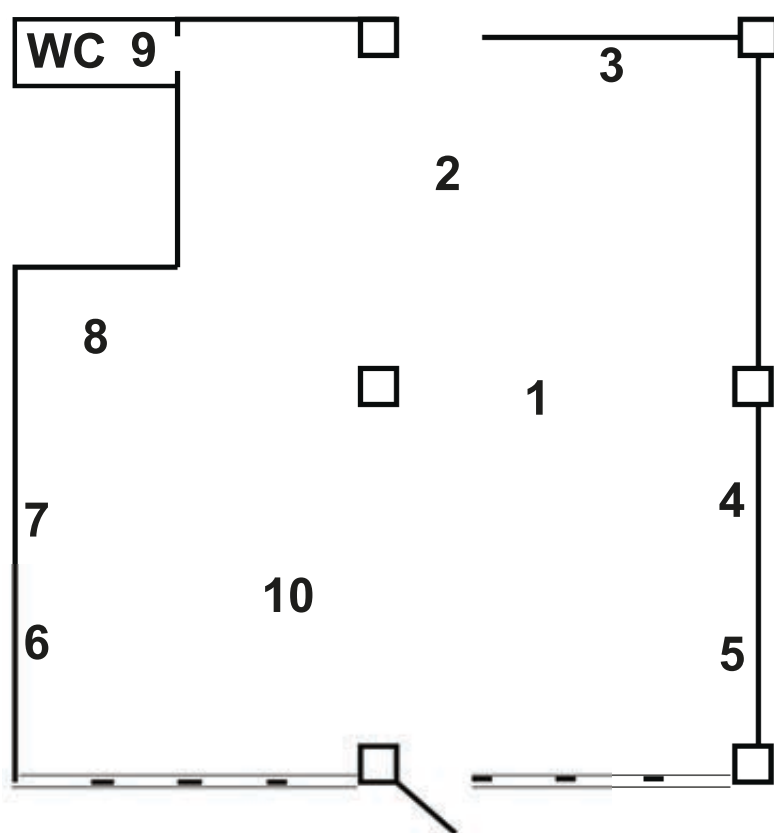
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1. MIST

safety glass, integrity film, motion sensor, steel and aluminum

2. Fa(l)na phase 2

bleached blue collar fabric, steel and string

3. View from nowhere to here

dome mirror in acrylic

4. Every whisper in a distance

steel and seashells

5. Terra Inc.ognito

globe made out of steel and varnished wood

6. Closer away (Object for examination)

magnifying glass made out of nickel silver

7. Double vision from a single point of view

stained glass

8. Worry beads (Abacus)

steel, wire and 1147 cultured, second-graded pearls

9. Post-it note

ink on post-it note

10. Wishing well

steel, distilled water, circulated coins and tears

**A READING
OF SOME OF
THE WORKS**

Worry beads (Abacus)

steel, wire and 1147 cultured, second-rated pearls

Pearls are formed in sea animals such as mussels and abalones, as a defense mechanism against a foreign object that has entered the animal's shell. If the threat can't be expelled, the animal slowly begins to seal it within thin layers of mother-of-pearl until a form of tumor is created. A protective cover that both isolates and integrates the foreign body with its own.

The first cultured pearls were produced in the late 19th century by injecting bred mussels with small pieces of shells. The procedure involves a great deal of stress for the mussels and very few survive more than one cycle in the production chain. Having been a mysterious, natural and unusual phenomenon that only adorned the richest and most powerful, pearls suddenly came to be a systematic, mass-produced product that was exported in millions around the world.

The pearls used in this work are second-rated, cultured pearls that originate from China. Due to poor luster, small size, discoloration or uneven shape they have not been considered to fill the criteria of high quality pearls. Stretched on interchangeable wires the pearls form a kind of morse code of materialized pain, a tactility that speaks of the way we control and structure the world around us.

Fa(I)na phase 2

bleached fabric, steel and string

Consists of a large piece of fabric that was slowly bleached during a previous exhibition. This particular fabric has historically been used in workwear for blue collar workers. Sewn in the shape of a banner, the fabric connects to a sphere where the color comes to bear political, ideological and geographical connotations. Rather than proud it appears almost assaulted where it stands wrapped around itself, bleached and broken.

MIST

safety glass, integrity film, motion sensor, steel and aluminum

Glass is a material intimately connected with modernity. Used for its overview and insight, it represents both secularized consciousness, scientific rationality and democratic values. But glass is also invisible and impenetrable, at the same time a barrier as no barrier at all. In our time, where traditional power structures have withered, where capital moves freely across borders while bodies are monitored and controlled, glass also embodies the qualities of a power that is hard to see materially and politically. A power as fleeting as mist, in a schizophrenic mixture of openness and control.

Terra Incognita

globe made of metal and varnished wood

Terra incognita means "unknown land" and was a term used during the age of discovery to describe unexplored areas that had not yet been mapped. Inc. is also an abbreviation for incorporated and is written at the end of a company's name to show that it is registered on the stock market.

The globe used here was made in 1897, at a time when the black holes on the world map had been filled in, and where large areas of the lands that had been mapped also had been colonized. The few spots left on the globe today are the land masses classified as tax havens according to the EU investigation of February 2020. The violent overwriting points to a change in the political landscape, where a long history of exploitation has taken new forms, and where we gradually have come to destroy the earth we once set out to explore.

Closer away (Object for examination)

magnifying glass made out of nickel silver

In the distance to the foreign there's a void, often filled by our fears and desires. Distance enables a kind of fascination that can be experienced both as exciting and frightening, something that can repel us, or attract us. It can take the expression of fear, or as exotification. If the foreign is obscure, then the magnifying glass on the other hand is a tool that brings the world closer and clarifies it. In a similar way, the image also has the ability to bring the distant closer by portraying it. An image instills a sense of knowledge and control, but is just like in the lens of a magnifying glass a kind of distortion. By making reality into image a distance is re-established, where the real has been pinned down, and where desires and fears once again can take place, at a safe distance from the foreign.

Despite research, I hardly know anything about where this magnifying glass is produced, what place it portrays or who has created the image on the handle. This ignorance has made it hard for me to know how to relate to it, and has led the portrayed place to become a kind of abstract image of foreignness to me, rather than a image of a specific place in the world. It is a stereotype I don't wish to reproduce, but a problem that I've stayed with, lingered on. The act of erasing the people from the landscape could be read both as a violence sprung from othering, or as a violence against the representation itself. The landscape can be seen as a ruined land where a culture and a people have been extinguished, or as an empty projection surface, where the palm trees becomes backdrop for a distant gaze filled with longing.

The magnifying glass is intended to serve as a tangible tool for approaching the exhibition through a different way of seeing, as well as being an object whose inscribed intentions also needs to be examined.

NOTE! Please use hand sanitizer before and after you touch the magnifying glass

Every whisper in a distance

stainless steel and seashells

Haliotis is a genus of sea snails that was first described in 1758 in Carl von Linnés Systema Naturae, a work which has laid the foundation for our current system of biological classification. Locally they have borne many different names; Awabi in Japan, Perlemoen in South Africa and Pāua in New Zealand.

Along the west coast of North America, the shimmering shells were for a long time used as currency, amulets, and ritual objects by the indigenous people before the continent was colonized. Today, in New Age circles, the shells are sold as jewelry, incense burners and gems which supposedly carry balancing, calming and protective qualities. Often the shells are leftovers from the Asian food industry, where the meat is considered a delicacy. Due to their special molecular structure, the shells also have come to be the object of research within genetics. There they are used to develop nanotechnology for computer chips and crystal sensors, as well as to develop durable materials for bulletproof vest, astronautics and biomedical equipment. Acidified seas and commercial overfishing have led to a sharp decline in population in recent decades and many of the genus species are today endangered.

This work has been an attempt to follow the various notions, pleasures and forces that have led a whole genus of species into the realm of classified knowledge, towards the brink of extinction. The shells used here come from a few different places, including one bought by a woman outside Stockholm who have used it for burning incense during ceremonies. Another is from the Swedish Museum of Natural History in Stockholm. Due to a lack of data, the specimen has been considered to have too low scientific value to fit into the museum's collections and exhibitions. Turned towards us on adjustable arms the shells appear attentive, perhaps listening? Their radiating, shimmering surface averts any fixed definition, at the same time as they inevitably become a collection of documents held in place. Luscious subjects as well as instrumental objects of knowledge, entangled in multitude of historical, cultural and personal discourses.