

# ANNA-SOFIA SYSSER

## TROPICAL DREAMS

conversation with Manuela Pacella and Dobrila Denegri  
Wednesday, April 17th, 2019 – 6 pm

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Anna-Sofia Sysser, *Birds of Paradise*, 2015

STUDIO STEFANIA MISCETTI is proud to present *Tropical Dreams*, a focus on the practice of **Anna-Sofia Sysser**. The artist's 2015 piece *Birds of Paradise* has been selected for the eleventh edition of **SHE DEVIL**.

In conversation with Manuela Pacella and Dobrila Denegri, the Finnish artist will present her research on “Finnish tropical” – that is, the way in which the tropical theme is conceived in Finland – to a Roman audience.

Her interest came from observations of the Finnish Tropical in 2015, and grew during her travels to the tropics. This critical investigation has led to *Tropical Dreams: Representations of the Tropical in Finland*, her thesis at Aalto University in 2018.

In her talk, she will reflect on her most important exhibitions: namely, her solo show at Oksasenkatu 11 gallery in Helsinki, *Surprise Paradise* (2015) which included the video works *Flowers of Cuba* and *Birds of Paradise*, which were both shown in two highly immersive environments, alongside installations and performative works like *Tropical Rooms* (2016). During the presentation, a selection of her videos will be shown and themes, like play, environmental sustainability and the tropical, will be discussed. In this edition of **SHE DEVIL, We Will Survive**, Anna-Sofia Sysser succeeds in adding an essential touch of irony and “care” to the theme proposed: the urgent issue of climate change.

**Anna-Sofia Sysser:** born in Helsinki in 1986 where she lives and works. She works with video, performance, writing and installation. Sysser has graduated from Aalto University's Visual Culture and Contemporary Art MA program in 2018 and from Turku Arts Academy as a drama instructor in 2012.

**Selected Exhibitions – Solo shows:** 2018 – *Trooppisia unelmia*, Ponnahus Gallery, Kajaani (FI); 2017 – *Touching palm trees, artificial waves, 'tropical' dreams*, Asematila, Helsinki; *Yllätysparatiisi/Surprise Paradise*, Oksasenkatu 11 Gallery, Helsinki; 2014 – *Between the Ceiling And the Floor* with the architect Helmi Kajaste, Sorbus Gallery, Helsinki; 2013 – *Collecting – Recollecting*, Deck Drei, Berlin. **Group shows:** 2017 – *RytmiTaju 2017*, Hyvinkään taidemuseo ja taiteilijaseura, Hyvinkää (FI); *Space Invaders V – Tolerance*, Lielahdi mansion, Tampere (FI); 2016 – *Pori Biennaali 2016 – Saatanan kesänäyttely*, Generaattorigalleria, Pori (FI); *Salon de Porveaux*, Porvoon Taidehalli, Porvoo (FI); 2012 – *Phase*, XL Art Space, Helsinki; *B + Titanik*, Titanik Gallery, Turku (FI).

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**SHE DEVIL** is the name of a heroine in the Marvel Comics universe, Shanna the She Devil, and title of the famous film from 1989 by Susan Seidelman. In this circumstance it alludes in a playful way to the diabolical and bizarre spirit with which artistic experience investigates day-to-day life. In continuity with the previous editions of the program, the videos represent female viewpoints and place the various fields of video art research in direct contrast to one another. The purpose of the initiative is to stress, at times using irony, at times realism, the collective consciousness on themes such as female identity, the body as repository of representation and meaning, and personal experiences on universal dimensions, even when the very intimacy of the artists is at the forefront of their works.

**SHE DEVIL** was founded in 2006 thanks to an idea of Stefania Miscetti, and involves artists and curators, both Italian and international, from emerging young talents to highly acclaimed personalities. The various works and different critical perspectives coexist within a discourse of many voices, in which the multiplicity of feminine worlds and visions emerges. After the first two editions, in 2006 and in 2007, respectively with four and six curators (and the same number of artists), since 2009, with the third edition, Stefania Miscetti has decided to get more curators involved. The success of the initiative was confirmed that year by a special international edition held at the MNAC, National Museum of Contemporary Art in Bucharest, Romania. In 2010, after the fourth edition of the project, SHE DEVIL was selected for the show *The Madness of Art* at the Ravello Festival. The fifth edition of the project took place in the summer of 2011 at MACRO, the Museum of Contemporary Art in Rome. In 2014 the sixth edition received extensive media coverage. In 2015, it was organized the seventh edition in Rome and the **SHE DEVIL on Tour** at Palazzo Primavera, in Terni (Italy) and at Golden Thread Gallery, Belfast (UK). The eighth edition and SHE DEVIL. Leipziger Edition: Home, at Galerie KUB were held in 2016. In 2017, SHE DEVIL landed in Lithuania, at National Gallery of Art, in Vilnius and the ninth edition took place at the Studio. In 2018, tenth edition was held at the Gallery and great selections were presented at National Institute of Graphics, Rome, and at Centro per l'Arte Contemporanea Luigi Pecci, Prato.