

The language of boundaries, the boundaries of language

– Meira Ahmemulic & Sophie Vuković

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What is the in-between? No matter if it's spatial, temporal or social we often perceive the in-between as empty. But the in-between is not empty, it is that which we still lack a (common) language for. Art has the ability not only to produce a language for these spaces and times. It has the ability to destabilize fixed spaces and times while at the same producing new ones.

In this exhibition the artists Meira Ahmemulic and Sophie Vuković twist and turn concepts and notions of identity, origin and language. In the dissertation *När Andra skriver: Skrivande som motstånd, ansvar och tid* the author and translator Mara Lee writes the following about about movement in language “[...] But words move. Movement itself is neither poetic, performative nor political. But tracing, following and listening to the movement is part of a political/poetic/performative linguistic work”.

The videos featured in the exhibition are all essay films and as such relate to a particular art and film history. Essay film originate from literature and therefore often has a close relation to text. The author and art critic Jan Verwoert discusses the essay film in relation to its ability to generate multiple layers by combining different methods and materials. It thereby requires a double viewing where text, sound and image both overlap and can be read as separate layers.

In the great hall the two videos *Något fint måste hända* and *Crnogorci/Montenegriner* by Meira Ahmemulic are presented. In the video *Något fint måste hända* the artist's own history and experiences are intertwined with notions of migration, the excluding structures in the field of art and a young authors search for a better life in America. In the video *Crnogorci/Montenegriner* we see the artist's father sitting in a sofa, his mouth is moving but we can't hear what he is saying. He is deprived of his voice and in its place we hear the narrator presenting prejudices and stereotypes regarding montenegrin men. They are described as unreliable, criminal and unemployable. The professor in literature, Homi Bhaba, describes the stereotype as a linguistic category consisting of a language that has stagnated: “The stereotype is not a simplification because it would be a false representation of a given reality. It's a simplification because it's a hunched, fixed form of representation”. Meaning the stereotype is made by repeating a false and constructed representation without a real original. In the video *Ett språk måste vinna* Meira Ahmemulic use her old high school as the point of departure to explore the Swedish language, it's demands, prejudices and violence. At the same time as it is within language boundaries are drawn and legitimized, it is through language that violence can be kept on a distance. In the small hall the film *Shapeshifters* by the artist Sophie Vuković is presented. The film begin and end in the great antiracist manifestation held in Kärrtorp, Stockholm in 2013. There Vuković find the film's “you” with whom she initiate a multilingual dialogue about childhood and identity. By combining archival material with enactments and images from her family's everyday life, Vuković creates a visual world reflecting the fragmentation the film describes.

By exploring concepts of identity, belonging and language beyond solidified concepts and fixed categories, this exhibition offers new ways of seeing.

Exhibition team:

Sebastian Dahlqvist (curator), Signe Johannessen, Peter Olsén,
Erik Rören and Emanuel Hallklint.