

**WE WILL KEEP EACH OTHER COMPANY
WHEN IT GROWS DARK**

*** J.F. Espai 13**

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Exhibition series curated by Irina Mutt

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BUTTERFLY LOGIC

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INARI SANDELL

FAO FOSCO

26/04 - 07/07/2024

Upcoming exhibitions of the series:

DANIELLE BRATHWAITE-SHIRLEY 19/07 - 20/10/2024

HELENA VINENT 31/10/2024 - 19/01/2025

Inari Sandell's *Butterfly Logic* is the second project presented in Espai 13's *We Will Keep Each Other Company When It Grows Dark* exhibition series.

Sandell works in a variety of media, including photography, video, and sculpture. Their research is frequently based on experiences lived from neurodivergent and queer positions, while questioning the different conventional limits established in relation to bodily and cognitive capacities. These themes appear repeatedly in their work mainly as methods for unlearning ableism and advancing towards a more sustainable and accessible artistic practice.

In their project for Espai 13, Sandell explores some of the discourses and strategies of the psychiatric disciplinary system that have defined standard accounts of neurodiversity, and especially of autism spectrum disorder. These repressive methods are often aimed at reinforcing the dominant system to ensure that *everything works*. The control, internment, repression, and medication of disruptive agents are at the basis of this regulatory system. Accordingly, discipline and sanctions are intended to preserve what the cap-

Lahti, Finland, 1991. Their lens-based and sculptural work takes the form of installations and addresses themes of neurodivergence, accessibility and sensory experience entangled with post-digital and post-human millennial existence.

Sandell holds an MFA in Time and Space Arts from Uniarts Helsinki (2023), a BA in Media Studies from the

BUTTERFLY LOGIC

italist system regards as a person's most valuable attributes: their capacity to produce and consume. In response to these structures and discourses surrounding neurodiversity, Sandell proposes an unexpected signifier to convey an idea of resistance: the butterfly.

Butterfly Logic takes as its starting point the survival strategies used by these insects. One of the ways they evade predators is by flying in an unpredictable and chaotic manner. Their erratic, zigzagging movements protect them from being caught. Sandell invites us to transpose these patterns of behaviour into the social sphere. Perhaps we might find in the choreography of their changeable flight evidence that the same protective strategy may also prove effective when applied to erratic conduct; that it may be possible to escape the 'logic' of the system precisely by means of a counter logic.

The images and objects shown in *Butterfly Logic* present links and paradoxical relations with various

elements and materials used in regulatory treatments of autism. Sandell combines fragility (glass, textiles, and transparency effects) with hardness (sharp edges, spikes, and metal).

The artist took most of the photographs and recorded the video on view in the exhibition during a visit to the natural history museum in Copenhagen. Whereas museums of this kind encapsulate and show nature in an artificially idealised state, Sandell's gaze focuses on the structural features of the buildings in which this nature is contained and displayed. As a result, their images highlight not just flowers and plants but the architecture that delimits the space, the metal pipes and air conduits, columns, and walls; fixtures with which the museum safeguards its contents while at the same time confining what it holds. In this respect, the exhibition situates itself in search of what happens in those liminal spaces, where everything remains potentially and in progress, in a fragile balance between danger and hope. In this way, Sandell applies a type of reasoning that circumvents the limitations of ableism. Theirs is a disorganised coherence: a butterfly logic.

Credits: Sound design by Jussi Hertz

INARI SANDELL

University of Turku (2020) and a BFA in Photography from the Turku Arts Academy (2016). Their praxis also includes self-publishing and curating.

Their work has been shown internationally in galleries, museums and festivals that include the UKS (Unge

Kunstneres Samfund / Young Artists' Society, Oslo, 2023), Hafnarborg Centre of Culture and Fine Art (Iceland, 2023), SÍM Korpúfsstaðir (Reykjavik, 2023), Kaiku gallery (Helsinki, 2022), Titanic Gallery (Turku, 2021), SIC (Helsinki, 2019), Finnish Cultural Institute (New York, 2021) and Athens Photo Festival (Athens, 2016). *Butterfly Logic* is their first solo exhibition in Spain.

WE WILL KEEP EACH OTHER COMPANY WHEN IT GROWS DARK

Ens acompanyarem quan es faci fosc (We Will Keep Each Other Company when It Grows Dark) is the title of the Espai 13 exhibition programme for 2024, curated by Irina Mutt. Mutt's curatorial project stems from a desire to situate interdependence, to explain it and share it by means of four solo exhibitions in which each artist will look at their way of being in the world, of managing and negotiating spaces.

According to Mutt, interdependence speaks to us of our relationship with the world, of how we inhabit it, about our limits and vulnerabilities. To think in terms of interdependence requires us to challenge the fiction of autonomy and to recognise how interlinked our bodies and lives are with other bodies and lives. We are all part of everything, and we exist in relation to other beings, structures, and phenomena. Nothing presents itself, functions or operates in isolation.

Accordingly, the opportunities for agency, presence and access do not consist so much of individual triumphs or failures as of a collective and shared responsibility. Not every space feels as inviting or can be occupied in the same way by everyone. Not all voices fill up the same amount of space, nor do all stories endure the same across time. This programme offers a few notes, indications, and actions about different ways of occupying and being in space, of lasting in time.

The title of the programme alludes to a «we», to gestures, rather than to a discourse: how we place ourselves next to someone else, walk alongside them, even if only for a short stretch of the way, for a short amount of time. It provides an opportunity to assume our responsibility despite knowing we will not always be effective. This will be our gesture: to place ourselves close by.

In discourses against discrimination, reference is usually made to the idea of safe and accessible spaces, but oftentimes a safe space does not mean a space free of conflict, nor does complying with the rules guarantee accessibility. Assuming responsibility for and being aware of our privileges can on occasion be wounding. At times it means surrendering, and to surrender is to lose power. But there are more important things than power, aren't there?

Over the course of this programme, a narrative will gradually generate itself in an elastic, non-essentialist, non-linear manner. The embodied and the material, as planes of truth, will have the capacity to deploy the political and activate it. In this narrative, fragility and power will not be binary opposites but relational phenomena that are exchanged and which overlap.

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