

# PORTFOLIO

KRYSTALLIA SAKELLARIOU

## **PROJECT 1. DARK ROOMS – DISTANT STARS (MÖRKA RUM – AVLÄGSNA STJÄRNOR)**

Exhibited at Galleri Hamnmagasinet, Varberg Sweden, 2024 and parts at Gdansk City Gallery, Poland, 2024.

In this project I have connected many separate pieces from about the last ten years of my practice. Spanning over and connecting for the first time the two houses in Greece and in Sweden.

Installation, photography, video, text, archive material. The dark room, referring both to the photographic dark room where paper copies are made and the empty, abandoned house where memories are kept and recalled.

One of the stars, the Greek film star Melina Merkouri that my father photographed in Greece in the 60s and from his left behind negatives I have worked with today creating an animation and installation. The Andromeda galaxy, a series of photographs of the stars in the sky over our house in Sweden that my father took after he left his work as a photographer in Greece. A result of immigration and isolation I would say (but was never mentioned). The sun, also a star, shining in through the same windows of both houses much the same way as it always did, caught in photographs and videos. The light being crucial

for life and photography but at the same time fatal in the light-sensitive dark room process.

Among others, a series of photographs, printed on fabric and on paper. Sometimes me dressed up in my parent's old clothes. A series of Installations with objects from both homes that can take new meaning. For instance, sherds of glass and porcelain on the floor, broken and collected over the years. The broken porcelain which on one hand can be a symbol of decay but can have an opposite meaning in Greece, the result of a grandiose party where plates and glasses was traditionally broken to keep the evil spirits away.

On the next pages I am showing documentations from the solo show in Varberg as well as parts that were shown in a group show at Gdansk City Gallery called Nostos (Homecoming) and where the house in Greece (Salamina) played a more central role.

*Salamina is the name of a Greek island outside Athens. A famous naval battle, the Battle of Salamis, took place there 480 B.C. My parents bought a small and simple house on the island in the 1970s. A demolition contract that they hoped one day to restore and move into. Although its poor state already then, we used to stay in the house during many summers of my childhood. But since the end of the 80s the house has been left abandoned.*

*I visited the house again in 2017 and 2022. To step inside was like entering a modern Pompeii. Everything was almost the same way we left it in summer 1986. Clean dishes in a tray with a towel on top. Coffee in a jar in the fridge. Folded towels in the drawers. At the same time a study of decay. What kind of changes occur within a time span of 30 years? Or between my two visits 2017 and 2022? How long does it take for a package of washing power to dissolve or a cat skeleton to deteriorate?*

*In the kitchen beneath large blankets were also the boxes of wedding gifts from my parents wedding in Greece 1966. Beautiful crystal glass and nice porcelain, as my mother used to say. Things that she never wanted to bring to Sweden because the idea was that everything was going to be unpacked when the house was finished. But it never happened and with time the house became a symbol of the life that could have been but never was, the dreams that were never fulfilled.*

*For many years I imagined the house without us and I had nightmares of its disrepair. At the same time my own childhood dream still keeps reminding me. To one day live in the house with long grey hair as my grandmother and to give food to all the homeless cats on the island.*

*The story of this house has been the source of several works of mine for more than a decade. I have tried to approach it in different ways and in different scales by:*

- *Recreating the house in miniature from cardboard, plastic bags etc. and to photograph, film inside the model. Enabling me to be both be present and absent inside the house. To capture subtle movements like a fluttering curtain, a ray of sunshine through the damaged window shutters, but not to enter and change anything by my presence.*
- *Dress up in my late parents old nightgown and pajamas and photograph myself on the beds inside the real house, using very long shutter time so that I manage to both walk into and out from the same picture. My body semi-transparent over walls and furniture.*
- *Film inside the real house and intertwine the material with my father's old VHS recordings, allowing different times to overlap within the same space.*
- *Making a painted copy of the floor in natural scale on paper where the tiles can be moved around and also animated to movement. A floor that is both physical yet useless as a floor.*
- *A newly started series of dresses with large photographs of the garden and exterior, as a way to carry the house on and with me.*



Exhibition view Galleri Hamnmagasinet, Varberg 2024.

Installation from analogue photographs printed digitally on polyester textile. Photographs taken inside the house on Salamina where I have dressed up in my mother's night gown and my father's pajamas. Using very long shutter time I could walk in and out of the same picture. My body semi-transparent over the walls and furniture, being present and at the same time not.

Each image 1,5 x 1,5 m. All images are taken from the same angle, the ten images forming a sequence in space.







**Inside the house, Salamina 2017**  
Photograph 14 x 21 cm,  
from mobile phone



Still images from video **“Is the bougainvillea still alive?”** (27 min)  
video from 2022 intertwined with VHS from 1986, the last summer we  
stayed in the house)  
Video shown as small projection on wall, approx. 10 x 15 cm

Exhibition view in the picnic area shown further on.

*Inside the house on Salamina 2022,  
five years after the last visit to the house when I first encountered the  
cat skeleton on the bed.*

*When I opened the door this time I was expecting to see the skeleton  
again but to my surprise it was gone.  
At first I thought someone had taken it, then I noticed the teeth.*

*It took five years for the skeleton to deteriorate.*



**Reconstruction of the floor from the house on Salamina**

Installation view Gdansk City gallery 2024

196 pieces, painted paper with gouache and aquarelle, each piece 19 x 19 cm. Placed next to a mirror wall that makes the titles multiply and creates a new space, half physical half illusion.

For every time the installation has been installed in a new place ( three times now), the mirrors have broken a little bit more, just as every break up, every journey, perhaps breaks the illusion little by little.

The tiles are made in natural scale and are placed directly on the floor. Visitors can interact with them, move them around. In a previous version I also animated the floor to a moving sequence.









Installation view, Gdansk City Gallery

A smaller variation of previous installation at  
Hammmagasinet.

Here together with mini-view master/ hung from roof that  
can be looked into. Photograph mounted inside taken 1978  
outside the house on Salamina by Demetrios Sakellariou





View through mini view master.



Ongoing series of dresses sewn from photographs of the exterior of the house on Salamina. Printed as one large image 1,5 x 1,5 m on textile which is folded in its whole without cutting. The full textile is connected over the shoulders, similar to an antique dress "Chiton". On this page you can see the documentation from the opening night in Gdansk, me wearing the dress. Next page, second dress made from another photograph taken outside the house of Salamina with the cacti taking over the garden, almost covering the view of the house from the main road. The dress is worn and photographed in the garden/forest around the house in Sweden, Ekegården, which is also growing stronger. Two strong vegetations from different places meet.





Continuing exhibition views of Dark room – distant starts at Galleri Hammagasinet Varberg, 2024.

Following pages, exhibition views:

In the back of the first picture, projected on wall, the animation “Melina in Motion again” made from my father’s left behind negatives of the Greek actress Melina Merkouri famous in the 1960s with the film “Never on Sunday”. The soundtrack of this film has become something of a soundtrack to every tourist vacation in Greece (I am quite sure you will recognize it if you hear it!) Melina Merkouri was also a symbol for the liberated women in Greece in the 1960s.

My father had been a photographer in Greece during this time. In Sweden he eventually left his profession and retired from a job in a factory. What was left from his career in Greece, was the box of photo negatives that he took of Melina Merkouri.

After his death 2017, I eventually began working with this material. I made hundreds of paper copies in the dark room that then were scanned and put together into time-lapses, creating an animation that resembles an old super 8 film, with flickering images due to different settings in the dark room. The background sound in the animation is the sound of the motor on my father’s tripod he used in Sweden to photograph, not the film stars in Greece, but the stars in the sky above the house where we lived.

Link to excerpt animation Melina in Motion Again:

<https://vimeo.com/1011732741?share=copy>

(Animation shown as projection on wall)







To the left, installation with dark room copies of the negatives that were used for the animation.  
To the right, the tripod that my father welded







Detail installation, curtain made from analogue paper copies made in the darkroom from my father's negatives of Melina Merkouri. Photographs are sewn together in curtain like panels making the images rotate softly. With the backlight of the sun outside, images become semi-transparent, similar to a photo negative. Documentation of movement of curtain:

<https://vimeo.com/953492698?share=copy>, password:melina



For close-ups see following pages

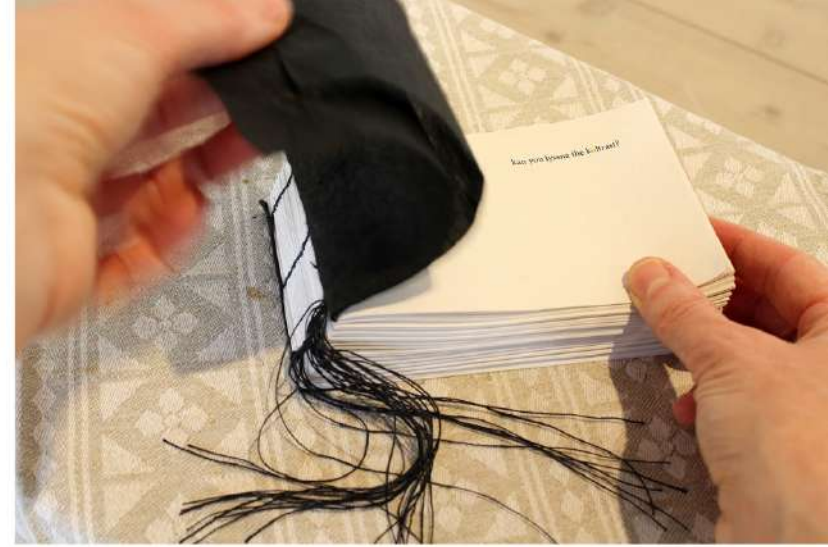




Photo negatives, 6 x 6, Demetrios Sakellariou, ca 1987



Installation, broken glasses, placed in new formation



**Kan you lysna the koltrast? / Kan you listen the blackbird?** Handmade book, 3 copies, sewn by hand, 480 pages. 2024

Book consisting of short texts/fragments/dialogues between my late parents and myself, before and after their death. The dialogues between my parents are written in their own mix of languages, English, Swedish and Greek, all in one sentence. Using this language again I see as an act to revive an extinct micro language.

(A performance reading can be listened to here, from a previous performance (at Delphi Malmö):

<https://www.krystalliasakellariou.com/exhibits/epilogue-performance-at-konstepidemin-gothenburg-2018/>

(To the left: walking stick placed upside down from the roof)



The Andromeda Galaxy, photograph 14 x 20 cm, Demetrios Sakellariou, 1985, from the house on Ekegården, Sweden, using the tripod that he constructed with a motor to make the camera rotate the same speed as Earth around its own axis. The tripod was also exhibited together with the curtain installation of the photographs of Melina Merkouri, see previous images.



Details installation, two forks balancing on a thin needle.

Black and white dove.  
Video projection with movable projector,  
see next page for video





Video still from Black and White dove, 3 min loop,  
projection on Wall.  
Projector hanging from a thread enabling it to make the dove  
move over the wall.  
(Video projection seen on top left in previous image)

Video excerpt:

<https://vimeo.com/716388231>

password: duva

Documentation projection inside exhibition:

<https://vimeo.com/953500736>









Installation with broken glass and porcelain  
from the house on Ekegården and Salamina.  
Textile found in the house in Salamina, hung from fish  
line



Analogue photograph, taken with long shutter time. Here digital print on paper 100 x 100 cm.

*My mother died right here.*

*In the kitchen, in front of the oven  
in the house on Ekegården.  
Sweden*



Analogue photograph.  
Here digital print on  
black out textile  
100 x 100 cm.

*The door into my room  
Ekegården, Sweden.*



Next pages:

Model built after the house on Salamina, from recycled cardboard, plastic bags for curtains, painted textiles, plaster etc.

I began the construction process in 2012 while living in Colombia (the cardboard boxes are from there).

This was before I visited the house after all these years. To construct the model was perhaps a way to prepare myself for what I was going to confront later on.

In 2024 the model was exhibited as part of the exhibition Dark rooms- distant starts. It was placed on the floor inside an upside down camping table from the home in Sweden. The model was lit up using the bed lamps of my parents.

Next to the model, a pic-nic area where visitors could sit down during the opening, using the old towels that had been left in the house as well as trays, drinking glasses.

The model has also been the source of a series of photographs and videos recorded inside the model. You can see a few excerpts of them after the photographs of the model.

Il bello è  
che si fa  
che si fa  
che si fa  
che si fa





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**familia**  
Cafeteria

100 SERVILLETAS DOBLADAS EN 4





CONTIENE:  
Paquetes de Bolsas Plásticas  
para Basura x 6 Unidades  
TIPO: "A" LA AGUANTADORA  
65 X 87 CMS  
MARCA: MAJAPLAST  
E-mail: majaplast@elnet.net.co  
Tel: 7942-405 7558 - Fax: 370 0708



Still video series recorded inside the model.

<https://vimeo.com/366089489?share=copy> Password: salamina.

<https://vimeo.com/796365362?share=copy> Password: salamina

**PROJECT 2. IN BETWEENs - ENTANGLED BODIES and BODY PARTS**

**Antistatic** (video, Uppsala short film festival, SESIFF, South Korea, 2020, acquired by Statens konstråd

**Resurrection** (installation at Bergrummet, Konstepidemin, Gothenburg Sweden. 2021 )

**Hair of Steel** (installation, plan d, Dusseldorf, forest Ekegården) 2022

**Reverse Death** (book sold at book shop Malmö konsthall, Hallands konstmuseum among others 2023



**Antistatic, video 4k, 3 min, 2020,  
projection**

(Uppsala short film festival, 2020,  
SESEFF, South Korea,  
acquired by Statens konstråd 2021)

*I remember my childhood friend,  
proudly showing me how he could  
urinate on the wall of his own house.  
I remember a dressing room at H&M.  
Someone had left their sperm  
on the mirror.  
As a recent mother my body has gained  
new properties.  
Between outlet and care,  
erasure and exposure.*

<https://vimeo.com/617975865>,

password: Krystallia

Stills from video

**Resurrection, Bergrummet**, Konstepidemin, Gothenburg Sweden.  
2021

**Site-specific installation made from homemade wine, pump, hoses, electrical switch and text**

The cave like room at Konstepidemin (Bergrummet) was temporarily transformed into a burial chamber. An installation consisting of a pump, hoses and my father's left-behind home-made wine took up almost the entire room. A huge blood stream of wine circulation from a pump (submerged in the barrel where we used to ferment the wine) that pumps the homemade wine out through branched plastic hoses in the room and then back to the barrel again in a closed system. A switch connected to the pump where the visitor could start and stop the installation, turn on and off the pumping heart. A way of sharing the responsibility partly with the visitor, the same way I had to give my trust to the medical system.

On the same table where the switch was placed, a text work with the same title (Resurrection) was also displayed. The text consists of two parts. In the first part, my long process of trying to find the right kind

of pump, hoses, couplings etc. for the work is described. Countless visits to various hardware stores - a world that is difficult to access for those who are not part of it. In the second part, my father's last time in hospital is described. The hospital as a different kind of world to try to understand. Codes we must know in order to ask for help in the right way, the individual's vulnerability to those who cannot make themselves understood, those who do not know codes and language. The body as a big piece of machinery, a factory that requires the input of many people to maintain. The need for collaboration with others and the fragility of this collaboration is also brought to a head by the work's power switch. The visitor as another crucial puzzle piece in the body's enormous machinery.

Placed around the room were also the empty plastic cans that were used to preserve the home-made wine, labeled with the date, year and descriptions of the wine's origin.

Link to short video documentation filmed inside the installation can also be seen here: <https://vimeo.com/600978502>

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MADE IN SWEDEN



**Hair of steel**, First exhibited at plan d, Dusseldorf (this page) then temporary installed in the forest outside the house in Ekegården, Sweden.

(Approx 4000 m of thin steel wire, tied together to a ring and hung from roof or tree.)

Steel wire has long been a common material in my previous works (and for other artists). For example to hang up paintings, installations or inside constructions such as puppets for stop-motion animation. Common for all these purposes is that the material is always working hard in the background. Not meant to be seen as part of a piece, just doing its job, never expecting to be noticed.

With this installation I wanted to take the steel wire from its position in the background and place it in the center of attention. Not to sustain, but to shine.

The many strings of long steel wire can be associated to a long hair, perhaps from a fairy - tale hair, but this time it's grey. Also an unwanted color often concealed, although grey hair can also symbolize all hair colors, because eventually all hair, independent of color, turn grey.









**Book, Reverse Death,**  
144 pages, 2023, handmade,  
350 copies, all sewn by hand.

Reverse Death can be read as a long poem between the loss of a mother and the birth of a daughter. Birth so foreign that at first it resembles death which feels more familiar. Bodies that must leave in order to meet. The sea around which is also inside. The women on the other side who receive but sometimes hinder.

The book is wire bound by hand and printed on semi-transparent sketch paper, which makes the lines of text on future pages shine through, creating a reverse echo forward in the book, almost like a premonition.



### **PROJECT 3. ONCE UPON A TIME I WAS A SLEEPWALKER**

Short film 29 min, stop-motion animation, text, super 8 mm, video and book

Series of site-specific installations from different scenes of the same animation.

Exhibited at Gotlands Art Museum, Galleria Valenzuela Klenner, Bogotá, Mustarinda, Finland, Köttinspektionen Uppsala, Galleri 54 Gothenburg.  
2014-2018



Stills from short film Once upon a time I was a sleepwalker

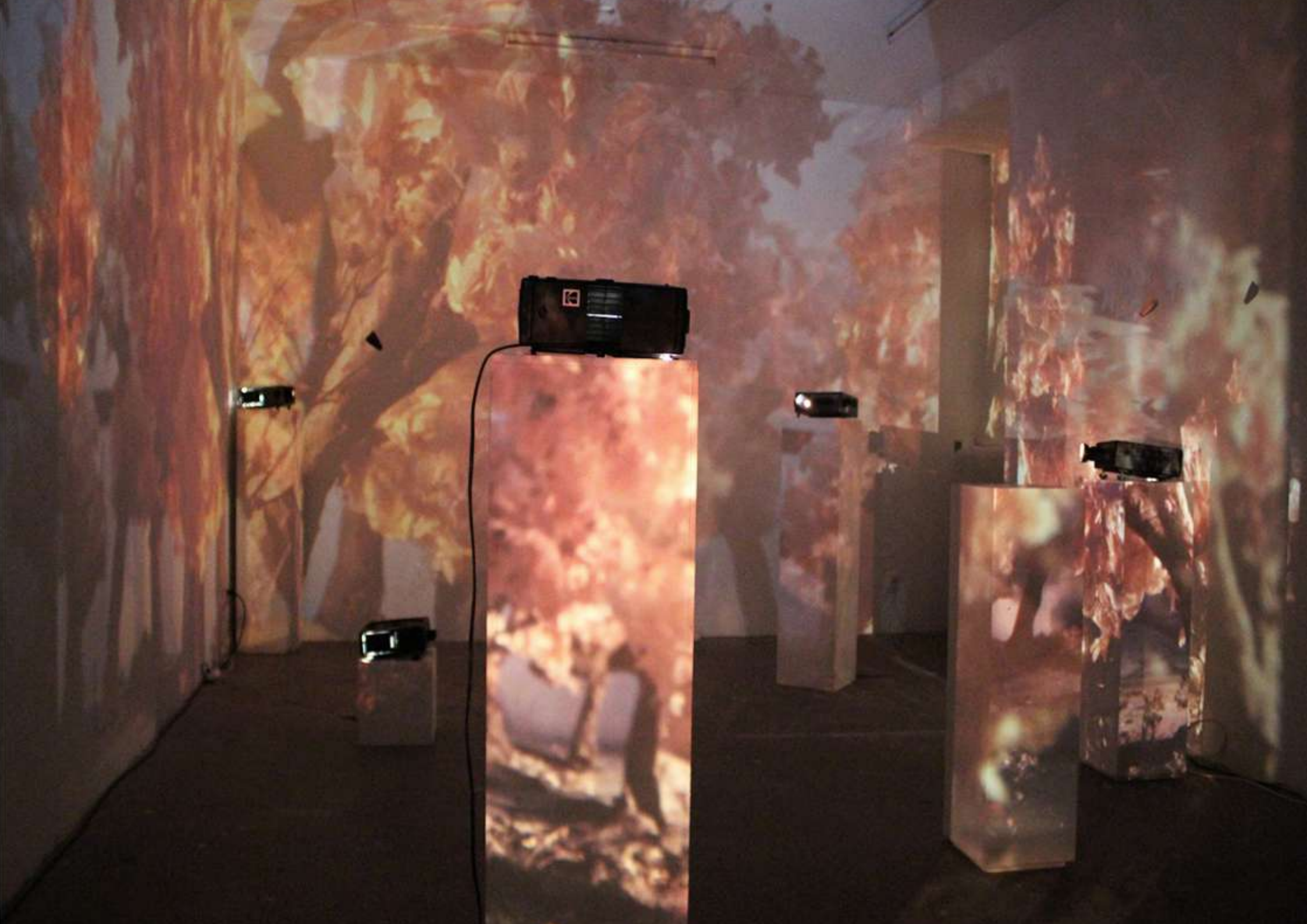
Link trailer: <https://vimeo.com/1011729521?share=copy>

Full film reference: <https://vimeo.com/716350349?share=copy>,

password: lejon

#### **Synopsis short film:**

*In the 1960s my mother went to Greece on a charter flight and met my father from Athens. A family was formed and my father documented their life together and the many travels that followed between Sweden and Greece. One Sunday afternoon in 1985 we gathered in our home in Sweden to watch his super8 mm family films recorded between Sweden and Greece in the 1960s and 70s. This time we recorded our voices as we together watched glimpses of our history. 30 years later I confronted fragments of this material with yet another layer; my own experiences from growing up in a small village in Sweden. Feelings of belonging and alienation, exploring roles and relationships. Following a path through Nordic forests an inner journey begins through memories and present life connecting animation, text, super8 mm and video.*



Galleri 54, Gothenburg, Sweden 2015.

Site-specific installation, 7 channel slide projected installation, projections overlapping and covering the walls of the gallery.

Part of a series of installations in which the forest that the lion walks through in the animation, are increased to a full-size installations that the viewer can walk into and interact with.

Different sequences of the forest are built up at various location, creating a parallel journey to the one taking place in the animation where the lion walks through different Nordic forest to finally come back to the point where it started.

The miniature forest for the animation is made from old cardboard, acrylic paint, plastic bags.





Stop motion animation, mayfly, 20 sec loop, projected into glass jar.  
The lion in the animation is chasing a mayfly that it cannot catch,  
in this installation the mayfly both appears to be trapped and isn't.  
Next page, 8 channeled slide projected installation, Gotland Art Museum, 2016.





**Second room at Gotlands Konstmuseum/Gotland Art Museum, 2016.**

In the middle of the room a landscape is built up with small trees made from old plastic bags and receipts, placed on sculptural podiums resembling a mountain. Around the landscape, three fans create a gentle movement in the trees, like a wind.

Around the walls, text installation, interventions made inside old children's books, images of these were also shown as intertitles inside the animation. Parts of this material later also becoming the book *Denna bok tillhör Krystallia S*, see following pages.



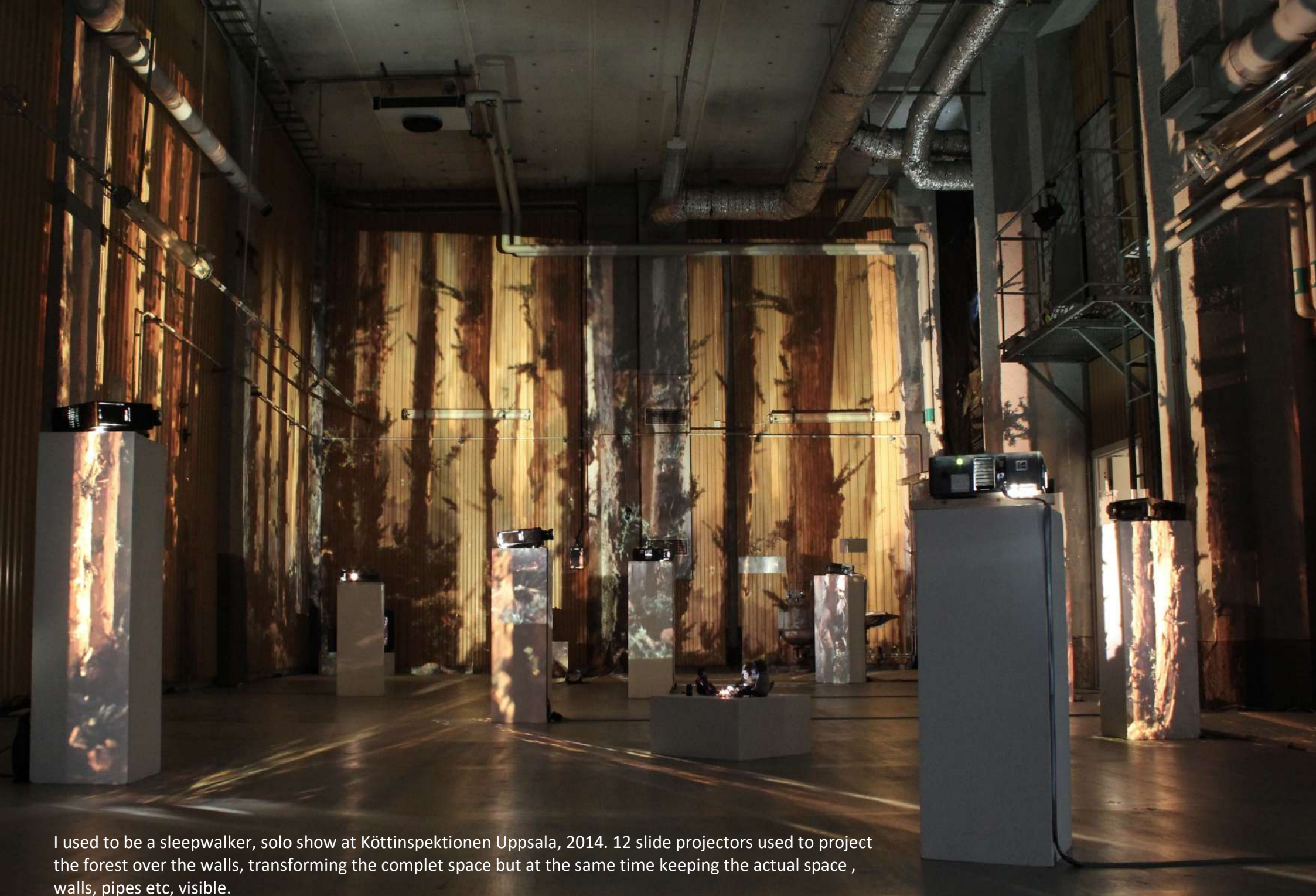


**Book, This book belongs to Krystallia S/ Insides outsides. - A book of books and other stories**

**(Denna bok tillhör Krystallia S /insidor – utsidor – en bok av böcker och andra berättelser)** 300 copies, 2016, produced with support from Kuturbryggan. Sold at the book shops at Malmö Konsthall, Bonniers konsthall, Hallands Art Museum, Gothenburg Art Museum.

A book of many books, made from interactions inside old children's books. Short stories written on blank pages placed next to the covers of these books. Insides and outsides have sometimes been thrown around and changed places, inner and outer worlds meet in new constellation. Some individual texts from the original books have also been cut apart, letter by letter, and new words and sentences have been formed. Other texts have been typed on blank book pages. Stories about searching for belonging and wanting to break rules and norms. To be both inside and outside. About boundaries, between oneself and one's surroundings, different groups and affiliations, between life and death. 40 pages that are as thick as 40 book covers put together.





I used to be a sleepwalker, solo show at Köttinspektionen Uppsala, 2014. 12 slide projectors used to project the forest over the walls, transforming the complete space but at the same time keeping the actual space, walls, pipes etc, visible.