

Tensta Konsthall

Standard Length of a Miracle was a mutating retrospective by Goldin+Senneby. Over the past ten years, the Stockholm-based artist duo has explored virtual worlds, offshore companies, withdrawal strategies, and subversive speculation. In a unique and subtle way, they combine artistic practice, financial theory, and performative methods, which are sometimes borrowed from the world of magic. The retrospective was presented as installations and performances at Tensta konsthall as well as at other places not primarily associated with contemporary art. Stockholm School of Economics, the Third Swedish National Pension Fund, the Financial Supervisory Authority, the clothing store A Day's March, Cirkus Cirkör, and the historical art museum Prince Eugen's Waldemarsudde all served as stages for reactivations of Goldin+Senneby's oeuvre from the past ten years. Introducing the artistic field to public institutions and commercial centers enabled a shift of perspective about where art takes place and who the audience is.

Economic and financial structures govern our lives increasingly. But, for most people, terms such as repo rates, tax havens, and derivatives are abstract and difficult to grasp. The artistic practice of Goldin+Senneby masters economic strategies and thus punctures the idea that this kind of knowledge is too complex to acquire. Instead of rejecting the financial sector, the artist duo borrows market-inspired methods in order to infiltrate and illuminate the consequences of our late capitalist system and its neoliberal approach. The retrospective highlights the precarious labor market of our time, the increased commercialization of the art world, and the new all-time highs and stock market crashes within the financial economy.

Part of the exhibition was Goldin+Senneby's research project at the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm, which was presented through the magic show *On a Long Enough Time Line The Survival Rate for Everyone Drops to Zero (2015)* and the magic box *Zero Magic (2016)*.

Tensta konsthall

Standard Length of a Miracle (2016)
With Jonas Hassen Khemiri (author), Behnaz Aram (costume designer), LiLaRo (tailors), Mehrdad Arta (designer), Zhala (musician), Anna Heymowska (set designer), Moa Ott (carpenter), Samir Al-Nehlaoui (arborist).

On view at Tensta konsthall was a new production developed in collaboration with the writer Jonas Hassen Khemiri. Khemiri's meta-fictional response to Goldin+Senneby's practice was read out loud at the konsthall every day at 14.12. In the short story *Standard Length of a Miracle*, the narrator changes his name to the aristocratic-sounding Anders Reuterswärd, hoping to increase his chances of getting hired at a konsthall. At a brisk pace without any full stops or breathing space, the reader gets thrown into a stream of consciousness where all associations are equally important. The short story's monologue is connected to the installation of an oak in the gallery space.

The tree refers to the oak that occurs in Khemiri's text and also to the surrealist Georges Bataille's secret society *Acéphale*, which is said to have gathered around an oak tree in the late 1930s. *Acéphale*—Greek for headless— has long been of interest to the artist duo and figures in their multi-year project *Headless*. Khemiri's short story was published 10.1 in Sweden's main daily *Dagens Nyheter* and was available in the book shop at Tensta konsthall. The functioned as a meeting place for discussions and seminars during the exhibition period, and, as the carpenter Moa Ott took on the tree, new furniture was produced around it. The clothing line Anders Reuterswärd, developed in collaboration with Behnaz Aram, fashion and costume designer, was on view in the entrance. The materials for the clothes originally come from garments left behind at dry cleaners around Stockholm. The clothing line was available for sale in the clothing store *A Day's March* in the city center. The

clothes are inspired by Reuterswärd's quest to leave his job at the dry cleaner in order to focus on an artistic career. The artists have registered Anders Reuterswärd as a trademark at the Swedish Patent and Registration Office. The clothes were accompanied by a new soundtrack composed by the musician Zhala, using sound recordings from dry cleaners.

The Third Swedish National Pension Fund

Money Will Be Like Dross (2012) was exhibited in the offices of the Third Swedish National Pension Fund. The work consists of two parts: the 18th century mineralogist August Nordenskiöld's alchemical furnace and a manual on how to produce a copy of the furnace today. Nordenskiöld was temporarily hired by the Swedish court in the late 18th century to create gold for King Gustav III. However, Nordenskiöld's hidden agenda was to make the secret of gold-making publicly available and, in doing so, to undermine the entire monetary system. Is it possible to understand the pension fund's active asset management of all our pensions as a contemporary attempt to "modernize" alchemy?

Money Will Be Like Dross (2012)

An alchemical furnace from the Nordic Museum's collections is one of few remaining artifacts from the alchemist and mineralogist August Nordenskiöld's secret laboratory at Drottningholm Palace from the 1780s. King Gustav III established the laboratory in the greatest secrecy and hired Nordenskiöld to produce gold in order to finance Sweden's expanded military and war against Russia. But Nordenskiöld was driven by a different, utopian agenda. He wanted to produce enough gold for it to completely lose its fictitious value. This would abolish the "tyranny of money" and thus make mankind more receptive to the spiritual world. As devotee supporter of the scientist and theologian Emanuel Swedenborg, Nordenskiöld believed that the true

jewels of life were God's message of love and a society shouldering its social responsibilities.

Money Will Be Like Dross (2012)
Manual With Kunstgiesserei (material research), Daniel McClean (legal adviser), Johan Hjerpe (designer).

This manual provides the owner with a license to reproduce an unlimited number of alchemical furnaces similar to the one that belonged to August Nordenskiöld. The manual is available in a numbered but unlimited edition. For each edition sold, the price of the manual increases, and hence it becomes significantly more expensive to contribute to decreasing the uniqueness of the work. It is precisely the notion of the value of the unique art object that is the gold mine of today's increasingly commercialized art world. *Money Will Be Like Dross* plays with the mechanics that govern how value is created and changes over time.

The Third Swedish National Pension Fund (AP3) is one of five so-called buffer funds within the Swedish national pension system. AP3 has twin roles in the pension system: serving as a buffer when inflows and outflows cause imbalance and promoting the overall financial stability of the system. The AP funds are state-owned pension funds with a government-appointed board of directors. AP3 manages a diversified global portfolio of listed equities, fixed income assets, and alternative investments.

Stockholm School of Economics Library

The library of the Stockholm School of Economics featured two works by Goldin+Senneby that, not unlike the curriculum of the school, explore methods and mechanisms in the world of finance. Just as contemporary art sometimes appears both abstract and difficult for those without experience in the field, the world of economics can be perceived by some as a secret terrain. Short-selling, hedge funds, and other abstract terms often create a feeling of

being controlled by unseen forces. The works *Zero Magic (2016)* and *Banca Rotta (I Dispense, Divide, Assign, Keep, Hold) (2012)* touch upon secret and possibly manipulative strategies in the world of finance. The invisible becomes visible through the magic box of props in *Zero Magic*, while *Banca Rotta (I Dispense, Divide, Assign, Keep, Hold)* tracks the history and etymology of the banking system.

Zero Magic (2016)
With Malin Nilsson (magician), Théo Bourgeron (sociologist of finance), Kevin Keener (patent attorney), Johan Hjerpe (designer), Moa Ott (carpenter)-

A magician creates illusions, making us see things that don't exist, that are not really happening. The word magic originates from magush (Persian), meaning "to be able" or "to have power." In *Zero Magic*, the magic trick takes place in the financial markets. Goldin+Senneby have infiltrated a secretive hedge fund in the US and recreated its short selling practices, i.e. the practice of selling shares that one doesn't own. They have, in collaboration with the magician Malin Nilsson and finance sociologist Théo Bourgeron, developed a magic trick for the financial market that has the capacity to influence the perception of a company's value and to profit from this. The magic box contains the props and equipment needed to perform these financial manipulations and also historical references to other controversial magic tricks performed offstage, in real life.

Banca Rotta (I Dispense, Divide, Assign, Keep, Hold) (2012)
With Anna Heymowska (set designer).

Banca Rotta is a money changer's table from the 1600s that the artists have had sawn in half. The word bank derives from the Old Italian word for these tables, "banca" (comparable to bench in English). When a money changer in Florence went bankrupt, his trading table was destroyed—"banca" became "banca rotta," broken bench.

Stockholm School of Economics offers reputable education programs within finance and economics. The library functions as the school's main source of information and as a meeting point for students, researchers, and staff.

Financial Supervisory Authority

The lobby of the Financial Supervisory Authority provided the setting for one of Goldin+Senneby's installations, which, like the work of this state authority, tracks the hidden strategies and shady businesses of the financial world.

The Decapitation of Money (2010)
With Angus Cameron (economic geographer), Anna Heymowska (set designer), KD (fictional author), Kerwin Rolland (sound designer), Johan Hjerpe (graphic designer), Alexandre Guirkingner (photographer).

The Decapitation of Money (2010) is a spatial installation in two parts: the first one is a reconstruction of the lobby at the Russian-owned bank BCEN (EUROBANK), now known as VTB Bank. Behind a physical table and two comfortable leather armchairs is a backdrop with an extension of the room, including more furniture and an unmanned reception desk. During the first years of the Cold War, Soviet banks started to deposit US dollars in BCEN, with its headquarter in Paris. The Soviet State was concerned that the US would freeze their dollar reserves, but, through BCEN and a loophole in French law, the Soviets managed to create a new currency: the "Euro dollar," named after the telex address of the bank "eurobank." Eurodollars are dollars outside the control of the Federal Reserve. They thus break the historical connection between money and the sovereign state, something Goldin+Senneby's spokesperson Angus Cameron refers to as a "decapitation of money." Money is beginning to flow beyond the control of states and territorial boundaries. Money creates its own territory: the "offshore."

The back of the backdrop displays the second part of the installation: a map of the Marly Forest outside Paris where the surrealist Georges Bataille's secret society Acéphale met in 1937 to commemorate the murder of Louis XVI. Acéphale appropriated the form of a fascist cell but with the aim of creating an anti-fascist mythology. Some years after the meetings in Marly Forest, Georges Bataille published *La Part Maudite* (The Accursed Share) (1949) in which he argues that all human societies are characterized by waste. When an economic structure is no longer able to use its accumulation for growth, the surplus has to be used in a non-productive way, otherwise the entire system will collapse. However, for Bataille, waste is not necessarily a bad thing. On the contrary, much of his writing shows a fascination with man's self-destruction. It's only when you sacrifice a piece of yourself and indulge in others, taking part in movements like Acéphale, religious rituals, or erotic pleasures, that glimpses of true ecstasy can be perceived.

The Decapitation of Money connects Acéphale's mysterious meetings in the Marly Forest with the introduction of the euro dollar. Goldin+Senneby suggest that Bataille's secret society might have something in common with strategies for withdrawal employed by offshore companies. Is the void into which offshore companies' money "disappears" part of the excessive luxury consumption that Bataille predicted in *La Part Maudite*?

The Decapitation of Money is part of Goldin+Senneby's multi-year project *Headless*. *Headless* is also a meta novel in which the British author John Barlow is commissioned by the characters Goldin+Senneby to trace the mysterious offshore company *Headless Ltd*. Over the years, *Headless* has also manifested itself in the form of lectures, conferences, and exhibitions. *Headless* as a theme can be said to allude both to the company bearing this name and to the secret society Acéphale— Greek for headless—which serves as an uncanny

backdrop for the project's narrative. Headless can also be read as an image of the mindless society: a body without a brain.

The Financial Supervisory Authority is an authority that monitors the financial market in order to make sure that all companies obey national and international regulations. It also coordinates the supervision of measures against money laundering and aims to strengthen the consumer's rights on the financial market.

A Day's March

Anders Reuterswård (2016)
With Jonas Hassen Khemiri (author), Behnaz Aram (costume designer), LiLaRo (tailors), Mehrdad Arta (designer), Zhala (musician).

The clothing line Anders Reuterswård was for sale in the store A Day's March at Kungsgatan 3 in Stockholm. The clothing line was developed in collaboration with fashion and costume designer Behnaz Aram and is based on Jonas Hassen Khemiri's short story Standard Length of a Miracle. The short story throws the reader into a voluble stream of consciousness in which the narrator changes his name to Anders Reuterswård, hoping to leave his job at the dry cleaner and make an artistic career. Aram let herself be inspired by this striving motion and Reuterswård's desire to re-create himself. The material for the clothes originally came from forgotten garments gathered at dry cleaners around Stockholm. Aram designed a new conceptual uniform by deconstructing and re-sewing the clothes.

A Day's March is a Swedish menswear label specializing in classic cuts and quality shirts at lower prices, achieved by selling solely in its own stores and online. The collection also includes T-shirts made of organic cotton and crocheted silk ties in different colors. A Day's March is an old military term referring to how far an army could move during one single day and thus reflects

the company's ambition to offer clothes that help you get through the day in style.

Prince Eugen's Waldemarsudde

Three works presented at the historical art museum Prince Eugen's Waldemarsudde revolve around landscapes, their representation and ownership status. A3 The Plot (2015), Not Approved (2011), and After Microsoft (2007) thus enter into dialogue with the older landscape paintings also on view at the museum.

A3 The Plot (2015)

With Pamela Carter (playwright), Johan Hjerpe (designer), Moa Ott (carpenter), Natali Hallberg (scenic painter).

A3 The Plot is a 1:10 scale stage model visualizing a tiny piece of real estate in Kent that Goldin+Senneby acquired. Accompanying the model are the artists' title deed and a script written by Pamela Carter. Carter's text is a dramatization of the land area's changing ownership from Roman times to today. If the work of art is sold, the ownership of the real estate will also be transferred, adding another scene to the drama. A public table read of the script will be held on 14.4, 18:00 with the actor Hamadi Khemiri.

Not Approved (2011)

With the County Administrative Board of Skåne, Stockholm, and Värmland.

These landscape photographs were taken by Swedish bureaucrats. The work departs from a reform implemented by the EU in 2003. The reform decoupled agricultural subsidies from production, which changed the role of the farmer from someone who produces food to someone who provides open landscape. The images in the series were taken in order to make an aesthetic assessment of the quality of the landscapes provided by the farmers. The photographs show a selection of landscapes that fail to meet the aesthetic standards of EU funding.

After Microsoft (2007)

After Microsoft revisits the site of Windows XP's default computer wallpaper Bliss, a green hill with blue sky and clouds that is the most distributed image ever. The original photo was taken by the National Geographic photographer Charles O'Rear, who sold it to the picture agency Corbis. From there it was picked up by Microsoft, which was attracted to the image's bright green and blue colors. O'Rear claims that the photo was never digitally manipulated. The intense green color was due to the fact that the vines which usually cover the hill had been temporarily replaced by grass because of a phylloxera invasion. When Goldin+Senneby returned to the hill in Sonoma Valley, California, the vineyards were back, and a gray cloud covered the drab vines. The production of After Microsoft coincided with the phasing out of Windows XP and the Bliss image. The work is presented in the form of a still image with a 3 minute voice-over. Prince Eugen's Waldemarsudde was originally the private home of Prince Eugen (1865–1947) and is today one of the most visited art museums in Sweden. A selection of Prince Eugen's own art is on view year round, as are works from the collections and temporary exhibitions of both historical and contemporary art.

The exhibition Ljusets magi – Friluftsmåleri från sent 1800-tal (The Magic of Light – Plen Air Painting from the late 1800s) (13.2–28.8 2016) provides an exciting context for the landscape-based work of Goldin+Senneby. This connection raises urgent questions regarding the mythical aspects of nationalism and nature as well as nature images as branding tools. There may be significant differences between the outdoor oil paintings from the 1800s and Microsoft's wallpaper Bliss (1996), but in the open air landscapes, beneath clear blue skies, obvious points of contact emerge. What beliefs about French or Swedish nature and the US company are conveyed through these images? Which dreams

and ideals are reflected through an image of a landscape?

Cirkus Cirkör

On a Long Enough Time Line the Survival Rate for Everyone Drops to Zero (2015)
With Malin Nilsson (magician) and Théo Bourgeron (sociologist of finance).

The magician Malin Nilsson performed a magic show at Cirkus Cirkör in dialogue with the work Zero Magic, on view in the library at the Stockholm School of Economics. On a Long Enough Time Line the Survival Rate for Everyone Drops to Zero (2015) invited the audience to participate in a financial magic trick. The tickets for the show also functioned as an investment in a "short selling campaign," i.e., the selling of borrowed shares against a listed company. The show made the audience aware of the implications of the financial position they have bought in to. The speculation/trick was also placed in a historical context, among other illusionists who used their methods for political purposes off stage, so-called "conspiracy magic".

The 20-year jubilee Cirkus Cirkör is the largest circus company in the Nordic area. The name Cirkus Cirkör is a play on the French words "Cirque" and "Coeur," circus and heart. Cirkör LAB (Laboratory of Artistic Brilliance) is a platform for national and international circus performers and companies, as well as for artists working within other areas. Through Cirkör LAB, Circus Cirkör aims to create a space for cross-artistic meetings with circus at the core.

The Royal Institute of Art PhD (2010–2016)

The Royal Institute of Art creates conditions for artistic investigations with experimental methods. 2010-16, Goldin+Senneby held a practice-based PhD position at the Department of Fine Arts—the first doctoral position of its kind at the school. In their work, Goldin+Senneby consistently use artistic methods in order to renegotiate academic protocols. One example is the requirement of singular authorship, which is something completely absent for Goldin+Senneby. For their 25% seminar, they hired the management consultant Aliceson Robinson (former McKinsey & Co.) to compile an interim report based on interviews with fifteen collaborators that the duo worked with during the previous year (but not the artists themselves). Nor is the dissertation a dissertation in the traditional sense. The disputation took place in Muralen at the Royal Institute of Art. Manuel Borja-Villel, director of Museo Reina Sofía, Madrid acted as opponent.

Staff at Tensta konsthall

Fahyma Alnablsi, host
Maja Andreasson, assistent
Emily Fahlén, mediator
Ulrika Flink, assisting curator
Asrin Haidari, communication and press
Maria Lind, director
Hedvig Wiezell, producer
Carolina Oscarsson, intern
Aleksi Borisionok, intern

Hosts

Hamdi Farah
Rado Ištok
Carl-Oskar Linné
Ylva Westerlund

Technical staff

Johan Wahlgren
Carl-Oskar Linné