Edge Hill University

RESISTANCE WITHIN THE MUSEUM FAUNA

Challenging Anthropocentrism through Counter Art Histories and Non-Human Narratives

EvaMarie Lindahl

Department of Creative Arts, Edge Hill University

May 2022

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements of Edge Hill University for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Acknowledgement

This thesis would not have come about without the support of my supervisor Claire Parkinson. Thank you for your trust in my abilities and for guiding me through my academic insecurities, keeping me on track while enthusiastically cheering on.

Thank you, Annie Potts and Philip Armstrong, for your enthusiastic response to my work during my first staggering steps in the field of critical animal studies. Getting to know you both during your stay in Lund gave me the courage to pursue this new path of my artistic practice. I hope we can meet again for dinner soon!

Thank you, Emma, Kalle, Kristina, Maria, Johan and Karin at Munka Art School for being the most fabulous team of colleagues who keeps me humble and open to the curveballs of life. And thank you all you students of Munka who trust me to guide you through your unfolding of the world and practice of art. Throughout this endeavor, the collective of Munka has reminded me of art as a practice to engage in the world.

Thank you, Henrik, for answering every question I've had concerning English grammar and the Harvard reference system. Your incredible support and absolute belief in my success have ushered me forward over these six years as we have celebrated life, love and death together.

Thank you, Pia, mamma, Ina, Andria and Elsa, for being my family and the vegan deliciousness and game of charades that come with every loud and energetic family celebration. I feel blessed surrounded by such a strong and independent family.

Thank you, Lisa Nyberg, without your support and brilliance, coming to me from the other side of the phone line, I would never have managed this. You make me smarter and bolder and to have shared this roller-coaster ride with you has been invaluable. I'm looking forward to our celebrations, let's head for the future!

Della, to you I owe everything. I feel blessed to have had you in my life and I will be forever grateful for the turn you gently pushed my life to take. Jodie, to know of the life you have lived, and seeing how you enthusiastically take on the world, keeps me grounded and never

lets me forget what this struggle is all about. I love you both more than I could ever have imagined, and I will continue to fight for the end of the abuse of your kin and others.

The first time I met my dog friend Della she was three years old and came strutting down the sidewalk of my house. She came with her family and when they left, she belonged to another family, me and my husband. I remember how we looked at each other, frightened but excited, we were now responsible for this living being and we couldn't understand that someone actually thought we were capable of taking on such a responsibility. It took a while for me and Della to develop our relationship and after a few months with her in my life I had an epiphany: I knew nothing about other animals. If I could create such a strong bond with a dog, if I could recognise fear, affection, stress, desire, hunger, irritation, joy, longing and many other emotions in her that I didn't think she was capable of, then I probably didn't know anything about other animals. If I was shocked by her ability to think, plan, manipulate and keep track of time it was because I had underestimated her. And probably many others like her. I was shaken to the core by her clear will and integrity. I no longer could trust the way I had viewed the non-humans with whom I share this earth. I had been taught that the inner lives, communication skills and willpower of humans were superior to other animals. That the species barrier was impossible to bridge, that what I saw in them was just myself. I wasn't prepared for the mutual relationship that was ours. My love for her became so strong it made me frightened. Everything in the world was a threat: other dogs, cars, humans and their laws. The love I felt, the relationship I had with her was supposed to be impossible. Everything I knew about other animals had to be renegotiated and re-evaluated.
I knew nothing.

EvaMarie Lindahl October 2019

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Introduction

This research project is engaged in decentring the human in art history in favour of non-human animals. By writing imagined and 'crowded non-human animal autobiographies' in the shape of text-based artworks, performances and video works, the motivation of this research has been to investigate how to create non-human 'counter narratives' to the one-sided and anthropocentric art historic narrative that engulfs the art museum.

Furthermore, this research project is practice-based and interdisciplinary, situated within the fields of visual art and critical animal studies. The art practice of this project has gone through several phases in its pursuit to find form, just as art should, when used as an investigative practice of the world, not knowing the result beforehand. The artworks and the theoretical framework of this thesis have been developed simultaneously and are equally as important. When used as intertwined investigative partners, far from contrasting binary modes, practice has evolved theory and theory has evolved practice. The artworks finalised and presented in this thesis are text-based and have been printed, read, performed, and transformed into video works.

I entered this research project after working as a professional artist since 2008 when I earned my Master of Fine Arts at Malmö Art Academy (SE). Since then I have exhibited my work frequently and developed a research driven way of working that is situated in the intersection of Critical Animal Studies, the visual arts and activism, working with large-scale graphite drawings (Lindahl, 2017) as well as text-based performance work (Lindahl, 2014) and collective self-organisation. Through several projects I have investigated and questioned the writing of art history from an anthropocentric and patriarchal position by correcting, re-writing and imagining new (art) histories (Ejlerskov & Lindahl, 2014) (Lindahl, 2015). These earlier projects, together with the works developed during this research project, have shaped my art practice into what I now call *art history activism*. Art history activism is placed in close connection to artivism. The term artivism is a "hybrid neologism that signifies work created by individuals who see an organic relationship between art and activism" as defined by Chela Sandoval and Guisela Latorre when discussing the work of Chicana artist Judy Baca (2008, p. 82). But where artivism includes any material or technique art history activism

turns to history as its main art material as well as the fuel from which new artworks are developed, and in the center of the work, lies a quest to change norms by re-writing, imagining and suggesting more just histories that holds space for the unheard, ignored and silenced.

This research has been presented throughout its diverse phases of theory and practice at several venues and in different contexts. By invitation the research has been presented and performed at leading art institutions such as the Museum of Modern Art in Malmö (SE) and Lunds Konsthall (SE) (Appendix 2). Furthermore, parts of the research and practice has been performed and shown at two separate art exhibitions in Sweden and Germany and it has been presented and performed at seven academic conferences in four different countries, one by invitation and six through answered calls (Appendix 3). In relation to the academic conferences the text-based artworks have been performed live as guided tours at the National Museum of Fine Arts (SE), the National Gallery of Denmark (DK) and the Bishop's House in Lund (Appendix 2). Currently a book about the research project is in print and will be published by the Swedish publishing house Aska Förlag (Appendix 5).

Since this research project is committed to finding ways of challenging an anthropocentric art world, the research approach is qualitative. This means that this project is not trying to measure, but rather experiment, experience and re-think while investigating how an artistic practice can concentrate its attention to the lives, histories and roles of non-human animals in art production while working towards the goal of ending the killing of non-human animals in the name of art.

The architecture under which this research project has developed and plotted its course has been supported with the help of the following three pillars: critical animal studies; the fauna of the art museum; and anthropomorphism. A short introduction to critical animal studies and the term the 'fauna of the art museum' is found in the introduction while anthropomorphism is discussed in chapter 2.

Critical Animal Studies (CAS) is an academic field dedicated to the "abolition of animal exploitation, oppression, and domination" (DeMello, 2012, p. 5). CAS recognises the intersection of several forms of oppression such as sexism, racism, classism, and other

hierarchical ideologies to understand the structures that govern the asymmetries of power between species. Additionally, it is an academic field that "actively seeks to link theory to practice, analysis to politics and the academy to the community" (Lund University, 2021). During the seven years this research project have been underway the interest from the arts community in the obsolete dichotomy of human and non-human has increased. In the precarious times of the Anthropocene, one of the strategies of the arts have been to embrace the academic field of Human Animal Studies (HAS) when trying to make sense of it all. Since this is a project situated within visual arts it is therefore necessary to point out the difference between the two fields and position this research project within CAS. In short, HAS' focus lies in the study of the interactions and relationships between human and nonhuman animals (DeMello, 2012, p. 5) whereas CAS is motivated by a "firm, unwavering normative commitment to ending the exploitation of nonhuman animals for human consumption and pleasure" (Pedersen & Stanescu, 2014, p. 263). This means that this research project is in conflict with the practices and parts of the art world where non-human animals are seen as resource and material and used instrumentally in the production of art works.

The fauna of the art museum is not only the title of this thesis, but also a term that is developed for this research project because of the necessity to hold space for a group of non-human animals whose commonality is that their habitat is the art museum: Some are seen in the open, named and portrayed in paintings, on display within frames and hanging on the walls of the museum. Many are hidden within artist materials when grinded to become pigment, glue and paint. Others are objectified as study material or leave traces of themselves as drawings in the archives. Their habitat, as well as their final resting place, is the art museum. They are the casualties of art production. But even though the art museum is a final resting place for many non-human animals, it is also a place that is full of life and histories that refuse and resist an anthropocentric narrative. The hoof of a horse, a cow resting, the feathers of a parrot are drawn in charcoal and kept in remembrance in archives with perfect humidity and condition to last for hundreds of years. The varnish of the paintings is perfectly cared for. If we listen carefully, dare to imagine, and refuse to read the portrayed non-human animals symbolically, we can hear the fauna of the art museum calling

through the cracks of the paintings and from the darkest tombs in the shape of museum archives.

When we use animals as metaphors, they lose their physical form in this world, their sounds and their stories disappear when turned into extras in the lives of humans. They "lose their fur, the curve of their spine, the spines of their tongue" (Pattinson, 2017, p. 96) and according to Danielle Sands "we are responsible for rewriting anthropocentric histories" (2019, p. 95) if we want to create "alternative cross-species futures" (ibid) that are less violent towards non-human animals. This is the reason why, instead of being seen as representation for human affairs and emotions, each painted individual that is investigated in this research project, is treated as a once breathing individual with emotions, history and agency since an individual of another species is not "merely a concept or a metaphor but, instead, a real, living and embodied *person* who requires our respect, support and solidarity" (Pedersen & Stanescu, 2014, p. 263). In this research project agency should be seen through the lens of critical animal studies and understood as an ability to express and act upon desires and wills as well as being an effective agent towards one's own oppression (adapted from Isaac, 2002, p.129), this means that one of the critical points of this research is to extend the notion of agency towards other species. When agency transgress human exceptionalism, a space is created for the interpretation of non-human animal body language, facts, and histories that points to acts of resistance already present in history. It is when opening up to non-human animals as agents and the refusal of symbolic readings of their portrayed bodies, together with the embracing of anthropomorphism, when addressing the ground, chopped and torn individuals of the fauna of the art museum, that it becomes possible to imagine narratives that put forth a multitude of real life experiences of the consequences of art production to non-human animals. From the cold winter landscape of painter Gustaf Cederström a capercaillie declares:

> I refuse to think of myself as a symbol, and therefore urge you to read me as living. Because once I was alive. Or once someone was alive for someone else to kill and later study. Humans wants other animals to be still so that they can study. So that you can create a perfect watercolour drawing of the back feathers of someone like me. And it takes several. I am not only one. I am a

series of me. I am an US. (Lindahl, 2019)

The chapters of this thesis are crowded with non-human animals. Geese, cows, squirrels and many more are travelling through and over the text, generously carrying the artworks, discussions and readings forward. Together they form the fauna of the art museum and I think of them as active agents of this research project.

The first chapter of this thesis focuses on the role of the artist as activist and the ethics of art production. Further on visibility and invisibility is discussed with the help of the absent referent (Adams, 1990), and the vegan killjoy (Stanescu, 2013; Twine, 2014) is presented as an artistic strategy. At the end of the chapter I suggest looking outside of the frame at the art museum as a way to find the individual and personal histories of non-human animals that challenge the asymmetric power relation between human and the fauna of the art museum in art history.

The focus of the second chapter is on pursuing and developing practical strategies that can decentre the human in art history. I start with a discussion of different perspectives on anthropomorphism and what to be mindful of when embracing anthropomorphism as a radical tool to envision new perspectives. I then discus the concepts of storying and non-human animal autobiographies with a critical look at who has the power in these histories. The chapter continues with a presentation of the methods developed within this thesis when writing, reading and performing counter art histories in the shape of ‘crowded non-human animal autobiographies’.

In the third chapter, the thesis changes character into an autoethnographic account of the research process and production of the text-based artworks that takes the reader to the Bishop’s House in Lund, Nationalmuseum in Stockholm, the National Gallery of Denmark, as well as my own studio. In this specific research project, the lived experiences that are researched are not only the experiences of the researcher but the imagined experiences of the fauna of the art museum. Therefore, throughout this chapter the human ‘I’ is strongly present, since I, with all my anthropocentric shortcomings, need to be responsible for the subjective human-centred person that I am, when imagining, writing and performing these histories, that never could or should be neutral.

The documentation of the artistic practice, presentations and publication of this thesis, listed earlier, can be found in the appendix. The appendix ends in practice with a toolkit written as exercises for the visitor to the art museum to bring along and experiment with when entering the exhibitions and collections of paintings portraying non-human animals. The toolkit aims to create a feeling *with* another instead of looking *at* others, and the courage to engage in art works from a position of empathy towards all species. Therefore, this way of ending the thesis is a hope for a beginning of a collective practice of feeling *with* when standing in front of painted and portrayed non-human animals.

This thesis is written from the firm and unwavering conviction of the rights of all living beings, and that the killing of non-human animals taking place within the production system of visual art needs to end. Please be mindful of the agents in this thesis with whom you don't share the same species-specific experiences. Engage in a reading of this text which allows an imaginative state that practices a *feeling with* another, and that does not search for an objective truth but instead a shared experience of being alive.

CHAPTER 1

Art, Artists and Non-Human Animals

This chapter focuses on the role of the artist and the ethics of art production in relation to non-human animals. The first section starts with a question of trust, the second continues with a discussion on invisibility and the absent referent (Adams, 1990) in relation to art museums as well as the vegan killjoy (Stanescu, 2013; Twine, 2014) as an artistic method. The third section ends the chapter with looking at art through the lens of the frame.

The following section starts with a discussion about whether the contemporary artist can work with, and use non-human animals as material without oppressing? Is it at all possible from the human centred position that we hold, even though the intention of the artist might be one of collaboration and celebration of life?

Further on I will give examples of artists who holds their ethics high in relation to non-human animals in their art practice, bridging the alleged gap between the role of artist and activist. I will contrast this with examples of artists without this intent, giving examples of artworks that are explained as, or interpreted to, care, honour and celebrate non-human animals while, at the same time, in practice, being visually and materially violent.

Non-Human Animals in the Hands of Artists

In the book *The Postmodern Animal,* Steve Baker (2000) investigates how images of animals and animal bodies have been used in modern and contemporary art works. He discusses how animals have entered the "stage" of art and how artists through, and with, animals have investigated different ideas of art, identity and creativity. He does so by looking at several different artists and their work from a variety of different perspectives such as Joseph Beuys performance *I Like America and America Likes Me* (1974), where a caged living coyote functioned as a symbol for meditating on violence in the US, and Olly and Suzi who started a collaborative art project based on fieldwork where endangered animals are studied

in their natural habitat, sometimes even participating in the work (Williams & Winstanley, 1993 - ongoing).

Baker continues his investigation of how artists think and relate to the non-human animals that they use in their art production in several articles and books following *The Postmodern Animal* (2000). In *Artist/Animal* (2013) Baker gets closer to the artist. He visits them in their studios and has more intimate discussions on their thoughts and ideas concerning their art and the animals incorporated in it. He is, in this book, not so much discussing the aesthetics or symbolism of the animal body or imagery but rather more how artists think about and work with animals, their use of animal bodies and dealings with animal life. However, even though Baker is dedicated to the investigation of the animals in art production his readings of the artworks in *Artist/Animal* are anthropocentric since he neglects the ethical side and practical consequences of art to the non-human life and dead bodies present on almost every page. The most striking example being the description of Catherine Bell's performance where she sucks the ink from 40 newly killed squid. He writes: "Nothing (to this viewer, at least) seems ugly or repellent about this performance: it's caring, attentive, beautiful" (2013, p. 20).

The contemporary artist of today is part of a society where the use and slaughter of animal bodies are normalised, and ethics concerning humans rarely apply to animals in production. When Baker writes: "to impose questions of ethics before even attending to the art is, at the very least, to risk failing to take those practices seriously" (2013, p. 3) he is continuing a normalised anthropocentric viewpoint where neither the artist, or the one writing about art and artists, have to take animal life seriously. Baker believes that artists can operate with integrity in relation to the animals that they use. This belief is a dismissal of the ethical aspects of art production and the consequences it has to non-human animal lives.

In *Leonardo's Choice: Genetic Technologies and Animals* (2009) Carol Gigliotti raises the ethical problems she experiences in a new art form that she defines as an art practice involved in creating living beings using technologies and proposes it is "disastrous, not just for animals, but for the planet at large" (2009, p. 78). Unlike Baker, Gigliotti addresses the ethical concerns when it comes to artists dealing with non-human lives in their practice. She

writes:

> Humans have been manipulating animal life with impunity for thousands of years. Most do not find it alarming, but customary. If … [the artist's] … goal is to encourage people to understand the distortions a human centered view causes in recognizing the continuum of life, more manipulation of life forms will most certainly not contribute to that project, but only serve to reinforce it. (2009, p. 64)

Gigliotti continues by critiquing the assumption that art is consistently experimental, non-conformist and radical. She argues that a complex topic does not exclude ethical concerns but rather that "one of the main reasons for understanding complexity is the insight it may offer to ethical choice" (2009, p. 63).

Baker and Gigliotti discuss Gigliotti's writing in a published e-mail conversation (Gigliotti, 2009) where they get deeper into the ethical topic of animals used in art. In that conversation, Baker explains that one of the reasons for not expressing his ethical disapproval towards how artists and their art works sometimes use non-humans is, "Because my conviction that recent and contemporary art can offer fresh perspectives on ethical questions … has led me to the really quite uncomfortable view that it is not only 'ethically sound' art, for want of a better term, that can do this" (Gigliotti, 2009, p. 81). Baker continues: "Do I think that artists messing around with animals in laboratories is wrong? Yes. But my disapproval alone is not going to stop them doing it" (Gigliotti, 2009, p. 82). He uses Felix Guattari's thoughts on art as an activity that is "unframing, of rupturing sense" (Gigliotti, 2009, p. 82, quoting Guattari) to explain his position and to which Gigliotti answers: "But what about other functions of art: to make sense, for instance, to creatively look for alternatives, to offer connections where none were seen before" (2009, p. 85).

As argued by Gigliotti, one of the important functions of art is to look for new ways, and it is our obligation to speak up if we stand in front of the work of an artist whose practice is built on the upholding of oppression. To exploit the bodies of other animals to produce art is not care, and even though it can sometimes seem hopeless, disapproval always needs to be voiced. There is nothing so sacred with art that it cannot be critiqued. To critique and look critically at the practice of artists, and the effects their practice can have on life, is to take art

seriously. Artworks are never isolated from the consequences of their production and always created through a serious of decisions that could have taken another path, towards a trajectory that aims for a practice that is caring and attentive towards all species.

Giovanni Aloi both believes in and distrusts the artist as he sees art's potential power as a changer of norms. In *Art and Animals* (2012) he wants us to unlearn the animal, by this he means to

> suspend one's knowledge of nature in order to reconfigure it, or perhaps to let it reconfigure itself; it means to deconstruct the certainties offered by nature, in order to acquire a critical awareness of the relational modes we establish with animals and ecosystems, and simultaneously to find the courage to envision new ones (2012, p. xvi).

Aloi wants us to look at how other kinds of "otherness" have been contested and changed and argues that the struggles of animals should be a part of the same discourse as earlier human struggles. He wants us to question the binary of human and non-human so that we can envision new systems and power relations. He writes: "The woman, the slave, the queer, the black and the savage have all been re-learnt through a continuous and infinite process of unlearning and reconfiguring. It therefore follows that the animal, the ultimate otherness of the animal, another subject of power relations, would also become part of the discourse" (2012, p. xvi).

Even though Aloi sees the potential of art he is not certain of the ethics of artists. In a chapter titled 'The Death of the Animal' in *Art and Animals* (2012), Aloi discuss the question "can contemporary art productively address the killing of animals?" (2012, p. 124), a question first asked by Steve Baker in *Killing Animals* (2006, p. 70). Later Aloi answers this question with a yes and gives several examples of artists and art works who he believes successfully do this, such as the charcoal drawings of Susan Coe, the sculptures of Joana Vasconcelos and the photographs of flattened roadkill by Steve Baker. Aloi argues: "it could be concluded that contemporary art can indeed productively address the killing of animals, but only when artists refrain from using animals as metaphorical figures, and instead hold the animal at the core of their concern" (2012, p. 136). As argued by Aloi, to be able to

effectively tackle the killing of all kinds of animals we need to reach beyond thinking of their presence as metaphorical but we also need to move beyond thinking of the bodies of non-human animals as material. To address killing, while at the same time killing through the choice of material, becomes a hollow act, and far from productive.

Further on Aloi concludes that "it is not in those works involving the actual killing of animals that we encounter productive opportunities" (2012, p. 136) to address the killings of other animals. But it is neither so in the works that merely document the dead bodies of other animals. When it comes to the aestheticizing and documentation of dead animals, are we not, in a world where the bodies of other animals are endlessly flattened, torn, killed, eaten, bought and sold, ground and in constant process of transformation, already used to watching and emotionally distancing ourselves from dismembered bodies? Instead, let us call for work that imagines the life that was lost, that was here before the car, axe or butcher.

It is safe to say that when non-human animals are caught up in the net and system of art it most often does not play out in their favour. The risk of getting killed, used or imprisoned by artists is quite high. However, there are artists who oppose this violence and are trying to find ways of working with a practice that is either questioning this set up through their modes of production, their subject matter, or both.

Artist/Activist or Artist/Tyrant

Yvette Watt is an artist, scholar and animal activist who has found a way to intertwine the roles of artist and activist in her art works. One of her latest projects *Duck Lake* (2016) is an amateur performance of Tchaikovsky's *Swan Lake* ballet, aboard a floating pontoon-stage in the Tasmanian wetlands. It took place on March 15, 2016, at the same time as the opening of duck hunting season and caused a temporary halt in the hunting of ducks and the accompanying drinking and shooting. In her text *Making Animal Matter: Why the Art World Needs to Rethink the Representation of Animals* (2011) Watt brings up the rise in artists' interest for the animal. However, when analysing exhibitions which address this theme, she finds that most of the artists still use animals as "metaphors, signifiers, or representations of the human or Other" (Watt, 2011, p. 122), and that the animal still functions as "generic

signifiers for the natural world, rather than individual sentient, and self-interested beings" (ibid, p. 121). This suggests that the art community's increasing interest in the animal Other doesn't necessary extend to a consideration of the ethics of exploiting animals in the name of art.

Watt stresses that artists need to address the ethics of the use of animals in art production, and that not doing so "will prove to be a weakness, not just in terms of art and exhibitions on the subject of human-animal relations, but in our society in general" (ibid, p. 126) and believes that artists should not accept the conservative notion against artists being political in their work. She writes: "I think there is a gradual acceptance of the value of this kind of work. After all, artists working in the field of gender politics have been doing this for a long time and it is accepted. I think the resistance to art that deals openly with the ethical issues surrounding human-animal relations is based on the same resistance to these issues in general society" (Watt, 2016). As Watt argues, in these precarious times, where we are frequently informed about the consequences of oppression towards other animals on a global level, it is important that the contemporary artists address their practice and the consequences it can have on non-human animals and adapt accordingly for a less unjust future for all species.

The work of Minneapolis artist Mary Britton Clouse focuses on "telling the stories of real individual animals" (Clouse in Potts, 2008) with a specific focus and interest in chickens. Some of Clouse's work includes portrait of birds she has rescued and rehabilitated. By making portraits Clouse wants to address the chickens' personality and sentience and points at the biased ideas of art history when it comes to who can be portrayed. "Human portraits have always held an esteemed place in the history of visual arts, but animal portraits, unless sanitized into metaphor or decoration, are marginalized as sentimental and not serious art" (Clouse in Potts, 2008). Just as Watt does, Clouse argues for a more politically engaged role of the artist and believes that "the days of the self-involved artist marketed to wealthy patrons needs to be history. This is a world in desperate need of deep insights and compassion, critical thought and creativity. I used to think politics had no place in art, now I see them as inseparable" (Clouse in Potts, 2008). Both Watt and Clouse have come to these

conclusions by denying the dichotomy often set up by the field of contemporary art between art and activism. Instead, Clouse points out the similarities:

> I think activism, if it's well done, oftentimes is almost like a performance piece, because you need the same creativity, you need the same kind of open ended approach to be able to roll with the way things unfold. A lot of the same things that make for good art can make for good activism. (Clouse in Baker, 2013: 108)

While artists may often claim they are doing critical work, it is clear that animals, for the majority of contemporary western artists, are seen as working material. After reading an interview of artist Richard Sierra in *Bomb Magazine* Aloi interprets how Sierra is thinking about the use of non-human animals as art material, writing that "the animal is perceived as a material to be used in the work of art, like pigments, or a simple found object, like any other inanimate object that could become part of any artistic compositions" (Aloi, 2012, p. 7).

It has been ten years since Watt warned of the consequences of failing to address ethical concerns about the use of non-human animals in art production. Since then, the Anthropocene has become a buzzword in contemporary art and the interest in human-animal relations in art has become common. For example, in Sweden several institutions have curated exhibitions that want to "renegotiate human relations to other species"[1] (Uppsala Konstmuseum, 2019) and urge us to "rethink the human position in the world" (Bildmuseet Umeå, 2019) while stating that "all animals, also humans, must live symbiotically in order to survive" (Lunds Konsthall, 2021). But are the exhibitions, conferences and artists who claim they are interested in these topics truly renegotiating and rethinking human relation to other species? If more and more artists work with this subject matter, turning their interest to non-human animals, without a critical perspective on their own studio practice, and a real concern of how their work effects the non-human animals they use in a practical or metaphorical level, this will most certainly make sure that more individuals are harmed.

[1] My translation from Swedish into English, original quote: "omförhandlar människans relation till andra arter"

What follows are three critical readings of the ethical perspective of artworks exhibited in contexts where the human-animal relation has been in focus.

Signe Johansson's *Protector* and *Bloodline 1*

At the conference 'Multispecies Storytelling' at Linnaeus University, and the accompanying art exhibit with the same name, artist Signe Johannesson's participates with the work *Protector* (Johannessen, 2018) and *Bloodline 1* (Johannessen, 2018) at Växjö Konsthall. *Protector* is comprised of a large aluminium frame hanging from the ceiling, within the frame the hide of a horse is mounted and spread open with the help of wires, hooks and chains. The hair of the horse is reflecting the artificial light in the exhibition halls and the tail of the horse is hanging over the frame touching the ground. Near this work, Johannesson's *Bloodline 1* is installed with Rorschach-like prints made from the blood of the emptied and mounted horse. The horse whose body is used in both of her artworks is not named, but on the opening Johannessen explains that it was a sick and injured horse who was going to die anyway. The horse wasn't killed because of this art piece but after their death the horse's body has been transformed and shaped into art. This horse is a metaphorical representation for the horse Rauen that Johannesen grew up with, a childhood friend who her father killed, creating a traumatic scar (TT, 2018).

The need to process the traumatic experience of Rauen's death is the driving force of Johannessen's works at the exhibition. In relation to the exhibition in Växjö Johannessen organized the performance *Protector.* The aluminium frame was taken down from its suspended position and placed on the floor and young girls from the local horse-riding club was instructed to braid and groom the hair, thus "caring for a friend" (Växjö Konsthall, 2019). The work *Protector* is described as a work that is honouring the horse, and the performance as an act of care and ritualistic memorial. However, even though *Protector* and *Bloodline 1* speaks about patriarchal violence, that violence is not transformed into care, instead, the violence is perpetuated, ritualized and taught in the artworks. The violence doesn't end with the killing of Rauen but is reproduced and projected onto a nameless horse by Johannesen in the processing of her trauma and the production of installation and performance. To put

another's skin on display without consent is oppression because, as Carol Donovan who has been active in the development of the feminist animal care theory puts it, "we should not kill, eat, torture, and exploit animals because they do not want to be so treated, and we know that. If we listen we can hear them" (Donovan, 1990, p. 375). In the works of Johannesen we see oppression, the disciplining of non-human and human bodies and the metaphorical use of animal bodies for human affairs and dramas, disguised as care.

On the conference site one can read that "multispecies stories challenge anthropocentric narratives that tend to depict the bodies of other species as rhetorically passive resources for human appropriation" (Linnaeus University, 2021). In Johannesen's artwork non-human animals as passive resources isn't challenged but uphold and reinforced. This critique is also aimed at the conference organizers and curators involved. How blind are we to violence if we don't recognize it right in front of us, especially in the context of a conference whose whole purpose is to take other species seriously?

Fredriks Strid's *All Birds of Sweden*

On the website of Swedish artist Fredrik Strid one can read about the art project *All Birds of Sweden* (Strid, 2021) that in the end of 2021 will be comprised of 274 sculptures of birds in life size cast in candle wax. Strid is thinking of his practice as one that "pays great attention to nature" (ibid) and the choice of material for the sculptures is chosen from his inspiration of the Christian vanitas tradition. He writes that his project "articulates the ephemeral qualities of life" (ibid) but also touches upon migration. Looking at the sculptures with the vanitas inspiration in mind can be read as a warning, that these species he so carefully casts are about to burn and disappear. Just as the vanitas teaches us one should celebrate life and be prepared for death and extinction we also need to be prepared that nature is threatened.

This is not the first time that Strid produces artworks in candle wax. In the work *Monument to a Newborn Boar* (2019) it is difficult to define whether the animal is sleeping or dead. The placement of the sculpture on top of a pedestal creates a sense that this specific individual might be the last one of its kind, and therefore, held on reverent display. It is a work that celebrates and mourns life.

But not all life. When diving deeper into the materials of the sculptures it becomes clear that the candle wax is made from the fats of non-human animals making the sculpture instead about the fact that all lives, using the words of Judith Butler, are not grievable (2009, p. 22). The individual animals whose body fats has been melted and sculpted into the shape of birds and boars are invisible, making the sculptures of Fredrik Strid, even though the focus of his work wants to evoke respect towards the living, part of a practice that kills in the process.

Paula Pivi's *We Are the Alaskan Tourists*

At the exhibition *We Are the Alaskan Tourists* at Arken Museum of Modern Art outside of Copenhagen in late 2020 it was possible to see the famous polar bears of Italian artist Paola Pivi. For several years now she has exhibited feathered life-sized polar bears in bright colours in human-like body positions. One does yoga, another dances, one sways from a trapeze and another is taking a nap on the floor. It is hard not to giggle and the colours give it a playful and whimsical atmosphere. In an essay by Max Delanay written for Pivi's exhibition *You Started it … I Finish it*, at the National Gallery of Victoria, her "deep concern about the vulnerability of the natural world" (Delany, 2014) is explained as the driving force behind Pivi´s work. When asked what sort of feathers the polar bear´s brightly coloured fur is made of Pivi replies "turkey feathers" (Pivi, 2020). Again, the body parts of non-human animals are transformed into sculptures of other species and said to speak about the fragility of life and nature when it rather speaks of the blood thirsts of humans and the speciecist tradition of art production.

The works discussed above are framed or narrated, by the artist, curator or museum, as having a genuine interest in nature and life of other animals and presented at exhibitions and conferences with a critical theme of human-animal relations. But the life of animals always seems to be distant. It is not the factual physical animals in the materials that the work is sensitive to, rather it is something far away, speaking of another time and place, and not something that also happens repeatedly in the studio. This distance and tendency of lack of critical self-reflection when it comes to production, makes it possible to ignore the wrongdoing towards non-human animals made in the name of art. This is especially unsettling when it comes to artworks interested in the ideas of ethics, politics and justice

without reflecting on the lives being extinguished in the process. As explored by Aloi (2012), Baker (2000; 2013) and Gigliotti (2009) awareness of the role of the non-human animal in contemporary art is slowly being granted more and more space, but as Watt points out that doesn't mean that the art work and artists necessarily change their use of animal bodies (2011). For this to happen we need to constantly push the ethical discussion not only when it comes to representation but also when it comes to the choice of material.

Non-Human Loss, Disappearance and Death in Art

The previous section included examples of different artists' positions towards the use of animal bodies in contemporary art production. This section will further discuss the invisible non-human animals in art production as well as the vegan killjoy as an artistic method, and the difficulties that can occur when an artwork with a vegan ethic is put out into the world. It starts with the thinking of feminist scholars such as Sara Ahmed and Carol J. Adams with specific focus on the feminist killjoy developed by Ahmed (2010) and how that has been transformed, by Richard Twine (2014) and James K. Stanescu (2013), into the vegan killjoy. At the end of this section the artworks of Angela Singer are addressed to question if a vegan art practice can contain non-human animal body parts of any kind without falling into a speciesist commodification of animal bodies.

The Absent Referent at the Art Museum

Susan Willis writes in her text *Looking at the Zoo* (1999), in a passage inspired by Donna Haraway's writing in 'Teddy Bear Patriarchy: Taxidermy in the garden of Eden' (1984), on the natural history museum, that: "Enter a natural history museum and you are in the presence of loss, disappearance, and death. (...) With its mummies, artefacts, mannequins of tribespeople, skeletons, fossils, minerals, and taxidermy, the museum is a funereal garden" (Willis, 1999, p. 673). If the natural history museum is a funereal garden, then what is the art museum? A place that meticulously uses and displays every part of the animal body; hair of ox, camel and squirrel in brushes; hooves, skin and rind in gesso and watercolours; wax from

bees in crayons and canvases; ox gall and cochineal in pigments; stuffed animals in installations; painted animals in hunting scenes; collected animals in menagerie-paintings; animals cut up, divided, and on display. If the quote mentioned before was to be re-phrased to fit a museum of art, and the bodies of animals were made visible, it could be: Enter a museum of art and you are in the presence of loss, disappearance, and death. (...) With its paintings, ready-mades, sculptures, photographs, signs and printed material, the art museum is a butcher's store placed on the foundation of a slaughterhouse. And surely, in such a place, there must be a way for the vegan killjoy to be an ally to the fauna of the art museum.

Carol J. Adams argues in the *Sexual Politics of Meat: A Feminist-Vegetarian Critical Theory* (1990) that there is an absent referent behind every meal of meat. By that she means there is a living being who has been forced to become meat. The absent referent functions to protect the conscience of the meat eater and separate the meat eater from the animal and the animal from the meat. The function is to keep the bodies eaten separated from the knowledge that the meat was once a living animal and therefore the meat eater can eat a living being with good conscience. Adams argues: "The absent referent permits us to forget about the animals as an independent entity; it also enables us to resist efforts to make animals present" (ibid, p. 66). In the same way as there is an absent referent at the dinner table, there is also an absent referent in the museum halls that makes us able to look at paintings of non-human animals without seeing independent entities and acknowledging the once living who have been studied, sometimes killed and ground, in the process of creating the paintings we look at. Further, the separation of the museum visitor from the once living is strengthened by the facts that most non-humans in the museum setting are neither named, categorized or addressed and are often seen as symbols for human affairs.

Even though non-human animals are often visually present in art they are very much silenced and mostly present to tell the story of one or several humans. Horses fight our wars (Martszen, 1630-1636), lions are placed in the centre of menagerie paintings (Roos, 1722), dogs sit on the lap of their queen (Fildes, 1893). Since artists keep using the non-human animal's body to tell our human ideas about ethics, politics and justice, the art community is crowded with non-human animal absent referents, of animals killed and silenced for art. Adams argue: "In experiencing "art," I don't mind being disturbed, upset, dismayed, or

depressed, but I don't want to be the second hand beneficiary of violence, engaging in an act of viewing that can only exist because someone's death was willed, because someone's energy was the means to another's ends" (Adams in Potts, 2010, p. 17). She continues: "Artists, like butchers, are granted the right to take animate property and make it inanimate property" (ibid).

In the above quoted interview of Adams, by Annie Potts, Adams get into the difficulties in critiquing art's violence towards animals, specifically critiquing the use of medium, in this case animal bodies, and that such a critique, according to Adams, often is rendered as non-valid and uninteresting in the world of contemporary art. Adams questions the species-specific privilege that has created a space "in which art that uses the abject bodies of dead animals exists and can be protected" (ibid, p. 19) and when ethics stops at the species line she wants us to ask why. The arguments "because they are animals" (ibid) and "because they are artists" (ibid) are insufficient as answers to her. This research project will search for new kinds of questions and answers that can put the non-human animal in the centre of art production while renegotiating the species privilege of the human artist. This will be done by looking at strategies of activist, artists and academics who has gone through similar struggles when met with resistance towards a new and critical perspective of practice.

The Vegan Killjoy as Artistic Method

The feminist killjoy, is a concept that Sara Ahmed writes about in her text *Feminist Killjoys And Other Willful Subjects* (2010). According to Ahmed the killjoy is a feminist that uses the killing of joy as a feminist strategy reacting to the norms of a sexist society. She explains the killjoy by placing us at the family dinner table:

> Around this table, the family gathers, having polite conversations, where only certain things can be brought up. Someone says something you consider problematic. You are becoming tense; it is becoming tense. How hard to tell the difference between what is you and what is it! You respond, carefully, perhaps. You say why you think what they have said is problematic. You might be speaking quietly, but you are

> beginning to feel "wound up," recognising with frustration that you are being wound up by someone who is winding you up. In speaking up or speaking out, you upset the situation (ibid).

Ahmed means that the feminist killjoy is someone who starts noticing a gap between what one should feel and what one feels and speaks out about it. Activism is according to Ahmed something that can start from this gap. She writes: “You cannot always close the gap between how you do feel and how you should feel. Behind the sharpness of this "cannot" is a world of possibility. Does activism act out of this gap, opening it up, loosening it up? Not to close the gap between what you do feel and what you should feel might begin as or with a sense of disappointment” (ibid). According to Ahmed this disappointment, and the fact that the feminist killjoy does not participate in the joy makes us/her “strangers, or affect aliens, in such moments” (ibid). This makes the feminist killjoy a figure of unhappiness to others, because she disrupts the agreement concerning that which is supposed to make her happy. “Affect aliens are those who experience alien affects. You are unseated by the table of happiness” (ibid). The reason why the feminist killjoy becomes unseated is a joy built on oppression. To not be happy is to be killing joy, someone else’s joy, based on inequality.

Even though Ahmed use a family situation to describe the effect of being and feeling the killjoy it is easy to see the position of the killjoy acted out at work (when not laughing at a sexist joke in the kitchen), at the local bus (when not smiling at a “compliment” on body form), at the opening of an exhibition (when pointing to the dead animals) or at the museum when speaking of the difference between whose history is told and what is seen, in short, the killjoy can find joys to kill wherever there is oppression. The challenge is to fight the urge to close the gap with a smile, even if it makes us uncomfortable to ruin the atmosphere, but rather seeing it as a possible place for change. Ahmed argues:

> The feminist killjoy ‘spoils’ the happiness of others; she is a spoilsport because she refuses to convene, to assemble, or to meet up over happiness. In the thick sociality of everyday spaces, feminists are thus attributed as the origin of the bad feeling, as the ones who ruin the atmosphere (ibid).

But is it really she who ruins the atmosphere? Ahmed asks us to question if it is the feminist killjoy who caused the bad feeling, or if she merely pointed out a bad feeling that already existed.

Just as Ahmed investigates how the killjoy can create bad feelings and change in a sexist society, Richard Twine (2014) investigates how vegans are the destroyers of good atmosphere and creators of change in a society of speciesism by investigating the feminist killjoy from a vegan perspective. In the text 'Vegan Killjoys at the Table—Contesting Happiness and Negotiating Relationships with Food' Twine interviews forty vegans, based in the UK, by focusing on how their change to a vegan diet affected their relationships, the social consequences of this change and how this is negotiated. Twine writes that just as with the feminist killjoy, the vegan killjoy denies others happiness, in this case, "omnivore happiness", by "actively refuse offerings of non-vegan food" (ibid, p. 626) at the dinner table. By not closing the gap that has been opened by the denying of happiness he suggests that vegans challenge the process of animals becoming absent referents by making oppression visible. He writes: "The vegan contests this process (of making invisible, writers remark), re-imagines the animal, recalls the relational violence and, sometimes, speaks out" (ibid).

Even though food is absent in the writing of Ahmed, Twine takes us back to the dinner table where Ahmed sits and where the feminist killjoy performs resistance towards a dominant order and places a vegan by her side to which "happiness is exposed as anthropocentric" (ibid, p. 638). He writes: "the table is a more obvious site for the vegan killjoy than the feminist killjoy" (ibid, p. 626) because "the table is materially and symbolically central for those reiterated performances, disruptions, inquisitions around counter normative eating practices, around counter hegemonic ways of valuing other animals" (ibid).

James K. Stanescu, another scholar discussing the similarities of the vegan position and the feminist killing joy, writes of his own personal experiences of being one of those whose very presence becomes a source of conflict and uncomfortableness:

> Every feminist, every anti-racist, every queer theorist, every animal scholar, every person who has ever seriously engaged with the vicissitudes of identity and justice

> are all sick and tired of being that woman. Trust me, I know I am sick of being that guy. The one at the seminar or conference, after an anthropocentric and unsupportable point is made (we are humans because we play, or write sonnets, or whatever the idiocy is), and I sigh and raise my hand and they don't want me to be that guy, but trust me, I don't want to be that guy even more. It gets so bad that other people make me into that guy even when I am not being (Stanescu, 2013).

So why do we choose to be put in this position (if it ever is a choice)? Can we find community, collective joy and hope for change when inhabiting these roles? Stanescu writes: “sitting apart can allow us to build new communities and new commons” (Stanescu, 2013). Twine continues the trail of thought by suggesting that these communities together “create new meanings and practices that underline the shared joy in living outside and beyond social norms once thought fixed” (Twine, 2014, p. 638), and Ahmed believes that “a killjoy can be a knowledge project, a world-making project” (Ahmed, 2010). So, Ahmed, Stanescu and Twine all believe that there is a transformative power in the killjoy, that the killjoy can be the changer of norms and a strategy for changing dominant hegemonies. However, as Stanescu points out, being a killjoy at one table does not mean that you are the killjoy of another, you can be the upholder of a dominant hegemony and produce your own need for happiness. Stanescu writes: “Our wilful subjects can be turned against others, to not hear for the thousandth time how our campaigns are sexist, racist, and exclusionary” (Stanescu, 2013). Therefore, we need to listen and be aware when we are the destroyers of happiness to see the opening of gaps and possibilities of change, and we need to listen when we are exposed to a killjoy destroying the happiness we find unproblematic.

This research project takes on the vegan killjoy as an artistic method, embraces the bad feelings, searches for the emotional gaps and forces them to stay open for others to feel. If trusting in the transformative possibilities of killing joy, the vegan killjoy can be used as an artistic tool when critiquing the overwhelming use of animal bodies in the production of art. When searching for the artworks that I focus on in my guided tours and writing of counter art histories, that is the foundation of the art practice of this research; I have actively looked for this gap and let it guide me.

The killing of joy in this project has taken several forms, such as putting the experiences of violence against other animals into words during a guided tour, counting the bodies of non-human animals in the museum halls or pointing to the fact that the benches that you sit on while looking at a painting of a group of milk cows are dressed with the skins from young calves. There is a carnage going on in the world, and the artist and the art museum is part of that, and it is the role of the killjoy to address this fact and make it visible. The celebration and joy in experiencing art sometimes needs to be transformed into unhappiness, in the prospect for change.

Artistic Strategies and Failures

Angela Singer is an artist who discusses the rights of animals through her work while she, according to Giovanni Aloi "reinvents the trophy into an object of pain and shame" (Aloi, 2012, p. 42) and writes that she "calls her technique 'de-taxidermy', as effectively the making of her work first involves the undoing of that done by the taxidermist" (ibid). The basis of her work is animal bodies comprised of recycled taxidermy that has been donated and that she, through her work, transforms into memorials of the once living animals turned into objects of taxidermy. It is important to her that she does not work with animals that are alive or have been killed because of art. In an interview in the Italian magazine *Belio*, quoted by Steve Baker, Singer expresses how important the material is to her:

> For some artists the material they use isn't important, it's just a way to achieve the object. For me the material, the animal, is everything. Working with the animal body makes me want to investigate what it could have to do with me, with the relationships I have with animals in the world. It confronts me in the safe space of my studio with real everyday brutality (Singer in Baker, 2013, p. 168).

Singer wants her work to invoke strong emotions in the viewer and, in a correspondence with Baker, Singer explains that the role of the artist is to "shock the viewer into a new way of seeing and thinking about the animal" (Singer in Baker, 2013, p. 165). She resists offering an explanation of what her artworks means or how it should be interpreted and argues instead that "This wanting to be told what the piece means, so that the viewer knows how to feel about it, is to me really disconcerting." (Singer in Baker, 2013, p. 175). She does not

try to control the audience reading of her work and in an unpublished interview by Baker she states of her audience: “Do many of them *get* the animal rights message? Some do, some don’t.” (Singer in Baker, 2013, p. 176)

Someone who did not “get” the true meaning of Singer’s work is the Australian art collector and New Zealand sheep farmer Sir James Wallace when buying a piece of art by Singer titled *Chilled Lamb* (Singer, 2004), as pointed out by Philip Armstrong in a presentation at the Pufendorf Institute, May 2016. Armstrong explains that *Chilled Lamb* is

> made from the preserved body of an early lamb who died of hypothermia, decorated with jewelled ice crystals and blowflies. It was purchased by Sir James Wallace, one of NZ’s foremost art patrons – a man who can only play that role because of his considerable wealth, which derives from his ownership of New Zealand’s largest meat rendering business. This seems an extremely provocative fact: why might such a person buy such an artwork? (Armstrong, 2016)

Looking closer at the collection of the James Wallace Arts Trust one finds that *Chilled Lamb* is not the only work of Singer’s in the collection. Wallace has purchased five pieces from the artist. Michele Hewitson, a journalist for the *New Zealand Herald* interviewed Wallace in 2011 and even though Wallace claimed that the art trust and his own personal wealth are separated she draws the conclusion that presumably “the dead animals pay for the art” (Hewitson, 2011). As artists we risk that our work is interpreted in ways that are opposite of our own intentions. There is no way to be in complete control of the reading of a work, and perhaps we do not want to have complete control. But we can, and need to take, responsibility for the production and how the work is displayed and consumed.

I have been in a similar situation as Singer. In 2011 I made a drawing as part of the project *Johann, David and I* that was critiquing art collecting as a way to build personal cultural capital (Lindahl, 2008). The artwork was sold to one of Sweden’s billionaires, who also happens to be one of Sweden’s most active art collectors and CEO for a Konsthall. The critique was swallowed whole by the very power it was critiquing. By critiquing the system of art collecting by doing a collectible work, I did not only critique the system but also made an artwork that kept on upholding it. From this perspective and experience, when looking at

the work of Singer, I read her work as it is critiquing a system of commodification of animals while still turning non-human animals into a commodity. The work produced keeps on maintaining a system of oppression by being a part of a capitalist system where animal bodies are sold, no different than at the butcher shop.

As discussed, Singer's works are diligently used by Critical Animal Studies and Human Animal Studies scholars (Armstrong, 2016; Baker, 2013 and Aloi, 2012), as examples of art that in a successful way raise questions concerning the use of animals in society. But if artists are truly going to be critical of the way animal bodies are used in society, we then need to look hard at our ways and modes of production. I argue that the bodies of non-human animals should be taken out of the system of art production, just as the bodies of non-human animals should be taken out of the human food chain. Our power over other animals is too great and our anthropocentric mode of thinking too strong.

The Frames of the Fauna of the Art Museum

The previous section ends with the claim that art has an impact on real animals' lives. That discussion is continued in this section by looking at how different cultural and verbal frames effect how non-human animals are treated and used in art production. By looking closer at the roles of physical and mental frames within the system of art production, and with the help of such thinkers and writers as Randy Malamud, John Berger and Judith Butler, it becomes possible to envision an artistic practice that tries to break and challenge these frames when aiming for a positive change for non-human animals trapped within the production system of art.

Frames inhabit several layers of an artistic practice. They are present when visiting the art museum as golden frames surrounding the paintings, when stepping into the studio to bubble wrap framed drawings, while writing the framework of a research project and when framing animals as metaphors, symbols and materials to be used in art works. Frames and framing define and contour this research project especially the physical frames at the art museum. It is the non-human animals within the frame, the ones painted, that are my

concern within this study. And it is with them in mind that the frame will be viewed upon from different perspectives.

Non-Human Animals Being Framed

According to philosopher José Ortega y Gasset in *Meditations on the Frame* (1990) we need an isolator between the real world and the imaginative world of painting "and that isolator is the frame" (ibid, p. 189). He claims that the frame

> has something of the window about it, just as the window is a lot like the frame. The painted canvases are portholes of ideality which are perforated in the mute reality of the walls. They are openings of illusion into which we can peer, thanks to the beneficent 'window,' the frame. (1990)

The thinking of the frame as an open window is contested by John Berger who rather believes the frame to be enfolding a safe, he writes:

> We are arguing that if one studies the culture of the European oil painting as a whole, and if one leaves aside its own claims for itself, its model is not so much a framed window open on to the world as a safe let into the wall, a safe in which the visible has been deposited. (Berger, 1972, p. 109)

From the perspective of Randy Malamud there seem to be no neutral frames but rather that the frame encompasses Berger's safe which can be seen as a cultural prison made up of several digital and physical frames within which representation of animals take place. According to Malamud we "place animals (and note the imperial resonances of using the word 'place' as a verb rather than a noun)" within "human representations" which makes it impossible for us to come close to an "objectively true account of who animals are" since the visual culture of humans is "inherently biased and self-serving" (Malamud, 2012, p. 6).

The impossibility of a true account is discussed by philosopher Judith Butler when they write about the expression *being framed* and the consequence this framing can have for individuals. Being framed, meaning that one is accused of a "false accusation" "guides the interpretation" of the one being framed (Butler, 2009, p. 11). According to Malamud, being

framed makes the framed non-human animal “disempowered, delimited, and found guilty (guilty, perhaps, of being wild, or dumb, or bestial, or violent, or simply non-human)” and their penalty is to lose “their freedom, their rights, their identities, their self-determination” (Malamud, 2012, pp. 5-6) which makes it possible for the contemporary artist to transform a living body into lifeless material without moral consequence.

Looking at the work by Malamud, Berger and Butler and the concept of framing suggests ways in which this process of becoming material can be stopped. This approach builds on their ideas to suggest that the production of an artwork and practice can challenge the prevailing hierarchies of power between human and non-human.

The Frames of the Art Museum

In *Why Look at Animals* (2009) John Berger points out the similarities between the cages of the zoo and the frames at the museum. How the movements of the visitors at the zoo can be compared to the ones visiting the art museum, how they move from one tableau to another and another and another and another. He writes:

> A zoo is a place where as many species and varieties of animals as possible are collected in order that they can be seen, observed, studied. In principle each cage is a frame round the animal inside it. Visitors visit the zoo to look at animals. They proceed from cage to cage, not unlike visitors in an art gallery who stop in front of one painting, and then move on to the next or the one after next (ibid: 33).

In *Ways of Seeing (1972),* Berger investigates the history of the European oil painting and the authority, wealth and social status that, according to the author, it celebrates. He writes that “art makes inequality seem noble and hierarchies seem thrilling” and that the authority of art can be exploited “to glorify the present social system and its priorities” (ibid, p. 29). When he is specifically looking at the genre of animal paintings he states that animals are seldom painted in their natural condition but that they often are “emphasized as a proof of their value” and that they “[emphasize] the social status of their owners” (ibid, p. 99). To Berger, animals seem to be given the same value as objects in the oil paintings that he

studies and writes that “animals [are] painted like pieces of furniture with four legs” (ibid) and therefore have no history or agenda within the frame but also suggests that by looking outside of the frame new contextual readings can be made.

Consequently, when doing a reading of the painting *The Ambassadors* by Hans Holbein the Younger (1533) (Fig 1), Berger does not look at “the level of what it shows within its frame, but at the level of what it refers to outside it” (Berger, 1972, p. 94). By looking at what the painting contains, what is placed on the shelf in the painting and how the two ambassador’s eyes are directed, he *paints a picture* of the world that the painting is a part of. What is *inside* of the frame tells Berger something of what is *outside* of the frame, of the current situation, state of affairs and authority. In Berger’s reading *The Ambassadors* bear witness of “a stance towards the world … The two ambassadors belonged to a class who were convinced that the world was there to furnish their residence in it. In its extreme form this conviction was confirmed by the relations being set up between colonial conqueror and the colonized” (Berger, 1972: 96).

Fig 1 - Holbein, t y, Hans, 1533., *The Ambassadors*

Malamud, who just as Berger makes a connection between the organization and framing of animals at the Zoo with that which is framed and placed at the art museum, raises the difference between being *inside* and *outside* of the frame in *An Introduction to Animals and Visual Culture* (2012), he writes:

> Framing delineates a boundary that defines the realm in which we allow the framed creature to exist. This framing privileges the space *inside* the frame – here is where we will acknowledge you, it says; here is where we expect you to be when we come to look – and it voids the space *outside* the frame as inaccessible, irrelevant, out of bounds." (Malamud, 2012, p. 5)

He continues with stating that the frame is the "unchanging constant" of the art museum that "impose a categorical uniformity upon an otherwise diverse and eclectic set of images" (ibid). The frame is there to signify that "someone has organized and curated these imaginative image-texts into a coherent collection" and that the frame is a sign of "readiness for our cultural consumption" (ibid).

According to Malamud the frame is a witness of human organisation, of a selection that has been made by the one in power. That which is framed is presented as ready to be seen and consumed. Or rather that which is *inside* a frame is ready to be seen and consumed. Malamud traces the oppression of the frame to the invention of zoos in the early nineteenth century where "people began taking animals from where they belong and resituating them where they do not belong, but where it is more convenient for people to experience them", that is within the frames, and within these frames made of metal bars, golden wood and digital screens, the non-human animals are placed to satisfy "our cultural cravings" (ibid, p. 3).

Now, let's return to Butler and *Frames of War* (2009), in which they present five essays discussing how violence towards humans in contemporary war is framed differently depending on who the victims are and how this framing "work[s] to differentiate the lives we can apprehend from those we cannot" (p. 3). Butler claims that the different ways we

look at people afflicted by war, through the framing of images and text, creates a divide with "grievable lives on the one hand, and devalued and ungrievable lives on the other" (2009, p. 22). Butler writes:

> specific lives cannot be apprehended as injured or lost if they are not first apprehended as living. If certain lives do not qualify as lives or are, from the start, not conceivable as lives within certain epistemological frames, then these lives are never lived nor lost in the full sense (ibid, p. 1).

Even though Butler's text is discussing the value of human life in contemporary war, this analysis can be applied when looking at the systematic killing of non-human animals and how these animals are framed as grievable and ungrievable, which becomes a matter of life and death in an anthropocentric society. Most of the animals that come in contact with contemporary art are turned into material or symbolic gesture without hesitation. Butler writes: "An ungrievable life is one that cannot be mourned because it has never lived, that is, it has never counted as a life at all" (2009, p. 38). If this is translated into a context of contemporary art it can be argued that animals turned into art material are ungrievable lives, never really counted as life but rather counted as material.

Butler continues investigating the expression *being framed* and argues that "a picture is framed, but so too is a criminal (by the police), or an innocent person (by someone nefarious, often the police), so that to be framed is to be set up, or to have evidence planted against one that ultimately 'proves' one's guilt" (2009, p. 8). Butler explains: "If one is 'framed,' then a 'frame' is constructed around one's deed such that one's guilty status becomes the viewer's inevitable conclusion" (ibid). When applying Butler's concept of the frame when looking at depicted non-human animals we see not only framed but also *framed* individuals: They are not only physically framed but also framed as guilty of being non-human animals and therefore sentenced to become material and object in art history. However, to Butler this framing is not constant. Just as Malamud and Berger writes of the inside and outside of frames so does Butler. She asks us to call the frame into question and "show that the frame never quite contained the scene it was meant to enclose, that something was already outside, which made the very sense of the inside possible, recognizable" (2009, p. 9). Therefore, when a frame is broken a "taken-for-granted reality is

called into question, exposing the orchestrating designs of the authority who sought to control the frame" (2009, p. 12). According to Butler the frames functions normatively: "Frames are operations of power" (2009, p. 1) and since power relations can shift, get contested and change, the frames can be broken, and "call certain fields of normativity into question" (2009, p. 24).

Therefore, one way to challenge the prevailing hierarchies of power between human and non-human, with the help of Berger, Malamud and Butler, is to look *outside* of the frame in paintings of non-human animals and search for the personal histories of the non-human animals inhabiting them. The aim of this project is to write these personal histories and make the invisible fauna of the art museum visible and active agents, part of the resistance towards the unjust power relation between humans and non-humans set by the production of contemporary art. By using anthropomorphism and extending our empathy towards non-human animals while focusing on the consequences of art for the fauna of the art museum, the culture of humans, in which non-human animals are forcefully a part, becomes visible as an oppressing, dominant and selective history.

CHAPTER 2

Decentring the Human in Art History

The previous chapter centred on the ethical practice of artists and art production. The main focus of this chapter is the histories of the fauna of the art museum and the methods of writing stories that encompass non-human animals. Further on I will discuss the way in which art history, as well as other histories, are based upon an imaginative practice of storying and how the human centred writing of history can be challenged when imagining and listening differently.

In the article “Postcritical or Acritical? Twelve Steps for Art History Writing in the Anthropocene” art historian Dan Karlholm asks for “new ways of composing histories of art”, adapted to the anthropocentric times we are living in, free from the “urge to conquer the world and suppress nature to progress, develop and advance, at all costs” (2020, p. 150). As a critical animal scholar my suggestion of a new way is to compose counter art histories that don’t suppress and neglect the experience and realities of non-human animals. There are histories of violence within art production that need to be addressed, and joy that needs to be killed to create new modes of thinking, imagining, and feeling art history, hearing the wordless voices calling to us through the cracks of paintings and anthropocentric historiography. To be able to do this we need to enter the archives, museums and other sites of research searching for the fauna of the art museum while embracing anthropomorphism, and as a consequence extend our empathy towards non-humans, in our quest for writing a less anthropocentric art history.

This chapter starts with a discussion of different perspectives on anthropomorphism and the pitfalls it can entail when embracing anthropomorphism as a method of envisioning new perspectives of art history as well as challenging speciesism. It continues with a discussion on what a non-human animal autobiography can be and conclusively suggests a non-human animal autobiography can travel over space and time to encompass the fauna of the art museum.

Embracing Anthropomorphism

To anthropomorphise means giving or recognising human emotions and traits in something or someone non-human and comes from the two Greek words *anthropos* and *morphe* meaning human and form. At the end of the nineteenth century anthropomorphism transformed from being used when giving deities humanlike form and characteristics to describing the humanlike characteristics of non-human animals. According to Claire Molloy, this shift "came to be regarded, in a pejorative sense" since the "dominant systems of knowledge production have aligned anthropomorphic practice with 'bad science', a lack of rational objectivity, and misplaced sentiment" (Molloy, 2006, p. 2). Parkinson continues her reasoning in her book *Animals, Anthropomorphism and Mediated Encounters* (2020) when writing that if we "scratch at the surface of the historical regulation of anthropomorphism, we find that it has been closely managed for more than a century by anthropocentric ideas and racialised and gendered systems of thought" (p. 2). But where Parkinson believes that anthropomorphism has the potential of being a "disruptive force" that has the "capacity for imaginative appreciation of another's perspective" that can play a role in the "development of empathetic relationships with other animals" (ibid), all too often anthropomorphism is seen as a "disease" where the "remedy" is an "objective terminology" (Spada, 1997, p. 39). This can be understood in the Canadian psychologist Hank Davis' writing who believes that anthropomorphism represents a form of "intellectual laziness" and that it does "far more harm than good" (Davis, 1997, p. 336). Turning again to Parkinson, despite the disbelief and endeavours to delete anthropomorphism from our contemporary lives anthropomorphism is "alive and well and circulating in abundance throughout systems of cultural production" (2020, p. 2). In disagreement with Davis, and argued further on, intellectual laziness can't be blamed on a specific "ism", it is what you do with that "ism" that can either turn it into a critical or complicit tool. Rather it seems that the value of anthropomorphism, from a critical standpoint, is dependent on whether we can leave our anthropocentrism behind. Anthropomorphism has a strong visual tradition and has historically been used by artists as a way to, for example, criticize political situations (Beuys, 1974), tell painful experiences of grief (Schenck, 1876 - 1878), or understand the personal histories of war (Spiegelman, 1987). It is not difficult to find a non-human animal telling the story of humans. Non-humans have

been a surface of projection for humans where empathy and imagination have been tools to re-think and learn of the troubles of the world and to understand human conditions. According to Jessica Ullrich in *Minding the Animal in Contemporary Art* (2012) anthropomorphism has also been a way for artists to "interpret living animals" (p. 236) and get closer to an understanding of the animal other and ourselves.

However, there are also academic scholars who believe in ways of a self-reflexive and self-aware anthropomorphism that has the interest of non- human animals in mind. Gordon Burghardt introduced the term critical anthropomorphism to describe a method that "helps to establish ground rules for dealing with the inevitable anthropomorphic tendencies that we, as sentient human beings, confront in trying to understand the behaviour of other species" (2004, p. 15). He argues that we have more in common with non-human animals than we believe and when wearing the "shoes" of another species "we can overcome part of our natural bias and obtain a more legitimate understanding of other species" (Burghardt, 2007, pp. 137-138) and come closer to a less self-centred answer to the question: "'hmm, what would I do if I were in a similar situation to the other species?" (ibid). Burghardt also believes that "Critical anthropomorphism provides a way to combine our human characteristics and abilities with various kinds of knowledge and keep the question-asking in bounds but still creative" (Burghardt, 1991, p. 87).

de Waal has coined the term anthropodenial which he explains as "a blindness to the human-like characteristics of animals, or the animal-like characteristics of ourselves" (1999, p. 258). But this does not mean that Burghardt and de Waal are uncritical towards anthropomorphism. In his foreword to the anthology *Anthropomorphism, Anecdotes and Animals,* de Waal states that if anthropomorphism should have any value at all when it comes to communicate and discover knowledge about the animal other we "must respect the peculiarities of a species while framing them in a language that strikes a chord in the human experience" (1997, p. xvi). By respecting the peculiarities, here de Waal means the characteristics of a specific species, he argues that it is not for us humans to make another species like us but we need to recognize and understand our similarities. Both Burghardt and de Waal are aware that anthropomorphism and anthropocentrism are closely connected but recognise that anthropomorphism is not automatically a problem, but rather that there lies

a problem in not listening to the inevitable anthropomorphism that humans seem to be drawn towards. In the words of de Waal: “anthropomorphism and anthropocentrism are never far apart: the first is partly a "problem" due to the second” (2001, p. 63). But if we keep our peculiarities in mind and dive into the quest of feeling with ‘others’, anthropomorphism can be a “disruptive force, a capacity for imaginative appreciation of another’s perspective” that can “play a role in the development of empathetic relationships with other animals” and challenge unequal power relations between humans and other species (Parkinson, 2020, p. 2).

When using anthropomorphism as a research method, be it art, sociology or psychology, it is important to be aware of one’s human position. Anthropomorphism, critical or not, is a human activity and as humans we come from a tradition of reinforcing oppression without even noticing. In the introduction to the anthology *Thinking With Animals –New Perspectives on Anthropomorphism*, Lorraine Daston and Gregg Mitman write that anthropomorphism is a “doomed act of complete empathy” (2005, p. 7) because the submersion of self in the genuinely other is attempted but never achieved. It is an impossibility to know if we know what the animal others know in a specific situation, but we need to try. We are doomed but we need to keep on going. One of the reasons for continuing the doomed mission, according to Wendy Doniger, is language. She writes that “language is the place from where compassion springs” (2005, p. 32).

Anthropomorphism inspires empathy and compassion because it makes you listen, and sometimes even speak to, not only the other but to yourself. Doniger argues: “it is difficult, though not impossible, to torment - or eat - the people we speak with” (Doniger, 2005, p. 34) which transforms anthropomorphism into an agent that could be working against the violent use of non-human animal’s bodies. But even though empathy can open up to new ways of perceiving the genuine other it also puts focus on the ones who we are not currently empathic with. Daston writes in her text *Angelic, Animal, Human* that “the cult of sympathy” tends “to embrace first children, then animals, and finally citizens of other times and spaces” (2005, p. 53). This hierarchy sets animals higher in the ranking systems than White’s account of moral philosopher William Lecky’s description of the development of European morals as first encompassing one’s immediate family, one’s class, one’s nation, all nations, and finally

the animal world (White, 2005, p. 68). These definitions of hierarchical differences of empathy span over time and different academic fields but put focus on the borders of these definitions. How can anthropomorphism be a tool to tear down these borders and not just move them around?

In his text *Pachyderm Personalities: The media of science, politics and conservation* (2005) Gregg Mitman, writes about the two scientists-activists Iain Douglas Hamilton and Cynthia Moss and their work with elephants in the wild. He discusses how the communicating of emotions, anthropomorphism and interplay between human and animal, seen in their work, has been important in their quest for changing the public's view on elephant conservation. He writes: "while an appeal to numbers has often shored up the authority and expertise of scientists in the political realm, in the case of elephant conservation, anthropomorphism and emotion, more than numbers, have lent greater credence to science in the public sphere" (2005, p. 176). Mitman argues that creative work such as photography and film, as instruments for research in collaboration with animal activists, found new ways to communicate the work of Douglas Hamilton and Cynthia Moss and generated a shift in the public's belief in the moral rights of elephants. Filmmaker Sarita Siegel, who in 2002 made the documentary *The Disenchanted Forest* (2002) that follows Dr Anne Russo working with former captured orangutans in Indonesian Borneo, also writes about her experience of the value of anthropomorphism when it comes to communicating the life and experience of scientists and animals. Siegel uses "anthropomorphic and anecdotal comparisons as a communication tool" (Siegel, 2005, p. 199) and believes in the importance of anthropomorphic anecdotes and metaphors for the audience of her film to understand the personalities of the animal others and their struggle for survival and that this can create an emotional connection that can "provide audiences with a powerful story, which allows them to momentarily traverse species boundaries" (p. 217).

However, even if the story provided is powerful, and shows the emotional state of another animal, and perhaps even breaks through the species boundaries, we cannot be sure that it is in the favour of the non-human animal portrayed. Returning to *Minding the Animal in Contemporary Art*, Jessica Ullrich discusses how artists engage with living animals in contemporary art and identifies three basic strategies: "observing an animal, imitating an

animal and adopting the point of view of an animal" (Ullrich, 2012, p. 287). One of the examples that she brings up is the video work *Time After Time*, (Sala, 2003) by the Albanian artist Anri Sala, a video that shows a "black silhouetted image of a solitary horse surrounded by busy traffic on a highway in front of an undefined cityscape" (Ullrich, 2012, p. 289). The headlights of the cars passing by "illuminate the scene abruptly and unfold the extent of the horse's misery. It is famished, barely able to stand; its posture suggests resigned pain. It lifts its hind leg, possibly because it hurts or in a vain attempt at self-defense" (2012, p. 290). According to Ullrich "Sala teaches the viewer a lesson in empathy. He or she can empathize with the horse's bodily pain and its hopelessness" (ibid). She suggests that experiencing Sala's work can "generate concern or respect for the animal" and by doing so "lead to a sustained ethical relationship towards animals" (ibid). And even though, watching the clearly painful distress of the horse, couldn't we also claim the opposite? That by portraying individual non-human animal's suffering, without interfering, Sala is also teaching us that animal suffering isn't worth reacting to. The audience, and especially the artist, are passive viewers. Looking from a distance on the suffering of an individual in clear need of help. But we do not help the horse, we watch. We watch, analyse and use the suffering of an individual hoping for an emotional lesson. Ullrich writes: "When we are put in the position of an animal, we might be more concerned about their well-being and we might feel empathy or respect for them. Using animals in art might thus have impact on animals in real life" (ibid: 297). The video work of Sala address empathy but also teaches us to stay passive, not reacting to the ongoing everyday violence towards non-human animals. And even though the work sparks empathy it might not challenge the prevailing order of power between human and non-human animals, but instead reinforces it.

To be able to acknowledge the diverse ways in which anthropomorphism, as well as art, functions and can be used, sometimes as part of the commodification of animals and sometimes as a disruptive force against speciesism, Claire Parkinson suggests that anthropomorphism should be "regarded as situational, contextual, differentiated and entangled" (2020, p. 30). When embracing the use of anthropomorphism as an entangled practice it becomes clear that artists cannot automatically think of anthropomorphism as a 'good' practice, and not only analyse the emotional impact non-human animals used in art can have on its audience, but also the physical consequences to these non-human animals

when they, often forced, participate in the production of art. It is crucial, for the artist that wants to be part of the change of the asymmetric power relations between species, that they aim not only for the viewer to feel sympathy but for an experience of anthropomorphism that can be a "meaningful part of pursuing pragmatic empathetic connections" (2020, p. 115). In this research project the call for anthropomorphism as a disruptive force and the quest for empathic connections made by Parkinson, is answered through a series of text-based artworks where the portrayed non-human animals, as well as the ones hidden in the material and production process, are in the center of the narrative; aiming for a less anthropocentric art history and thereby hoping for an extended empathy towards the fauna of the art museum.

Changing the Story

Thom van Dooren and Deborah Bird Rose write about stories and storying being opportunities to "cultivate the intellectual, emotional, and critical capacities necessary to recognize our own implication in the world, the consequences of our actions, and possibilities for other kinds of futures" (2016, p. 90). They view storytelling as an ethical practice while developing what they call "lively ethographies" (2016, p. 77), which they explain as a way of storytelling "that recognizes the meaningful lives of others" (ibid). This will draw us "into new connections and, with them, new accountabilities and obligations" (p. 89). van Dooren further explains lively stories as an "effort to weave tales that add flesh to the bones of the dead and dying, that give them some vitality, presence, perhaps 'thickness' on the page and in the minds and lives of readers" (2014, p. 8). He continues with defining writing lively stories as a "multidisciplinary task" drawing from different fields and methods of theory and practice in the hopes of writing stories that "invite readers into a sense of curiosity" (ibid).

In the anthology *Beyond the Human-Animal Divide - Creaturely Lives in Literature and Culture,* Dominik Ohrem raises concerns about thinking of storying as automatically progressive when writing that "storying is not per se an emancipatory practice" reminding us that practices of storying are also an often used tool for "reactionary master narratives of

race, nation, hegemonic masculinity, and/or human exceptionalism" (2017, p. 13). He continues: "lively stories includes (sic) critical reflection about what enables us to tell such stories in the first place. Lively stories, that is, require lively theory" (ibid). Ecofeminist Linda Vance also attests to the intertwined relation between theory and storying when writing that "just as theorizing is a form of storytelling, so too is storytelling a form of theorizing. Our theories reflect our beliefs—our stories—about how the world works; our stories about how the world works lead us, consciously or not, to the creation of theory, as we repeat and revise them" (Vance quoted by Ohrem, 2017, p.13). It is this revision that Matthew Calarco aims for when he writes that we "need to think unheard-of thoughts about animals" and create "new artworks" and "new histories" to "aid in the task of working through the question of the animal" (2008, p. 6). But, as I will argue further on, we don't need to think unheard of thoughts, we need to listen to the unheard of thoughts that are already around us. And we need to translate these thoughts and experiences, that we have earlier refused to hear, into words and lively biographies of the fauna of the art museum. Or as Donna Haraway directly puts it: "the story must change" (2016, p. 40).

Non-Human Animal Autobiographies

Historian Hilda Kean writes about the practice of the historian that "we find material, often created in different times, with which to imagine a past and bring it alive in the present" (2018, p. 45), hoping to re-create experiences that can "validate past lives" (ibid). These lives are usually human, and even though Kean points to specific problems that might occur when it comes to writing the history of non-humans, such as representation and agency, she believes that there are valid similarities between writing the history of humans and non-humans.

Written biographies of non-human animals, whether once living or fictional, has a long tradition. Spanning from scholarly texts such as Kim Stallwood writing about the elephant Topsy (2018), to novels such as Black Beauty (2018) written by Anna Sewell in 1877 and everything in between. The word biography comes from the Greek words of *bios* for life and *graphein* for writing, making it a practice of writing life. Autobiography, meaning a history of an individual's life written or told by that person can also cross species barriers with the help

of human imagination, empathy and experience of being together in this world. But being together, in proximity to humans, all too often mean death or crisis for the many non-human animals of this world we share. Whether it is dogs experimented on in labs, the lost habitats of whales and dolphins that share this overheated planet with us or the fifty billion[2] chickens killed for food each year in the industrial meat complex (not taking into account the male chicks and unproductive hens killed in egg production). The animals mentioned might be tagged and organized by number but they are mostly part of a faceless mass, sometimes gaining fleeting individuality through the lens of the camera of an activist. And even if the fact of the abuse is communicated to us clearly, and sometimes even loudly, through the resistance of claws scratching our skin, the sudden stranded helpless bodies or the almost unbearably loud cacophonic clucking in the barns, their different form of voices seem to never be truly heard, because we humans seem to choose to not listen to that which is wordless.

De Waal writes that "each animal has its own story to tell" (2005, p. 146) and according to anthrozoologist Margo de Mello there is a contemporary rise of telling these histories in several different forms such as literature or through social media "demonstrating a new awareness of animal subjectivity, and a desire on the part of many animal lovers to give that subjectivity a voice" (2013, p. 4). But as will be discussed further on the different form of voices of non-human animals are already present and don't need to be "given". Instead we should follow the suggestion of curator Radhika Subramaniam and "rather than thrusting forward in our effort to give voice or even to communicate" we instead should hold back and try to listen (2018, p. 218) for the "individual experience that is wordless but certainly not world- or voiceless" (Middelhoff, 2018, p. 61). When seeking these individual wordless voices of the museum fauna through the multitude of sources such as photography, paintings, drawings and texts we should be able to hear them calling to us through the cracks of the varnish of the paintings. Still, the question is, who benefits from the interpretation and verbalization of these wordless voices?

Biographies and autobiographies, human or non-human, are written when we initiate the "task of imagining" (Kean, 2018, p. 44) another time and place with whatever scraps we find

[2] https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2019/02/chart-of-the-day-this-is-how-many-animals-we-eat-each-year/

from the memories and archives of the world. With the help of these scraps we then try to "bring that past into the present" which might seem like an impossible mission since "there will only ever be traces existing in the present from the past" (ibid). But as De Mello writes "we can either choose to ignore what animals are saying, making them silent" or we can try to "interpret for them" (2013, p. 5) and even though the traces are difficult to find since "animals leave almost no records" (Skabelund, 2018, p. 85) we still have to try even though we "risk of doing so from the human point of view." (DeMello, 2013, p. 5) But sometimes it is not enough to be alive or even documented in this world. Erica Fudge, a professor in English Studies, writes that even where "sufficient detail of the animal's life is known, its entry into biographical record remains unlikely" (2004, p. 22) instead it is often the human who owned the non-human animal that have their biographies written. She reflects on the reasons why when writing "animals' thoughts and intentions are unrecordable, and because of this humans have historically asserted that they lack thoughts and intentions; self-awareness and self-will" (2004, p. 23). In the hopes of changing a speciesist world, in which art history is written and art is created, we need to force the power, pain, and histories of these animals into the centre, to bring forward a multitude of voices and self-will, make the invisible visible and let the histories of other species reverberate in the exhibition halls. To make this happen we need to write those histories for each other.

The Biographer in Power

The paintings of non-humans populating the walls of the museums are often made in proximity to death. It can be in the process of the making of the artwork, when studied to be painted or ground to become material. Or perhaps the artwork documents the consequences of hunting in the many still lifes of hunted and killed animals, while numerous are caught and put in painted (and real life) cages such as the white squirrel of Ehrenstrahl (1697). But it is not only within the frame of the painting that the history of the non-human animals are told. An imagined biography of the squirrel is later posted by Nationalmuseum to their Facebook page (Nationalmuseum, 2019)[3], 300 years after being caught by a stable hand. The situation of the squirrel is then told as a moral children's story about bullying and

[3] Read about the Facebook post of Nationalmuseum in the section *Imagining a Squirrel and a Marmot*

loneliness and the narrative given us is framed in such a way so that being caught and brought in front of the king was a way for the squirrel to no longer feel different and lonely in the forest. The biography of the squirrel is used as an example of human bullying at the school grounds, and that everyone, no matter how they look, will find somewhere they are admired, if they are lucky. This story frames the portrait as a favour to the squirrel and doesn't address the fact that a squirrel was hunted, caught and taken from their natural habitat because a king wanted to see a rare albino. In short, the story does not benefit the squirrel, or seem to have anything to do with the portrayed individual, or others like them.

De Mello points out that an autobiographical story can be part of an effective change of the reality of others (2018), giving examples of how animal activism in today's social media benefit from the form of autobiographical narrative as well as how the novel Black Beauty from 1877 by Anna Sewell (2018) was part of strengthening the first wave of the animal protection movement by telling the story of horses and "the cruelty of their human owners" with the intention to "change the treatment of horses in American society" (DeMello, 2018, p. 250). According to de Mello "both women and animals, at that time, were considered to be (and effectively were) voiceless" and "were given a voice (and an audience to hear that voice)" (ibid) through the writing of Sewell, who, when putting the facts of the life of horses into words, ultimately narrated non-human animal biographies that was part of the change in the actual treatment of horses and animals.

Author and independent scholar Kim Stallwood "seeks to make amends for past injustices and prevent their reoccurrence" (2018, p. 239) when writing the biography of the female Asian elephant Topsy, who was mistreated and died of poisoning, strangulation and electrocution on Coney Island in 1875. She was sentenced to death because of her harming and even killing humans while in captivity, her violence a consequence of the abuse she was subjected to. The execution was filmed, and the horror of her death can be seen in the short black and white documentary *Electrocuting an Elephant* (1903), forever on repeat.[4] Stallwood writes that "whomever is recognised as speaking for Topsy has power over her" (2018, p. 239) but he still believes that the biography can be a tool for "restorative justice"

[4] The short black and white documentary can be found here: https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?title=File%3AElectrocuting_an_Elephant.webm

(ibid) for Topsy when writing with the intention to “make some amends to her and return some power and control back to her—for her own life to be recognized as the subject of a life” (p. 242). When writing the biography of the life of Topsy, from being captured as a baby elephant to her final breaths on film, Stallwood uses this power over her to shift the narrative into one where Topsy is in the centre of her own biography, where she no longer is just a rogue elephant, deserving punishment, but an abused and mistreated individual who in desperation tries to cope with her surroundings and the mistreatment and violence she was subjected to.

The biographies of non-humans can also be used as political tools and to strengthen nationalistic agendas. One example researched by Aaron Skabelund, a professor of Japanese modern history, is that of the dog Hachikō (1923–1935). In the text ‘A Dog’s Life: The Challenges and Possibilities of Animal Biography’ (Skabelund, 2018) we learn that Hachikō was a Japanese Akita dog who walked his human Ueno back and forth to the Shibuya station each day until 21 May 1925 when Ueno died from a stroke at work and never returned to the station. Hachikō later became known as the loyal dog since he kept waiting for Ueno at the station for several years. Hachikō became an icon of “purity, loyalty, and bravery” (2018, p. 88), characteristics often assigned to indigenous dogs in Japan in the beginning of the 1930’s, and the biography of Hachikō was used in school curriculums as a way to “to foster allegiance to the state and to the emperor” (2018, p. 98). But for Hachikō to become the pure Japanese icon intended his tail had to be curled and his right floppy ear erected “so that he emerged looking like a young, healthy, pureblooded “Japanese” dog” (p. 92) when mounted for the National Science Museum after his death.

The examples of Topsy, Black Beauty, Hachikō and the white squirrel tell us that it is not enough to just tell and write biographies about the lives of non-humans if we want to create change but also ask ourselves “whose interests are being served in these narratives.” (Parkinson, 2020, p. 109). It is important how we write, the agenda of the writer, and what kind of stories that are told. Sometimes we write the biographies from scraps, sometimes, such as in the case of Hachikō, there are many sources, but they all need to be looked at critically and sometimes “deconstructed and disentangled” (Skabelund, 2018, p. 90). This way, narratives can be used as a “disruptive force” (Parkinson, 2020, p. 2) that challenges

the hierarchies of power that always are involved when telling the stories of another. We need to tell stories from non-human perspectives, where we dare to imagine and listen through the cracks of the painting, deeper into the archives, beyond the short snippets on the title signs on the wall of the museum and their pedagogical anthropocentric stories, to look for other perspectives. When reading between the lines and shifting focus from the experience of the stable hand to the squirrel in Ehrenstrahl's painting (Ehrenstrahl, 1697), and paying attention to and hearing that which is not human, we can "recognize that history and culture are not just the creation of humans, but are the joint, shared creations of humans and other creatures" that ultimately "deserve to be heard and included in the histories and biographies we humans tell" (Skabelund, 2018, p. 100), consequently making art history a more pluralistic one and, if we stay aware of, and try to defy, our anthropocentrism, hopefully a less human-centred one.

Ways of Writing a Less Anthropocentric Art History

In the beginning of this research project I was helped by André Krebber and Mieke Rosher's definition of biography and autobiography in their introduction to *Animal Biography – Re-framing Animal Lives* (2018), where they suggest a definition of animal autobiography as approaching "animal agency by trying to bring to light the self-experience of an animal other" (p. 7), which differs from their definition of animal biography as "attempt(s) to reveal agency through external markers and through the intertwinement with others and the historical, socio-cultural context" (ibid). When expanding my research and during the development of the text-based artworks, in the shape of animal autobiographies, and while performing them as guided tours, I started to experience the necessity of an expanded definition of what a non-human autobiography might be, encompass, and do.

The Floating I

During the writing, and performing of my first guided tour, containing an autobiographical account of the herd of the cows in the painting *Riverbed with Cattle* by Aelbert Cuyp (n.d.), the necessity of an expanded definition of whose self-experience an autobiography can

encompass, had me experimenting with a form of writing and imagining that shifted between individual and collective claims of the cows of the herd, which formed into an exercise and method that I later named the 'floating I'. The exercise started with imagining the portrayed cow's individual perspectives, and bodily positions within the herd, and then progressed into the collective awareness of wind, water and shared experiences of contact with humans. When writing these several I's transforming into we's and back again to I's, I began to experience problems with separating the cows in the herd from each other. To distinguish the individuals in the herd I started to use my body and mirror the position of the painted individuals while standing in front of the painting as an attempt to not get lost in the process of writing and imaging the cows' collective and individual experiences. The exercise therefore also created a choreography of my own body, mirroring the positions of the I's in the painting transforming the text into a floating and collective I that I myself in part became a part of and that helped me to not get trapped in my own individuality.

The 'floating I' was primarily developed to be able to imagine and write a collective within a specific painting and when expanding the research and writing process to encompass several more paintings and guided tours the 'floating I' quickly became too limited. Even though the 'floating I' had defied the frames of the painting this project needed an autobiographical I that was capable of space and time travel. An I that while held with cotton gloves in the contemporary could bear witness to the grinding of bones and priming of canvases in the artist studio a century earlier. An I that could travel between the space of the studio, the field visits and the museum, and that could move between paintings within the rooms of the museum. And while, even though using the I to evoke emotion and empathy and personal experience, never only speak about itself, a self that might not even have existed, but also the crowds of lives lost in the process of making art, that surely has existed.

Crowded Non-Human Animal Autobiographies

While continuing my research in the process of writing the text-based artworks called *The Scripts*, the crowd gets bigger, more and more non-human animals come forward, I count them within the frames at the museums, I write them, listen to them through the cracks of the paintings, look for them in the archives. And it slowly becomes clear to me that most un-

named painted non-human individuals are representations of several, since it perhaps took several to make an in-depth study: Some to be looked at alive, some to be killed to be still, some to be killed and dissected to fully understand and represent. And they are all part of the process of art making and therefore part of the biography of the painted individual. The autobiographical writing now starts to get crowded, as it should be, behind the act of painting there is a wordless crowd hidden.

The non-human autobiographies that are written for this research project are crowded ones and they originate from paintings of the fauna of the art museum. Together the performances and texts, and since the autobiography is a crowded one, form a choir, a multitude of voices, that bear witness to how the speciesist sociocultural society of humans effect the non-human individuals trapped within the production system of art. I therefore believe that the *crowded non-human autobiographies* of the fauna of the art museum not only bring forward the intertwinement between the painted non-human individuals and the practice of the artist, but also the consequences for the non-human individuals transformed into material (Lindahl, 2017), or encountered during field studies and invisible in the archives (Lindahl, 2018), or imprisoned to be studied (Lindahl, 2017). Together they form a crowd and a choir over space and time. The 'crowded non-human animal autobiography' of the fauna of the art museum puts the experience of the non-human individual in its centre but it also points to the consequences of the practice of the artist and the museum since the pain and suffering of non-human animals, in the process of becoming visual painting, is attested to.

The Autobiographies of the Fauna of the Art Museum

Silencing, whether it is done by pretending not to hear or understand other species, or by the refusal of taking the biographies of non-humans seriously, or cutting the vocal cords on the many dogs used in medical experiments so that they cannot voice their resistance and pain, is an oppressive tool of power. To go against the silencing, to dare to acknowledge the possibility to write biographies of non-humans based on a combination of research and imagination and recognise that this doesn't differ from the writing of the biographies of humans is an act of defiance. It is also about acknowledging that there once was a voice and agency (or perhaps vulnerability) that we, humans, didn't listen to or honour and certainly

did not think was important enough to survive through time and history. Parkinson tells us that “the challenge is not in speaking but in listening” (2020, p. 110) and since a “conversation with another ‘speaking’ mind has moral responsibilities” (ibid) that can be “costly in terms of normative human practices” (ibid). Therefore, it is not about giving voice, it is about listening in such a way that “interrogates place, power, and language” (Lockwood, 2017, p. 169) and be prepared for an answer. De Mello writes that the “more we recognize how much it is that we share in common, the more plausible speaking animals become” (2013, p. 6) making the historian or artist, fortunate to work in the field of writing autobiographies of non-humans, into a listener, translator and performer of these wordless voices to a wider audience, and thereby validate and bring attention to the more or less visible past lives in the hopes of changing the lives of the ones in the future. Or as Gayatri Spivak phrases it: "To do a thing, to work for the subaltern, means to bring it into speech" (1992, p. 46).

The autobiographies of the fauna of the art museum do not follow the non-human animals from birth to death. Instead, they follow the animals in connection to a painting while addressing the consequences of production, commodification, processing and displaying of the portrayed individual. Sometimes they speak of freedom and what could have happened instead (Lindahl, 2018), or about the consequences of love and power (Lindahl, 2017), or of the planning of resistance (Lindahl, 2019). In the autobiographies of the fauna of the art museum the focus of the painting is shifted from human affairs to the affairs of parrot, geese, cats and many more, and since these counter art histories refuse to view the protagonists as symbols for anything else than themselves, they become the centre of their own art histories.

In the biography of Rosa Bonheur she recalls how Nero’s life ended at the Zoo in Paris, and that she visited him in the end. We are also told that Fathma died by falling down the stairs (Klumpke, 2001, p. 184). But whether it was because of affection towards Bonheur that Fathma climbed those stairs, or what Nero felt when visited by his tormenter, can only be imagined through interpretation of those anthropocentric written accounts and it is these interpretations that forms the imagined autobiographies of Nero and Fathma that are part of the first guided tour of this research project at the Bishop’s House in Lund (Lindahl, 2017).

As Kean points to earlier, imagining is not a specific trait of the animal biography, the dramatization of history, fiction, film, narrative and oral of the ones living has been around as long as the telling of history and as Skabelund points out human and non-human histories are intertwined. Therefore, imagining a non-human autobiography is impossible without also addressing the, often oppressive, roles of humans in art history, making the autobiographies of the fauna of the art museum partial accounts of portrayed animals but also partial accounts of the production of paintings and a less human centred art history.

CHAPTER 3

The Practice Behind the Crowded Non-Human Animal Autobiographies

The following chapter is an autoethnographic account of the research process and production of the text-based artworks that have been created as part of this research project. The text-based artworks have been developed into scripts that function as both artwork and documentation of the guided tours where the text-based artworks have been performed. By appropriating the guided tour, the work blends into the museum environment and the familiarity of the guided tour, a regular activity of the museum halls with an audience that is willing to learn beyond that which is first seen. This project takes the opportunity to present a possible re-framing and alternative reading of the paintings presented during the guided tours when proposing a less anthropocentric art history, aiming for a more empathic understanding of the life of the non-humans forever connected to the specific paintings.

The text-based artworks have also been performed at several conferences in physical and digital form as well as developed into voice-overs in video works and as performances at exhibitions. The video works, performances (both physical and digital) and scripts, can be seen and read in the appendix.

Autoethnography is a genre of research that “involves the writing of lived experience with an autobiographical focus” (Pattinson, 2017, p. 99) which in turn connects “the personal to the cultural” (Ellis & P. Bochner, 2000, p. 739). It is a way to put the researcher, and who or what is researched, within a social context. In this specific research project, the lived experiences researched are not only the experiences of the researcher of this thesis, but the imagined experiences of the fauna of the art museum and the social context of art production and art history. The research interacts with the once living invisible and visible non-human animals of the fauna of the art museum when narrating, imagining and listening

to the wordless voices from the cracks of the paintings, hoping to embody non-human animal counter art histories through text and performance.

It is reasonable to perceive autoethnography as a predominantly human matter since most descriptions of autoethnography is centered around the human when often presented as a practice of "writing the events of our human experience" (Holman Jones & Adams, 2017, p. 135) asking us to "think with open hearts and open minds about discrimination and difference as well as about our commonality within the human experience. (Ellis & Bochner, 2014, p. 10) But this anthropocentric understanding of autoethnography is not the case of this research. This thesis is centered around an attempt to connect over species differences in the shared experience of being part, forced as well as willingly, of the production of artworks. The auto in autoethnography is me, the researcher writing this, but the 'I' in the text, performances and artworks of this thesis sets out to dissolve and float to encompass more than one individual and more than human experience, in its quest to write non-human animal counter art histories. Therefore, the autoethnography of this thesis, through process of writing and experimenting with form, is "carving" (Leavy, 2015, p. 3) out new tools with which to "sculpt" (ibid) a way of research that addresses the difficulties and possibilities of a process that imagines and listens to the several 'I's of the wordless voices from the fauna of the art museum.

One of the tools carved out is the before mentioned 'floating I', described through practice in the following autoethnographic section of the thesis, which is adjacent to what Stacy Holman Jones describes when writing about critical autoethnography that it is "focused on engaging *with* the world as shifting, partial, unfinished, and animated by feeling and imagination" (Holman Jones, 2016, p. 231) that "examine systems, institutions, and discourses that privilege some people and marginalize others" (Holman Jones, 2018, p. 5). Holman Jones continues: "in other words, critical autoethnography critically imagines a future world through the very performance of other ways of living, being, and becoming" (p. 7). But where Holman Jones focuses on privileged and marginalized humans, this research focuses on marginalized and invisible non-human animals within the fauna of the art museum, and it does so by blurring the lines of human and non-human first-person narratives.

Another tool carved out is the crowded non-human autobiography, also mentioned before, that is bordering what Kathryn Gillespie writes about when presenting a multispecies autoethnography that encompass other species and that "offers a window into these intimate scales of our own lives and the lives of nonhuman others as a manifestation of the particular" (2021, p. 3). The window of this thesis opens up toward histories that travels over time and space to encompass the experiences of the individual non-human animals portrayed. But even though I agree with Gillespie that autoethnography can "illuminate lived and embodied multispecies experiences" (p. 5) that "can lead to reflection and action to create more just and ethical futures for and with other species" (ibid) I also agree with her warning that autoethnography holds the "potential to reaffirm and reinscribe anthropocentric ways of relating in multispecies worlds, in effect privileging the human subject even as it claims to decenter the human and consider or center the nonhuman" (ibid). The risk of anthropocentrism is the reason for this research developing its own set of tools based on what I as an individual need in practice to be able to embrace empathy towards other species and listen to that which seems different to myself.

Even though both critical and multispecies autoethnography in different ways opens up to an 'I' that floats and a history that is crowded and refuse anthropocentrism it is still not enough. To be able to keep track of the anthropocentrism that lies inherent in me I need to personalize my research methods to not end up in the pitfall that Gillespie warns me of. The human I, must through practice crumble and float, so that the I that is in power opens up to the cracks in the varnish of the paintings and lets the fauna of the art museum through.

It is not fruitful for this research project to defend the boundaries of the singular human I or objective and anthropocentric history writing since there does not exist such a history within the fauna of the art museum. Rather it is the idea of clear definitions and boundaries of human superiority within the art world that upholds the speciesism of art production. Instead this research aims for a total collapse of the former narrating force behind the artworks addressed by introducing new histories that speak of the individualism seldom granted portrayed animals into the mind of the researcher as well as reader of this thesis, the audience of the performances and visitor to the art museum.

As writer Elizabeth Pattinson suggests, when discussing an autoethnographic written account of her shared experiences of being convalescent after surgery together with her companion animal, this autoethnographic account isn't solely interested in the "anthropocentric relation of human self to human self and human society" (Pattinson, 2017, p. 100) but also intent to "give time, affective consideration, and words to the experience of mutual world-making present in the relation between human self and non-human animal other" (p. 101). In this research, the world-making hopes to break the frames that holds human and non-human animal separated, writing art histories that transgress time and space and shares the experiences of being entangled in the process of art making and alive across species.

The research process accounted for in this chapter is that of a person that knows everything about being animal since she herself is one, even though she keeps forgetting. This chapter takes the reader along the journey of gathering the context that philosophers Lori Gruen and Elisa Aaltola both believe is crucial to not only sympathise from a distance but to engage in an embodied empathy (Aaltola, 2018), and an entangled empathy (Gruen, 2015), that enables us to empathise in a less anthropocentric and self-centred way concerning other species. It is the context that shapes the foundation from where the imagined histories of the non-human animals in art history, which are at the centre of this research, are developed into text-based artworks.

Throughout this chapter the human 'I' is strongly present, since I, with all my anthropocentric shortcomings, need to be responsible for the subjective human-centred person that I am, when imagining, writing and performing these histories. Or as Aaltola would put it when discussing that the reading and writing of narratives never can or should be neutral:

> we are rooted in our own bodies, mental states and concepts, and this will always impact how we make sense of reality. We are not neutral beings, nor should we become ones, and empathy always involves our situated "selves", us as non-neutral, non-abstract subjects with our own histories and contexts (Aaltola, 2018, p. 36).

Elisa Aaltola writes in *Varieties of Empathy: Moral Psychology and Animal Ethics* (2018) about the importance of context to simulate the one we perceive as other since "it is via contexts that the broader ramifications, origins, and causes of the others emotions can be understood" (p. 34) making context a necessity for being able to empathize and imagine in a way that is less human-centred.

Throughout the research phase of the text-based artworks there has been a flood of paintings portraying non-human animals that could not be addressed or accounted for in the following autoethnographic account. Therefore, all of the non-human animals that have been left unattended during this research project should be seen as part of the crowded non-human animal autobiographies.

The paintings from which the text-based artworks stems are just a few of all them that have been part of the flood of images and individuals this research has touched upon. The process of finding which paintings to focus on happens while visiting museums, researching and writing. Every visit starts with counting. How many animals are portrayed? Of which species? Are they addressed in titles and on the information signs of the artworks? I look for the gap of the vegan killjoy discussed earlier, or the violence or perhaps neglect that charges the situation of the painting and the room in which the painting is situated. When Rosa Bonheur is described as a lover of animals on the information sign of the *Wild Cat* (1850) there is a gap between the caged animals of Bonheur and the love described by Nationalmuseum. When the capturing of the white squirrel of Ehrenstrahl is narrated as an example of care in social media (Nationalmuseum, 2019), there is again a gap.[5] The gap is an opportunity, an opening towards the writing of a counter art history that is less anthropocentric. Unfortunately, all gaps cannot be addressed, since sometimes the context needed to be able to dare to imagine counter art histories cannot be found. And if there is no context from which to empathize, the risk of a human centered narrative is to great.

There is also something more personal that takes an active part in the process of choosing, empathizing and narrating. Some paintings affect me, hit me hard, or seem to call for my attention. It can for example be through the golden sunlight of a Danish landscape, a raised

[5] The two gaps are discussed in the section *Imagining a Parrot, Geese and Cows at the National Gallery of Denmark.*

whip that sounds through the museum hall or when a non-human animal is painted with such care that the individual gets a hold of me. But there seems to be limits to whom I am able to empathize with. Throughout this research there is no specific list or criteria that the paintings addressed need to live up to. Therefore, it is not only lack of context that limits the selection of paintings but also my shortcomings and abilities to empathize. I have not yet been able to write and imagine the histories of insects, and I cannot imagine individuals from abstract work. I have tried and failed this. But these are not the only limitation. The crowded non-human autobiographies are written from the sites of Nationalmuseum, The Bishops House and The National Gallery of Denmark where I have been invited to perform. The collection of these sites also limits the selection of the paintings addressed in this work and since their collections are built on a western, male, canonical art context this effect, as so many times before, whose work is addressed and remembered.

Imagining Lions and Cattle at the Bishop's House in Lund

This section is the account of the process of writing the script 'A Guided Tour of Lions and Cattle' at the Bishop's House in Lund (Appendix 1.) The script was written for a guided tour that was held as part of the 5th European Conference of Critical Animal Studies and written as a continuation of the paper *The Choir of Isaac van Amburgh and his Animals* that I presented as part of the panel 'Animal symbols, reconstruction and resurrection in literature and art'. The panel was held at the Pufendorf Institute in Lund and from there we walked together to the Old Bishop's House where the guided tour was performed.

This was the first text-based artwork that I wrote and performed in the form of a guided tour and the first artwork that I made with the aim of writing a less anthropocentric art history narrative. The creation of this work had not been possible if it was not for the help, as well as the curious and informed input, from the curator of the Lund University art collection Annie Lindberg. She introduced me to the history of the Bishop's House and to the art collection of Lund University. She also welcomed the audience of the guided tour and helped me communicate my specific needs to the staff working at the site.

Imagining *The Collective We and I of the Cattle by the Riverbed*

It is June when I take the train from Malmö to Lund to meet with the curator of the Lund University Art Collection at the Old Bishop's House in Lund. Together we are about to investigate which paintings that are placed within the halls of the building, as well as in the archives of the attic, that portray animals other than humans This is not the first time Annie Lindberg is helping me with her art historic knowledge. Earlier we worked together on the project *About the Blank Pages* (Ejlerskov & Lindahl, 2014) where she, together with Linda Fagerström, Associate Professor in Art History at Linnæus University, assisted me and my colleague Ditte Ejlerskov in creating a list of women artists, that opposed the unjust and sexist art historic writing of the German publishing House Taschen[6].

During the short walk from the train station to the Old Bishop's House I walk through the old quarters of Lund city centre, pass the backside of the Lund University older Main Building and the medieval quarters of Paradislyckan[7] that in the 1860s was transformed into a new and modern hospital quarter, now housing the buildings of Lund University, such as the houses of Anthropology from 1850 (Akademiska Hus, 2019) and the Old Surgeons house from 1867 (Akademiska Hus, 2019). As always, when walking through Paradislyckan, I am searching for an information sign that I remember seeing here once a couple of years ago about the 50 000 Mulberry trees planted in the area by botanist Erik Gustaf Lidbeck in 1756 (Lunds Kommun, 2011). The trees were used to produce silkworms that later were farmed and killed in the process of producing silk. I have a vivid memory of the sign, but I have never found it again after that one time. Not knowing if it was an activist celebration of the memory of the trees and silkworms no longer present, or a Lund University information sign that has been stolen, broken or removed. But I am sure of having seen it, and I think of it,

[6] In the book series *Basic Art* the publishing house Taschen chose to only publish 5 women out of a total of 97 monographies about "who's who of art history" in the "world's best-selling art book collection ever published" (Taschen, 2019) in which they analyze artists "historical importance and cultural legacy" (ibid). Making their introduction to art history a sexist business. In a revised 2.0 version, published for the series 30th anniversary, they have unfortunately not listened to our critique. Still publishing unjust numbers now being 4 women (3 monographies and one about an artist duo) out of a total of 71 books in the book series' art category. For further information please visit www.evamarielindahl.com/about-the-blank-pages and https://www.taschen.com/pages/en/search/basic-art-series

[7] In 1670 the area of the quarter was mostly owned by Nils Paradis thereof the name Paradislyckan. In English the name is comprised by the two words paradise and happiness.

and the worms, every time I walk through Paradislyckan.

I leave the quarter of Paradislyckan and enter Sandgatan. At the end of the street, overlooking the grand boulevard of Lund from around the year nine hundred, a brick house from 1842 is placed (Lunds Universitet, 2018). The house which has three floors and is surrounded by an iron fence, is the Old Bishop's House. In her office on the first floor Annie is waiting for me. I can feel the pebbles through the sole of my shoes when walking across the courtyard, circle the building and press the doorbell on the back of the house. It takes a while before Annie opens.

I enter the building, which functions as a conference and meeting site of the University, through the staff entrance. Together with Annie I walk through a narrow corridor close to the kitchen and the parts of the house never seen by the conference visitors. I meet staff dressed in black skirts and white shirts reminding me of the dress code of my mothers' workplace during the eighties, working as a waitress at Hotel Mollberg in Helsingborg, housed in a historic building with heritage from the 14th century. Annie shows me around and we enter the entrance hall. The chairs are too old for me to dare to sit in, even though it is permitted, the flowers are fresh, and the white linen tablecloths are spotless. This is a house representing the University's grandeur and where meetings which need an extra push of cultural dignity are held. It is also a place that makes me nervous and aware of my own background as a working-class daughter of a waitress. And even though I am now an educated person about to prepare a performance reading, this house makes me somehow feel that I belong in the kitchen, folding napkins, as I did as a child helping my mother when serving the men at the local Rotary Club.

Annie and I continue to tour every inch of the house searching for non-human animals in the artworks on the walls as well as in the archives and architecture. We find, as is always the case when you start observing, a myriad of non-human animals. While we walk on, Annie tells me what she knows of the house. I learn that the building originally was built for the Lund University's Zoological institution (3rd floor), departments of Chemistry (1st floor) and Physics (2nd floor) (Lunds Universitet, 2010, p. 3). However, the building only housed these institutions for a few years before they together outgrew it and switched house with the

building intended for the Bishop Vilhelm Faxe at Kraft's Square in 1849 (Zoologiska Museets i Lunds vänner, 2011). When we reach the top floor, I am told that the unusual height of the ceiling is constructed for the possibility to have skeletons and stuffed bodies from larger animals on display and that since this house once functioned as a centre for the natural science departments of Lund University it has housed and displayed thousands of dead non-human animals. Amongst many other collections the Old Bishop's House has stored one of the oldest Swedish Naturalie Cabinets gathered by Kilian Stobaeus an early professor of Carl von Linné, given to the Zoological Museum in 1735 (Svenskt biografiskt lexikon (art av Gunnar Broberg), 2007-2011), and the ambitious collection of Sven Nilsson with the aim of containing one of each mammal inhabiting Sweden (Lindgren & Schlyter , 2010). Consequently, it feels as if I am walking around in a house no longer celebrating grandeur but rather death and destruction since the zoological collection of Lund University seems to be driven by a curiosity that needs to kill, categorize, and collect to make sense of the world.

After taking a walk through the house together with Annie I find myself returning to the painting *Flodlandskap med boskap* (Cuyp, n.d.) (Fig 2) which can be roughly translated into *Riverbed with Cattle*, by Aelbert Cuyp (1620-1691), placed on a wall between two windows in the 15th century room on the second floor, overlooking Paradislyckan.

Fig 2 - Cuyp, A., n.d. *Flodlandskap med boskap* (*Riverbed with Cattle*)

The painting depicts a group of cows standing together on a riverbed. The line of the horizon is placed low in the painting, giving focus to the clouds and light in the sky enhancing the feeling of a vast and flat landscape with infinite blue skies. The sun is hiding behind one of the clouds and the sun is reflected in a group of boats further away in the landscape by some bold bright orange details. The boats seem to be going out or coming in, the piece of land to the left gives me a feeling of narrow water, this isn't the sea, perhaps rather a river on its way out to the sea since the water doesn't look deep. The main focus of the painting is the four cows standing together with a fifth cow standing slightly to the side drinking water. The cows are painted with broader strokes, creating more contrast, making everything else fall back into a muffled background, they are the focus of attention in this painting. In the right corner of the sky there are two birds flying, their bodies contrast the darker blue clouds reflecting light from the sun that seems to find them between the clouds. The scene feels quiet. When imagining being there the noise of the landscape feels crisp but not loud, like a sound of early morning: The shallow water pouring in over the grass and water plants, the cows drinking and chewing grass, the sound of the fishermen travelling across the water, and perhaps a sound of a seagull. The scene feels serene, a new day is slowly awaking.

When standing in front of the painting it becomes clear to me that the animals, whether human or non-human, are not painted by the artist only to "enliven a landscape" (Sokolova, 1988, p. 15) but instead it seems that the ones inhabiting and working in the landscape are important to him. They are not tiny and placed far away, they are close and placed in the centre, therefore we can distinguish them, look at them as individuals. Later when researching the painting I conclude that this painting most certainly depicts an area of smaller rivers called the Merwede, by the look of the landscape and the fact that Cuyp lived and worked his entire life in the Dordrecht region in the western Netherlands. Is it this familiarity with the area, its humans and other animals, that doesn't turn them into staffage[8]?

Earlier, Annie has told me that much of the information that the university has about the painting is uncertain. In fact, the original title and the exact year of the painting is unknown. There are even some uncertainties regarding whether or not the painter truly is Aelbert Cuyp (Lund University Art Collection, 2017). In a scanned page from a book that Annie e-mails me, Ulla Melander writes that the painting was bought at the auction house Bukowski in 1941, and is believed to have been at the Hermitage in Saint Petersburg until 1932 before being lost. But Melander claims that there is another possibility of the painting being a copy of Cuyp by Abraham van Calraet (1642-1722). Here Melander points to the birds in the right part of the sky in her argument, stating that when comparing this painting to photographs of the painting hanging at the Hermitage, there are four birds missing in the centre of the painting (Lund University & Berglund, 2001, p. 52). Strengthening the theory of this actually being a painting by Calraet but also opening up to the possibility that the missing birds have been erased through eager renovation by human hands.

When I get home, I search the internet for a quick comparison of the disappeared birds and find as many as seven other paintings by Cuyp that seems to portray the same scene, with small variations, and which all have the characteristic two birds in the right corner but also a group of birds in the centre: *River landscape with cows* (Cuyp, 1648-1650) *(*Fig 14*)*; *A*

[8] Staffage is a term for when human and animal figures are depicted in a scene, such as a landscape, but not the primary subject matter of the work.

herdsman with five cows by a river (Cuyp, 1650) *(*Fig 15*); Cows in a river* (Cuyp, 1650) *(*Fig 16*)*; *Bulls on a riverbank* (Cuyp, 1650) *(*Fig 17*)*; *Cows in a river* (Cuyp, 1650) *(*Fig 18*)*; *Cows and Herdsman by a River* (Cuyp, 1650) *(*Fig 19*)*; *River Landscape with Seven Cows and the Ruins of Huis te Merwede near Dordrecht* (Cuyp, 1648) *(*Fig 20*).*

I print out images of the paintings. Look at them over and over, compare lighting and birds. Suddenly I seem to have lost interest in the cows, now focusing on whether or not a painting is fake, obsessed by solving this puzzle. But does it matter to the cows if they have been portrayed by Calraet or Cuyp? Does it matter to them whether or not they are painted in real life or copied from another painting? Is this what they want me to imagine? Elisa Aaltola writes in *Varieties of Empathy: Moral Psychology and Animal Ethics* about the importance of context to simulate the one we perceive as other since "it is via contexts that the broader ramifications, origins, and causes of the others emotions can be understood" (2018, p. 34) making context a necessity for being able to empathize and imagine in a way that is not self-centred, in this case human-centred. Therefore, I need to ask myself in front of the cows and the printed paintings, is this a context worth following? The answer is no. I have been sucked up in human affairs, playing detective, and if I am not careful, I am heading for yet another human-centred version of the history of the cows by a riverbed outside the city of Dordrecht.

So, I leave the birds and the question of original and copy and get back to the cows. There is a total of 49 cows in the riverbanks of Cuyp and Calraet laying in front of me. How can I write and perform a text that imagines this multitude of individuals, or at least a text that represent the six individuals hanging on the wall of the Bishop's House? How can I communicate a multitude of voices such as a flock or a heard? While I earlier have written texts based on experiences of individual non-human animals, such as the war pigeon Cher Ami (Lindahl, 2014) or the lion Nero (Lindahl, 2015), I now need to write a text where a multitude of individual experiences are performed and read by a single person, me.

What I search for is a floating I that flows through the individuals in the painting, making it possible to listen to each and every one of them while they at the same time also are a part of a written *we* with collective experiences. I experiment with structuring my writing to find the common experiences and the we's and I's of the herd. I start with writing individual

claims from each of the five cows:

> Separated from the group by a few feet, I am leaning my head down and forward.
> I am looking into the vast landscape, listening to the boats by the horizon.
> I turn my head to the right and smell another body.
> I am shifting the weight between my legs, back and forth and back again.
> Over the back of a warm body I can see the artist.

Then I write a few claims that I imagine they experienced together:

> In the background we can hear shouting from the men on the boats. We are standing by a riverbed. We have been held and stroked by humans.

I read them out loud while looking at the printed version of the painting from the Bishop's House. The cows in the painting are standing close together and are hard for me to separate. Who is the individual experiencing smell? Who is the individual leaning forward? I point to them with my finger while reading their individual claims to keep track of whom I am speaking about. Depending on their position they see, and experience different bodily sensations and I want it to be clear, when reading for an audience, whose perspective I read. But I need to find a way that isn't based on pointing with a finger. To point with a finger is to stand outside, looking in, keeping distance, and I want the reading to feel as if standing among the group of cows.

While standing in front of the painting once again I therefore try to mimic the position of the cows with my own body. I find myself looking into a corner of a room, out through the window, into the painting and through a door down the hall. I do it once again. This time while reading the sentences that represent the cows that I mirror. It starts to make sense. I move in and out of the group. To keep track of my movements I use arrows and symbols, drawn directly on the pages I read from, and I continue to experiment until they develop into instructions for me on how to move physically in front of the painting to describe the different *we*'s and *I*'s of the herd. This experience is the reason why the written

documentation takes the form of a script since the documentation needs to take into account the space and actions while reading.

Hence the multitude of the cows made my own body visible to me as an important tool of communication, when distinguishing the individual cows in the herd, with the help of a choreography of the written sentences. It also made me understand that I was not only reading. I was also physically performing the text and the imagined experiences of the cows, creating an alternative version of art history taking into account the imagined and possible experiences of the non-humans in the centre of the painting and their collective and individual experiences of breathing, water and sound.

Imagining *White Pigment out of Bones*

After spending time in the 15th century room with the herd by the water I again head up to the office of Annie on the second floor of the Bishop's House. There, I find the next artwork that grabs my attention. It is a small oil painting sized 23 x 30 cm hanging on the wall of the office. According to the archive there is no known information about the artist as well as the title and its date of production. Since the painting has become rather dark with age it is difficult for me to discern the details, but I can identify that there is a cow standing alone in a barn looking out through an open door where there is sunlight and perhaps two more cows. The painting affects me, the cow seems lonely and isolated, standing in the dusky interior longing for what is outside.

I ask Annie about the painting and she finds a description in the digital archives that is close to my interpretation of the murky image. Roughly translated from Swedish into English the description reads: "Barn Interior / a cow is being milked. Various containers, pots and the like on the floor. A view through the open door over a meadow with two cows and a willow tree/" (Lund University Art Collection, 2017). In accordance with the description, we call the painting *Ladugårdsinteriör* (*Barn Interior*) (Anon., n.d.) (Fig 3). The description also tells me that there is an activity going on in the darkness that I didn't notice: The cow is being milked.

Fig 3 - Anon., n.d. *Ladugårdsinteriör* (*Barn Interior*)

Even if I put an effort into it, the dark interior is making it impossible for me to distinguish a human milking the cow. In that case, the human must be huddled behind her, all I can see is more pots on the floor. According to Annie the painting must be over 200 years old and because some pigments affect others, and the varnish grows darker with age, the black shadows has slowly taken over the painted picture. Thus, since it is impossible for me to will the sunlight from the door opening into the barn, and thereby perhaps see what the archivist who first classified the painting saw, I will take their word for it, the cow is being milked. There is something about this scene that I later on can't get out of my mind, somewhere in the pitch-dark corner of the painting there is a human milking an isolated cow, whose bones can be turned into white pigment and cast light over the barn and the milking process.

The fact that ground non-human animal bones have been used when creating either black or white pigments, and thereby can both illuminate and dim the activities in the corner of the

painting, fascinates me. Through research I learn that white pigment over time has been produced in a variety of materials such as led, chalk, titanium dioxide and from the bones of non-human animals (Carlyle & Witlox, 2017). Titanium was discovered in 1791 by mineralogist William Gregor (Oil and Colour Chemists' Association, Australia, 1983, p. 305). But it wasn't until 1914 that the production of titanium white, currently used in everything from makeup to wall paint, artists pigment, traffic lines and toothpaste, started at an industrial scale (St Clair, 2016, p. 47) to become fully commercialised around the 1920's (Oil and Colour Chemists' Association, Australia, 1983, p. 305). Since titanium white is highly opaque, it is a colour you can use on top of several layers of colour and it will still cover what is underneath. Hence, it is a colour one could claim makes layers, time and history invisible by hiding what has been before. At the same time as the large-scale production of titanium dioxide is developed, making it possible for artists to paint a thick white surface, the industrialization of cows picks up speed, doubling the amount of individuals killed in factory farming between 1820 and 1920 (Scully, 2002, p. 23). And, as a consequence of this, thousands and thousands of litres of white milk is taken, running through tubes and pipes, gathered in tanks. Furthermore, one could claim that at the same time as white pigment becomes more opaque the reality of the milking cow changes into a factory system that is impenetrable, non-transparent, cruel and effective, hiding its layer of violence and production behind walls painted by a binder mixed with titanium dioxide.

The white pigment made from bones, once used as an early primer, is much more translucent than pigment made out of titanium dioxide. I imagine that the paint made from non-human animal's bodies refused to hide and forget what is hidden underneath, that in fact being translucent is a defiant act of resistance. I continue thinking of translucency as resistance while standing by the kitchenette in my studio mixing water with white acrylic paint of titanium dioxide, trying to find the right combination making the paint resemble cow's milk. When I reach the combination, I try to go backwards, moving from milk-like to transparency with the help of several litres of water, and then back again:

white acrylic (opaque)	→	milk-like fluid	→	water (transparent)
water (transparent)	→	milk-like fluid	→	white acrylic (opaque)

After some time of experimenting I have found a way to visually transform transparent water into what resembles opaque milk. I rehearse the transformation with the help of milk jugs. I place two milk jugs in front of me, one containing water while the other one is empty. I pick up the metal tube with titanium dioxide and squeeze the paint into the empty milk jug before emptying the milk jug with transparent water into it. I continue to pour the water back and forth. For every time I pour, the liquid becomes whiter. I keep pouring back and forth a minute or so, until the liquid turns into an opaque white that could be milk. Thus, in the process, turning translucent resistance into opaque oppression, it should have been the other way around.

Imagining *From Nero to Rosa*

Later during the same day, when resting in a sofa of the library of the Bishop's House, I think of all the non-human animals that are archived, on display, portrayed and exhibited within the brick walls of this house. And how they all, visible or not, are part of the history of this specific building. This brick house that I am resting in, built for housing non-human animal specimens on the third floor makes me think of another brick house, transformed by the artist Rosa Bonheur into a space for keeping other animals in cages to study and then paint.

In 2015 I did a project about the lion Nero, caged in the studio and chateaux of Bonheur (Lindahl, 2015). Since then, Nero has haunted me, compelling me to dig deeper into Bonheur's ideas of care and love towards the animals she caged and killed. On the sofa in the library of the Bishop's House the histories of the two brick houses connect through their function and history, and I decide to go back to Nero and try to listen to what he has to say about what went on in the brick house of Bonheur's.

I say thanks and farewell to Annie and leave the brick house of the Bishop in Lund to take the train back to Malmö and look for the two books about Bonheur that I keep in my bookshelves. I find them both in my studio. And as I remembered I find printed sketches of Nero in them.

In the first book, titled Rosa Bonheur: All Nature's Children, is a sketch printed (Dahesh Museum, 1998, p. 41) on blue paper named *Lion at Sunset* (Fig 4) that looks familiar to the painting *Lion (The Look Out)* (Bonheur, n.d.) (Fig 5) that I have studied in my earlier work about Nero. The sketch is of a lion resting on what could be a cliff, looking out over a vast landscape, the lion is turned so that his head is in profile, as if looking out over the landscape contemplating the view. In the painting however, the lion is standing up, looking over what could be a desert and has turned further away so that we only can see the back of his head, creating what I interpret to be a much more sad and lonely ambiance. Furthermore, the sketch is signed not only by Bonheur's name but also with Anna Klumpke's, with whom Bonheur was in a relationship. After looking at other sketches and paintings by Bonheur I still believe that the lion, sketched by Klumpke and Bonheur, is one of Bonheur's most beloved lions named Nero.

Fig 4 - Bonheur, Rosa, n.d. *Lion at Sunset*

Fig 5 - Bonheur, R., n.d. *Lion (The Look Out)*

The second book on Bonheur is *Rosa Bonheur: A Life and a Legend* (Ashton, 1981) which contains studies of the lion Fathma together with a photograph of Bonheur and Fathma resting together (Ashton, 1981, pp. 136-137). Fathma was another lion who lived at Bonheur's chateaux and to whom Bonheur claimed to have special affection for (Klumpke, 2001, p. 184), and who died only three years old when falling down the grand stairs of Bonheurs.

In the studio I place the books in front of me on a table together with a digital tablet showing the painting *Lion (The Look Out)* and realize that Nero can be fitted into the brick house in Lund through the library. And I decide to place the two books about Rosa Bonheur, as well as the tablet, in the green bookshelves along the walls and use them as material for the third stop of the guided tour of the Bishop's House, giving me an opportunity to thereby further imagine the experience of the lion Nero, kept by Bonheur at her Chateau near the forest of Fontainebleau in France.

When Bonheur tells the world about her life and relationship with the many lions she keeps in her chateau menagerie over the years, she fills her histories with love, devotion and affection, directed from herself towards the lions but even more so from the lions directed

towards herself. Her stories seem, even though animals to her have personalities and emotions and are worthy of love, highly anthropocentric, since her artistic needs have terrible consequences for the animals that she keeps. These consequences become especially apparent in her relationship to the two lions in her menagerie to whom she claims to have a special bond. And it is those relationships, built on a sense of care that is nothing more than oppression and ownership, that I want to investigate on the third stop of the guided tour, in the library of the Bishop's House.

The first lion to whom Bonheur describe this special bond is the male lion Nero who, according to Bonheur, gives her "tender looks" (Klumpke, 2001, p. 183) and misses her terribly when she sends him and his female companion back to the zoo of Jardin des Plantes in Paris when they, as she phrases it, "were of no more use to me" (ibid). Later when she visits Nero at the zoo he has gone blind and is said to be literally dying of boredom but according to Bonheur he still recognizes her voice and drags himself towards her when she calls her name (2001, p. 184). The second is Fathma who Bonheur kisses goodnight, keeps inside the house and who follows her around "like a poodle" (ibid). Furthermore, Fathma, who dies only three years old, to great shock of Bonheur, is described as "a model of obedience and docility" (ibid). The testimony of Fathmas death as shocking is remarkable when in fact she is one of the lions who lived the longest within the cages of Bonheur. And even in Fathma's moment of death Bonheur describes herself as the centre of her life when explaining that Fathma wanted to die "someplace closer to me" (ibid) when finding her dead after falling down the stairs in Bonheur's house.

Bonheur describes herself as an animal lover (Klumpke, 2001, p. 22). A conviction shared by many such as Dore Ashton (1928-2017), the American art critic who wrote the book *Rosa Bonheur: A Life and a Legend* (Ashton, 1981) still laying on my studio table, and who describes Bonheur as having a "lifelong love affair with the nature of animals" (p. x). When searching about Rosa Bonheur on the internet the idea of her as an animal lover is one of the first descriptions that is mentioned of her. One of all examples is when Denver Art Museum lists "10 fascinating facts about the women artists in her Paris" where Rosa Bonheur is listed as an "animal lover and painter" (Denver Art Museum, 2017). The description of Bonheur as an animal lover seems to be the key personality trait brought up

when describing her person in art history. I don't think Nero and Fathma would agree to this portrayal of Bonheur, and with their help I want to dispute this description by writing and reading a letter from Nero to Rosa with the perspective of the ones whom her so-called acts of love was directed towards.

When researching Bonheur, I become fascinated by her way of portraying personality, and not only symbolic representations of other species. To me, specificity and personality is especially strong in her portraits of individual non-human animals such as the donkey in the three-quarter view portrait *The Forlorn Donkey* (Bonheur, n.d.) (Fig 21) and the dog in the full-face portrait *Martin, a Terrier* (Bonheur, n.d.) (Fig 22). To be able to portray individual expressions in this way, I believe you need to interpret and connect to the emotions of the one being portrayed. Therefore, together with the before mentioned testimonies in her "(auto)biography" (Klumpke, 2001) of her emotional relationship to some of her animals, I draw the conclusion that Bonheur knows of the suffering of the lions she brings to her menagerie. In fact, she even portrays it. But as Aaltola points out in *Varieties of Empathy: Moral Psychology and Animal Ethics* (2018), discussed earlier, *feeling with* others doesn't necessarily spark change.

So, why does she keep on bringing them to a chateau filled with cages, even though they become sick and die young. Because she loves them? Because she cares for them? Or is it exactly because she doesn't care for them? Perhaps her *feeling with* is morally detached? Is Bonheur an animal lover? The answer is no, or perhaps I should re-phrase, Bonheur is an anthropocentric animal lover, where the love is in relation to an unequal power dynamic. If art is the tyrant that demands caged animals to exist, then Rosa Bonheur is the warden of the ones enslaved by this tyrant. To contest the written and oral histories of these paintings, centred around an "animal loving" artist, another perspective needs to be brought forward that derives from behind the bars of her chateau. A version of history where the consequences of Rosa Bonheurs love towards her caged animals is made visible with the help of one of her beloved, Nero.

Imagining a Parrot, Geese and Cows at the National Gallery of Denmark

This section is an account of the process of writing the script *A Guided Tour of a Parrot, Geese and Cows at the National Gallery of Denmark* (Appendix 1.). The script is written for a guided tour of the National Gallery of Denmark and was produced for the European Society for Literature, Science and the Arts Conference GREEN 2018. As part of the conference the National Gallery dedicated one of their event evenings called SMK Fridays, which is a series of curated art experiences outside of the museum opening hours always free and open to the public, to fill the museum with performance, music, food and talks on the themed around the colour green.

My response to the call for participation for this conference was both a guided tour on-site at the National Gallery and a lecture on my research project. The guided tour took place twice on the evening of Friday 15 June and had approximately 50 visitors. The three text-based artworks *Green Feathers*, *The Christmas Geese* and *The Disappearance of Cows* was performed in the exhibition titled *Danish and Nordic Art 1750-1900*.

Imagining *Green Feathers*

I enter the National Gallery of Denmark through the staff entrance on the left side of the building. When entering through the glass door you first meet a guard who signs you in and gives you a visitors' badge with your name on it. Then you wait a few minutes while the one you are visiting walks down the stairs and through the corridors to come and get you so that you finally can enter the museum together. I am here to meet Ayoe Torbensdóttir and Daniel Smith Nielsen who are organizing the SMK Fridays, and I am here to look for the colour green in paintings portraying non-human animals, which I will find in the shape of a parrot.

Since several parts of the museum are closed I choose to focus on the exhibition *Danish and Nordic Art 1750-1900* to search for the colour green and after entering the exhibition, passing through a few rooms with horses, dogs and birds I encounter the green parrot of Eckersbergs painting *Mendel Levin Nathanson's Elder Daughters, Bella and Hanna*

(Eckersberg, 1820) (Fig 6). The green plumage of the parrot, stuck in a cage, as well as the corresponding green dress of one of the daughters and the green details of the unusual carpet on the floor stands out to me and strike me hard. The paintings layer of green seems like a good place to start.

Fig 6 - Eckersberg, C., 1820. *Mendel Levin Nathanson's Elder Daughters, Bella and Hanna*

In the digital archive of the National Museum of Denmark one can read that the merchant Nathanson was Eckersberg's greatest patron and according to Danish art historian Kasper Monrad the commissioned painting made it possible for Eckersberg to finance his marriage. Monrad also suggests a symbolic reading of the appearance of the parrot and writes the following: "Due to their ability to imitate human voices parrots were often seen as symbols

of good breeding, a suitable allusion for a picture of two young middle-class woman (sic)." He also suggests that the caged bird can be "regarded as a metaphor for the two unmarried women's sheltered situation while waiting - perhaps longing? - to move out into real life" (National Gallery of Denmark, 2018).

However, the parrot in the painting won't let you read them symbolically any longer. Instead the writer (me) will renounce you (the audience and the reader) the right to refuse the parrot of individuality, physical experience and agency. One might suggest that the "I" is in fact a "we" comprised of parrot and human, of writer and portrayed. Let me reiterate: *We* aren't letting you read this parrot symbolically. And I am therefore about to write a text in the first person as well as letting the physical expression of one take form in the other. During the guided tour and reading of *Green Feathers* I will turn my head as a "we".

The parrot in the painting could be painted from a killed and stuffed relative taken across seas or painted in several studies from notes and drawings from one of the enslaved colonies of former Danish West India. The I is perhaps a multitude of parrots. Somewhere, someone has either been killed, studied, transported or caged, or all of the above, in the process of making this painted scene come alive. The parrot is therefore not symbolic. They are alive. They had a physical body, and *we* refuse an anthropocentric reading of the painting telling us, once again, about the stories of upbringing and social status of humans.

The humans seen in the painting are Hanna and Bella Nathanson. Hanna has her hand raised in such a way that you understand that she is presenting something to the parrot. It seems to me that the gesture caught is a gesture of giving. When studying the painting, my suggestion is that she is giving something that can be eaten, even though it is very difficult to see what that might be. I am trying to imagine. I close my eyes and see the budgerigar of my childhood eating seeds. I search for parrot + food and parrot + seed on YouTube. I learn that parrots need fresh vegetables and appreciate pasta. I also learn that they really enjoy sunflower seeds. I leave my apartment to buy sunflower seeds with salted husks from my local store and nibble away. I am far from as quick and effective as the parrots with their beaks. It takes me a while before getting a hang of it but after some time, I can eat them without using my hands too much. I decide to imagine that it is a sunflower seed that is

presented to the bird from the hand of Hanna Nathanson and that is why I decide to eat a sunflower seed as a “we” in front of the audience, as part of my performance reading, even though it is embarrassingly difficult to do it gracefully.

I imagine:

The artist turns her head to the right and then tilts her head to the left.

The artist reads:
I change the grip of my feet.

The artist lifts her heels from the ground, left, right, left.

The artist reads:
I turn my head again.

The artist tilts her head to the left.

The artist reads:
I shift my weight. I eat a sunflower seed.

The artist reaches into her right pocket and finds a sunflower seed. She cracks the hull with her teeth and slowly, with concentration, eats the kernel. She then puts the broken hull back into her pocket.

The artist reads:
I turn my head again. I wait… I have endless amount of time to think.

Later, a couple of weeks after performing the text at the National Gallery of Denmark I stumble across a book about Eckersberg in the cellar of the antique bookstore Paludan Bog & Café in Copenhagen. And there, to my great surprise and delight I finally find a written suggestion of what it is that the parrot is given: It is sugar! (Hannover, 1898, p. 196). This

makes the painting turn partly into an image of the colonial history of Denmark where the Danish West India Company during the 1600-1700's controlled the three Islands St. Croix, St. Jan and St. Thomas of former Danish West India, where slaves were forced to work the sugar plants, making Denmark one of Europe's biggest producers of sugar of that time. The painting then turns into an image where sugar produced by oppression and violence is fed to a caged non-human animal who is told to tell us of human innocence. The history of the painting is not one of innocence but one of an oppressive system where the dress, cage, carpet and education is built on slavery.

Therefore, I re-imagine:

The artist turns her head to the right and then tilts her head to the left.

The artist reads:
I change the grip of my feet.

The artist lifts her heels from the ground, left, right, left.

The artist reads:
I turn my head again.

The artist tilts her head to the left.

The artist reads:
I shift my weight. I taste the sweetness of sugar.

The artist reaches into her right pocket and finds a lump of sugar. She puts it in her mouth and sucks on it for a while, before crushing it between her teeth.

The artist reads:
I turn my head again. I wait… I have endless amount of time to think.

Imagining *The Christmas Geese*

I continue through the rooms of the Nordic exhibition. I pass by paintings of fish lying dead at a kitchen table (Bloch, 1878) (Fig 23) and chopped into pieces at a market (Bloch, 1875) (Fig 24). I walk through a room with a sculpture of a panther whose child has been stolen and is about to be killed by a spear (Jerichau, 1845-1846) (Fig 25), room after room documenting violence towards non-humans without hesitation. When entering room 222 I first feel relieved when it seems to be a room without such violence. The room appears instead to be interested in the collective labour of humans such as men bringing rescue boats into the water (Ancher, 1883) (Fig 26) and a group of men poring metal at an iron foundry. But in the corner of the room, the violence is there again. The work of humans is of course connected to the usage of bodies of other animals and in the corner of the room I find a group of people plucking the feathers of geese. Doing labour for the Christmas dinner. The mundane violence stands out to me.

The painting of the geese is titled *Plucking the Geese* (Ancher, 1904) (Fig 7) and is painted by Danish artist Anna Ancher who was one of few women listed as members of the group of artists called the Skagen Painters, gathering in the village of Skagen in the northernmost part of Denmark from the late 1870s until around the turn of the century. She was born at the Brøndrum Hotel that was owned by her father and well known for being the centre of the artistic activities of the Skagen Painters. Ancher is known for portraying the everyday life of the people in Skagen. *Plucking the Geese* is a great example of this, portraying four people sitting close together, plucking geese, in a room with a closed window. The Danish original title is *Julegæssene plukkes* that can roughly be translated into “the Christmas geese are being plucked”.

Fig 7 - Ancher, A., 1904. *Plucking the Geese*

Consequently, and remembering Ferdinand the duck's exclamations, from the rooftop of the farm in the movie *Babe*, regarding the harsh realities of Christmas: "Christmas? Christmas means dinner, dinner means death! Death means carnage; Christmas means carnage!" (Babe, 1995), I started to search for the context needed to write a goose-centred version of the history of the painting through recipes of Christmas dinners and tutorials on how to kill and pluck a goose. I watched the carnage of Christmas being prepared through pedagogically illustrated tutorials in text, image, and video all over the internet. Teaching me how to pluck feathers in the correct direction, scrubbing of blood stains, cutting and prying the bones and cleaning up the tiny down feathers that, to everyone's annoyance, seemed to disappear into the smallest of cracks. I watched, with some amusement, the cut/pry/stitch activities in the kitchen of Julia Child when cooking a goose in her tv-series *The French Chef* (TheVladbocean, 2013). I translated a handy cutting tutorial from third person into first person to feel the violence. But, the context needed for the courage to start writing what Aaltola would call an "other-directed" (Aaltola, 2018, p. 28) goose-oriented version of art history first occurred when *escaping through a window*.

As a researcher of oppression, I have developed a research method that I use and seem to have formed intuitively, as a way to handle the violence I witness. I start by looking directly at the violent core: the blood, the pressure, the force, the cage. Then, I continue by focusing on the architecture, the clothes, the colours, the artworks, the windows, that can be seen if you place the focus of your eyes just a little to the side, or behind the point of physical violence. I do this because I need silence. But this is also the crucial point where emotions are felt, imagination and chance meet and consequently research expands, and it does so in companion with the experience of the violence witnessed. Escaping through a window of a painting, imagining what is happening outside, without first noticing the violence and bringing it along as a companion, is to risk forgetting what is essential. Therefore, it is first after researching the plucking and killing of geese that I let myself notice the window to the right of the painting.

So, I jumped out a window, for a breath of fresh air. Finding myself outside of the Brøndrum Hotel in Skagen, or perhaps at Markvej where Anna Ancher and her husband lived for thirty years, just a block away from the hotel. I opened Google Maps and started to walk the streets surrounding the hotel and their house, looking for the six paned window in the painting, accompanied by images in my head of white feathers and blooded tools.

Moving around in Google Maps, peeking into backyards, looking for the specific window, downloading images of visitors of the hotel, the recurring combination of red and white struck me: The main house of the hotel built in red brick with white windows. The red tablecloth outside in the hotel garden. The white wooden garden furniture. The white picket fence. The raised red and white Danish flag (Google Maps, 2009a). The red plastered house of Ancher with white wooden windows (Google Maps, 2009b). The horseradish on top on the salmon served by the kitchen at Brøndrums hotel (Google Maps, 2011). The feathers of the geese where mainly white, the blushing cheeks of the pluckers painted in a warm red colour (Ancher, 1904). The red blood stains and muscles in the tutorials (Siemens, 2017). The Danish national Christmas traditions. Digging deeper in red and whiteness, wandering the streets of Skagen, from the starting point of geography and geese, red and white is starting to seem like a claustrophobic social and physical cage. And from this physical feeling of sadness, and of anger, I started to write the imagined histories of geese.

Hence, one warm summer evening, flying from the northern most point of Denmark, across the waters of Kattegat and the land of Zealand, a skein of geese landed at the National Gallery of Denmark to bring forward a list of red and white. Worded by me in the corner of room 222 near a painting by Anna Ancher, in front of an audience of visitors to the museum, watching geese getting plucked.

Imagining *The Disappearance of Cows*

My first experience of the cow paintings of Johan Thomas Lundbye (1818-1848) was from the corner of my eyes. I had just asked one of the guards for the women painters on display in the exhibition Danish and Nordic Art 1750 – 1900 and now I was rushing through the halls to keep up with the museum worker on route to show me one of only four women exhibited in the exhibition: Anna Ancher.[9] I had just spent time with the parrot and when hurrying by the paintings by Lundbye I experienced a sensation of the sun stroking my left cheek. There was a warm colour of light and a glimpse of what I remembered to be more cows than I have ever seen gathered at a museum wall.

Leaving, what I later experienced to be, the fiery red and obliterating white framework of Anna Ancher's geese in a room full of painted workers, I returned to golden sun and green fields burnt with a touch of yellow: the summer fields of Lundbye's beloved Zealand. In the room 217F of the National Gallery of Denmark an entire wall was dedicated to the landscape and cows of Lundbyes childhood area. The four paintings displayed on the wall were placed in the following order, from left to right*: Zealand Landscape. Open Country in North Zealand* (Lundbye, 1842) (Fig 8); *Two Cows in an Open Field* (Lundbye, 1845) (Fig 27)*; A Croft at Lodskov near Vognserup Manor. Study* (Lundbye, 1846) (Fig 28); *A Croft at Lodskov near Vognserup Manor, Zealand* (Lundbye, 1847) (Fig 29).

[9] The numbers of the participants in the exhibition are as follow: A total of 42 men and 4 women are exhibited, furthermore, only 5 works of women are on display while 112 works of men are presented. Making this an exhibition that fails when it comes to gender equality.

Sitting on a bench in the museum halls, with my smartphone and notebook in hand, watching the cows grace the warm golden landscapes, I read the information provided on Lundbye on the website of the museum. There are a total of 1411 objects attributed to Lundbye in the digital collection, among them 39 oil paintings. Except for four close-up portraits, all of the paintings contain landscapes, most of them inhabited by animals. I count approximately 81 cows, 7 horses, 3 chickens, 27 humans, 4 ducks, 23 sheep, 1 stork and 2 donkeys. In front of me I have 13 cows and 1 human, framed and hanging on the wall.

From the collection one learns that the motif for *Zealand Landscape. Open Country in North Zealand* (Lundbye, 1842) (Fig 8**)** is inspired from the scenery near his parents' home. One also learns that the painting is made from several studies in the area and therefore a mix of what Lundbye believed to be the most Zealandic scenery (National Gallery of Denmark, 2018). One can claim that according to Lundbye the recipe for a correct representation of Zealandic landscape contains open fields, blue skies, hills, a few trees and cows. Or, as The National Museum of Denmark defines it, when describing the painting by choosing these words in the following order: landscape, open country, countryside, winding road, hilly, open landscape, forest, grassy hills, countryside, landscape, nature, mossy boulders, windswept bushes, road, roads, landscape, landscape, countryside, open land, tilled field, landscape, nature (National Gallery of Denmark, 2018). The archivist of the museum has chosen to not mention a single cow, making them invisible, creating a hole.

Fig 8 - Lundbye, J. T., 1842. *Zealand Landscape. Open Country in North Zealand*

As argued by art historian Linda Nochlin in her influential article *Why Have There Been No Great Women Artists?*, originally published in the magazine ARTnews in 1971, art history is written from the "white Western male viewpoint" which "must be corrected in order to achieve a more adequate and accurate view of historical situations" (1988). In this case, what needs to be corrected, is rather an anthropocentric and speciesist description of a painting of cows that fails to account for the portrayed. These cows are not meant to be symbolic. They are the gracing inhabitants of Lundbye's beloved Zealand and he paints them with care. Sitting on a bench in hall 217F. In front of the paintings of cows. With another painting by Lundbye behind me, where two cows in the foreground of the painting are portrayed with distinct emotions and personalities (Lundbye, 1844) (Fig 30), I start to write. I will not accept the obscuring of these cows. I believe that the context needed to write this text is the museum that I am physically present in. Thus, I grab my notebook and begin an attempt to re-write the content of the archives of the National Gallery of Denmark.

I start to write the text hunched over my notebook on the bench, continue in the cafeteria and complete it on the train home. The writing went almost too quick, or at least in a pace

that made me suspicious. What am I missing? For whom am I writing? Have I produced a text that Aaltola would call self-directed? (Aaltola, 2018, pp. 28-30). Am I using these cows to discuss the oppressive system of history writing? The answer is yes. I am writing, and will be reading, and thereby calling out, the problems of history writing in an oppressive speciesist archiving tradition, where animals are seen as symbolic, or in some cases not seen at all. I will speak about this, in front of an audience of humans and cows, in the halls of the institution of these archives. And I think that the cows would agree with me.

Imagining a Squirrel, Marmot, Cat and a Capercaillie at Nationalmuseum in Stockholm

This section is an account of the process of writing the script *A Guided Tour of a Squirrel, Marmot, Cat and a Capercaillie at Nationalmuseum in Stockholm* (Appendix 1.). The script is written for a guided tour at the Swedish Nationalmuseum and came to be after senior lecturer Simon Ceder from the department of Visual Arts and Sloyd Education at Konstfack: University of Arts, Crafts and Design in Stockholm invited me to be part of the Konstfack Research Week 2019. Simon was organizing a node titled *With Animals* and as part of that I was asked to do a presentation about my research project. I then suggested a lecture performance in the shape of a guided tour for the newly renovated and re-opened Nationalmuseum, and with the help of Simon and Konstfack I was given the opportunity to develop and write a text-based artwork for Nationalmuseum's exhibition *The Timeline*, performed during the research week on site at the museum. The guided tour was performed on 30 January 2019 at Nationalmuseum in front of an audience of 27 people.

Imagining *Resting in Darkness and Perfect Humidity*

My first ever visit to Nationalmuseum is virtual. When invited by Simon to participate in Konstfack Research Week 2019, I suggest a lecture performance discussing the possibility of a less human-centred reading of paintings hanging at museum walls. Since Nationalmuseum recently reopened after their five-year long renovation, we decide that it would be interesting to engage in a critical reading of the re-organized exhibitions, within the node of

the research week called *With Animals* that Simon organize. So, while Simon initiated a dialogue with Nationalmuseum, I start to research the exhibitions by making a virtual visit to the limestone house of Södra Blasieholmshamnen, placed in the peninsula of Blasieholmen in Stockholm, with the help of Google Earth (Google, 2019), from my studio in Malmö, Sweden.

Google Earth starts in space, where earth rotates around its axis in a dark star-filled background. And while the three sisters of Orion's Belt rise in the Philippine Sea, I write Nationalmuseum in the search tab. I quickly travel approximately 12,362 virtual kilometres, using the browser as my vehicle, and find myself hovering above the stone house of German architect Friedrich August Stüler, that was built and erected for Nationalmuseum in 1866. In Google Earth it is summer. Unlike the trees outside my apartment, whose branches appear as dark graphite signs against grey skies, the trees in Stockholm are lush green. The sun is out, the sea is blue, and the sailboats are in the water.

When dragging the yellow avatar from the right corner of the browser and dropping it through the roof into the museum I find myself in the great hall of the sixth floor, documented by Google in October 2012, experiencing the exhibitions before the recent renovation. In 2012, the great hall is about nationalism and male grandeur showing off muscles and kings with the large scale and site specific paintings of Carl Larsson: *Mid-Winter Sacrifice* (1915) (Fig 31) and *The Entry of King Gustav Vasa of Sweden into Stockholm, 1523* (1908) (Fig 32), accompanied with plaster casts and *Bringing Home the Body of King Karl XII of Sweden* (1884) (Fig 12) by Gustaf Cederström. I exit the hall of the large scale works and enter a red room with marble pillars, carrying with me these first impressions that quite eloquently sums up the nationalist storytelling a national museum often is based upon and reinforce, by for example, organising artworks according to country while focusing on the history of the kings. From the red room I continue down the smaller galleries searching for portrayed non-humans.

My plan is to systematically look at one painting after another, in one room after another, not unlike a physical visit. This strategy will hopefully give me more "hits" than searching through the digital archives of the museum that earlier showed me Bruno Liljefors' *A Fox*

Family (1886) (Fig 33), when searching for cows. But my plan quickly fails. I get thrown through walls like a ghost and am unable to move through doors. There is no logic and I click my way through the rooms unable to orientate myself trying to navigate a space closer to a digital labyrinth than an exhibition space. After locating and taking screenshots of works such as *Still Life with Birds and Hunting Gear in a Niche* (Hondecoeter, 1663) (Fig 34) I find a room with several of Swedish painter David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl's (1628-1698) studies of animals such as marmots (1682) (Fig 11), turtles (1690) (Fig 35) and a squirrel (1697) (Fig 10). Further into the labyrinth I stumble upon, to great delight and surprise, the painting *Wild Cat* (1850) (Fig 9) by Rosa Bonheur in the part of the exhibition called *Modern Life, France 19th Century* on a wall categorized as *The Countryside*. The text about *The Countryside* mentions the Fountainbleu forest, where Rosa Bonheur resides nearby in a chateau from 1859 until her death in 1899, and which is the setting for one of the texts in the guided tour of the Bishop's House in Lund (Lindahl, 2017), which was also the first guided tour of this doctoral project. Beneath the *Wild Cat* a sign explains:

> Rosa Bonheur was one of the most famous painters of animals of her time. This wild cat is an excellent example of her realistic way of portraying animals. Bonheur was genuinely interested in the animals she depicted. In addition to a large number of dogs, birds and cats, she also had an otter, Mouflon sheep and lions. In 1853, at the age of 31, she gained wide recognition for her monumental painting The Horse Market. Bonheur's choice of subjects required her to frequent places where it was impractical to wear long skirts. In 1857[10], the police granted her permission to wear trousers in public. (Nationalmuseum, 2019)

It is the discovery of the wild cat and the mentioning of Fountainbleu, together with the fact that the sign below the painting lacks a critical perspective on her "genuine interest", that makes me suggest a guided tour at Nationalmuseum, instead of a lecture performance at Konstfack. With the help of the wild cat, I want to express a critical perspective of the

[10] According to Klumpke in *Rosa Bonheur: the artist's (auto)biography* (Klumpke, 2001, p. 137) Bonheur is granted permission to wear pants already in 1850 while riding in the Pyrenees.

consequences of Bonheur's interest in the animals she paints. And therefore, I book a train ticket to Stockholm. I need to meet the wild cat.

Fig 9 - Bonheur, R., 1850. *Wild Cat*

On the train to Stockholm I start to research the painting of the wild cat through the artist who showed her such genuine interest. Rosa Bonheur didn't move to the Château de By outside Fountainbleau until 1859 (thomery.com, 2019) placing the painting 9 years before her move to the chateau. In 1850 when the painting was signed, she was 28 years old. In 1849 she finished the painting *Ploughing in the Nivernaise* (Bonheur) (Fig 36), ordered by the French state in 1848 for the Musée de Lyon (Musée d'Orsay, 2019) showing a scene of ploughing in the rural landscape in the former area Nivernaise in the countryside outside of the French town Nevers, south of Paris. Between 1850 and 1851 it is said that she visited the horse market in Paris twice a week (Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2019) doing studies for the painting *The Horse Fair* (Bonheur, 1852-55). (Fig 37). The small sized painting of the wild cat is portrayed in the years between the largest two paintings of Bonheur: *Ploughing in the Nervanaise* sized 2600 x 1340 cm and *Horse Fair* sized 506.7 x 244.5 cm and could be painted in any studio or at any rural landscape during those years. In 1908, Bonheur's partner Anna Klumpke writes in the before mentioned autobiography of Bonheur (Klumpke, 2001) about

the summer of 1850, where Bonheur travelled the Pyrenees together with her first partner Nathalie Micas, that:

> She [Bonheur] painted and drew her way through these trips, with all the subjects they offered her. Every turn opened up a new vista, and the animal painter discovered furry and woolly beasts unlike the ones in Paris, Nièvre, and Auvergne. Her portfolios filled up with drawings.
> (Klumpke, 2001, p. 139)

Since the species known as wild cat inhabits the Pyrenees (Yamaguchi, et al., 2015), I imagine that this is where they both have met, making the wild cat vulnerable to the attention of Rosa Bonheur. Perhaps only for a short while instead of a longer period of time, which is the case for several of the cats that Bonheur will cage, such as Nero and Fatima amongst others (Lindahl, 2017).

I physically enter the Nationalmuseum of Sweden on a snowy Wednesday in January. Even though I have read about the record-breaking number of visitors since the opening I am not prepared for the number of people crowded in the exhibition halls, elevators and bathrooms. After struggling a while with finding a locker for my bag I take the elevator to the sixth floor. My plan is to move through the entire exhibition space to search for non-human animals in paintings, take snapshots and then go back to the ones I find the most interesting. A couple of hours later I have found several paintings that I want to research and get into dialogue with, but no wild cat.

I describe the painting to one of the museum guards and ask if they know where it is to be found. The answer I get is disappointing. It can be found in another part of town in the museum archives. I later find out through an e-mail conversation with curator Carl Johan Olsson that the painting has been on loan for the earlier exhibitions, and therefore, after the renovation, no longer is on display. I am also informed that they have decided to prolong the loan making it possible to again display the wild cat, this time within the new permanent exhibition *The Timeline* (Olsson, 2019). But when on site, at Nationalmuseum, realizing my mistake, all I can think of is Rosa Bonheurs importance to me, her undisputable place in art

history, and the somewhat surprising sadness that affects me for not being able to experience the wild cat.

After the disappointment of the wild cat, I take a second tour of the museum, spending time with the paintings I want to go into dialogue with. I sketch, write, and look at how people move around the paintings, some passing by, others looking closely at them. After a while I start to search for a room that is less crowded, where I can sit for a while and write about my initial thoughts of the experience I am having.

On the fourth floor I find myself alone in a quiet room called The Old Director General's office. The room is dusky and only lit by the streetlights outside, carrying the light by the help of the snowflakes in the air, now falling heavy. The walls are dark blue. A small bench is placed facing a group of large windows overlooking Skeppsholmsbron, connecting the islets Blasieholmen with Skeppsholmen. In the corner of the room there is a small bookshelf. I sit down and think of the wild cat. I realize I think of *her* not him. I imagine her within a golden frame, placed within a system of the great archives of Nationalmuseum. Right now, we are in different parts of the city, both resting in darkness and perfect humidity. There and then, I hope that her rest is a temporary one, and not part of a process of exclusion. I think of the other felines painted by Bonheur, about her possessing them and the consequences of her oeuvre to their lives. I think of the lions Nero and Fathma that I have researched, written about and discussed earlier and I wonder how the wild cat's experience of Bonheur relates to theirs. I realise that even though the wild cat is not on site, I can carry her across the city and let the group that I will guide listen to what it is like to be exposed to the *genuine interest* of Bonheur, through the imagined experience, and knowledge, of a Pyrenees wild cat.

Imagining A Squirrel and a Marmot

When continuing through the halls of Nationalmuseum I find that one of the gallery rooms is still dedicated to the paintings of David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl (1628-1698) and a few other animal painters active during the 17th century. On the main wall of the room there are five

paintings on display: Closest to the ceiling is the painting Two Turtles (1690) (Fig 40) by David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl, placed beneath, left and centre, are *White Squirrel in a Landscape* (1697) (Fig 10) and *Murmeldjur (Marmots)* (1682) (Fig 11), both by Ehrenstrahl, with *Two owls fighting over a rat* (1650) by Hans Georg Müller (Fig 38), to the right. Below hangs a *Study of a Male Lumpsucker (cyclopterus lumpus)* (1617) (Fig 39) by Hendrick Goltzius, in what seems to be lifesize (Fryklund, 2015, p. 38). The titles of the paintings in this room are straightforward, describing the space or the species. There are neither titles nor exhibition texts describing the relations between the studied subject and the painter, between the idea of free and wild nature and the capturing and killing that needs to be done to be able to study. The violence that brought them here is left out.

Fig 10 - Ehrenstrahl, D. K., 1697. *White squirrel in a landscape*

Fig 11 - Ehrenstrahl, D. K., 1682. *Murmeldjur*

The fact that Nationalmuseum doesn't address the violence of this room becomes clear when I visit their Facebook page to read a post about the albino squirrel painted by Ehrenstrahl. They write:

> The white albino squirrel is painted in 1697 and a real favourite among our youngest visitors. We usually tell that the white squirrels most certainly felt isolated in the woods, maybe even being bullied by the other squirrels? But then one day the white squirrel was caught by the stable hand Anders Ek and brought in front of the king Karl XI. The king thought the squirrel was so special that he let his court painter David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl paint a portrait of it. Therefore, this squirrel, who in the 17th century wasn't like every other squirrel, has a place at the very halls of Nationalmuseum. Please do tell this story if you visit us with children (Nationalmuseum, 2019) [11] [12].

[11] Original text in Swedish: "Den vita albinoekorren är målad 1697 och en riktig favorit bland våra yngsta besökare. Vi brukar berätta att den vita ekorren säkert kände sig utanför i skogen, kanske till och med var retad av de andra ekorrarna? Men så en dag blev den vita ekorren fångad av stalldrängen Anders Ek och förd till självaste kungen, Karl XI. Och kungen tyckte att ekorren var så speciell att han lät sin hovmålare David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl porträttera den. Så nu hänger den ekorre som i slutet av 1600-talet inte var som alla andra ekorrar med sitt porträtt på självaste Nationalmuseum. Berätta gärna historien du också, om du besöker oss med barn." (Nationalmuseum, 2019)

[12] The story of the bullied squirrel retold at the Facebook page of Nationalmuseum has had 200 reactions in form of thumbs up and hearts. It is their fifth most reacted to post of 2019 so far (21 July 2019).

Just as I do when re-writing the histories of paintings from a less human centred perspective, Nationalmuseum uses anthropomorphism. But instead of telling the story of violent consequence of human curiosities, they choose to tell a story in which meaning, and context, is given to the squirrel by the making of a portrait. A portrait by which remembrance in human history is given as a gift. Granted that the anthropomorphic story written by Nationalmuseum "strikes a chord in the human experience" (de Waal, 1997, p. xvi), since every young child most certainly has been in front of a narrated or real situation of schoolyard bullying and therefore recognizes the consequences of being singled out. But as de Waal also writes "anthropomorphism and anthropocentrism are never far apart" (de Waal, 2001, p. 63), making this story a narration of an anthropocentric anthropomorphism in support of a speciesist system. Consequently, when asking the question: Who gains from this narrative? The answer is the speciesist society in which we live, that teaches children to uphold the system of oppressing other species. The story of the squirrel, written by Nationalmuseum, is anthropocentric and oppressive, where children are being taught that capturing that which is different and keeping it in a cage is a way of caring.

When looking closer at the painting of the squirrel, there is, however, a trace of violence within its frame, in a painted text in the left corner of the painting. The text says:

> In 1696, on the 27th of July, a squirrel at Kungzbarkare was caught by stablehand Anders Eek and brought alive to the king (RKD - Netherlands Institute for Art History, 2019)[13] [14]

The squirrel was caught, meaning, there was a hunt. When artists study other animals there more often than not seems to be a hunt beforehand. The hunt might have occurred seconds, years or generations before the artists draw, sketch or paint to document and understand the other. When looking at the walls of the gallery the hunt is evident. The male lumpsucker's skin is detailed in such a way that it must have been still. Before this stillness

[13] Orig text in Swedish: "*A. 1696 D. 27 Julij blef sådan Ekorn wid Kungzbarkare fången af Stalldrengen Anders Eek och till Hans Kongl. Maij lefwandes bracht"*
[14] Quotes from Karl XI's diary concerning the albino squirrel can be found here: http://runeberg.org/faunaflora/1907/1028.html (in Swedish)

there has been a handle net or a hook. Furthermore, the owls might have been stuffed, the marmot caged.

The hunt also seems to be woven into Nationalmuseum's pedagogical tools for children. On their website I find a pdf of a map called *Art on the Run*[15], "An exploration in the collections for children and curious adults"[16] (Nationalmuseum, 2019). On the first page of the map is a portrait of the dachshund Pehr painted by Jean-Baptiste Oudry titled *The Dachshound Pehr with Dead Game and a Rifle* (1740) (Fig 40), and on the following pages is a map over the museum floors with images of paintings with non-human animals as well as troll, flowers and mushrooms. The idea is, with the help of the map, to find the ones on the run. According to Nationalmuseum some of the animals have escaped the cage of the frame and we are supposed to engage in finding them. As earlier quoted, Malamud writes that being painted and framed is disempowering non-human animals, making them loose their freedom, rights and self-determination (Malamud, 2012, pp. 5-6). We are encouraged to explore, but what are we supposed to do when we find them within the frame? Within rooms where the windows are shut, within rooms impossible to flee, where the air and sunlight are fully controlled, making these rooms perfect condition for an eternity of being on display.

When researching the paintings of the squirrel I become curious about Ehrenstrahl who in 1661 was hired as a court painter within the Swedish court. According to Axel Sjöblom, Ehrenstrahl was tired of painting animals other than humans. In *Svenskt Biografiskt Lexikon* he writes that the artist even despised painting non-human animals, and when king Karl XI brings him along to paint elks at Kungsör he is said to sigh over the situation (2019). But his obvious discontent didn't change anything and during his time as court painter he was commissioned to paint many different species such as horses, bears, wolf, grouse, capercaillie, foxes, owls, a squirrel and several dogs (2019), making him one of Sweden's most prolific but at the same time reluctant non-human animal painters.

[15] Orig text in Swedish: "*Konst på rymmen*"
[16] Orig text in Swedish: "En upptäcktsfärd i samlingarna för barn och nyfikna vuxna."

In the archives of Nationalmuseum I find a painting of an elk by Ehrenstrahl (1689) (Fig 41). It is clear that it is made without conviction. The elk feels more like a cartoon and the blood of their wound is indifferently splashed onto the canvas. His reluctance is manifested through his palette. On the other hand, when it comes to the marmots, hanging next to the squirrel in the gallery, painted seven years before the elk, there seems to be a genuine interest of studying the non-human animal's bodies. When researching the marmots I find that the keywords ascribed to the painting, by RKD – Netherlands Institute for Art History are:

> animal painting (genre)
> marmot
> sitting
> eating
> standing (position)
> cliff

At the RKD website the painting is catalogued as *Three Marmots* in English and *Drie marmotten* in Dutch, together with information of the description "murmur-their" painted in the upper centre of the painting. (RKD- Netherlands Institute for Art History, 2019). In Swedish the title is *Murmeldjur* that can be read as either singular or plural form. During my research of the painting, I think of the marmots in plural, that it is a painting of three different individuals. But when I find a second entry, together with a photograph in black and white of the painting together with some new information written in English, at the digital archives of Nationalmuseum, I need to re-think my reading of the painting. Apparently, the painting is a study of a single marmot. They write:

> From the information on the artist's bill, we know that this is one single animal, depicted in different positions. Like a natural science illustration, the painting was to show the marmot in characteristic poses: eating, scouting and making a warning cry, as well as walking. Its natural habitat is the Alps. For this reason, the background is a rock. Karl XI very (sic) commissioned Ehrenstrahl to paint both domestic and wild animals in his possession (Nationalmuseum, 2019).

Hence, this is a portrait of a single marmot. Possessed by Karl XI and they has been alive, just as the squirrel, for the king to commission and Ehrenstrahl to study. I read another post of Nationalmuseum at their Facebook page, this time about the marmot, written on the Groundhog Day of 2017. They write:

> Ehrenstrahls (sic) animal paintings often reflect the fascination of his times with the exotic or unusual - parrots and polar bears are interspersed with giant moose or malformed dogs. This (sic) three groundhogs appears (sic), however, unusally (sic) common (Nationalmuseum, 2017).

Nationalmuseum writes, from a 2017 perspective, that the marmot is common, meaning that they are not exotic enough to be portrayed in their own right. But apparently the Swedish king of 1652 was of another opinion. According to him, this animal was interesting enough to paint and study. Since they are painted in three different positions, I can imagine the marmot spinning around for an eternity: crouch, stretch, stand, crouch, stretch, stand, crouch, stretch, stand…

stretch stretch stretch
stand stand stand
crouch crouch crouch crou

And even though there is a rumour that the marmot perhaps might be on the run, it seems to me that the only way to free the owls, marmot, the lumpsucker and the squirrel is by opening the gallery windows and let the sunshine in. Which will slowly turn the paintings darker and darker, and finally make them fade out and disappear.

Imagining *A Dead King Happens to Pass By*

When I first enter Nationalmuseum through the roof, into the great hall of the sixth floor, on my first and digital visit, I notice, but quickly pass by, the painting *Bringing Home the Body of King Karl XII of Sweden* by Gustaf Cederström (1884) (Fig 12). I don't think of the painting again until I physically stand in front of it in one of the larger halls of the fourth floor

dedicated to the turn of the 20th century, showing art that promotes or questions the idea of Swedish nationalism.

Fig 12 - Cederström, G., 1884. *Bringing Home the Body of King Karl XII of Sweden*

The painting strikes me hard. It affects me physically. The size of it. The massive golden frame reflecting the light of the spotlights. The snow. The height. The depth. I notice details that I have missed before, when looking at it digitally or in books: the bird in the air, the soldiers seeking my eyes, the struggling with the flag, the movement of snow and wind. The composition of this painting is intense. I grab a museum stool and sit down in front of it.

I let my eyes wander, drifting through the painting, following the zigzag formation of the soldiers pulling me into the landscape. Continuing through the space between the flag and the cliff, then I am thrown to the left with the help of the wind catching the flag and the robes. Passing a small group of two humans, one dog and a capercaillie, the speed of the wind almost carrying me of the cliff, but I am saved by the golden frame. My eyes do the same journey over and over, it is a not so merry merry-go-round, ending up at the same

position again and again, standing behind the small group, next to a contrasting red blood stain in the snow, making it my point of attention.

The blood comes from the beak of the capercaillie, hanging dead on the back of a human, who carries the rifle that killed over his right shoulder. A child is standing to the left. Both of them are holding their hats in hand, turning their heads down but eyes up, looking at the procession of a dead king. Between them is a barking dog. There is an information sign below the painting. I read:

> The scene stretches panorama-like across a snowy mountain landscape. A column of troops winds its way to the horizon. The uniforms and arms are accurately depicted, but the scene as a whole is a fantasy. Charles XII's body was not carried on an open bier, but in a coffin pulled on a wagon. The artist has combined the return of the body with the story of General Armfeldt's disastrous retreat across the Jämtland mountains**.** (Fig 42)

Nationalmuseum writes that the scene is a fantasy, combining historic events for a dramatic touch. Cederström calls it "licentia poetica" (Järbe, 1979, pp. 295-297) meaning he has deviated from fact or form for artistic purposes. My eyes keep turning back to a specific detail, the blood in the snow. Thinking of the capercaillie. For this fantasy to feel accurate Cederström studied and sketched intensely. He was known for using human models, both strangers and family (Arvidsson, 2014), posing in correct military outfits, as well as using the nature around him (Harrison, 2011). In 1878 the Swedish artist Hugo Birger wrote to Johan Boklund, another Swedish painter, saying that Cederström didn't paint anything "unless he had a complete and correct model for it" (Laurin, 1933, p. 629).[17] Making it most likely that he also used a barking dog and probably at least one dead capercaillie. Meaning that even though this is a fantasy, someone most likely died for it to manifest. Turning, at least one

[17] Full quote in Swedish: *"Då det snöade häromdagen, överraskade jag honom med att han målade efter en utanför fönstret upphängd Karl den tolftes-stövel, som förut vederbörligen hade inbökats med snö – den som hade råd att gå så solitt tillväga i allt vad till kostymer och andra arrangements hörer som han; inte en sporre eller sölja, ej en rock eller en handske målar han utan en komplett, fullständig modell därtill!"*

detail of this painting, into documentation of harsh reality for a non-human animal in relation to art production.

Sitting in front of the painting I come to think of English ornithologist, bird artist and taxidermist John Gould (1804-1881), that I first read about in Bryndis Snöbjörnsdottir's thesis *Spaces of Encounter: Art and Revision in Human - Animal Relations* (2009). Snöbjörnsdottir writes in her thesis about taxidermy and the relation between killing and studying, using Gould as a "good example of the closeness in the relationship between the life and death of animals and their representation" (p. 127). Snöbjörnsdottir elaborates: "Before the invention of binoculars and later lens-based media, animals and birds were most often shot and then drawn and painted" (ibid), and because Gould was a specialist in drawing hummingbirds, and did so for decades before even seeing a live one, his representations are of death. And even though I cannot be certain that there has been a capercaillie in the system of studying and producing *Bringing Home the Body of King Karl XII of Sweden* (Cederström, 1884) I imagine that there has been. And since this painting exists in two versions, and Cederström's artistic process was to paint that which was in front of him, I imagine that at least two, or perhaps even several capercaillies have been killed for this painting to come alive.

Still sitting in front of the painting, now all I see is violence. And that this nationalist *licentia poetica* storytelling still claimed life, 166 years after the event. Consequently, I stand up, fold the stool together and start exploring the room. I find that I have been sitting with my back towards a group of artworks creating an island in the middle of the room. The artworks are grouped together because of their nationalist critique or agenda. There I find *How to cook a Souvenir* (1990) by Peter Johansson (Fig 43) comprised by sliced dalecarlian horses packaged as meat, placed in front of Anders Zorn's *Midsommardans* (1897) (Fig 44), remembering that the placement of these two works together, stirred up quite the controversy for the re-opening.

Both Zorn and Johansson were born in Dalarna, a historical province in Sweden known for its typical folk culture marketed as more Swedish than the rest of Sweden. But while Zorn is known for creating and upholding a utopian image of Dalarna and Sweden, Johansson has

critiqued the Dala-identity by focusing on, for example, how the identity of Sweden is packaged (Johansson, 1990), and the growing Nazi culture (Johansson, 2000) in Dalarna and Sweden. When presenting Johansson's work together with the work of Zorn, Nationalmuseum triggered the right wing nationalists of Sweden at the webpage Samnytt (Dagerlind, 2018), as well as the editorial journalist and critics of liberal conservative daily newspaper Svenska Dagladet (Irenius, 2018) (Johansson, 2018), who all reacted against Nationalmuseum's new information signs on nationalism in a negative way. The liberal daily newspaper Göteborgsposten, published an editorial where Håkan Boström called the museum's information sign on nationalism "state indoctrination" (2018). The information sign that sparked most of these reactions, is placed beneath Cederström's *Bringing Home the Body of King Karl XII of Sweden* (1884), and reads:

> The populist and nationalism-based view of Swedishness, which is used politically today, is based on the idea of a static, ideal and construed past. The thought that there is a historical time and place to look back at, where everything was in a certain way, is not accurate.
> When Nationalmuseum opened in 1866, people talked more about Scandinavism. At that time Sweden was in a union with Norway. In the 1890s, pictures and objects were not only symbols of a national ideology, they were also part of creating and launching National Romanticism. (Fig 45)

How and which objects are shown, as well as which stories are told, at Nationalmuseum or any other museum, whether its focus is on art, design or nature, tell us something about how we perceive our collective identity, what our moral circles[18] encompass and how that circle is shaped and transformed. A week before my guided tour at Nationalmuseum, I had been speaking at a seminar arranged by Malmö Museeer, Skånes Konstfrämjande and Skåne Regional Council (Konstfrämjandet Skåne, 2019) about my art project *Slit, Scratch, Stuff, Stitch* (Lindahl, 2015), concerning the giraffe who was shot and killed in 1930, then

[18] Expanding the moral circle is a phrase coined by William Edward Hartpole Lecky (1838 - 1903), a 19th century Irish historian and philosopher. In 1869 he writes: "At one time the benevolent affections embrace merely the family, soon the circle expanding includes first a class, then nation, then a coalition of nations, then all humanity and finally, its influence is felt in the dealings of man with the animal world...". (Lecky, 1869, pp. 100-101) Further developed in relation to non-human animals by Peter Singer in his book *The expanding circle: ethics and sociobiology* (Singer, 1981).

taxidermied, and later put on display to greet the visitors at the entrance hall of Malmö Castle for many decades. The seminar had as its focus the taxidermized giraffe and beforehand I had decided to, in my presentation of the giraffe's violent history, and the art work that I had done, propose two actions: The first being that they should not try to "save" the giraffe by building the climate glass cage they currently were discussing, but instead let her fall apart. Arguing that they should stop fighting against the cracks in the skin of the giraffe and instead embrace that as a form of resistance that they needed to listen to and act upon, not fight against. The second being to free the giraffe by taking her down and bury her together with her foetus, that is currently stuck in a leaking glass yar in a basement in Lund. My suggestions sparked a series of negative reactions from the museum staff. I was questioned both during my talk and during the coffee break, hearing from several that that would be a political act and the museum isn't a political place. Afterwards I was even taken aside to stand in the hallway to discuss with one of the staff, who wanted to know if I really meant what I had just said. Naturally, there was also some positive reactions in such a way that they thought it was thought-provoking to think of freeing the giraffe.

I was, of course, prepared for reactions. After all I wanted to provoke the status quo. But I hadn't really understood how radical my suggestions would be perceived by the staff. Later in the afternoon Gunlög Fur, Professor in History and Dean at Linnaeus University entered the stage. During her talk she discussed the Swedish history of taxidermized human bodies using the example of Kewuck Ootahkah (1846-1875) from the Pawnee people in Oklahoma, USA, also called White Fox, who together with the two brothers Red Fox and White Eagle toured and performed in Sweden, Denmark and Norway in 1874. She told us of how he never returned to his home since he unfortunately died in tuberculosis. After this his torso's skin was mounted on plaster and exhibited at the Palace of the Hereditary Prince in Stockholm between 1878 and 1879 after which his body was placed in Karolinska Källaren until 1996 when he was repatriated to the Pawnee people (Asker, 2017) (Verdier, 2015) (Lindroth, 2014). When Gunlög described the mounting of Ootahkah's skin a massive collective gasp of disgust and disbelief was drawn from the audience. Later, when I pointed out, during a short panel discussion, that this was the exact same method used when mounting the giraffe, I was met with silence. To my surprise the idea of the museum as an apolitical place was used again as an argument in favour of not removing the giraffe from

the museum.

Let me be clear, there is no such thing as an apolitical museum because there is no such thing as an apolitical history. This we can see in the contemporary debates of representation, gender inequality and repatriation of stolen objects. The museum structure stands on a construction of historical hierarchies. And its main narrator is the one in power. It matters whose history is told and whose history is silenced. As Guerrilla Girls points out: "Do women have to be naked to get into the Met. Museum? (Guerrilla Girls, 1985-1990) (Fig 46). It was a surprise to me that so many off the staff participating at the seminar at Malmö Museum didn't agree with me on this and couldn't recognise themselves as part of a speciesist and oppressive structure. A system, that without hesitation, use the painful history, and body, of a killed and mounted giraffe as merchandise. At Nationalmuseum the histories of the non-human animals in paintings are addressed in such a way that the status quo of speciesism is being upheld, and children are guided through the rooms with the help of a narrative based on ideas of hierarchies between species. And even though Nationalmuseum addresses Nationalism as well as representation[19] in their presentations it seems as if there are many years left before they will address the death of non-human animals, used within the system of art and museum presentations.

[19] Two examples on Nationalmuseum's work on representation: 1. In a text about the newly acquired works by female artists working in France in the 1880s curator Carl-Johan Olsson explains: "Pieces by female artists are at the top of our wish list, and we have a long-term ambition to be able to present a more complete picture of what the art scene was actually like in the late 1800s." (Nationalmuseum, 2019). 2. The change of the title of David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl's painting *Ung man med papegojor och markattor* (Young Man with Parrots and Guenons) (Fig 47). (Ehrenstrahl, 1670) to not encompass the n-word.

Conclusion

A Suggestions on How to Move Forward – An End that Begins

The main focus of the thesis *Resistance Within the Museum Fauna – Challenging Anthropocentrism through Counter Art Histories and Non-Human Narratives* has been to investigate the possibility of writing counter art histories that decentre the human in art history in favour of non-human animals. Since this research project is practice-based and interdisciplinary, situated within the fields of visual art and critical animal studies, it does so through practice while keeping non-human animals in its centre of attention. And because of its qualitative enquiry it examines *how* these new imagined histories can be written and performed as well as what forms of methods are needed when creating a shift of attention from an anthropocentric narrative towards one that encompass other species.

This thesis is a call for resistance against the ongoing anthropocentric storytelling that frames our lives and others, and the specific site addressed, is the art museum. It suggests that instead of thinking of the fauna of the art museum as metaphors and symbols of human affairs to recognise them as once living, to look for relationships, violence and acknowledge the pain inflicted through art production. It searches for the cracks where the invisible and wordless voices can be heard and acknowledges the non-human animals hidden within art material. It looks slightly to the side of that which is painted and explores what exists outside of the frame, what happened before this specific painted situation, what happens right after? It embraces empathy and anthropomorphism as radical tools with which to get closer, and resist.

In its early stages this thesis was considerably narrowed down to encompass only one of its original two parallel parts. The part not addressed was that of exploring the possibility of keeping a vegan studio practice, with a specific interest in the use of art materials and the invisible non-human animals hidden within. After the writing of the literature review and the preparation for the first viva it was clear that the investigation of studio materials was a separate project. The aim of making the hidden non-human animals within art materials

visible has still been an important part of this thesis but instead of making it a concern of the studio and the specific materials of the artist it is investigated at the site of the museum, its archives and the narratives surrounding certain paintings.

The art practice of this thesis took a sudden turn in the beginning of this research project when the graphite drawings that was intended as the foundation of the practice could not encompass the complexity of the project. The intent of the graphite drawings was to re-frame classical oil paintings by experimenting with re-sizing and re-drawing the paintings in the life size of the animals portrayed. This had in some part been investigated earlier (Lindahl, 2008, 2015, 2017) and was meant to be developed further. The first drawing made as part of this research was a re-drawing of *Still Life with Birds and Pocket Knife* by Johann Adalbert (1709) (Fig 13). The intent of the drawing was to challenge the hierarchies of power between human and non-human animal, through the transformation into life size. But the expected outcome failed, since the re-sizing of birds does not re-negotiate power relations as larger animals do. The knowledge coming out of this failure was important and physical and it took a while to figure out and muster the courage to let go of what was first planned. Because, if art truly is used as an investigative practice of the world, one cannot know the result beforehand and must be open to change. Consequently, this thesis took a turn into the form of text-based artworks when writing, reading and performing counter art histories. One of the productive outcomes of this shift has been one of tempo. A large-scale graphite drawing can take as much as a year to develop and the technique of re-sizing is one of precision and mathematics, while working with text has the capacity of being both slow and hesitant as well as fast and to the point.

Fig 13 - Angermeyer, J., 1709. *Still Life with Birds and Pocket Knife*

The Covid-19 pandemic between 2020 and 2022 affected the outcome of this research. As a part time doctoral student at Edge Hill University I have been based in Sweden, and the conversations and tutoring of this project have mostly been online. The text-based artworks in the shape of guided tours, developed during the last two years, had to be performed online instead of in the museum halls, due to the pandemic. The performances were developed into an online format, with the help of Google Maps and Google Earth to create an online museum visit. Even though this in the beginning was quite frustrating it opened up to new possibilities such as finding a wider audience and experimenting with the video format.

Being a doctoral student has made me braver. I have been able to make more demands concerning animal rights and veganism when lecturing, performing and discussing my work, and thereby position myself more clearly in the world. It is easier to be in opposition when you have a mission. But it has also made me see the boundaries of my own empathetic abilities. When choosing the paintings addressed in the artworks of this thesis I have searched for paintings of non-human animals and situations that I have been able to empathise and imagine with. We are not neutral beings and therefore the way in which the paintings are chosen is not neutral, rather it puts focus on my abilities, or rather inabilities, to empathise with certain living beings.

The gathering of context, that philosophers Lori Gruen and Elisa Aaltola both believe is crucial to not only sympathise from a distance but to engage in an embodied (Aaltola, 2018) and entangled (Gruen, 2015) empathy, that enables us to empathise in a less anthropocentric and self-centred way concerning other species, has been important to the development of the imagined autobiographies of this thesis. It is the research that stems from the paintings that I choose which shapes the context from where the imagined counter narratives are developed. I wish that I could empathise with butterflies. But no matter how much I read and research I am not able to do so. Not in such a way that I dare to imagine their histories. In the future I hope this flaw in me will change, because the histories of the staggering number of butterflies killed by Damian Hirst needs to be imagined.

I would like for this research project to end in practice. Or let me re-phrase, not end, rather start in practice by suggesting how to enter and visit the museum differently. What tools can we use to break the frames, to widen the cracks and let the wordless voices through? One outcome of this thesis is the toolkit found in the appendix (Appendix 6) in the shape of five different exercises to bring along when visiting the art museum. These exercises can also be used at a visit to a zoo-prison, or other sites that frames non-human animals and are drawn from the methods and terms that have been developed throughout this thesis when imagining the counter narratives of the visible and invisible non-humans of the fauna of the art museum*: the floating I, crowded non-human animal autobiographies, the fauna of the art museum* and *escaping through a window*. The exercises start with representation and the

counting of non-human animals on display in the exhibition halls. Are they mentioned? How are they represented? Then continues to ask for a bodily investigation of the position of the ones portrayed and a first description of what they see. Next it is time to dare to engage and feel with the violent core of a painting and then to escape the violence through a window/frame as an imaginative exercise of painting an inner picture of what we cannot see. In the next exercise a drawing of that inner picture is asked for. And finally, in the fifth exercise, the wordless crowd of the fauna of the art museum is heard through the cracks of the painting.

When writing the final sentences of this thesis I am looking forward to performing the text-based artworks again, live on site at museums. I hope for a future where critical animal studies is a self-evident part of the teachings of the art academies. I demand a future where the sufferings of non-human and human, by the hands of artists, is ended. I hope for imaginative readings and critical perspectives at the art museum. I aim for this thesis to have an ending that is also a beginning, that starts with a roar from the fauna of the art museum that reverberates through the museum halls. Listen! I bet you can hear a crowd.

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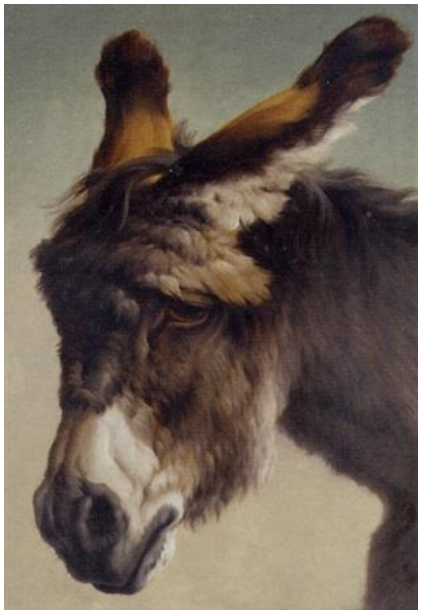

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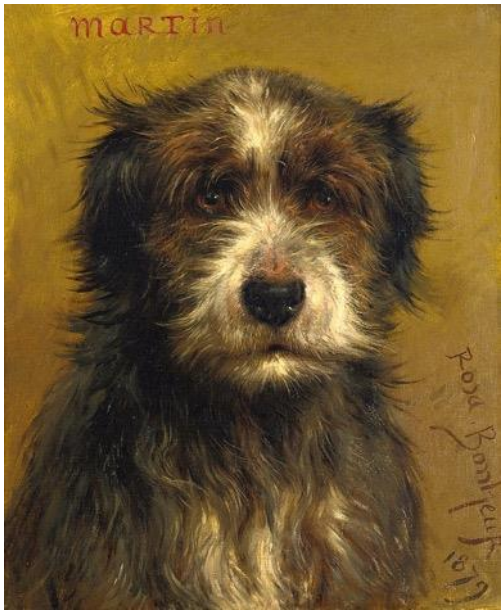

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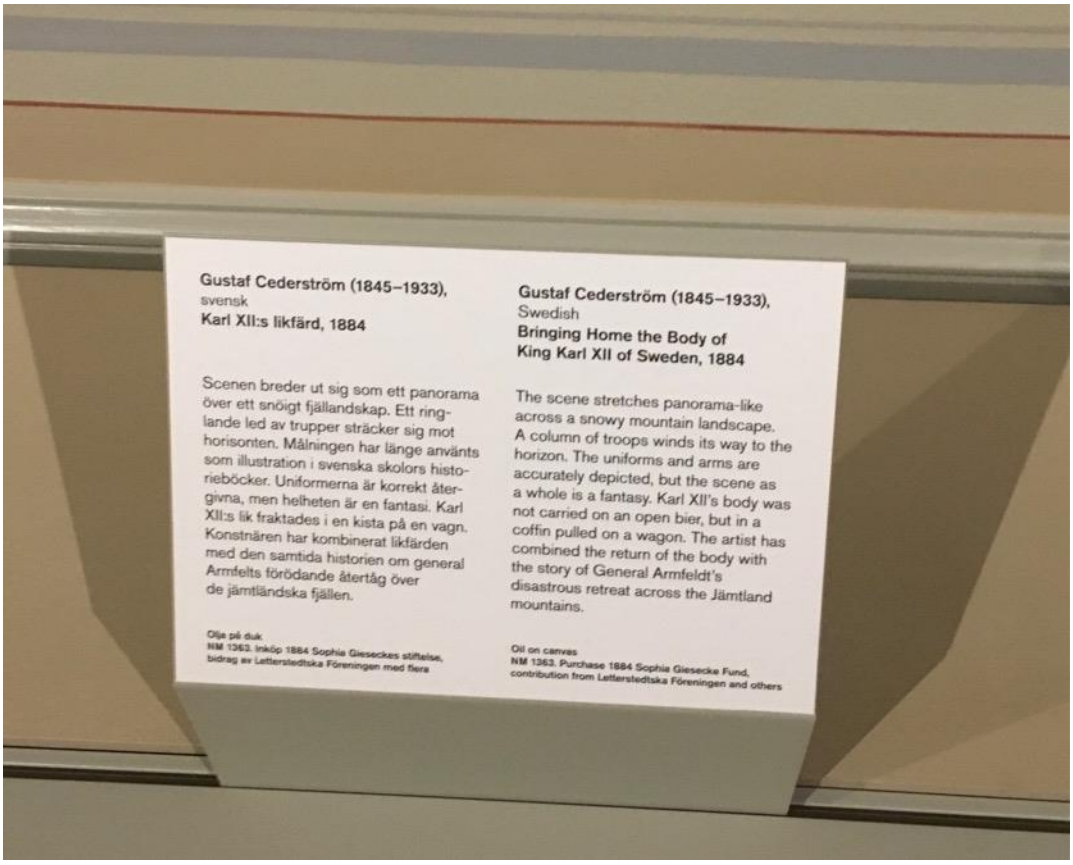

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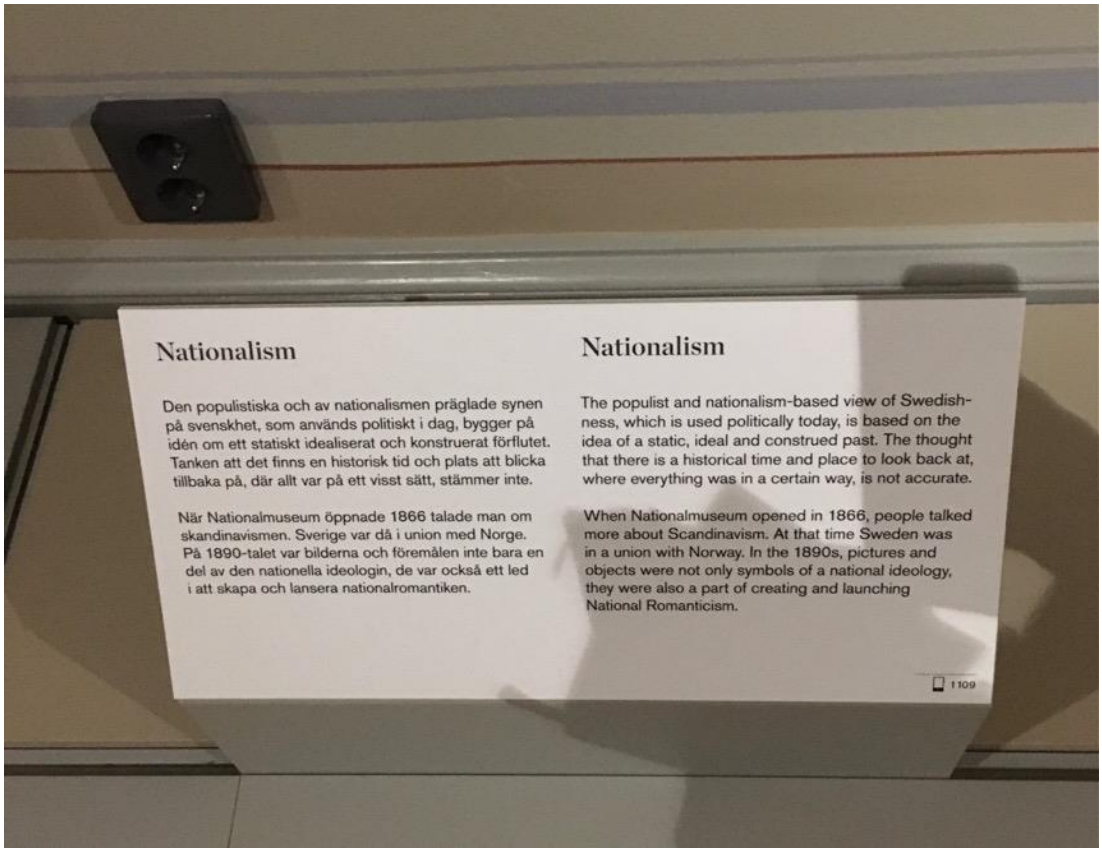

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Appendix of Artworks and Toolkit

A full online appendix can be found at

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

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Appendix 1. The Scripts – text-based artworks

The Scripts can also be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix

27 October 2017

A Guided Tour of Lions and Cattle at the Bishop's House in Lund

Roles/parts/attendees
The Artist – EvaMarie Lindahl
The Curator – Annie Lindberg
The Audience – 9 participants of the 5th European Conference for Critical Animal Studies

Cuyp, A., n.d. *Flodlandskap med boskap (Riverbed with Cattle)*

The Collective We and I of the Cattle by the Riverbed

LUND, SWEDEN
THE BISHOP'S HOUSE, THIRD FLOOR, THE 15TH CENTURY ROOM

The Artist is standing in front of, and with her back towards an oil painting by AELBERT CUYP (1620-1691). The year of the painting is unknown, the title of the painting is unknown and there are some uncertainties regarding whether or not the painter is Aelbert Cuyp. In the archive of Lund University, the painting is titled FLODLANDSKAP MED BOSKAP (riverbed with cattle).

The Audience and the Curator stands in front of the Artist looking at the painting, gathered in a semi-circle. The Artist starts to read from the paper she holds in her hand.

THE ARTIST READS

We are standing by a riverbed. It is a slow and hazy morning, or perhaps it is early evening? In the background we can hear shouting from the men on the boats, coming in from a long day or hurrying out, they are pushing and steering their boats through the water. All day they are capturing fish and moving cargo back and forth. There are five of us. Four of us are huddling together while the fifth of us is standing just a few feet to the left.

The Artist takes two steps to the right so that her body mirrors the position of the cow furthest to the left in the painting.

THE ARTIST READS

I have taken a small step to the side to get clean water from the stream. Separated from the group by a few feet, I am leaning my head down and forward. Drinking the water. It is as if I can hear them clearer while standing a bit apart. They are all breathing together.

The Artists takes two steps to the left and turns, facing the painting. Her position is now mirroring the cow to the second left.

THE ARTIST READS

I am looking into the vast landscape, listening to the boats by the horizon, concentrating. I am swaying my tail back and forth. I can feel the warmth from the other bodies coming from the right and the wind stroking my left side. I am leaning my hip against

someone.

The Artist turns a bit to the right, still with her back towards the Audience. Now mirroring the cow in the centre of the flock.

THE ARTIST READS
I am standing with my back towards the audience. I turn my head to the right and smell another body.

The Artist turns to the left, so that her body is positioned alongside the painting mirroring the cow furthest to the right

THE ARTIST READS
I am positioned with my side towards the audience. I am resting my head against the one to my left and I am looking down into the mud. I can feel the cold slowly moving its way up through muscles and bones. I am shifting the weight between my legs. Back and forth and back again.

The Artist turns so that she faces the Audience, mirroring the cow in the back of the flock.

THE ARTIST READS
I can’t see the boats in the horizon but I can see the grass and audience in front of me. Over the back of a warm body I can see the artist.

The Artist takes a couple of steps so that she is positioned in front of, and in the centre of, the painting.

THE ARTIST READS
I am guessing that today is approximately 360 years ahead of when the paint was mixed and formed into a representation of my body. Another artist has drawn a small part of the painting in the actual physical life size of the landscape. She unfolds it.

The Artist reaches her back pocket to bring forward a graphite drawing that she unfolds. The drawing is approximately 20x30 cm. She shows the drawing to the Audience.

THE ARTIST READS
It is impossible to see that this is a section of the clouds in the upper right part of the painting. It is impossible to be sure. Perhaps the artist is

only telling us this because she believes it fits the narrative? Just as the one archiving the painting in the beginning of the 20th century cannot be sure that this is not a copy of Cuyp by Abraham van Calraet. Just as no one can be sure of who I am or has tried to figure out if I ever existed. And now, that the opportunity has occurred, there are only rumours.

The Artist folds the drawing and puts it back into her back pocket.

THE ARTIST READS

What I can tell you is that the representation of what could be my body, or several bodies joint and imagined together into this representation of a body, has been travelling. I have been held and stroked by humans. Unpacked, packed and stored so many times. At least I exist in the future. The birds that earlier could be seen to the left of the centre of the panting has disappeared through careful renovation by insensitive human hands. At least I am still here.

Anon., n.d. *Ladugårdsinteriör (Barn Interior)*

White Pigment out of Bones

LUND, SWEDEN
THE BISHOP'S HOUSE, THIRD FLOOR, THE GRAND HALL

The Artist, the Curator and the Audience enters the Grand Hall. In the centre of the room is a long table with 16 chairs on each side. On the

end of the table some objects are placed: a paper card, two milk jugs (one of them contains water) and a metal tube containing oil paint in the colour of titanium dioxide. In one corner of the room a painting lays on a table together with a pair of white gloves.

The Curator puts on the white gloves and picks up the painting. She holds it in front of her with the bottom part of the frame resting in her hands and the upper part leaning towards her body. The size of the painting and the frame is approximately 40 x 50 cm. The Audience are asked to come further and lean in close to be able to see the cow and the interior of the stable. The painting has darkened with time and it is difficult to make out the interior. The Curator tells the Audience that if they look very closely they will be able to see two more cows and a willow tree outside the stable.

The Artist sits down by the end of the table, in front of the objects, she asks the Audience to join her. The Curator is standing next to the Artist, holding the painting, so that the Audience can see the painting while listening to the Artist who starts to read.

THE ARTIST READS

All these hands. Caressing me. Stroking me. Hitting me. Milking me. Squeezing me. Telling me when to go out. Deciding when to go back in. All because of the white fluid. Then painting me. Carrying me. Archiving me. Stealing me. Finding me. Caring for the layer of paint that is a representation of me.

The Artist picks up the paper card, placed a bit to the right amongst the objects in front of her and reads from it.

THE ARTIST READS

More shades of white are available commercially than any other colour.
White pigment out of led
White pigment out of chalk
White pigment out of titanium dioxide
White pigment out of zinc
White pigment out of bones

Titanium white was produced for the first time in 1820. Production in an industrial scale didn’t start until one hundred years later. Titanium white is highly opaque. You can’t see what is hidden underneath. It covers. At the same time as a thick opaque white surface can be painted by artists, the industrialization of cows picks up speed. Thousands and thousands of litres of white, running through pipes. Slowly as the whiteness thickens the reality at the factory becomes even more impenetrable, non-transparent, cruel and effective.

The Artist puts the paper card back from where she picked it up. She moves the two milk jugs so that they are placed in front of her on the table. She picks up the metal tube with titanium dioxide, removes the cork to squeeze the paint into one of the milk jugs before she puts the cork back on and puts the tube down. She takes the milk jugs in her hands and with her right hand she pours the water from one milk jug into the other that contains the paint. She moves the milk jug that now contains both paint and water to her right hand and pours the liquid back into the milk jug now placed in her left hand. The water is no longer fully transparent but has a very slight white colour. The Artist repeats the procedure, shifting hands and pouring the fluid from one milk jug to the other. The liquid becomes whiter. She repeats this procedure, pouring the liquid back and forth, until it turns into an opaque white. The Artist puts the milk jugs down.

THE ARTIST READS

I have white milk. White milk that will keep my sisters in shackles for millennia. I have white bones. White bones that can create white pigment that can shape form and sunlight and therefore landscape.

My fur is not titanium white, nor is my fur milky white. But that which turns my body into a vessel of production has named the stars above us. The Milky Way can be seen through the same stable doors as I now see a willow tree.

The doors let the light in into the room in which I am waiting to be milked. The light is created with white pigment and reflects parts of my body. It is the light that separates me from the darkness. That makes me visible. Still, light is a consequence of violent power.

Bonheur, R., n.d. *Lion (The Look Out)*

From Nero to Rosa

LUND, SWEDEN
THE BISHOP'S HOUSE, SECOND FLOOR, THE LIBRARY

The Audience, the Artist and the Curator enters the library. While the Artist looks through the book shelfs the Audience and the Curator sits down in a sofa and armchairs arranged in the centre of the room. The Artist finds the books that she is looking for and flicks through them before placing them on a table in front of the Audience and the Curator. The first book is Rosa Bonheur All Nature's Children. The pages 40 and 41 of the book is opened so that the Audience and the Curator can see a printed sketch of the Lion Nero on a blue piece of paper. The second book is Rosa Bonheur A Life and a Legend where pages 136 and 137 shows sketches, photographs and paintings of the Lions Rosa Bonheur kept. The Artist then turns to another shelf and brings forward a tablet showing an image of the painting Lion the Look Out by Rosa Bonheur, she places the tablet beside the books on the table. The Artist takes a few steps back to stand in front of the Audience and the Curator. She starts to read.

THE ARTIST READS

Dear artist,
When you died in the village of Fountainblue in 1899 the town erected a sculpture in your honour, shaped as a bull. How come there was no sculpture in my honour? I died for art.

To me art is a tyrant. It demands heart, brain, soul and body. The entireness of me. Nothing less will win its highest favour. The artist is both the warden and the caretaker employed by this tyrant, feeding me, keeping me warm, caressing me but also imprisoning me and accompanying me to my death. This means the sculpture in your honour is a sculpture of oppression.

The artist named me Nero.

I find myself in a courtyard of a chateaux with walls that are heavy of animal trophies. The artist lives and works here. I am surrounded by gazelle, deer, elk, moufloun, horse, bull, goat, yak, dog, pig, monkey and birds who cannot fly. The artist has built a great studio of red brick and large windows through which she can study us all.

I have permission to walk around in the courtyard. Every morning the artist passes me by, going over the courtyard and the lawn until she reaches the wall and the white wooden gate that opens towards the

forest. Sometimes she travels in a carriage that has a transparent wall on one side, it is because she wants to be able to paint even though the weather doesn't permit it. Those days I stay inside the cage.

There is a place by the wall where I can see and smell the forest that she disappears into daily. People pass by every day on the small path that runs between the trees and the wall. They walk closer to the forest when they see me. Now and then the artist comes back with prey. If it is a small animal she gives it to me, but usually she takes it to the brick house.

Behind the big house there is a pasture. It is full of sheep. I can smell them, they must be plenty. The great gate to the road is opened daily. More animals than people pass. The animals are transported on carts, are tied to donkeys and horses, are imprisoned in wooden boxes. She is collecting us, studying us for her paintings and when she is done we disappear through the gate again.

Dear artist, how come you need the bodies of animals to express what you need to tell and show the world? It is as if you need to conquer me to be able to respect me. I am a beast that is formidable only when I am feared or caged.

I have seen a painting of myself where I am standing alone in a landscape so vast the horizon is almost invisible. I am looking out into the landscape with my back to the viewer. There is so much longing in me and you have understood and portrayed this longing. You must have felt what I feel to be able to portray me like this. You felt my suffering, but you kept on causing it. You know of our suffering, of the knife that has to pierce our bodies for us to become material, still you keep on doing it.

I am living in a cage, on a courtyard of a chateaux that was once a hunting lodge and I am going to die in a cage at a zoo next to a natural history museum where animals will be imprisoned, exhibited and experimented on for hundreds of years. Paintings of myself, and other animals who have passed the gates of this chateaux, will be filling the walls of museums all over the world. It keeps on going. I cannot see an end to it.

I am not the first lion staying in this cage. Before me was a male lion that died the first week of entering this cage that I am in. After that came a feline who tried to climb the stairs of the house while sick and fell down and died and I will be followed by your most beloved Fathma. I am told that

> you looked upon us as fellow creatures and that you always thought of the soul of the animal while painting us. That you loved me. That you loved us. But it cannot be love when you in the future send me away to a certain death.
>
> For the last months of my life I was taken to the Jardin des Plantes in Paris when you left the chateaux for one of your longer journeys. The courtyard and the place where I used to sit and look into the forest is no more. The other animals that have surrounded me are gone. In the end you came to visit me and you were with me when I died. It felt good not being alone. That there was someone there who had once said that she loved me. And sometimes I believed that I loved you. But this isn't a love on equal terms. This is a "love" where someone is in control of the other, where someone is imprisoned.
>
> You talk to me, you mourn me, you treat me differently than the lion next to me. You do that because you know that I have personality, I am an individual and you know this. You feel it. But it doesn't matter. These feelings don't give me freedom. Perhaps you are too lonely to let me go, or perhaps you don't think I deserve it. After all I am still only animal to you.

The Artist then closes the books on the table and put them, together with the tablet, back to where they belong on the shelves of the library.

15 June 2018

A Guided Tour of a Parrot, Geese and Cows at the National Gallery of Denmark

Roles/parts/attendees
The Artist – EvaMarie Lindahl
The Audience – 48 visitors of the National Gallery of Denmark

Eckersberg, C., 1820. *Mendel Levin Nathanson's Elder Daughters, Bella and Hanna*

Green Feathers

COPENHAGEN, DENMARK

THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF DENMARK, FIRST FLOOR, ROOM 217C

The Artist is standing beside the painting Mendel Levin Nathanson's Elder Daughters, Bella and Hanna with her back against the corner of room 217C in the exhibition titled Danish and Nordic Art 1750 – 1900. The audience is turned to the artist as well as the painting by C.W Eckersberg from 1820. It is crowded. The artist starts to read.

THE ARTIST READS

Green is the dominating colour of fresh vegetation. It is also the colour of a dress in a painting by Christoffer Wilhelm Eckersberg. It is also the colour of me.

I am sitting in a metal cage, placed on a table, on top of a carpet, in front of a girl. The girl is raising her hand to feel the cold metal that surrounds me. This is a representation of the physical me. I have been restored and archived, studied and collected, I have been bought and I have been given and I have been surrounded by golden frames in the hands of the National Gallery of Denmark for almost 100 years.

One of the symbolic readings of this painting is that the girl, and her sister, are, just as I am, caught and confined in a cage. The sisters cage is made out of social control, expectations and youth. My cage is the fact that I am not human, but more than that it is physical, made out of metal confining my body. Art historians have told you to read my presence in this painting symbolically, which I won’t let you.

The man who painted me is referred to as the father of Danish painting. Painting me gave him enough money to pursue the opportunity to get married, my body, and this painting, is therefore a transaction of value that goes beyond money. But once I was more than a transaction. Once I was alive, and somewhere along the long line of research travels departing from Denmark, I was found and studied. As many before me has experienced, my exotic appearance meant death and exploitation. Perhaps I have been alive in Copenhagen, perhaps I was even born here. I don’t remember. But I do know that my feathers have a colour that most humans call green. Just as green is defined as not yellow and not blue I am defined as not human and not object.

Where I originate my colour is camouflage. Here, it is what imprisons me. My feathers are the colour of exotic leaves and it is making me painfully visible. Even though my feathers are multifaceted, it is hard

to adapt to this new scenery. There is not much for me to do.
I sit. I turn my head.

The artist turns her head to the right and then tilts her head to the left.

THE ARTIST READS
I change the grip of my feet.

The artist lifts her heels from the ground, left, right, left.

THE ARTIST READS
I turn my head again.

The artist tilts her head to the left.

THE ARTIST READS
I shift my weight. I taste the sweetness of sugar.

The artist reaches into her right pocket and finds a lump of sugar. She puts it in her mouth and sucks on it for a while, before crushing it between her teeth.

THE ARTIST READS
I turn my head again. I wait… I have endless amount of time to think.

What colours are compassion and empathy? Perhaps it is green? I am made out of pigment mixed together with a binder, binding me to the canvas, forever trapped in this cage. If compassion and empathy were a colour, humans seem colour-blind to me.

Ancher, A., 1904. *Plucking the Gees*

The Christmas Geese

COPENHAGEN, DENMARK
THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF DENMARK, FIRST FLOOR, ROOM 222

The artist is standing in room 222 at the National Gallery of Denmark. To her left the painting Plucking the Gees by Anna Ancher is placed. Around her the audience is gathered.

THE ARTIST READS

We are not green. Our size is practical. Easily affordable. Easily handled. Easily killed.

We are placed over laps, hanging over knees, our necks lifeless over the edge of tables and benches. Before this a blunt tool or a rifle was raised by a human. Before that we were fed. Now the same hands pluck, scrape and pull.

Our situation is forever documented by artist Anna Ancher. With the help of binder, pigments, oils and brushes her work transforms the canvas into painting.

White is the colour of our feathers
Red is the colour of our blood
Red is the colour of the women's cheeks
White is the colour of the candles on the Christmas dinner table
Red is the colour of the tablecloth
White is the colour of the napkins
Red is the colour of the brick of the house where this is happening
Red and white is the colour of the flag
White is the colour of the window frames
Red is the colour under their nails

We will be served at the Christmas table of Brøndums Hotel at the north Jutlandic Island. We would like for this to end differently. We wish for greenness, we wish for flight, we wish for ocean and winds and we wish to fly past this northernmost point of Denmark.

Lundbye, J. T., 1842. *Zealand Landscape. Open Country in North Zealand*

Lundbye, J. T., 1845. *Two Cows in an Open Field*

Lundbye, J. T., 1846. *A Croft at Lodskov near Vognserup Manor. Study*

Lundbye, J. T., 1847. *A Croft at Lodskov near Vognserup Manor, Zealand*

The Disappearance of Cows

COPENHAGEN, DENMARK
THE NATIONAL GALLERY OF DENMARK, FIRST FLOOR, ROOM 217F

Four paintings by the Danish artist Johan Thomas Lundbye are hanging together in room 217 F of the NATIONAL GALLERY OF DENMARK in Copenhagen. They are placed in the following order, from left to right: Zealand Landscape. Open Country in North Zealand, Two Cows in an Open Field, A Croft at Lodskov near Vognserup Manor. Study and A Croft at Lodskov near Vognserup Manor. The artist is standing in front of the second painting from the left: Two Cows in an Open Field, facing the audience.

THE ARTIST READS

I am resting in the grass. The sunburnt late summer field is itchy, but it doesn't bother me. I can feel it's last softness against my legs and my stomach. It's afternoon and the flies are fewer than earlier. The artist, with his easel, is standing in front of me. Behind him is a vast landscape of endless grass.

I am standing with my back against the artist. I am tired of humans and their curiosities. I am looking at other animals on the plain, how they look for shade, seek water. The warmth of the afternoon sun is stroking my back while I try to calculate how far away they are.

The artist takes a couple of steps to her left. She is now standing in front of A Croft at Lodskov near Vognserup Manor, furthest to the right. She looks at the cow in the painting and then looks at the audience.

THE ARTIST READS

I am standing with my back towards the artist. The sun is low in the afternoon, caressing the fields ready for harvest. I have some sort of tool around my mouth, created by humans so that they can move me around easily. It's one of the tools that will be used when they milk me. Someone will probably call for me soon.

The artist moves across the floor so that she is standing in front of the first of the four paintings: Zealand Landscape. Open Country in North Zealand.

THE ARTIST READS

The artist can be seen walking across the fields. We are standing a couple of meters apart, eating grass, looking at the sun, watching him as he passes on top of a small hill. From here, if we look carefully, we will be able to see his work station, sketches that will become painting. The artist seems equally interested in us and in the landscape, even so, when

another artist, 176 years later, visits the online archive of the National Gallery of Denmark these are the words describing the painting we are part of:

landscape, open country, countryside, winding road, hilly, open landscape, forest, grassy hills, countryside, landscape, nature, mossy boulders, windswept bushes, road, roads, landscape, landscape, countryside, open land, tilled field, Landscape, nature

We are not even mentioned. Again, there is not a single cow in the description of the painting.

The artist once again positions herself in front of A Croft at Lodskov near Vognserup Manor.

THE ARTIST READS

I am called to milking, it is time to contribute to the production systems of humans. This system is based on the oppressive use of my body, and other's. Whether it is by crushing bones for the making of white pigment to paint the skies of a landscape... or the plucking and scraping of the bodies of geese for food and clothing... or the sentence of invisibility by being read symbolically in art history... or the bodily fluids of me in a glass on the kitchen table, our bodies are consumed, slaughtered and used.

I agree with the parrot. If green is the colour of compassion and empathy, humans seem colour-blind to me.

30 January 2019

A Guided Tour of a Squirrel, Marmot, Cat and a Capercaillie at Nationalmuseum in Stockholm

Roles/parts/attendees
The Artist – EvaMarie Lindahl
The Audience – 24 visitors of Nationalmuseum

Bonheur, R., 1850. *Wild Cat*

Resting in Darkness and Perfect Humidity

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN
Nationalmuseum, fourth floor, Old Director General's Office

The audience and the artist are gathered in the Old Director General's Office, a small square shaped room in the corner of the fourth floor looking over the water and bridge to Skeppsholmen. It is dark outside, but the snow gives the air an invisible light. In the dusky light the artist is passing two books around showing sketches and paintings by Rosa Bonheur to the audience. The first book is *Rosa Bonheur All Nature's Children* opened at pages 40 and 41. The second book is *Rosa Bonheur A Life and a Legend* where pages 136 and 137 shows sketches, photographs and paintings of the lions and cats that Rosa Bonheur kept. In the corner, next to the artist there is a small bookshelf with an open laptop presenting an image of the painting *Wild Cat* and a study for the painting *Lion (The Look Out)* both by artist Rosa Bonheur. The room is quickly getting darker, making it hard to see details of each other's faces and view the text and sketches in the books.

THE ARTIST READS

I am a wild cat. I am placed within the archives of this museum, across town, waiting in perfect darkness and humidity, just like you are now. I am framed within golden frames and within those golden frames I am laying in green grass. It is sunlight and afternoon. I am resting in the shade. This is how I am depicted. This painting doesn't document the before and after. How I am hurrying away, trying to escape the attention of the artist. Almost making it, but the sound of the hooves was silenced by the dry and warm path by which she appeared. I almost managed to disappear but was caught in the corner of her eye. And now I am here.

It is the artist Rosa Bonheur that sees me. And therefore, I am now on loan to this museum, soon to be on display again in these halls. Earlier, before the renovation, that is the cause of me being in the archives, I was found on floor 6 in the north west part of the permanent exhibition called *The Countryside*. Above me, a killed fox hanging from a tree in a snowy landscape. Below me, a sign telling the visitor, and thereby the world, that the artist is one of the most famous animal painters of her time, and that her interest in other animals was true and genuine. It also informs us that I am an excellent example of her realistic way of portraying animals. An excellent example. This means that I

must be an excellent teller of truth.

The artist Anna Klumpke refers to me as a furry beast, but I am just one who rests in the grass, having a lazy afternoon, waiting for hunger or thirst, when the sound of hooves draws closer. If I were a beast I would have resisted more fiercely. If I were a beast I wouldn’t be here.

I am painted three years before Bonheur paints her grand painting of the control of the horses at the horse fair in Paris. It seems like all of us that she painted up until that moment has been sketches for a masterpiece. It was the painting of the horses that gave her such success, making it possible for her to buy her chateaux next to the forest in Fontainebleau. The same chateaux where she kept her genuine interests in cages.

What if we all had resisted? If I had been a bit quicker, if we all had been faster, on the move, refusing to be still, would she then had had her success? Would she then be excellent?

Three years after the brushstrokes that became me has dried, the grand painting of horses is produced. She spends time in the stable, twice a week for a year. She must then realize what I already know. That it is hard to resist against bridle and whip. It doesn’t matter how hard you try to rear when the reins and the men are holding you down.

I believe that the lions Nero and Fathma new this. And did the best they could with the cages and the fences and the walls that kept them locked inside the courtyard, forever watched, from above, by the artist from her studio. They died because of her genuine interest and her eagerness to paint. I was only in her glance for a moment, they were by her side for years.

When moved from the museum to the archive I am held by human hands in cotton gloves. No human skin has touched me for several years. It could be interpreted as care, but I choose to see it as a way to not feel, to not care, to not recognize or listen. The cotton gloves mean distance. The cotton gloves are here to stop time. To keep me alive forever.

Soon I will travel from the archive to this museum again. The ones missing me will be satisfied. They want me to always be here, on display. And I will probably be there for their always, longer than their lives. And if I start to grow dark and fade

because of time, someone will make sure that I don’t.

The next time I enter these halls I will resist. My golden frame will tear the glove. It is never too late to start resisting. I never asked for genuine interest.

Ehrenstrahl, D. K., 1697. *White squirrel in a landscape*

Ehrenstrahl, D. K., 1682. *Murmeldjur*

A Squirrel and a Marmot

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN
Nationalmuseum, sixth floor, 1600s

The artist is standing in the right corner of a small room with light green-blue walls. The audience is positioned close together facing the main wall where five paintings of non-human animals are on display. Closest to the ceiling the painting Two Turtles by David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl is placed. Beneath, left and center, are *White Squirrel in a Landscape* and *Murmeldjur (Marmots)* both by Ehrenstrahl, with *Two owls fighting over a rat* by Hans Georg Müller, to the right. Below hangs a Study of a Male Lumpsucker *(cyclopterus lumpus)* in what seems to be a natural scale, by Hendrick Goltzius. The artist points her finger to the Marmot.

THE ARTIST READS

I am a marmot, in Swedish *murmeldjur*. Most of you have never seen or heard of my kind. But you have heard of another in my family of rodents, the groundhog, or in Swedish skogsmurmeldjur. And I know. It is impossible for you to not think of the movie Groundhog Day with actor Bill Murray, while hearing the name of my species. In three days, Groundhog Day is celebrated in parts of Canada and the United States. But I can assure you there is no consistent correlation between me and my shadow and the arrival of spring.

This is a study of me. From several perspectives. Painted by artist David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl, a Swedish court painter, also called the father of Swedish painting. In a comment by an art historian I am called common. That I am not unusual enough for people to understand why the artist, who was obsessed by the exotic and different in the animal kingdom, would paint me. He who was fascinated by parrots and polar bears. But I think they are wrong and that he was tired of all the dogs of kings and queens he was ordered to immortalize. I think I actually was something new and exciting to him.

But nothing good ever comes out of given the attention of humans. I know this. I'd rather disappear out of this painting heading for the

sunset to the right. Not being remembered. Leaving without a trace.

The artist turns a page, then points to the painting of the squirrel.

THE ARTIST READS

This image of me is a fantasy. Placing me outdoors where I never again sat foot after being caught on July 27th 1696 by the stable hand Anders Ek. I was gifted to King Charles the eleventh because of his interest in nature. But I do not believe he had an interested in nature. He had an interest in curiosities.

In February of the year after my encounter with Anders Ek the king writes a letter to Ehrenstrahl with the assignment to paint me. I am such a rare animal, depicted in a landscape, beneath a tree, eating some of the nuts that has fallen down.

The king doesn't seem to be interested in a representation of reality. A reality that includes a cage. He wants to own me, in the presence as well as the future, in a cage as well as a landscape. Imagining me free, roaming around the woods. He wants to entertain his fantasy with the help of a painting. I never understand why. And he never gets to do so. Dying only two months after ordering this fantasy.

Just as the marmot in the frame beside me, I too would like to escape into the opening to the right where my white fur can blend into the sunlight, making it possible for me to disappear. Out of this painting, out of history. Never looked at again.

Cederström, G., 1884. *Bringing Home the Body of King Karl XII of Sweden*

A Dead King Happens to Pass by

STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN
Nationalmuseum, fourth floor, room: turn of the century

The audience is standing and sitting in a semicircle facing the large-scale painting of Cederström. Their semi-circle is flanked by Anders Zorn's painting *Midsummers Dance* and Peter Johansson's installation *How to cook a souvenir.* The artist is standing in front of Cederström's painting, by its left corner.

THE ARTIST READS

Follow the wind and you will find me. The icy cold wind whips the royal standard forcing the soldier carrying the flag to struggle, holding hard with both hands. The wind lifts his coat, hurrying on, almost catching the hat of another soldier before grabbing his coat, turning it into life. Then suddenly, the wind is pushed to the ground carrying snow over the ledge pushing snow behind the golden frame and out of reach of this painting. And there you have me. In front of the snow falling over the ledge, on the back of the huntsman. Hanging upside down with my head dangling towards the humans back side. Blood dripping from my beak, leaving a small trace of red in the snow-filled footprint of the human who killed me. Here I am. And I refuse to be read symbolically.

I am what Carl Linnaeus defined as *Tetrao Urogalius*. You call me capercaillie, wood grouse or as they say in the province of Jämtland: tjäder, gråfågel or fjärrhane. Whether my name is given me in relation to the colors of my feathers or because of the relation to other birds in a never-ending organization of all that is living, the names control me.

I find myself within the golden frames of this painting by Gustaf Cederström from 1884, but you can also find me in an earlier version from 1878. Both paintings are named Bringing Home the Body of King Charles the twelfth of Sweden.

Just as there are two physical representations of me there are two ways for you to see and read my presence: Either as a symbol or as a once living being. I refuse to think of myself as a symbol, and therefore urge you to read me as living. Because once I was alive. Or once someone was alive for someone else to kill and later study. Humans wants other animals to be still so that they can study. So that you can create a perfect watercolor drawing of the back feathers of someone like me. And it takes several. I am not only one. I am a series of me. I am an US.

The artist used his brother, colleagues, friends, and his child to stand as models for some of the painted humans, but to be able to paint us he had to study one of our kind, hanging upside down. To paint us we had to be killed.

Not long ago we were moved from the stair halls of this museum into this room. The two versions of us have been painted by Cederström in Paris, Florence and south of Uppsala. We have been given golden medals. We have been hanging at a marble palace in Sankt Petersburg. We have escaped a revolution, been lost, been rolled and carried. We have been moved by train, car and hands. We finally ended up in Gothenburg and Stockholm in the country of which this painting's nationalistic agenda still serves.

We are currently on display in two museums, within two golden frames, hanging on two backs. But we have also been printed in several thousand schoolbooks, telling the story of a glorious king. We have been scanned, photographed and placed on the ever-growing internet. Even if this painting would crack or burn. We would still be alive. Never forgotten, but rarely listened to.

We are stuck within this golden frame, in a never-ending freezing wind, watching the snow fall of the ledge. But this is no longer a painting where King Charles the twelfth of Sweden is passing by a hunter with a capercaillie on his back, this is a painting about a killed capercaillie who is hanging on the back of a hunter when a dead king happens to pass by. The scene that we are part of is a panorama over an icy cold landscape, with troops disappearing into the horizon. It is a romantic glorification of the return of a king. But it is also a factual documentation of us, hanging dead next to the rifle that killed.

Even though we are not carried on a stretcher but on the back of a man we are nevertheless on display. Therefore, instead of a romantic nationalist celebration of a dead king. You can choose to see the bird above us in the sky as a celebration of our lives, calling out, declaring the death of us over the landscape.

Appendix 2. Performance – onsite

Documentation of performances can also be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix

At the Bishop's House in Lund

Documentation of a guided tour at the Bishop's House in Lund

More documentation can be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix

Annie Lindberg holding the painting *Ladugårdsinteriör* (*Barn Interior*) by unknown painter
The visitors looking at the painting *Ladugårdsinteriör* (*Barn Interior*) by unknown painter
2017-10-27

At the National Gallery of Denmark

Documentation of a guided tour at the National gallery of Denmark

More documentation can be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix

Intro to the guided tour at the National Gallery of Denmark
Reading the text Green Feathers in front of C.W. Eckersberg's painting *Mendel Levin Nathanson's Elder Daughters, Bella and Hanna*
2018-06-15

At Nationalmuseum in Stockholm

Documentation of a guided tour at Nationalmuseum in Stockholm

More documentation can be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix

Reading the text *A Squirrel and a Marmot* in front of *White Squirrel in a Landscape* and *Murmeldjur (Marmots)* by David Klöcker Ehrenstrahl
Reading the text *A Dead King Happens to Pass* by in front of *Bringing Home the Body of King Karl XII of Sweden* by Gustaf Cederström
2019-01-30

At Lunds Konsthall

Documentation of a lecture performance and virtual guided tour at Lunds Konsthall

More documentation can be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix

Performance at Lund Konsthall
2020-08-20

Appendix 3. Performance – online

Documentation of performances made online can be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix

At the European Association for Critical Animal Studies conference

An online performance at the European Association for Critical Animal Studies conference 2021

Documentation of performances made online can be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix

At the Multispecies Heritage Conference

Resisting Invisibility: A Virtual Guided Tour from the Perspective of Eight Cows

Documentation of performances made online can be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix

At the Conference Multispecies Storytelling in Intermedial Practices

THE BIRDS – red – white – green

A performance lecture and virtual guided tour performed at Linnaeus University in Växjö

Documentation of performances made online can be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

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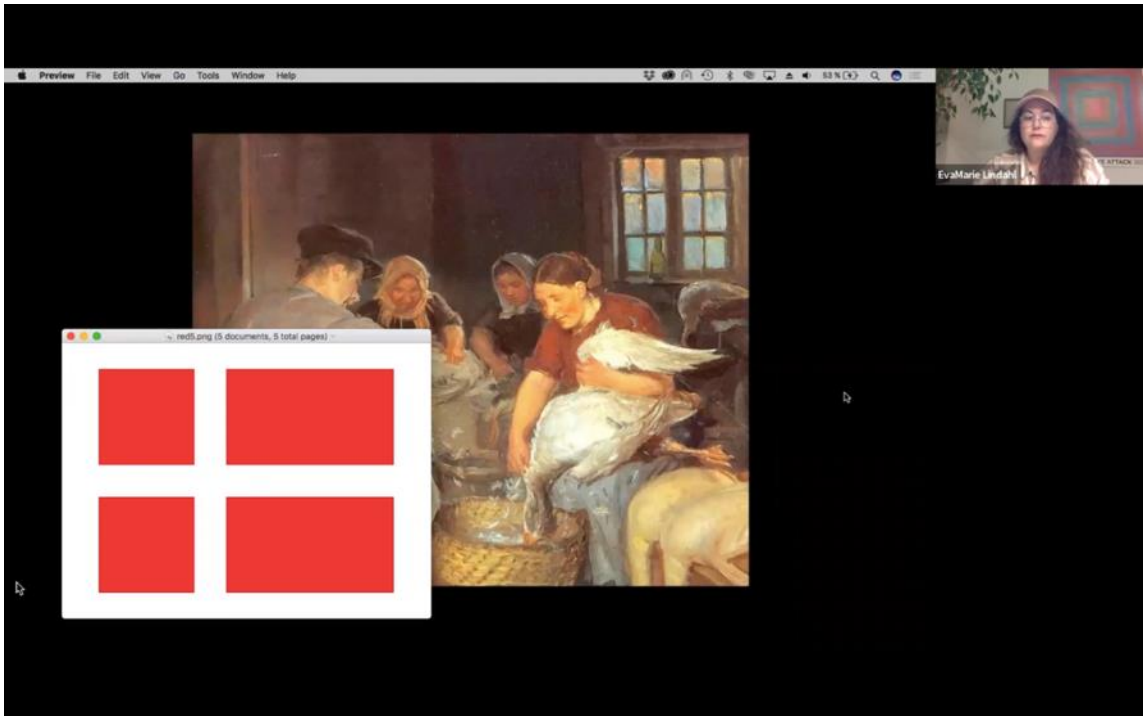


Appendix 4. Video works

The video works can be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix

The Artist Named Me Nero

The video works can be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix

Resistance Within the Museum Fauna

The video works can be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix

Appendix 5. Publication

The publication can be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

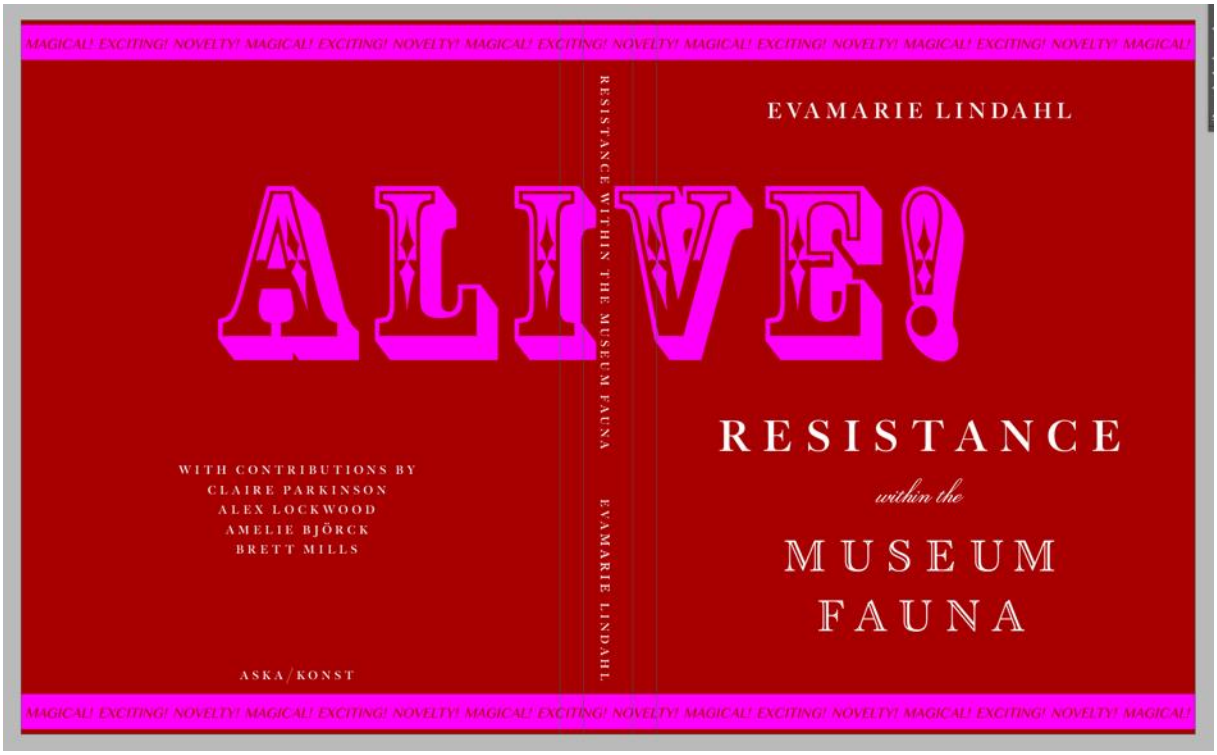
Password: Resistance_Appendix

Resistance Within the Museum Fauna - The book

A 161 page, full colour, cloth bound book comprised by chosen parts of images, texts and artworks of this research project. Currently in print (2022-04-09) and will be published by Aska Förlag. The book can be read as a pdf in the digital appendix.

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix



Appendix 6. The toolkit

The toolkit can also be found at the online appendix

Link: www.evamarielindahl.com/appendix

Password: Resistance_Appendix

1. The Numbers

First, let's count the numbers, representation is key

Where

This exercise is written for the art museum but can just as well be done in a contemporary art gallery.

To bring

Pen and paper

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What to do

Go through all the paintings and sculptures (as well as other artworks if applicable) and take notes according to the following system:

1. Write down every species of non-human animal that you see in the painting, from the smallest insect or bird far away in the sky to the cat or dog in the corner closest to you. Write them down on your paper and make a note of how many of each is represented.

2. Read the title. Are the animals included in the title? Are they named? If they are, write them down separately as well.

3. Read the description. Are the animals mentioned in the description? And if they are, are they treated as metaphors for human affairs? Make a note if they are mentioned and how.

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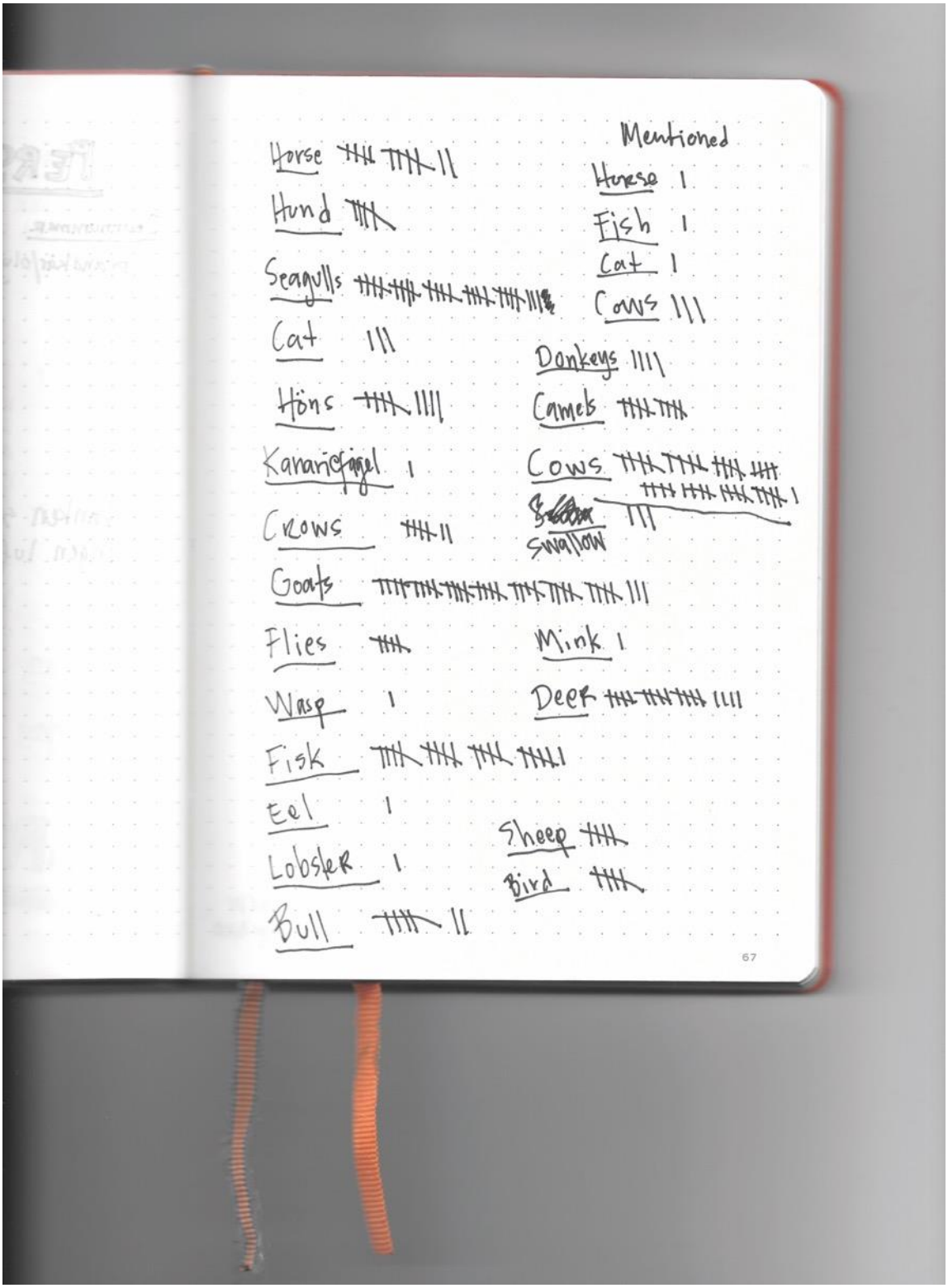
Question

What does these numbers tell you? Does it affect you? If so, what can you do?

Go deeper if interested

Look into the digital archives of the museum. Are the objects and individuals of the paintings categorised? If so, are the non-human animals you found mentioned and represented in the system of the archives?



Horse 𝍸 𝍸 |||
Hund 𝍸
Seagulls 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 |||
Cat |||
Lions 𝍸 |||
Kanarifågel -
Crows 𝍸 ||
Goats 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 |||
Flies 𝍸
Wasp -
Fisk 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸
Eel -
Lobster -
Bull 𝍸 ||

Mentioned
Horse -
Fish -
Cat -
Cows |||
Donkeys |||
Camels 𝍸 𝍸
Cows 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 -
Swallow
Mink -
Deer 𝍸 𝍸 𝍸 |||
Sheep 𝍸 𝍸
Bird 𝍸 𝍸

67

2. The Floating I

Where are we, and I, in all this?

Where

Stand in front of a painting that portrays several non-human animals, the painting can be placed anywhere, perhaps where you live or at an art museum.

To bring

Pen and paper

****

What to do

Study the non-human animals portrayed. Are they close together? By themselves? Are they standing, laying, sitting, hanging? Are they turning towards or away from each other? What kind of environment surrounds them? Water, grass, sand, sky? How are they connected to earth?

1. Write individual claims from each of the portrayed animals while positioning yourself as that specific individual. Point your toes in the same direction as their feet (if they have feet), turn your face and direct your eyes in the same direction as they are. Imagine what they are seeing in the far back of the painting, beyond the frame. Imagine what it feels like to be in that painted scenery.
Write in first person and present tense. Remember to take notes of who in the painting is stating what.

2. Write a couple of collective claims that you can imagine the non-human animals experiencing together. Perhaps it is of wind or sound, perhaps it is what t is like to be on display every day.
Write as a collective we in present tense.

3. Mix the collective and individual claims into a text. Now, read them out aloud. Stand with your back against the painting while reading the collective claims. When reading the individual statements, use your notes and position yourself as that specific individual.

****

Question

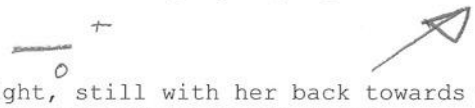
What did you experience while writing, reading and mirroring positions of individuals, as well as a group, of another species? What do you need to feel them better? What do you think they would like us to know?

Go deeper if interested

Draw a map of the movements you just did and pair it with the different claims. Make a system of the text and the bodily movements so that others can repeat it.

THE ARTIST READS

I am looking into the vast landscape, listening to the boats by the horizon, concentrating. I am swaying my tail back and forth. I can feel the warmth from the other bodies coming from the right and the wind stroking my left side. I am leaning my hip against someone.



The Artist turns a bit to the right, still with her back towards the Audience. Now mirroring the cow in the centre of the flock.

THE ARTIST READS

I am standing with my back towards the audience. I turn my head to the right and smell another body.

The Artist turns to the left, so that her body is positioned alongside the painting mirroring the cow furthest to the right

THE ARTIST READS

I am positioned with my side towards the audience. I am resting my head against the one to my left and I am looking down into the mud. I can feel the cold slowly moving its way up through muscles and bones. I am shifting the weight between my legs. Back and forth and back again.

The Artist turns so that she faces the Audience, mirroring the cow in the back of the flock.

THE ARTIST READS

I can't see the boats in the horizon but I can see the grass and audience in front of me. Over the back of a warm body I can see the artist.

The Artist takes a couple of steps so that she is positioned in front of, and in the centre of, the painting.

THE ARTIST READS

I am guessing that today is approximately 360 years ahead of when the paint was mixed and formed into a representation of my body. Another artist has drawn

3. Escaping through a Window

See the violence, then run with it!

Where

This exercise is written for the art museum but can just as well be done in a contemporary art gallery where violence towards non-human animals can be seen either visually or in the use of materials.

To bring

Pen and paper

****

What to do

Choose an exhibition where many non-human animals are portrayed. Go through the exhibition and look for ongoing violence or traces of violence directed against non-human animals. Perhaps it is the scene after the shot of the hunted dear. It could be dead fish on display at the market. A whip that whips. Or preparations of the Christmas dinner in a kitchen. Choose a painting you want to study.

1. Stand in front of the painting. Study it. Where is its violent core? The hands that tear and whip. The blood. The dead body. Look at it. Keep looking at it. Try to feel it. How does the ringing in your ear sound after the shot? How hard can your heart beat during the chase? What does a whip feel like? Feel it, until you cannot stand it anymore.

2. Let your eyes wander. Keep the violence in mind while you keep investigating the painting. Look a bit to the side of the violent core. What is going on here? Who is in it? What are they doing? Try to animate the scene in your head. What happened just before and after this snapshot? Listen to the sounds. Make the hands move, the rain to fall, the feet to run, the weapon to go off.

3. Try to find an opening. A crack. Maybe it is a kitchen window, a path through the forest or a boat about to cross the ocean. Follow it. Take it. Jump through it! Run. What is on the other side? Sunlight? Silence? A beach?

4. Write a few sentences about the paintings and the core violence. Write a few sentences of what it is like at that place that you escaped to. Write a few sentences about what happened just before the scene of the painting. Write all of the sentences from the perspective of the animal who is subjected to the violence.

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Ancher, A., 1904. *Plucking the Gees* and an opening

4. Break a Physical Frame

Draw what is outside

Where

This exercise is written for the art museum but can just as well be done in a contemporary art gallery. where violence is on display.

To bring

Pen and paper

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What to do

1. Sit down in front of a painting that portrays non-human animals. Study it. What do you see? Who is in it? Humans and non-humans? What do they do? Are they doing it together?

2. Think of the painting as a detail of a bigger landscape or space. What happens to the right? In the far corner? Outside of the frame where the painting does not document the scene. What happens behind those trees? Is there a building to the left maybe, where those cows or humans in the painting is coming from? What happens there? Is there a path? Where does it lead?

3. Make a drawing of what is outside of the frame. Widen the painting so that it encompasses that which is behind the scene.

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Question

If you were the artist of this painting you are studying, what can you then see if you turn around? Are you outside? Inside your studio? What is in your hands?

Go deeper if interested

Study the painting and the artist, when was it done and by who? In what setting? Try to figure out if this painting had casualties. Whose body is hidden in the materials? Who did the artist need to study to be able to paint, was the individuals studied alive?

5. A Letter from the Crowd

Listen through the cracks

Where

This exercise is written for the art museum but can just as well be done in a contemporary art gallery.

To bring

Pen and paper

****

What to do

Go back to the painting you studied in exercise 3. Now it is time to enter the painting again and search for a crowd.

1. What did the non-human animals subjected to violence tell you earlier? Read the sentences you wrote again. The sentences speak about a before and after, about what happens within the painting but also what happens outside. Time is extended, as well as space.

2. There are many more non-human animals in relation to this painting than the ones portrayed. Who are they? Are they hidden within the materials, in the paint and brushes? Are they standing outside the frame? Are they still in the artist studio, nailed to the wall so that the artist can study? Are they kept in cages? Are their bodies used as resources? Make a list of them all. They are the crowd.

3. Now search for the sounds of the wordless voices of the crowd coming to you through the cracks of the painting. Be brave. Embrace anthropomorphism. Embrace empathy. Let them tell you about their life. Imagine and listen. What do they think about the violence towards them that the painting is a testimony of? How would they like the scene of the painting to be different?

4. Pick one strong voice from the crowd that you can hear more clearly and write down their experiences and wishes. Fill in the blanks of the histories of this specific non-human animal with your own experiences of being alive in this world. What would their life be if not subjugated to humans? Write a letter together in first person and present tense addressing the visitors to the art museum. Read it out loud in front of the painting. Leave the letter in the exhibition halls when you leave.

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