



# WHAT'S WRONG

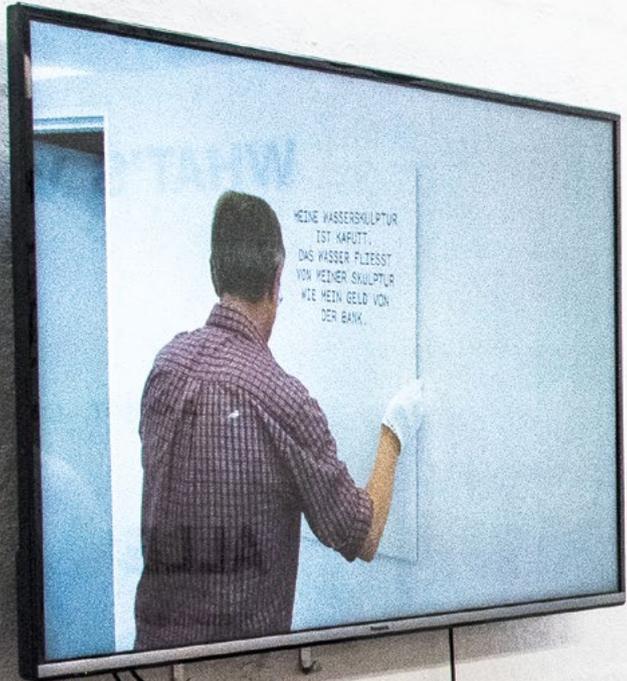
MANON BELLET

MANUEL BURGNER

STINE MARIE JACOBSEN

LUC MATTENBERGER

MO MAJA MOESGAARD



MEINE WASSERSKULPTUR  
IST KAPUTT.  
DAS WASSER FLIESST  
VON MEINER SKULPTUR  
WIE MEIN GELD VON  
DER BANK.





THE ARTISTS  
WANT  
TO BE  
PART OF  
THE  
ARTWORK





## THE SITE AS MEDIUM

**For WHAT'S WRONG - Young Swiss and Danish Art, Kunsthal NORD invited five artists from Switzerland and Denmark; a combination rarely seen. They share neither practices nor the topics their works orbit, but define themselves through the way they examine history and the site.**

*by Lisa Laura Schulze, Co-curator*

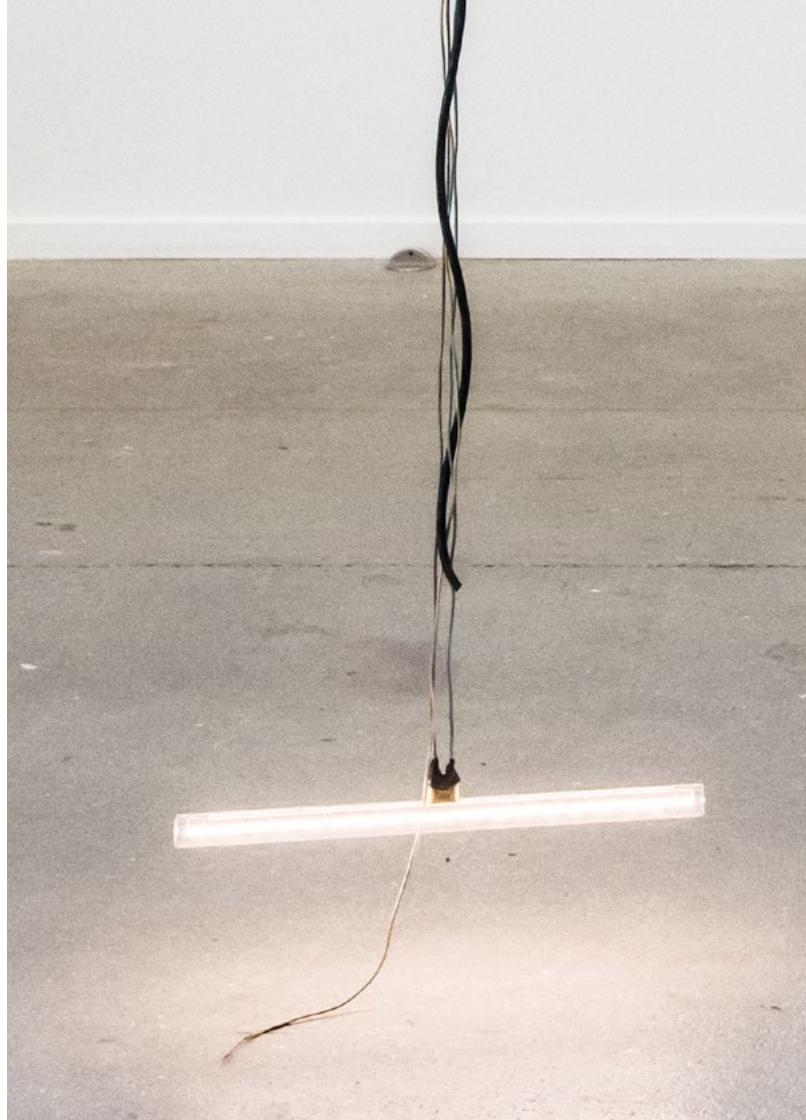
In the first half of the 20th century, art history had reached a point where the discourse around the artwork was in many cases granted the same amount of spotlight as the work itself. New streams and movements in the arts challenged the common idea of what art is and brought forth debates and disputes over its precise definition, which before mainly consisted of the notion that a work is defined through its extraordinary beauty. The vastly developing art world stretched those borders, and the existing genres of the time created definitions of their own.

Social and political topics became all the more relevant in these definitions, and so did the discussion regarding art's connection to the art market. Historically speaking, a connection of artists and their work to financial capital has existed for centuries. Countless pieces by old masters would not exist if it was not for rich, cleric or

royal patrons who commissioned their paintings and ensured the artists' living.

Throughout modern and contemporary art, market forces and art's ties to it became a frequent subject. Artists, writers and critics likewise began addressing the topic, rating it as a problem when the market worth of works or artists began to have an influence on what museums and art institutions would show. Attempts to loosen the strings between art and market are and were expressed with various methods and through different artistic practices. The space, in which the artwork was to be presented, began to play an increasingly important role in those practices.

In the 1960s, the artist Robert Morris curated an exhibition in The United States, for which he invited, among others, the American artist Richard Serra. The exhibition room was, similar to Kunsthal NORD, an industrial space that lacked the usual cleanliness and neutral appearance in which museums often present their exhibitions. Richard Serra took the opportunity to spend time at the site, and eventually created a work that was attached to the floor of the exhibition room. To remove his work was, according to him, equal to destroying it. The term site-specificity describes exactly this characteristic: that a work is made for one specific site. Taking it away from there might cause a loss of meaning and content, and the work may no longer be what it was intended to.



Creating a work for one specific site deprives it from its mobility, with the consequence that changing its position means changing the work. By creating a site-specific work, artists may be able to place their works outside the system of trading, because it is based on the idea of mobile goods.

Kunsthal NORD has made site-specificity a frequent topic in its exhibitions, in order to leave space for artists wishing to examine the grounds of site-specificity with their own practices, and contribute to the topic in their own artistic language. Located in what used to be Aalborg's heat power plant, the exhibition rooms of Kunsthal NORD still bear some of the industrial appearance, with bare brick walls, heating pipes and what seem to be unfinished walls. A rough surrounding that marks a strong presence in itself is able to challenge the artists as well as the artworks shown in it.

The artists invited for WHAT'S WRONG, Manon Bellet, Luc Mattenberger and Manuel Burgener from Switzerland, as well as Mo Maja Moesgaard and Stine Marie Jacobsen from Denmark, were asked to contribute works that were thought into Kunsthal NORD's unconventional space, addressing the site.

This led to an exhibition featuring works either newly built, or installed in a newfound way, adjusted to the architectural structure of Kunsthal NORD. The result of which is a diverse artistic dialogue, established on the

grounds of creating site-specific works, which further explain the term, its history and possibilities. After the closing day of the exhibition, most of the works will not exist in their current form.



## MANON BELLET

History also means memory, and that concerned Manon Bellet while conceptualizing her *Burning Air*. Trying to catch the sentiment of a moment when listening to live music, the feeling that takes over but only lasts an instant, finds a dramatic expression in the burnt paper.

Fragile as memory itself, the work is constantly changing. Every movement by the audience, breath of air or music frequency causes some of the paper pieces to fall, putting it in a continuous state of transformation, and eventual destruction.

By collaborating with local and international musicians, Manon Bellet's work unites visual and acoustic art. During the performances, the musicians generate their own melodies, but simultaneously cause the falling of the paper from the wall and contribute to the destruction of the piece.

Indirectly, this process reflects on Nordkraft's former purpose of being a place where coal was burnt to gain heat, repeating once more the processes of something being destroyed in order to create something new.









## **MANUEL BURGNER**

Drawn by its height, Manuel Burgener built his installation directly into Kunsthal NORD's tallest room.

Connecting with the exhibition site is an important part in the process of conceptualizing his works. Observing a room's details closely and spending time on the scene is often the way to go for Burgener – underlining how the site itself is used as a medium and a part of the work.

For *WHAT'S WRONG*, he created two installations that differ in their appearance, and yet share one significant feature: nothingness. His untitled tall sculpture pushes the limits of physics, by making something visible that exactly characterizes itself through its invisibility: the non-space, the vacuum.

Building around the nothing with physical material and using its ability to hold things in place, Manuel Burgener's statue lacks any other material of attachment, such as nails or glue.





## STINE MARIE JACOBSEN

Stine Marie Jacobsen's conceptual works are taken from her book *German for Artists*. She examined power and gender aspects rooted in the German language, taught in many Danish as well as Swiss schools.

In the German grammar rules, the definite article "the", in German "der", "die" or "das", has to be in accordance to the gender of the noun that follows them. Depending on what role a noun plays in a sentence, one may have to change it in order to conform to conjugation rules.

Much like a sculpture process, when an artist walks through the room, she or he visually bends the word "Raum". Had the room been female, however, it would not have changed.

In the context of the exhibition WHAT'S WRONG, Stine Marie Jacobsen's quotes can be read as a comment on the works the viewer will encounter. Therefore, they bring the exhibition together, on the base of her humoristic, yet critical assessment of the German language.

DER OLAFUR  
ELIASSON  
GEHT DURCH  
DEN RAUM.

OLAFUR ELIASSON WALKS THROUGH THE ROOM.

ICH ARBEITE  
NICHT  
KOSTENLOS,  
ABER MANCHMAL  
PASSIERT ES.

I DON'T WORK FOR FREE, BUT SOMETIMES IT  
HAPPENS.

ADRIAN PIPER WARTET  
NUR 15 MINUTEN AUF  
DICH.

ANDY WARHOL HAT DIESE  
15 MINUTEN FÜR ETWAS  
ANDERES BENUTZT.

ADRIAN PIPER ONLY WAITS 15 MINUTES FOR YOU.  
ANDY WARHOL USED THOSE 15 MINUTES FOR  
SOMETHING ELSE.

MEINE WASSERSKULPTUR  
IST KAPUTT.  
DAS WASSER FLIESST  
VON MEINER SKULPTUR  
WIE MEIN GELD VON  
DER BANK.

MY WATER SCULPTURE IS BROKEN.  
THE WATER IS RUNNING OUT FROM MY SCULPTURE  
LIKE MY MONEY FROM THE BANK.



## LUC MATTENBERGER

The elements Luc Mattenberger used for his works in *WHAT'S WRONG* are familiar elements our minds recollect, such as tiles, wood, flags and a water hose. The way they are used however, awards them with ambiguity and twists their conventional meaning.

His sculptures and installations are in a way appalling, he places them where we do not expect them to be and through that, induces a sense of the uncanny when one is confronted with their displacement.

For *Black Diamond*, he tapped into the history of the Red Cross, which in a time consuming process declared a red diamond on a white ground as one of its official symbols, because its form is neutral and evokes no apparent semiotic meaning.

His works are neither transparent nor revealing, and we can never be sure if what we see is really all we get. Research is rightfully suspected behind his works, and the visitor is invited to follow the artist's example by conducting some of their own.





## MO MAJA MOESGAARD

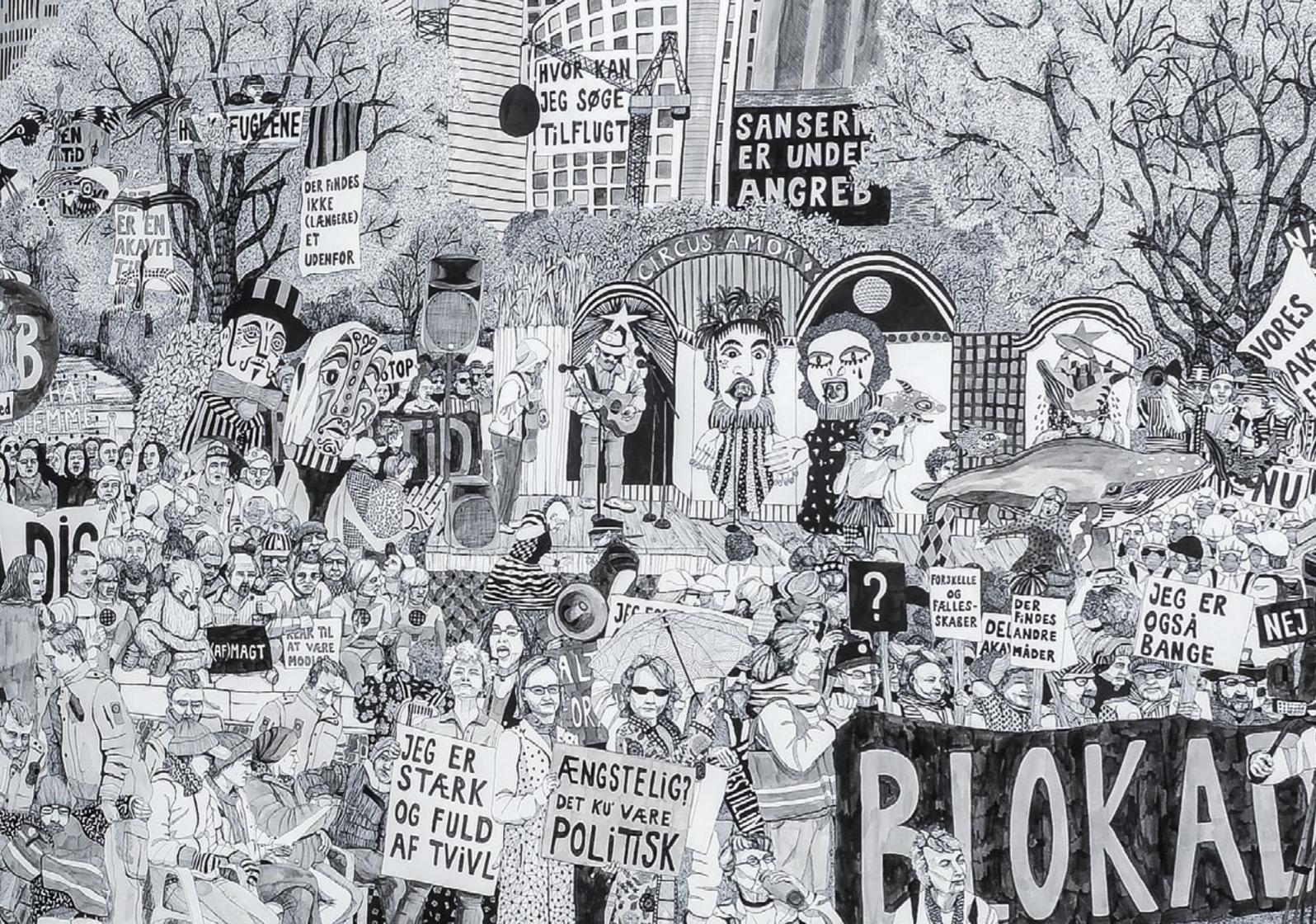
Mo Maja Moesgaard's animated video *Slowly but Suddenly* deals with climate change and its ties to capitalism.

In the video, an individual is being torn back and forth between feeling powerless and let down, but at the same time with an urge to act. Thoughts about the consequences give rise to the fear of total disaster, and provoke the question why those with political power do so little to improve the situation.

Screening Mo Maja Moesgaard's video in Kunsthall NORD has a historical relevance, with Nordkraft being a former coal power plant. The burning of fossil fuels has a negative effect on the climate due to CO2 emissions, and contributes to the climate changing.

The cinema for the video was especially installed for Mo Maja Moesgaard's video, and all requisites used to show the work were handmade, including the canvas on which the video is screened.





HVOR KAN  
JEG SØGE  
TILFLUGT

SANSER  
ER UNDER  
ANGREB

CIRCUS AMOR

HVER  
FUGLENE

DER FINDES  
IKKE  
(LÆNGERE)  
ET  
UDENFOR

ER EN  
AKAVET

STOP

DIS

KAPMAGT

REAR TIL  
AT VÆRE  
MOD

JEG ER

?

FØRSKELLE  
OG  
FÆLLES-  
SKABER

DER FINDES  
DELANDRE  
AKAMADER

JEG ER  
OGSÅ  
BANGE

NEJ

JEG ER  
STÆRK  
OG FULD  
AF TVIVL

ÆNGSTELIG?  
DET KU VÆRE  
POLITISK

BLOKAT

VORES  
AKT

NU

# WORK OVERVIEW

Front page:

Manon Bellet, 'Burning Air' (2017)  
Burnt silk paper // various dimensions

4-5:

Exhibition video

6-7:

Exhibition view

8:

Manon Bellet, 'Burning Air' (2017)  
Burnt silk paper // various dimensions

11:

Manuel Burgener, 'Untitled' (2017)  
Wire, glass, metal // various dimensions

13:

Luc Mattenberger, 'No Meeting, No Standing, No Sitting I'  
(2015/2017)  
Wood, tiles, rubber hose, metal // various dimensions

15-17:

Manon Bellet, 'Burning Air' (2017)  
Burnt silk paper // various dimensions

18-19:

Manon Bellet, 'Burning Air' (2017)  
Burnt silk paper // various dimensions  
Performance with local musicians.

20:

Manuel Burgener, 'Untitled' (2017)  
Wood, aluminium, foil // various dimensions

22-23:

Front: Manuel Burgener, 'Untitled' (2017)  
Wire, glass, metal // various dimensions

Back: Manuel Burgener, 'Untitled' (2017),

Wood, aluminium, foil // various dimensions

24-25:

Manuel Burgener, 'Untitled' (2017)  
Wood, aluminium, foil // various dimensions

27-29:

Stine Marie Jacobsen, 'German for Artists' (2015/2017)  
Paper laminated on aluminium dipond // 841 x 594 mm

30:

Luc Mattenberger, 'Black Diamond' (2015/2017)  
Serigraph on synthetic silk // 800 x 800 mm

32:

Luc Mattenberger, 'No Meeting, No Standing, No Sitting I'  
(2015/2017)  
Wood, tiles, rubber hose, metal // various dimensions

33:

Luc Mattenberger, 'Youth Path (Peak Hour)' (2017)  
Wood, metal, cotton, PVC // 1700 x 310 x 150 mm

34:

Mo Maja Moesgaard, 'Slowly but Suddenly'  
Animated video // 24 min. video-loop (english-speech)  
Room installation with benches

35-37:

Left: Mo Maja Moesgaard, 'Slowly but Suddenly'  
Animated video // 24 min. video-loop (english-speech)  
Room installation with benches

Right: Mo Maja Moesgaard, 'Power(lesness)'  
Ink on paper // 1220 x 2320 mm

38-39:

Mo Maja Moesgaard, 'Power(lesness)'  
Ink on paper // 1220 x 2320 mm

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**KUNSTHAL**  
**NORD**  
**INTERNATIONAL**