
BEWARE OF THE HOLY WHORE

*Sanskrit: 'Bhava' (being) + 'Vidya' (knowledge) = 'Bhava-vidya' (being-knowledge)
In English: 'Bhava' (being) + 'Vidya' (knowledge) = 'Bhava-vidya' (being-knowledge)
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Edvard Munch, Lene Berg and the Dilemma of Emancipation

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'Beware of the Holy Whore: Edvard Munch, Lene Berg and the Dilemma of Emancipation' is a project organised by the Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA) and Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa in Venice, as the official Norwegian representation at the 55th International Art Exhibition, La Biennale di Venezia in 2013. The exhibition, which includes a series of rarely exhibited works by Edvard Munch in addition to the newly commissioned film by Lene Berg *Ung Løs Gris* (*Dirty Young Loose*, 2013), revolves around emancipation as an issue always vexed with contradiction – between the realm of freedom and the consequences of the isolation that often accompany the pursuit of a qualitatively different, 'alternative' life.

The impulse to operate in the margins – on the outside trying to break in or on the inside redefining the context – is one of the key driving forces in the history of art, and is also at the centre of 'Beware of the Holy Whore: Edvard Munch, Lene Berg and the Dilemma of Emancipation'. The exhibition, curated by Marta Kuzma, Director, OCA, Angela Vettese, President, Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa and Pablo Lafuente, Associate Curator, OCA, explores the relationship between art, its social context and changing gender relationships, both in the age of emancipation in which Munch lived and today.

'Beware of the Holy Whore: Edvard Munch,
Lene Berg and the Dilemma of Emancipation'
takes place at:

Galleria di Piazza San Marco
Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa
San Marco 71/c, 30124 Venice

1 June–22 September 2013

In 1913, Norway granted women the right to vote, second only to Finland in Europe. While this was an event that symbolically marked the passage towards women's emancipation, it also speaks volumes about the traumas that this process implied both within the country's community and in the search for individual identity. It implied the dismantling of bourgeois traditions founded on restrictions of a religious nature, and by doing so it stripped the human soul bare, depriving it of the protection of norms that had been dictated by a rural society and that could no longer remain in an increasingly industrial and urbanised one. Throughout Europe, the city ushered in a new type of citizen, shaped by the struggle between the mass and the individual. It is no coincidence that this period spawned the greatest reflections on the self in recent history, drawing on the Latin meditations of Seneca and Marcus Aurelius, of Augustine and of Jean-Jacques Rousseau, yet shifting them from the subjective level to that of objective, scientific research, starting out from the field of neuroscience before crossing over to that of psychoanalysis, where it developed the notion of the *ego* through the work of Friedrich Nietzsche, Arthur Schnitzler, Marcel Proust, James Joyce and Italo Svevo. On its journey towards emancipation, the self demonstrated that it had no fixed points of reference, and that it was in fact anything but that reasonable and rational subject described in René Descartes's *Discourse on the Method* (1637). The object of love was thus transformed into a ghastly subject, a bearer of illness and death. The individual blurred into the crowd; corporality became the protagonist and yet was unable to shake off the traits of its damnation.

Norway seemed to take these issues very much to heart, as can be seen in the work of Edvard Munch and the background from which he emerged, that Christiania in which painters such as Hans Heyerdahl and Christian Krohg and writers like Henrik Ibsen and Hans Jæger railed against conventions.¹ The individual appears here characterised by uncertainty, mobil-

ity, contradictions and confusion between self and context, contrasting sharply with the social group of reference. Munch acts as a witness to this process through his three activities: as a painter, as a photographer and as the author of social caricatures. It was he who told us before anyone else what happens to the whore when she becomes a saint, a sort of Magdalene; what becomes of the individual when he is sacrificed to the pressures of the group; but also of the strength to resist that might be mustered in the light of standardising production and class dynamics; and his choice of the series in rejection of the romantic (and commercial) ideal of the single work; or even the mindful use of the error in the face of any bourgeois glorification of order, perfectionism and rules.

A ferocious instability, used as a form of resistance as well as one of self-expression, emerges from the adoption of time as a constituent of the work. An amateur photographer with an interest in deliberate technical errors, Munch was a great fan of double exposures:² the same negative bearing two fractions of time, like in the chronophotography of Étienne Marey. Indeed, the painting *Sykesal* (*Hospital Ward*, 1897–99) shows a sick man who seems to sit up on his bed and become two people: without such photographic premises, this optical ploy would appear incomprehensible. Munch underlines the slippery impertinence of time – i.e. the belief that the individual experience is perennially in a state of change, never stable – also by the recurrence of the same subjects: in *Den døde mor og barnet* (*The Dead Mother and Child*, 1897–99), the little girl places her hands over her ears just like the protagonist of *Skrik* (*The Scream*, itself painted in two crayon versions in 1893 and 1895, and two oils in 1893 and 1910). Of *Pikene på broen* (*Girls on the Jetty*) there are no fewer than 19 versions. Just like in the various positions adopted by a body in Marey's negatives,³ in Munch's *Barn og ender* (*Children and Ducks*, 1905–08), the blue outline of a boy seems to have been painted long after the rest of the scene. Almost all of Munch's paintings appear in numerous versions, studies that don't conclude in a final one but rather constitute a series of attempts, with a specific reason for every variation. He rarely considered his works finished, rather, he often returned to them, looking upon them as 'eternally incomplete'.

The movement and temporality that can be found here are not those that Futurism would explore shortly after. Munch does not speak of machines, of cities under construction, of the positivist myth of progress. Rather, he tells us of the ebb and flow of the present, of a continuous confusion between the outer and inner being, and ultimately the difficulty of deciding who one is. *Selvpotrett med sigarett* (*Self Portrait with Cigarette*, 1895), features a fading edge between clothes and the background, making only the hand and face protagonists of the picture. The same blurring or partial elimination may also be found in his many photographic self-portraits. Munch tells with them of the inner time of a man left to himself by the masses, and to do so he draws from Augustine's *distensio animi* or of Henri Bergson's notion of duration. Time becomes something that never passes completely, a time that would be echoed in Sigmund Freud's notion of the unconscious mind, and which continues to operate throughout adulthood via mechanisms that do not allow us to obscure our traumas. Instead, these mechanisms enable us to elaborate stories at a young age which are thus 'ready and waiting' to be recalled in order to interpret our dreams or our present.⁴

With a language that reiterates the same themes, Munch insists on issues relating to the inner self: sickness, death, the judgement of others, mourning, love and sexuality, experienced as liberation but also as disturbance. These are also the issues which a century of Norwegian visual culture has dealt with, often in close relationship with Scandinavian culture as a whole, in what constituted a paradigm shift in ethics made apparent in the sphere of eroticism. It is no coincidence that the exhibition 'Whatever Happened to Sex in Scandinavia?', curated by Marta Kuzma for the Office for Contemporary Art Norway in 2008–09, opened with Munch's 1895 *Vampyr II* (*Vampire II*, 1895).⁵ On a theoretical level, the texts by the post-Freudian psychoanalysts were of fundamental importance, starting with Wilhelm Reich's *The Sexual Revolution*, 1936) and Herbert Marcuse's *Eros and Civilization* (1955). In the US, the *Evergreen Review*, intellectual arm of the Beat and hippie movements, continually challenged the public with images of nudity and free love, intermingled with political es-

says and censored texts. Filmmakers such as Paul Sharits and Stan Brakhage owe a great deal to these new interpretations of the world, and that impulse returns to Norwegian territory with artists such as Peter Watkins and Lene Berg. The former provided us in 1973 with a film biography of Munch as a forerunner to the modern self-consciousness, albeit one doomed to failure in a certain sense; the latter portrays woman's independence from man, and also her derision of him, her vampire side, her commitment to dangerous relationships without fear yet without a complete sense of serenity.⁶ It is as if the moralist ghosts of Christiania were still at work in the Bohemian freedom of today's Oslo. But Lene Berg extends Oslo's Christiania to all the Western cities in which a moralist collective consciousness crosses swords with an only partially accepted notion of liberation. Places that experience an ethical freedom not without elements of ambiguity, of the persevering struggle between men and women and between the rich and the poor, meeting a new form of repression: that dictated by the ceaseless circulation of goods, eternally justified.

Translation from Italian by Ben Bazalgette

1

The novel *From the Christiania Bohemia* (*Fra Kristiania-Bohemen*), written by Hans Jæger in 1885, was sequestered immediately after publication and the author imprisoned.

2

On the importance of such experiments in photography, see Clément Chéroux, *Fautographie: Petite histoire de l'erreur photographique*, Crisnée: Yellow Now, 2003.

3

It is worth remembering that Étienne Marey, the inventor of chronophotography in the early 1880s, was a professor at the Collège de France from 1869 until 1904, a period when Munch visited Paris.

4

See Rosalind Krauss, *The Optical Unconscious*, Cambridge, MA and London: The MIT Press, 1994.

5

See Marta Kuzma and Pablo Lafuente (ed.), *Whatever Happened to Sex in Scandinavia?*, London and Oslo: Koenig Books and Office for Contemporary Art Norway, 2011. The gap between the Scandinavian mental openness and a certain American moralism came to light when, in 1968, the Swedish film *I Am Curious – Yellow* (1968) by Vilgot Sjöman was banned in the United States: though of a political subject matter, its subversive potential was considered all the more fearsome by virtue of its scenes of female and male frontal nudity.

6

Kopfkino, 2012, directed by Lene Berg.



Lene Berg — *Waiting for the actors* (from the production of *Ung Løs Gris / Dirty Young Loose* Funkhaus Berlin, 20 February 2013). Courtesy the artist

Three Plus One: Lene Berg's Dirty Young Loose Pablo Lafuente

Three words, three characters, three stories. Dirty, young, loose. A woman and two men (one older and one younger, her age somewhere in between). Three individuals, being questioned about an event that took place at some point in the near past, and that has been recorded on camera. The three are questioned by two voices (one female, one male) operating as a singular subjectivity – a single perspective that is replicated by a camera that never moves.

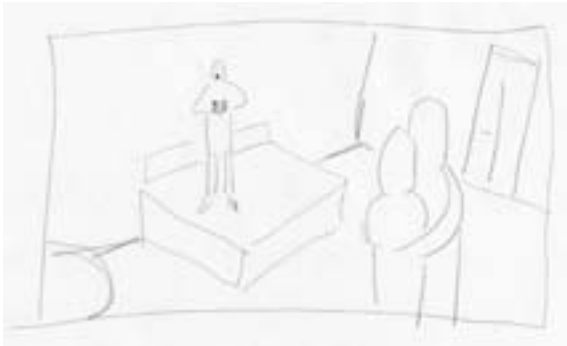
Three in one, three through one, three versus one. As if saying that a story ('the' story, if there be one) can only emerge from triangulation – through a triangulation that demands an additional position, on the outside. And that for anything to make sense it has to be seen through a relation – not a binary or dialectical one (*One Plus One*),¹ but 'between three, plus one'.

1. One

The event itself might seem simple, of no special relevance. Even if it is not clear what happened, and even if the event is the focus, it appears to be something we should not care about. It involved three individuals, in a hotel room, one evening. These people seem to have been acting according to codified behaviours, to specific social roles, their movements and responses the result of habit and automatism. Or at least that is what we expect from the way they look: we assume their behaviours to be, like the gestures of Robert Bresson's actors, not 'subordinated to will or thought',² but instead fully determined. This apparent determination seems to have led them to be involved in something that might be embarrassing, and that might have had consequences, but in principle only for those involved – and even in that case those consequences shouldn't have reached much further. But perhaps they did.

Because history may be made of stories that are not important – stories that didn't set themselves to make history, and that never thought of themselves as capable of making history.

Lene Berg — Sketches for
Dirty Young Loose (*Ung Løs
 Gris*, 2012). Courtesy the
 artist



Stories that an artist might tell. It is, however, not that easy to determine whether something leads to something else, whether an event will result in another event that leads to a chain of events (or several chains). This might well happen if the event is followed through, either by (one of) those involved, or by others. If that happens, then one could lead to two.

2. Two

In Raymond Queneau's *Exercises in Style* (1947), the narrator gets on the bus, witnesses a confrontation between two men, and then sees one of the men again, elsewhere, enquiring about how to add a button to his coat. The 'event' (or two events?) is told 99 times, each in a different style. Like in Erasmus's *Copia: Foundations of the Abundant Style* (1512), what is at stake here is both a display of variety of expression and a belief, put in practice, in the absence of a right form for a specific content: different accounts (a multitude!) are possible, and each account has a different effect, in terms of its ability to tell, explain, confuse, communicate, convince, entertain...

In *Dirty Young Loose* the accounts are neither two nor 99, but three, each corresponding to one of the characters. And they don't quite agree, neither on content nor on style. It doesn't matter if the variations are slight, those variations are fundamental. And this is complicated by the fact that, precisely because there are three characters in the scene, two courses of events are always taking place, involving one or two of the characters. The two courses and their three accounts turn the singular of the original event into a multiplicity – one that might or might not be 'resolved' by a triangulation.

3. Three

One plus one (plus one, and so on) might lead to a third that brings together, that consolidates, the diverse elements into one, a resulting synthesis. The three accounts, following the (objective?) enquiry of the interrogators and the (again, objective?) recording of the camera, can offer a full picture. But this picture is no longer a resolved picture – rather, it is one that is open to active reading, to reconstruction. This is the

hope of the critical theatre of Bertolt Brecht, to facilitate the recognition by the spectator that nothing is obvious (if it were, as Brecht says, 'any attempt to understand the world is abandoned'³). So the behaviours that could be inferred from the characters' assigned roles might not turn out as we might have expected. And, if that original necessity vanishes, with it goes the possibility to understand the sequence of events in terms of cause and effect (and this allows the spectator to 'make comparisons about everything that influences the way in which human beings behave').⁴

The perspective of the investigator(s) and that of the single surveillance camera, then, strategically work against themselves. The attempt to confront the participants in order to construct a story opens the story up to a fundamental disagreement that cannot be resolved. And the camera's digital record, which captures what in principle appear as codified behaviours, reveals the fragility of the images, their inability to settle, once and for all. (The contradiction within the images themselves is explicit in their 'affected' nature – these are images with depth and colour, rather than surveillance images that just present evidence.) The film is this way exposed as a fragmentary ensemble with gaps within it and no hidden meanings. These gaps, precisely because they can't be simply deciphered, offer the possibility of an intervention to the spectator, who must now construct the text.

4. One

Because the film presents itself as the result of surveillance and enquiry, it forsakes fiction's claim to be a parenthesis from the real. This makes the viewing experience more challenging for the spectator, it demands from him or her harder, more conscious work. This specific form not only invokes the reality of the subject it is filming, but also the reality of the work that the spectator must do to get something from the film, a looking and thinking that makes of the spectator a partner in the narration, a character and actor at the same time. The process, as Jean-Louis Comolli has written, follows this path:

*At the start, the places are defined: I, spectator, see director X's film, about issue or character Z. At the end, the places are no longer the same. I, spectator, I, author, and I, character, are mingled, irredeemably interwoven – positively or negatively.*⁵

So a singular results from all this, but a singular that is not that of the 'true' (what 'really' happened). The singular is that of the viewer, who constructs him or herself through his or her reconstruction of the scene, now that expectations about roles and behaviours are unfulfilled, and that accounts show their limitations. The act of viewing leads, then, to the emergence of 'a new spectator, an actor who starts where the performance ends, who only starts so as to complete it, but in life'.⁶ And, if Comolli is right, not only a new spectator, but also new characters, and a new author – individuals that, now becomes apparent, refuse to behave according to the clear boundaries set for them from the start. This is the beginning of a process of emancipation.

1

One Plus One is Jean-Luc Godard's own title for the film also known as *Sympathy for the Devil* (1968).

2

Robert Bresson, *Notes sur le cinéma*, Paris: Éditions Gallimard, 1975, p.34.

3

Bertolt Brecht, interview with Luth Otto, in *Brecht on Theatre: The Development of an Aesthetic* (ed. and trans. John Willett), New York: Hill and Wang, 1964, pp.70–71.

4

Bertolt Brecht, 'On the Use of Music in Epic Theatre', in *ibid.*, p.86.

5

Jean-Louis Comolli, 'Quelque chose à dire? – à qui', *Voir et Pouvoir. L'innocence perdue: cinéma, télévision, fiction, documentaire*, Paris: Éditions Verdier, 2004, p.76–77.

6

Louis Althusser, 'The "Piccolo Teatro": Bertolazzi and Brecht. Notes on a Materialist Theatre' (1962), *For Marx* (trans. Ben Brewster), New York and London: Verso, p.151.



Edvard Munch, *Raised Arm with Hammer* (*Hevet arm med hammer*, 1910) in sketchbook MM T 140, p.5r.

Who's Afraid of the Holy Whore: A Play in Six Acts
Marta Kuzma

Acts 1 and 2.

Social Studies: Cause and Effect

Edvard Munch's incredulous parson queen surrounded by a cast of characters cowers regally over a collapsed body, the gender undecipherable. The drawing's caption *Samfundslære: Årsak og virkning* (*Social Studies: Cause and Effect*, 1910) invokes by virtue of its date a latter 19th century concept of causality relating to life affirmation, whereby life is given meaning by being embraced passionately and authentically, albeit with consequence. Munch's queen states in the caption 'he suffered much, he sinned much' – perhaps referring to the 'do but be damned' attitude of an individual who chooses to live within the realm of freedom despite the prospect of isolation and the dilemma of existence that may accompany the pursuit of a qualitatively different, alternative life. The impulse to operate at the margins and to break the mode of the consensual and habitual, as a way to constitute a category of the new is one of the key driving forces in the history of modernism. For Charles Baudelaire, the symptoms of this condition of the new were radically decayed, darkened, even black; for Theodor Adorno, the cryptogram for the new was the image of collapse; and for Herbert Marcuse, this striving for a 'new sensibility' involved something altogether other – a psychedelic, narcotic release from the rationality of an established system, as well as from the logic that attempts to change that system. For Munch, the aspiration to a new sensibility involved a continual deliberation between the existing order of painting and a liberation from those traditions to produce an art that might function as a technique through which to reconstruct reality from its illusion, its imitation, even its harmony, as a bridge between the absolute emptiness of the individual and the passivity of collective behaviour.

Munch's painting, and later lithographs, drawings, photography, caricatures, diaries and play, make up a project of perceptual self-reflexivity aligned with modernist tropes of investigation

around autonomy and agency – be it in relation to sexual liberation, the women’s movement, the rise of the capitalist class, or the workers’ movement to contest existing spatial and temporal forms. This is not to claim that Munch illustrated an explicit political subjectivity, as did Gustave Courbet, Honoré Daumier and Käthe Kollwitz, yet he did exhibit a compulsive revisiting, redrafting and repainting of recurring themes to arrive at alternative social meanings. *Hevet arm med hammer* (*Raised Arm with Hammer*), another version of *Social Studies: Cause and Effect* exists, for example, as a sketch within one of the artist’s many notebooks. With similar motif, the circle of characters surround, rather than a corpse, a clenched fist arising from the ground. As a clear reference to the rise of labour movement representing the working class, Munch’s alternative sketch reveals a socio-historical impulse within the artist’s work – one less explored perhaps because it falls outside a more rhetorical interpretation of Munch’s work being expressive of psychic alone.

It is undeniable that *Skrik* (*The Scream*, in its many versions made between 1893 and 1910) remains the visual equivalent of human alienation in an industrial society, although the cult-like status of that correlation may have its foundations in Munch’s tacit agreement to serve as the ‘painter exemplary of madness’, even if he would eventually contest that association. As early as 1908, *The Scream* was reproduced within a book titled *Psychopathie und Kunst*, illustrating the condition of hysteria proposed by Dr. Heinrich Stadelmann, a clinical psychologist and specialist in nervous systems with a focus on hypnotic therapy (and who was immortalised by Otto Dix in a 1920 portrait). Stadelmann correlated key works of art by Francisco de Goya, Aubrey Beardsley, Marcus Behmer, Pol Doms and Munch to illustrate the symptomatic language of psychological neurosis, although his publication was released when the practice of psychotherapy was still in its development phase, as a treatment in which the ‘analysand’ verbalises thoughts, including free associations, fantasies and dreams. Sigmund Freud’s *The Interpretation of Dreams*, which appeared in 1900 and was followed by *Fragments of an Analysis of a Case of Hysteria* in 1901 and

Three Essays on the Theory of Sexuality in 1905, entered a field that until that point had been dominated by the visual theatre of Jean-Martin Charcot, who staged symptomatic bodies of female hysteria. And although Munch agreed to associate his work with the medical field’s early elaborations on hysteria, he would later qualify his investigations around the psycho-sexual in the autobiographical sketchbook *Den gale Diktets dagbok* (*The Mad Author’s Journal*), compiled during his stay at Dr. Jacobson’s clinic in 1908:

*When I write down these accounts with drawings – it is not in order to narrate my own life – For me it is a question of studying certain hereditary phenomena that are decisive for a human being’s life and fate – such as insanity in general. It is a study of the soul that I have [conducted] when I can actually study my self – use myself as an anatomical spiritual compound – Yet when it mainly has to do with a work of art and a study of the soul [I] have changed and exaggerated – and have used others for my investigation – It is therefore a mistake to view these accounts as confessions.’*¹

Emotion served as a powerful motivational, conceptual, rhetorical, political and practical tool for research into alternative forms of knowledge within the sciences in the latter part of the 19th century, and Munch wrestled with ways to render fear, anger, jealousy, joy, apprehension, anxiety and desire palpable. In doing so, he borrowed elements and figures from his real life without relying on their verification, to enact what Baudelaire would characterise in *The Painter of Modern Life* (1859) as the ‘consciousness of the new’, whereby the artist/flâneur with ‘a kaleidoscope of gifted consciousness asserts an “I” with an insatiable appetite for the non-I’.² Munch’s self-portrait, particularly within the disfigured and distorted *Visjon* (*Vision*, 1892) and *Selvportrett i helvete* (*Self-Portrait in Hell*, 1903), conveys the primacy of the psychic that could be interpreted as mirroring the artist’s mental state. But as noted in his sketchbook, Munch was influenced by the writings of contemporaries such



Fredrik Bødtkers – *A night of June in Karl Johan (Juninat paa Karl Johan)*
Illustration published in *Tyrihans*, 24 June 1904



Illustration by Olaf Krohn
published in *Tyrihans*,
18 October 1895

as Søren Kierkegaard, who in *Either/Or: A Fragment of Life* (1843) explored the division of self as a philosophical category. Munch noted that he followed Kierkegaard's example in 'dividing the work – in two – the painter and his overwrought friend the Author', implying a concerted distancing between the artist and the work of art. Kierkegaard's existential novel about the possibility of choice being as much about the possibility of change, portrayed two life views – one consciously hedonistic, the other based on ethical duty and responsibility, and Munch drew from this dichotomy as much as he did from Kierkegaard's engagement in multiple impersonations and his proclivity toward melancholia ('I have an intimate confidante [...] my depression is the most faithful mistress I have known [...] no wonder that I return to love').³

The intensification of emotional life evolving out of a continual shift of external and internal stimuli constituted the modern experience of spatial morphing, with distinctive qualities that Baudelaire characterised as fluidity, as in floating existences, and vaporousness, as also encountered in the writings of Karl Marx, Kierkegaard and Friedrich Nietzsche. As Munch explored psychic distortion within the various renditions of self-portraits, he also pursued spatial distortions in his alterations to rooms and interiors. Munch has the exterior encroach the interior, extending the floorboards in *Liklukt (Odour of Death, 1895)* and in *Sykesal (Hospital Ward, 1897–99)* beyond the dimensions of the room, to transform the space into a kind of public thoroughfare. In this sense, Munch reflects the boulevard arriving as a distinctive sign of 19th-century urbanism, and in his weightless simplification of the architectural interior it is impossible to separate it from the social. In these paintings, figures are rendered as amorphous apparitions, activating the room as a protagonist in its own right and expressing the very experience of anguish. In this way, Munch's painting recalls what T.J. Clark would refer to as a kind of cognitive painting that serves as a visible self interrogation, investigative, totalising and rooted through the spatial and the temporal.⁴

The collapse of foreground and background in these paintings connotes a wider spatio-temporal paradigm that transgresses place, space and time to challenge the viewer's ability to locate the figure. In doing so, the artist maintains that painting succumbs to an activity and the work, the reflection of a durational process:

I act either precipitously and with Inspiration hastily (thoughtlessly and unhappily – and with Inspiration and happy effect) or with long Deliberation – and anxiously – the Result is then often weaker and can be a failure – the Result can become the work's Undoing –

This applies to me as a painter and as a Human Being –

The Sick Child was a result of enduring Work lasting years – In the most complete Spring I had been able to utilise Numerous fortuitous Elements – It was less nervous and was not overworked or destroyed by invasive precipitous emotional States – The Sick Child was a more impetuous Mixture of mindless Work – inspiration – and nervous Deliberation over a long Period – It was completed thanks to Numerous inspired and precipitous Reworkings – The work very unwillingly abandoned – Hence its more spontaneously powerful Effect.⁵

Act 3.

Queen Draga: Love is free for the unfree – For the free it is not free

Munch figured the male unconscious in relation to the formation of fantasies and fears of women, who were increasingly emancipated. His avalanche of the psycho-sexual into the dystopic and even into the realm of death arrived out of a time when sex was centred on a political stage, when sexual liberation arose in tandem with the women's movement in Christiania (Norway's capital at the time) and wherein the bohemian community was bound up with political radicalism. At the time, early feminist Amelie Skram publicly denounced the differential treatment of adulterous women versus men,

and in 1884 the Norwegian Association of Women's Rights was established to promote voting and working rights. One year later, Munch's close colleague and writer Hans Jaeger published *From the Christiania Bohemia*, a novel about two young men and their contestation of the dominant social values and sexual mores to undermine the traditional values of marriage by extolling sexual liberation. Within this polemical climate of social change, Munch's *Symbolisk studie* (*Symbolic Study*, 1893–94), a sketch that portrays the virgin, the temptress and pivotal matrix of the matriarch/widow, stands in contrast to Eugène Delacroix's symbolic figure of *La Liberté guidant le peuple* (*Liberty Leading the People*, 1830), as the feminine embodiment of the human values of justice, truth and temperance. Munch digresses from this symbolic embodiment of the woman into a more distinctive characterisation of the woman and of evolving female consciousness that is, nevertheless, created by men or filtered through screens constituted by the imagination of men. This is moreover the case with the charged and sexualised images of women portrayed as the forthright and libidinous *Madonna* (1894–95), and devouring *Vampyr* (*Vampire*, 1895).

As Munch was influential as a visual reference within psychoanalytic circles already by the end of the 19th century, it may be that Austrian philosopher Otto Weininger also drew from the artist's paintings in *Sex and Character* (1904), wherein he characterises the ideal man as 'M' and the ideal woman as 'W', with construction of individual types resolved into two elemental figures – the Courtesan and the Mother. Weininger distinguishes these two figures by their preoccupation with the sexual act (which according to Weininger was the sole interest of 'W'). In the case of the courtesan, the sexual act is an end in itself, and in the case of the mother, it is a process that results in the possession of the child. Although Munch was known to keep a copy of Weininger's book on his bedside table together with a pistol, he may have done so as a reflection of an obsessive need for validation rather than for affinity of thought. Weininger was clearly unsympathetic with the modern feminist movement, which did not necessarily reflect Munch's more nuanced address of the movement in relation to class.

The women's suffrage movement throughout the late 19th century was motivated by women from the middle and upper class, who came into eventual confrontation with the socialist aspirations of the proletariat by the early 20th century. Munch found empathy with working classes women, and his characterisations of women evolved from deathly and dormant apparitions into the libidinal Madonna and sexually devouring vampires, only to be resolved into the cadavers of ailing prostitutes and working mothers in the early 1900s. Whereas sexual emancipation in relation to middle class women was tied to self-empowerment, self-fulfillment and political emancipation, Munch perhaps interpreted this as frivolous, whereas the prostitute warranted an adjustment to the social justice and welfare system.

Henrik Ibsen had already explored the venereal disease in *Ghosts* (1881) and Munch's colleague, the painter Christian Krohg, published *Albertine* (1886), a novel about prostitution as an exploitation of the lower classes by the bourgeoisie. Munch's stay in Paris in the late 1890s may have furthered his interest in portraying more austere prostitutes suffering from syphilis as models of the proletariat. It is possible that Munch visited these patients during his stay in Paris from 1896 to 1897, although it is not known if he actually saw the naked bodies of the afflicted or based his renderings on direct accounts. The etching *Gammel kvinne på sykehus* (*Old Woman in Hospital*, 1902) was likely to be based on the painting *Kvinner på hospitalet* (*Women in Hospital*, 1897), exhibited in the Paris exhibition of autumn 1897. It is also possible that Munch's treatment of the prostitute may have been inspired in Charles Baudelaire's interweaving of sex and death within the poem *Les Fleurs du Mal* (1857), which Munch planned to illustrate – a project he subsequently abandoned. Although the austerity with which Munch rendered the aging ailing prostitutes or the caretakers of infants afflicted with congenital syphilis in the painting *Arv* (*Inheritance*, 1895) and later a drawing believed to have been made in 1916 with the same title reflects a social documentary nature connected to feminist and socialist perspectives, and recall the approach of

Käthe Kollwitz, who presented to wide acclaim *Ein Weberaufstand* (*The Weavers Revolt*, 1893–98) in the 1898 Annual Berlin Show. It is not altogether unlikely that Munch, who travelled often to Berlin throughout this period, may have encountered Kollwitz's work and been influenced by the manner in which she conveyed a sense of class consciousness within her drawings.

Act 4.

*The Judge: You are accused of not wishing to
kiss the Dollar Princess*

The age of individualism that dominated the end of the 19th century folded into an era of collective organisation that took form by the start of the 1900s. The theatre of the soul and the primacy of the fragmentary that characterised the fin-de-siècle succumbed to a system of rationalisation of a new productive universe to support the continuity of the capitalist economy. The socially critical impulse that Munch illustrates in his portrayal of the prostitute and the working mother with the address of syphilis continues with his ironic turn against the many individuals who made up Christiania's politically radical community nearly a decade prior, recasting his former colleagues as monstrosities and caricatures in written works, sketches and drawings.

Den fri kjærligheds by (*The City of Free Love*, 1904–05) is a play that puts forward the artist's more explicit form of criticism of the Christiania bohemian community and its emphasis on sexual permissiveness, with illustrations that depict his former colleagues as a cohorts of toads, pigs, dogs and bloated figures. The play, reminiscent of Alfred Jarry's *Ubu Roi* (1896), is a satire of a bourgeois society whose abusive authority is fuelled by individual success. Munch addresses the obsession with sexual emancipation emphasising that this openness suited the bourgeois classes, as a way to develop a sex industry of workers who could be exploited – hence turning the once politically radical into the affirmative and consensual. As Munch wrote in *The Mad Author's Journal*:

*In Kristiania thanks to the Bohemian movement
Common Revellers; Men About town and
Libertines have become a kind of superior
Sect, a Religious Species – the sacred Animals
The sacred Swine*⁶

Upon a closer reading, it is also possible to interpret the play as a critique of early capitalism. Marx's *Capital* had been published in 1867, a treatise for the workers' movement that was very much at the centre of Munch's Norway's socio-political stage at the time (having just separated from Sweden in 1905). *The City of Free Love* is set in a marketplace centred on the exchange of goods and commodities, wherein a 'procession consisting of the Poet, the Billy goat, unburnt witches, various trade unions, the Cuckholds' preceded by the Billy-goat, the Drunkards, the Politicians, the Bastards, preceded by the Pig' takes place. A character Munch names 'the Dollar Princess' emerges in this marketplace as the protagonist who, according to the artist, possesses male characteristics and demands the love of the Minstrel. The play is presumably based on the relationship between Munch and Tulla Larsen, the daughter of a wealthy wine merchant, but upon a closer reading of the dialogue it is possible to draw away from biographical foundations to instead understand the work as an illustration of what Marx referred to as the juridical theatre, whereby persons exist as 'representatives and hence owners, of commodities appearing on an economic stage as mere personifications of economic relations as they come in contact with another'.⁷ And the Dollar Princess as some transgender subject, even symbolically reverent, demands from the Minstrel his use-value that transforms to the modus operandi of relations for the flock of capitalism into exchange values:

*Like a man –
And strong as a man she was
Not to say, as strong as the bear –
She weeps – but fights with lance
And bodkin*⁸

The character of the Minstrel may have been sourced from Karl Marx's early verse and poem *The Minstrel* (1836), a work that conveys the very essence of an artist's isolation and a narrative about an artist who lives solely by his art to exist as a misunderstood victim of alienation. The Dollar Princess, on the other hand, may be the character that personified what Marx called 'a consciousness and a will'. The Dollar Princess is nevertheless depicted as the culmination of imagination and inventiveness, and her eventual persecution of the Minstrel is not the persecution of one particular man but of society at large – one unable to cope with her autonomy and her independence through self-generated wealth. Munch closes the play with:

*The laws of the City of Freedom state
There is freedom to love freely – it is only for women –
They have the freedom to break the law
Where men are concerned
To which the judge responds: Let this right be
acknowledged
Men already have this freedom provided that women
are willing.*⁹

Act 5.

The History of Passion

In 1908, Munch, suffering the effects of heavy alcohol consumption, sought voluntary treatment in Dr. Jacobson's private clinic in Copenhagen enrolling in a rehabilitation programme of vitalist sunbaths, vegetarian diet, therapeutic electrification sessions and bed rest. He referred to this time as one of reflective experimentation, exaggerating the public's interpretation of him as a lunatic and producing a sketchbook of images and text titled *The Mad Author's Journal*, drawing comic renditions of himself being subjected to electroshock treatment, photographing manically attending nurses or himself reclined in bed as a 'revolutionary' Marat (Munch à la Marat, 1902). The period of recuperation only contributed to a social turn in Munch's work and a time in which he shifted out of a portrayal of psychological intricacies. Munch left Oslo for the Kragerø, a smaller town on the Oslofjord that was immersed in industrial-

isation. It was also a town where in 1910 the Labour Movement gained a strong position and where Munch was introduced to the climate of syndicalism.

In the same year that Munch painted *Arbeidere i snø* (*Workers in the Snow*, 1910), he also produced a series entitled 'the social caricatures' as a reworking of newspaper caricatures originally published some six to ten years earlier. Like Henrik Ibsen, who wrote *Enemy of the People* (1882) as a response to public outcry against *Ghosts* and in order to expose the effects of extreme social intolerance, Munch also set out to produce a series of works that fought against this reactionary mass criticism. Having been a popular subject of caricatures published largely within Oslo's newspapers and satirical magazines in the early 1900s, Munch was often lampooned as a cartoonish figure confronted by various skirmishes with other artists or police. One caricature depicted the artist arrested for clandestinely painting a couple embracing at night while sitting on a park bench – a violation of privacy, but only as it involved a married man from the upper class kissing a prostitute. Other caricatures related to the ironic visual treatment with the cartoonish rendering of his exhibited work at Blomqvist in Oslo in 1895.

Originally referring to the series as the *History of Assault* (later to be renamed the *History of Passion*), Munch wrote that he produced the series to establish 'indisputable facts – to make clear that I am the person who has been assaulted, and not that I am the person who attacks'.¹⁰ It is in a separate letter that Munch notes that he pursued this series 'like Goya and Daumier, with their intense bravura, to raise some ghosts'.¹¹ The restaging by Munch of these original caricatures under the rubric 'social caricature' served to highlight how mass criticism essentially protects the special interests of an elite. With the caricatures, Munch's recollection of trivial events exposes how the alleged radicality of the bourgeois class eventually leads to indifference, and how the juridical system reflects this indifference by instituting the authority of police, judges and a new penal code steered by rich men to favour their interests.

Act 6.

The Modern Moses

While the Dollar Princess, in her role as incredulous parson queen, stands over her victim, the Minstrel, represented as an undecipherable corpse in one sketch, she remains reanimated in another sketch, a witness to the wrenching free of a clenched fist from the ground. In the former, the Dollar Princess stands to judge; in the latter, she, together with her cohorts, threatened by an emancipatory force, stands to be judged. Truth is judged according to the time of its sentence.

In 1906, Munch paints *Småbygate i snø* (*Small Town Street in Snow*), a work that depicts villagers separated out by gender – a group of men on the front and a group of women in the background – with enough distance between the two groups to reflect authority within the men and a submission association within the women in the background. All traces of facial distinction are eliminated. In a later reworking of this motif in *Barn og ender* (*Children and Ducks*, conventionally dated 1906 but perhaps from 1910), Munch inserts a figure in the form of an outline, walking autonomously away from both groups, perhaps an anarchical soul moving away from the sense of contingency Munch has endowed this second painting with. The facial expressions of the men indicate the confrontational, even fanatical, while one woman in the background group is endowed with an expression of dread or alert, somehow positioned to protect the others. The reworked painting invokes a regressive scene not only in the separation of genders, but with the subsequent hierarchies and the indications of mass thought and mobilisation, even a looming menace. Perhaps reflecting the perspective of the Nietzschean good and evil, the painting alludes to 'free will' versus the 'will for power', and serves as Munch's visual image to the closing of the age of the emancipation at the beginning of the new century.

1
Edvard Munch, *The Mad Author's Journal*, 1908, unpublished [Munch Museum T 2734, p.374]

2
Charles Baudelaire, *The Painter of Modern Life, The Painter of Modern Life and other essays*, London: Phaidon, 1964, p.9.

3
Søren Kierkegaard, *Either/Or: A Fragment of Life* (trans. Howard V. Hong and Edna H. Hong), Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1987, p.20.

4
See T.J. Clark, 'On the Social History of Art', *Image of the People: Gustave Courbet and the 1848 Revolution*, Berkley and Los Angeles, CA and London: University of California Press, 1973.

5
E. Munch, *The Mad Author's Journal*, *op. cit.*, p.15.

6
Ibid., p.5.

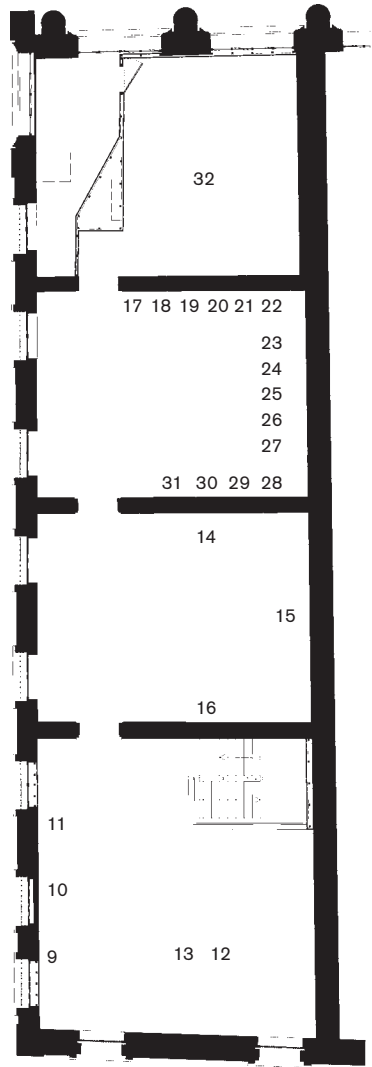
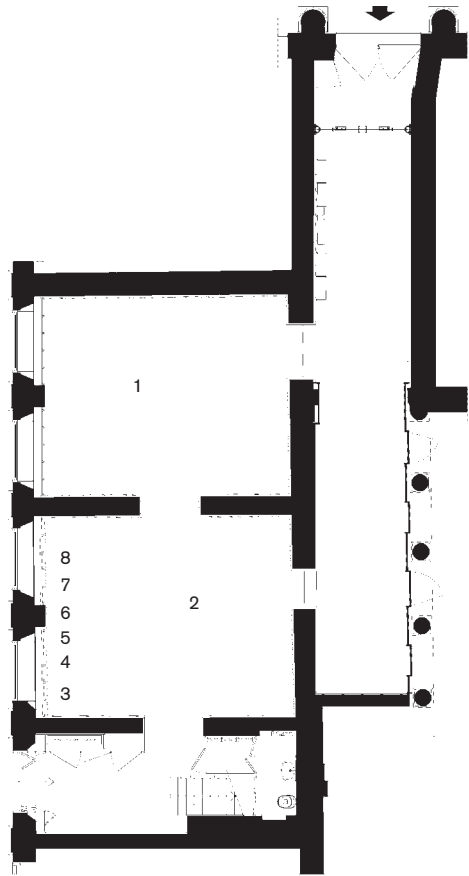
7
See Karl Marx, *Capital*, Vol. I, Chapter 2.

8
E. Munch, *The City of Free Love*, in Arne Eggum and Sissel Bjørnstad (ed.) *Edvard Munch. Alpha & Omega*, Oslo: Kirstes Boktrykkeri, 1981, p.75.

9
E. Munch, *The City of Free Love*, *op. cit.*, p.76.

10
Letter to Jappe Nielsen from 1 March 1909 in A. Eggum and S. Bjørnstad (ed.), *Edvard Munch. Alpha & Omega*, *op. cit.*, p.77.

11
Letter to Christian Gierfløff from 13 May 1908 in *ibid.*, p.77.





Dirty Young Loose – Ung

Løs Gris

2013, Written and directed
by Lene Berg / With Harry
Baer, Anne Ratte-Polle and
Max Rothbart / HD Video,
32 min. / German with
English subtitles / Shot in
Berlin and Ahrenschoop /
Produced by Studio
Fjordholm AS



Appendix Dirty Young Loose

– Appendix Ung Løs Gris

2013, HD Video, 5 min. (loop)

Edvard Munch, Plates

3



*Self-Portrait in Bed —
Selvportrett i sengen*
c.1902, Photograph of original
print, 10x9,5 cm,
B 2836

4



*Self-Portrait at the Lunch Table
at Dr. Jacobson's Clinic —
Selvportrett ved lunsjbordet på
Dr. Jacobsons klinikk*
1908-09, Photograph of
original print, 8,5x9,1 cm,
B 1355

5



*Nurse in Black, Dr. Jacobson's
Clinic — Sykepleierske i svart,
Dr. Jacobsons klinikk*
1908-09, Photograph of
original print, 8,6x8,8 cm,
B 1356

6



*Nurse in White, Dr. Jacobson's
Clinic — Sykepleierske i hvitt,
Dr. Jacobsons klinikk*
1908-09, Photograph of
original print, 12,1x8,3 cm,
B 2790

7



*Two Nurses, Dr. Jacobson's
Clinic — To sykepleiersker,
Dr. Jacobsons klinikk*
1908-09, Photograph of
original print, 8,6x8,8 cm,
B 1858

8



*Nurse with Arms behind Head,
Dr. Jacobson's Clinic —
Sykepleierske med armene bak
hodet, Dr. Jacobsons klinikk*
1908-09, Photograph of
original print, 8,8x8,9 cm,
B 2840



Inheritance — Arv
1916, Wax crayon on paper,
51,2×39 cm, T 2267



Symbolic Study — Symbolsk studie
1893-94, 56×69 cm, Tempera on
unprimed cardboard, M1033



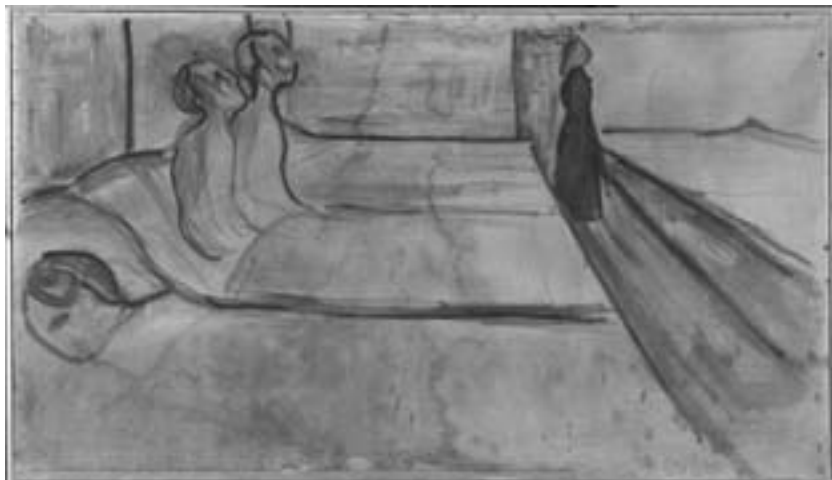
*Sex and Character — Geschlecht
und Charakter: Eine
prinzipielle Untersuchung*
by Otto Weininger, 1904,
Vienna and Leipzig: Wilhelm
Braumüller, K. u. K. Hof- und
Universitäts-Buchhändler
Original from Edvard
Munch's personal library



*Psychopathology and Art —
Der Psychopathologie
und Kunst* by Heinrich
Stadelmann, 1908, Munich:
R. Piper & Co. Original from
Edvard Munch's personal
library



*Old Woman — Gammel
kvinne på sykehus*
1902, Etching and drypoint
on copperplate, 17,8×12,1 cm,
G 64-7



Hospital Ward — Sykesal
1897-99, Oil on unprimed
canvas, 80x140 cm, M 0468



Odour of Death — Liklukt
1895, Tempera on unprimed
cardboard, 55x79 cm,
M 0248



*Death Raking the Leaves —
Døden raker løv*
1891-92, Pencil, pen and wash
on paper, 38,4x29,1 cm, T
290A



*The City of Free Love —
Den fri kjærlighets by*
1908-09, Lithographic crayon
on paper, 32x20 cm, MM G
330-6

On a signed print Munch has written in pencil: 'The Painter's Song at the Gate. On naked foot I wandered long, thirsty hungry, playing games, while longing for the wine, for woman's mead upon my lip, could I but rest awhile, lay my head to sleep. For a moment's sweet repose, with a maid with lips of mead. Behold the Paradise, on Earth young maids possess. Dream a little of the Paradise. That which was in Heaven. So much beauty has young maidens, golden hair and shining eyes, breasts that arch so generously, all of this our Lord has made. A maid can be such soothing rest for a king who has no kingdom'.



*The Merry Husband —
Den lystige ektemann*
1910, Lithographic crayon on
cream wove paper, 38,5x50
cm, MM G 514-30

'The merry husband. I was
kissed by my wife last night —
Deceived them all!'



*The Modern Moses —
Den moderne Moses*
1910, Lithographic crayon on
cream wove paper, 37x39,5
cm, MM G 517-30

'The Modern Moses. Give me
my beard and the penal code,
that is my armour, shield and
sword'.



*Queen Draga — Dronning
Draga*
1910, Lithographic crayon
on paper, 38,5x36,8 cm, MM
G 515-41

'Queen Draga on the throne.
Love is free for the unfree —
for the free it is not free —'.



In Court — For retten
1908-09, Lithographic crayon
on paper, 22,2x45,6 cm, MM
G 33-51

'In court. Oh my dear judge,
bohemians and pigs, what
have I done? I'll tell you — I
shit on a turd. The judge.
A virtuous fanfare, a slight
oversight, a hellish ware.
Your act was black. Take him
away.'

22



*Morning Whisky and Soda —
Morgenpjølter*
1908–09, Lithographic crayon
on paper, 26,5×21 cm, MM
G 332–67

‘After my last morning drink
and 2 pages of the Bible I
complete a thesis on perverse
art’.

23



*Bright Night in Christiania —
Lys natt i Kristiania*
1910, Lithographic crayon on
cream wove paper, 39,1×45 cm
MM G 334–1

‘1903. Painter M once again
caused disorder on the
street when five vandals,
all previously convicted,
assaulted him while he was
painting in the bright summer
night in Studenterlunden’.
On a signed print Munch has
written in pencil ‘The Painter
and the Police’.

24



*We Don't Need the Forts —
Vi slipper festningen*
1910, Lithographic crayon on
cream wove paper, 34×31,5
cm, MM G 482–4

‘1905. We don't need the forts
— We only need to assault a
sick and crippled painter —
then blood has been shed’.

25



*After the Assaults — Etter
overfallene*
1910, Lithographic crayon on
cream wove paper, 35,4×33,3
cm, MM G 518–1

‘1908. After the assaults. He is
nearly slain. He is dangerous
to his environment. He is
suffering from paranoia. He
must be locked up’.

26



*Social Studies: Cause and
Effect — Samfundslære:
Årsak og virkning*
1910, Lithographic crayon on
cream wove paper, 32,1×34
cm, MM G 516–2

‘Social Studies! Cause and
effect. The parson: He has
suffered greatly. He has
sinned greatly’.

27



The Murdered — Den myrdede
1910, Lithographic crayon on
cream wove paper, 31,8×29
cm, MM G 480–6

‘The murdered. The pig is
bleeding – He dares to smear
us –’

28



*The Rich Man — Den rike
mann*
1910, Lithographic crayon on
cream wove paper, 32×43,5
cm, MM G 335–03

‘1902. The rich man who gives
steals twice, first he has stolen
the money, then he steals the
people's hearts’. On one of
the prints Munch has written
in pencil: ‘From the eternal
civil war – Munch publishes
a portfolio of 10 lithographs
from the battle years 1902–08.
After this series comes one on
molboer mentality’.



The Money-Bag and the Poor Painter — Pengesekken og den fattige maler
1910, Lithographic crayon on cream wove paper, 32×32 cm, MM G 478-1

'1902. The inherited gold and the poor painter. We buy your debts and sell your hut. We buy your friends, we destroy your name in the papers'.



The Ambush in Copenhagen — Bakholdet i København
1910, Lithographic crayon on cream wove paper, 28,5×20,7 cm, MM G 337-06

'1904. The Ambush in Copenhagen'. On one of the prints Munch has written in pencil: 'When I had an exhibition in Berlin and was assaulted by Norwegians and Danes. Hamsun, Hjalmar Christensen, Thomas Krag and Haukland – I came from Germany as did Olav Trygvasson 800 years ago – Like him I came with the new religion – and like him I was assaulted in the Danish Isles, by Norwegians – and Danes – Swedes did not participate'.



Betrayal — Svik
1910, Lithographic crayon on cream wove paper, 36,7×39,5 cm, MM G 513-2

1902. Betrayal. Friends are enemies in disguise. They sneak into your house, eat your food, drink your wine and stab you in the back'. On one of the prints Munch has written in pencil: 'The seven years. The Germans came together for me and the Norwegians joined against me. When one gets shoved from the back and tripped from the front, the fall is bound to be ugly (Strindberg and I)'.



Children and Ducks — Barn og ender
1906, Oil on canvas, 100×105 cm, M 0548

Artworks by Edvard Munch:
© Munch-museet / Munch-Ellingsen
gruppen / BONO, Oslo 2013

The City of Free Love

Edvard Munch

The minstrel has travelled through many lands – great sufferings have worn him out, and he longs to rest in the arms of Love, and to warm himself at its flames. He had in vain sought great love – and so he dreamt of resting by the quiet heart of love, and feel its warmth. Tidings of the City of Freedom had reached him – there, the sacred flame of free love burnt. There he must go.

Outside the gate to the City of Free Love he met a peasant and he questioned about the city.

– Yes, said the peasant, this is a state within a state. It is free and has free laws. Some of the laws say that people should stay awake and drink at night and sleep during the day.

Marriages are made without any priest or fuss – a marriage does not last for more than three years, otherwise they are punished – and they can also in fact make marriages for two or three days – An idealist –

– Yes, you see, let me tell you, they have brought Heaven down to Earth. No chains will bind free love – Long live Free Love!

This is something for me, the minstrel thought, and he sang:

I wandered far on naked feet, thirsted, hungered, and made merry,

and yet I longed to taste the wine,
the sweet mead of a maiden's mouth.

If only I could rest a while,
rest my head and have a nap,
for a blessed hour or two,
in a sweet-lipped maiden's lap,
gazing into paradise,
made on earth by womankind,
dreaming of a paradise
we could once in Heaven find.

Girls have so much life and beauty,
golden hair and shining eyes,
a proud and heaving breast,
which Our Lord has blessed,
fitting pillow where to rest,
for a monarch dispossessed.

Above the town gate a number of people raise their heads – the
faces of various kinds of animal – pigs, dogs, and tigers – some
of them crowned with horns and antlers.

The minstrel:
May I come in?

The Pig:
Come in – you are cordially welcome –

The gate is opened and the minstrel walks in – the inhabitants
want to show him around –
– First of all I would like to look around, he says –

They are sitting round a table drinking champagne, with their
feet on the table – a gilded sucking-pig is carried around (this
is favourite god in the City of Freedom). The ladies hold it on
their laps in turn.

The Dollar Princess:
How sweet is the pig,
the price, is it big?
Never mind, I don't care a fig,
a thousand crowns is the cost of the pig.

The Dollar Princess pays a hundred crowns, places the pig on
her lap, and caresses it:

The sport-loving woman looks out:
An artist, an artist – and a poor one –

The Dollar Princess:
I want him. Just imagine, apart from money and a pig I shall
also have a reputation – and as he's poor, I shall have power
and freedom.
I want him – let him enter –

They all cry:
Come in, come in –

The Dollar Princess sits with her friends, drinking champagne,
with her feet on the table –

The Dollar Princess:
My God, how dull –

The others:
My God, how dull –

They look out of the window – an artist, an artist –

The Dollar Princess:
And a poor one, too – I've always wanted one.
After all, I have money and all I lack is reputation.
And since he's poor, I shall also have power –
and freedom –

– They all shout: Come in –

The minstrel comes in.
– I'm looking for a girl, he says, to love in freedom.
– May I choose? said the minstrel
– Yes, kiss all of us, says the Dollar Princess
– He kisses them
– I've been kissed, yelled the Dollar Princess – you are mine,
you are mine –
– No more than the others, said the minstrel
– Thank you for having me, says the minstrel, I'm going now –
– I'm going now, says the Dollar Princess –
– The minstrel goes – the Dollar Princess follows –

Sick room. The minstrel is lying in bed, writhing with stomach pains – a nurse comes in occasionally, carrying a chamber-pot –

The Dollar Princess:
Embrace me, I love you –

The minstrel:
I can't –

The Dollar Princess:
Don't destroy the great love of my life –

The minstrel weeps:
Chamber-pot, chamber-pot –

The nursing sister comes in with the chamber-pot –

The Dollar Princess, wrathfully:
Pause in this solemn hour –

The nursing sister, in respectful admiration:
I understand – she puts the chamber-pot down –

The Dollar Princess – to the minstrel, with outspread arms:
Beloved, here I am, embrace me –

The minstrel:
Don't touch me!

The Dollar Princess:
In this great moment of love – I don't understand.
Tell me why.

The minstrel:
I'm ill.

The Dollar Princess:
You would in fact destroy my love life –

The minstrel:
The impossible cannot happen –

The minstrel cries:
Help! Help!

The Dollar Princess, pale with indignation and scorn, rings the alarm bell.
The Queen Bee, KH, and B enter. –

The Dollar Princess:
He doesn't want to –

The minstrel:
I can't –

The Queen Bee:
Tell us what is the matter. –

The Dollar Princess:
He says he won't embrace me, because he can't –
Contemptible – he's ill. Isn't love greater?
– Have you no business to carry out in the Realm of Love?

The minstrel, weeping:
I must do something, but not in the Realm of Love for the moment – this belongs to the realm of universal goodness and a feeling of compassion – I'm dying of pain –

The Dollar Princess:
Here people die of love, not of pain.

The Dollar Princess:
My friends – don't you think this is impertinence?

The Queen Bee, K – H, and the others cry:

Ridiculous – impertinent ... he should be forced –

The indoor servant enters, and seizes hold of the minstrel, who howls with pain –

The Dollar Princess throws her arms around him –

The minstrel cries;

May God free me from the City of Freedom –

A street corner – the minstrel, who is trying to escape, is seized and taken before the Queen Bee –

Oh, Queen Bee, save me – I am hunted like an animal here in the City of Freedom – I have diarrhoea, and cannot relieve myself – I am not allowed to eat or sing or sleep at night, all for the sake of love –

The Dollar Princess:

Such is love – you should understand –
we have a remedy – you shall be united with the Dollar Princess –

The pig shall bind you in chains with her –

The minstrel:

Woe is me – but are we not in the City of Freedom – is not love free?

The Queen Bee:

Love is free for the unfree, but not for the free. –

She rings the bell – the pig enters with a chain –

The Queen Bee:

Chain him to the Dollar Princess –

He breaks the chain and escapes –

Marketplace in the City of Love –

Procession consisting of the Poet, the Billy-goat, unburnt

witches, various trade unions, the Cuckolds' preceded by the Billy-goat, the Drunkards', the Politicians', the Bastards', preceded by the Pig.

The Pig:

Lend me your wife, my friend,
and in return a crown I'll pay –

The Dog:

Dearest friend, lend me a crown,
and with your wife I'll lay me down –

The Pig's song:

Fat pigs float without trying
Pigs who smile when they're frying
Pigs have lots of things in store
Lovely mash, and much, much more
Sitting on its tail, the dog
gives protection to the hog
Munching, crunching, with its snout
while roast pigeons fly about –

The troop of unburnt witches led by the Billy-goat:

Ha ha hustle bustle
Hear the sounds of springtime rustle –
Blossoms white, everywhere
Ha ha ho ho

A witch:

I have got a long, long nose
Better than a short one, I suppose
'Neath our skirts, we all have tails
We have claws instead of nails
If you've got a crown to lend
You may wed a witch, my friend –

Second witch:

A helmsman's finger, he saw land,
Foundered off his native strand –

Billy-goat:

Ha! We rush to meet the spring
Flowers white and red and yellow
Where's that bastard, tell me true,
Which a virgin gave a fellow
For a night, but not for two –

Witches:

Where is he, if we can catch him
He who dared to touch the maiden
We shall scratch him –

Second witch:

We shall scratch and whine and burrow –

Third witch:

We shall poke and tug and spread
poison on his daily bread –

The Dollar Princess:

Ho, ho, hee, hee,
Hie, hie, belch and burp –
Now the man his food has tried
He will put it all aside –

To the Pig, whom she kisses, and the Kangaroo, whom she pats:

Oh, my friends –
I am now so raging mad
That embraces leave me cold,
If revenge cannot be had –
The wretched, poor sinner who dares to survive
Though he's seen me, the goddess, alive –

The Pig:

Maiden, for a crown so bright
You shall be my wife tonight –

Chorus of witches:

Rest assured, you will repent
If you, dear maid, a crown have lent –

The Kangaroo:

Dear love, a tenner give to me,
all night your lover I shall be –

The Queen Bee:

Dear lass, a crown give me in loan,
You may sit upon my throne –

The Dollar Princess hands out money right and left:

Here for all is gold enough,
I have bushels of the stuff –

The Queen Bee:

Listen – I have got a plan,
He is such a generous man,
We'll a trap contrive –
The Dollar Princess will lie down, as though dying, and yell
for
help –
We'll dig a ditch, in front of the bitch,
He'll fall inside and won't come out alive –

The Dollar Princess, who has lain down behind the ditch:

Help Help –

All shout:

Help Help
She is dying
Over there she now is lying
Try to save her, if you can
Otherwise you're not a man –

– He falls into the ditch and breaks his leg –

Chorus of witches:

In the grave his limbs he stretches
Begging for his life, the wretch is –

The Queen Bee to the Dollar Princess:

See him in the grave there lie
In relief you now may sigh –
‘Spite of all, he nearly kneeled before you,
Solemnly.
For your sake, he’s almost dead
Now love the kangaroo instead –

The minstrel in the ditch:

Oh, free me from this city of liberty –

The Dollar Princess claps her hands in frantic joy:

My goodness, he suffers unrequited love for me
What a joy to see –
Now at last an artist suffers unrequited love
For my sake –

The minstrel in the ditch:

Yes, this know the gods above
This was unrequited love –

The minstrel, on crutches, together with a number of tramps:

Where can we get food to eat?
Let’s ask the trade union of the wealthy –

The minstrel:

The rich chairman of North Pole exploration
Owes me ten crowns for a recitation,
I’ll go over to him –

A vagabond:

– and I’ll approach the chairman of
The North Pole Rescue Society –

The minstrel:

Mr Chairman, I’m sure you’ll note
You owe ten crowns for a song I wrote –

The Chairman – solemnly:

We have just heard of Nansen’s successful return –
We are all glad now
And you should be, too
A dinner’s arranged to mark the great day
If you want to be asked, I’m afraid you must pay,
Sixty thousand crowns, so you see
We can’t give you a sou –
Twenty dishes and twenty assorted wines from P. A. Larsen’s
store –
Take a look at the menu – what’s more –
Here’s a glass of water
For you –

The vagabond to the Chairman of the North Pole Rescue Society:

Chairman, I’m dying for lack of food
Give me a crown, be so good –

The Chairman:

We are just organising an expedition
To search for the bones of a dead explorer
We’ve nothing to give you –
Thank the Lord I’m not having you jailed –
We only save people dying at the North Pole –

The minstrel in despair:

I cannot get food –
Traps are placed so that I fall and break
Arms and legs when I kiss a girl –
And yet we’re here in the City of Freedom,
And I shall strive to gain my rights –

To the Chairman of the Politicians' Trade Union:

Dear Chairman – grant me my right,
I kiss a girl and I am almost tortured to death –
I'm given menus instead of food

The Politician:

Are you a politician?

The minstrel:

No

The Politician:

There is no use appealing for any right
unless you're a member of a union –
The politician's right is to be a politician –
The drunkard's right is drunkenness –
– Be a member of a union –
Besides, we've got a war on now –
The neighbouring city threatens us –
You too must join us in this war –

The minstrel:

I cannot – I'm starving
and I've lost a leg –

The Chairman:

Then instead we'll go for you
and make a pact with the nearby city –
– Blood shall flow and
Honour shall be saved –

He strikes him –

– Politicians, drunkards, and cuckolds assault him,
– with the result that he lies bleeding in the street –

An emissary:

We come from Prison Town – we declare war –

The Politician to the Supreme General:

Then send the minstrel and the aged citizens
and cripples out to fight the foe –

(They are herded together –)

Just a moment, can't we wait a bit –

The emissary:

Well, if you will pull down all the gates
then we can find our way inside –

The Pig and the Dog:

We want war, yes, we want war –

The Commander-in-Chief:

– No thank you, we know that as before
He'll stay at home and play the whore
with all our wives and daughters –

The Politician:

Resolved –

An agreement has been reached –

The Politician to the Commander-in-Chief:

Assault the minstrel and the cripple
That blood may flow and honour be saved –

The minstrel and cripple are attacked and massacred –

The Chief of Police with his patrol:

There he is, causing disorder –
Our patience's at an end –
– In the sacred name of Liberty
I sentence you to prison –
You have caused disorder on the street,
befouled the pavement and besmirched
the ladies and gentlemen of this town with your blood –
You are an anarchist, and a menace to those around –

He is gathered up and carried off on a stretcher –

Dear Judge, Bohemians, and Pigs
Tell me what I've done –
I'll tell you, my word,
I've slipped on a turd –

The Judge:
A fanfare to virtue,
the hellhound could hurt you,
What you did was absurd –

The Judge:
Fetch us our modern Moses,
Let him pronounce judgement –

The modern Moses shambles in, drunk, and speaks in a slurred voice:
Yes, I'm in a happy mood today,
The Judge said that I can give my consent –

The Judge:
Why are you so gay?
– You see on the corner of the street I met
thirty of my wife's lovers –
– They were all so furious because
I had deceived them – I had
a kiss from my wife tonight –

A chair is placed for the modern Moses –

Moses:
Bring me my horn, my beard,
my lawbook, and I'll counsel you –

The Judge:
You are accused of
kissing the Dollar Princess –
not wishing to kiss the Dollar Princess –
refusing to be chained to the Dollar Princess –

You fall into a ditch and have been guilty
of offensive behaviour, in that on the same occasion
you cried out and spattered with blood
the clothes of various ladies –
You have been disorderly
in that you were knocked senseless
by the police, soiling them with your blood
and causing a delay by refusing to die in time –

The accused:
With regard to the first charge may I point out
I can hardly call it seduction
this kiss I gave the Dollar Princess –
– venture to say it was not persuasive –
Perhaps rather the opposite –

The Judge:
Hee hee –

All:
Fie, fie, he dares to denigrate the woman –
She is a woman – a woman –

The accused:
She said she had the right to love
Like a man –
– and strong as a man she was
not to say, as strong as a bear –
She weeps – but fights with lance
and bodkin –

The Judge:
Why did you not kiss her more often?

– I was ill and could not –
What do you think, Judge Moses?

Moses:
One is entitled to kiss twenty times but not once –

The Judge:

The court acknowledges that you have done wrong –

The Judge:

You have lain with her

Why did you not wed her?

The accused, weeping:

I lay with her because I would not wed her –

The Judge:

Moses, what say you?

Moses:

Give me my horn, my beard, and my book –

and I shall counsel you –

Hm, hm, first you lie together

and then you marry

when you are bored with one another –

First a divorce – then marriage –

That's simple and clear –

by my horn and my beard –

The accused:

It's so simple that

Nothing could be understood – the laws of the City of Freedom state

There is freedom to love freely – it is only for the women –

– They have the freedom to break the law

where men are concerned –

The Judge:

Let this right be acknowledged –

Men already have this freedom provided the women are willing –

* * *

Over the pleasant

Land of Liberty

He makes his dreary way down to the earth

Love shall come

Love shall depart

Love shall beckon and love shall wave

Tears of love

Run into the grave

He died the death in the City of Freedom

[First published in English in Arne Eggum and Sissel Bjørnstad (ed.), *Edvard Munch. Alpha & Omega*, Oslo: Kirstes Boktrykkeri, 1981, pp.61–76. Translation from Norwegian by Christopher Norman.]



Still from *Edvard Munch* (directed by Peter Watkins, 1973)

On Peter Watkins's *Edvard Munch* (1973)

Edvard Munch is considered by Watkins as his most personal film. The work dramatises three decades of the life of the artist in the form of a docudrama that conveys Munch's subjective vision about tragic family events, difficulties in his first sexual relationships, and opposition from the conservative forces in Christiania (Oslo) following his engagement with its bohemian circle in the mid-1880s. The film concentrates on Munch's personal reactions to these events, enfoldes them in the social and historical reality of the time, and shows how they directly affected the development of his style as a painter.

In parallel to his work as a filmmaker, Peter Watkins has analysed and challenged for over four decades the widely accepted escalation of the standardised pictorial and narrative form of Hollywood within all forms of contemporary audiovisual communication, including modern internet technology.

The artist Edvard Munch is often referred to as a 'modern' artist, but – Watkins asks – how are we to define 'modernism' in the broadest sense, in a world that idolises manipulative audiovisual forms that encourage mass consumerism, political passivity and escalating environmental disaster?

Peter Watkins's *Edvard Munch* will be screened at:

Teatro Malibran
Campiello del Teatro Malibran,
Cannaregio 5870, 30124, Venice

13 October 2013, 2.30pm

‘Beware of the Holy Whore:
Edvard Munch, Lene Berg
and the Dilemma of
Emancipation’

Fondazione Bevilacqua
La Masa (BLM)
Galleria di Piazza San Marco
San Marco 71/c
30124 Venice, Italy

Exhibitors:

— Lene Berg
Edvard Munch

Commissioner:

— Office for Contemporary
Art Norway (OCA)

Organisers:

— OCA and BLM

Curators:

— Marta Kuzma, Director
OCA
— Angela Vettese, President,
BLM
— Pablo Lafuente, Associate
Curator, OCA

Project Coordinators:

— Antonio Cataldo,
Senior Programme
Coordinator, OCA
— Stefano Coletto, Curator,
BLM

Press Office:

— Giorgia Gallina, Press
Officer, BLM
— Maria Moseng, OCA
— Kathrin Luz, Neumann
Luz Networks

Installation Designer:

— Erwin De Muer, Erwin
De Muer Studio

Graphic Designer:

— Hans Gremmen

Exhibition dates:

— 1 June–22 September 2013

Opening hours:

— 11am–6pm (closed on
Mondays and Tuesdays,
except 3 June)

This exhibition has been commissioned and funded by the Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA) in cooperation and with the generous support of Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa in Venice and its Board. Additional support is provided by Fritt Ord – the Freedom of Expression Foundation, Oslo. The exhibition is made possible by generous loans from the Munch Museum, Oslo, Norway.

Fondazione Bevilacqua la Masa was created in 1898 and it soon became a reference for young artists within the Veneto region. Since then the foundation has continued to support young and emerging artists through grants, exhibitions and residency programmes, and to organise exhibitions with key national and international contemporary artists, hosted at Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa's premises at Palazzetto Tito and Galleria di Piazza San Marco.

The Office for Contemporary Art Norway is a foundation created by The Norwegian Ministry of Culture and The Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs in autumn 2001. The main aim of the Office for Contemporary Art Norway is to develop collaborations in contemporary art between Norway and the international art scene. OCA aims to become a key contributor to the discourses of contemporary art.

OCA and BLM would like to thank Stein Olav Henrichsen, Magne Bruteig, Gerd Woll, Petra Pettersen, Lasse Jacobsen, Biljana Casadiego, Tonja Boos, Chiarastella Cattana and Vida Urbonavicius.

Film Credits:	— Titles: Anja Lutz
<i>Dirty Young Loose – Ung Løs Gris</i>	— Shot at Grand Hotel & Spa Kurhaus Ahrenshoop
written and directed by Lene Berg	March 2013
Cast:	— Interrogations recorded in Trixx Musikproduktion, Berlin
— Hugo: Harry Baer	— Sound Engineer: Julian Cropp
— Lisa: Anne Ratte-Polle	— German Translation: Cornelia Fiedler
— Martin: Max Rothbart	
— Female Interrogator: Ellen Schlootz	
— Male Interrogator: Christian Wewerka	
— Casting: Tanja Schuh	A special thanks to:
— Director of Photography: Christian Marohl	— Sabine Kruggel, Bang & Olufsen, Lambert GmbH
— Assistant Camera, DIT: Martin Schmidt	<i>Dirty Young Loose</i> is produced by Studio Fjordholm AS, and made possible with the additional support of NFI, the Norwegian Film Institute – Film Commissioner: Åse Meyer, Norsk Kulturråd / Arts Council Norway, Fond for Lyd og Bilde/Audio and Visual Fund, Office for Contemporary Art Norway (OCA) and Norwegian Visual Artists Remuneration Fund.
— Production Designer: Bettina Scheibe	
— Set Decorator: Anna-Maria Thönelt	
— Costumes: Sandra Klaus	
— Make-up: Anna Bauer	
— Producer: Helga Fjordholm	
— Production Manager: Niklas Hlawatsch	
— 1st Assistant Director: Anna-Maria Thönelt	
— Artist's assistant: Ulrich Schäfer	
— Driver/Runner: Malte Hafner	
— Editor: Henrike Dosk	
— Grading and vfx: Gudmundur Gunnarsson, Bonanza Post Production	
— Sound Design: Sverre Jakobsen, Teknopilot Lillehammer	



la Biennale di Venezia

55. Esposizione Internazionale d'Arte

Partecipazioni nazionali

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