

SI

Angharad Williams & Mathis Gasser ***Hergest: Trem*** **January 20 – April 18, 2021**

Swiss Institute is pleased to present *Hergest: Trem*, the first collaborative exhibition by Angharad Williams and Mathis Gasser in the United States. *Trem*, Welsh for “view” and “sight,” marks the sixth cycle of the artists’ ongoing *Hergest* project.

Since 2016, Williams and Gasser have staged a series of episodic installations across the United Kingdom and Switzerland under the title *Hergest* that draw upon their shared interests in folklore, mythology, science fiction and cinematic depictions of the near future. Both artists work jointly on all facets of their exhibitions, which feature original artworks, performances and found objects arranged as disquieting *mises-en-scène*. An ambiguous absence and preternatural forms distinguish *Hergest: Trem*, where visitors encounter a deteriorating ad hoc bar and recreation space occupied by an uncommon set of guests.

“Hergest” is an ancient Welsh toponym that lends its name to a hilly ridge on the border between England and Wales, as well as the title of a singular medieval Welsh manuscript containing the *Mabinogion* and other mythological tales and poems: *The Red Book of Hergest*. Inquiries into the relationship between site and story are important to Williams and Gasser, who cull archetypes and plots from literature, film and television, along with diverse visual references, and synthesize them in response to their environment. The result is a new narrative of the artists’ own making. At SI, *Hergest: Trem* inhabits the basement gallery as a makeshift, subterranean zone of clandestine gathering that recalls the trope of the urban speakeasy.

A reddish glow spills from this room, which houses an interspecies cast of characters. Reptiles, a human and a specter rest near one another in solitary moments of stasis. A portal-like canvas serves as décor and depicts a bureaucratic architecture populated with seated, faceless figures linked in their loneliness to the varied beings in this shadowy bar. Resting on plinths and tucked away in booths are structures that portray a hive, an engineered terrain and an unorientable planet.

Hergest: Trem momentarily captures a tenuous connection between lives, things and the architectures that contain them. On the brink of an ebb, this hidden realm may not persist beyond the departure of its visitors.

Angharad Williams & Mathis Gasser

Hergest: Trem

2020-2021

Dimensions variable

Mixed media environment featuring a reproduction of Seymour Rosofsky, *Unemployment Agency*, 1957-1958. Oil on canvas. 129.5 × 182.9 cm (51 × 72 in.) Art Institute of Chicago, restricted gifts of Carol Rosofsky, Steven Rosofsky, Amy Rosofsky, J. Rebecca Ryan, and the Judith Rothschild Foundation; Ann M. Vielehr Prize Fund, 2001.159. Courtesy of the Estate of Seymour Rosofsky and Corbett vs. Dempsey, Chicago

All other works courtesy of the artists and Weiss Falk, Basel

SI gratefully acknowledges Designtex for in-kind support. Angharad Williams and Mathis Gasser wish to thank Dario Gimenez, Ehsan Morshed Sefat, Richard Sides, Michael Lanzano, Simone Kurland, Mary Provenzano, The Estate of Seymour Rosofsky and Weiss Falk, with very special thanks to Daniel Merritt.

This exhibition is organized by Daniel Merritt, Associate Curator.

About Angharad Williams & Mathis Gasser

Angharad Williams is an artist and writer who lives in Wales and Berlin. Recent solo projects, performances, and group exhibitions have taken place at KW Institute for Contemporary Art, Berlin; Stadtgalerie Bern, Bern; Kunstverein Munich, Munich (all 2020); Haus zur Liebe, Schaffhausen; ICA, London; No Bounds Festival, Sheffield; Peak, London (all 2019); Radiophrenia, Glasgow; and Liszt, Berlin (both 2018). Forthcoming solo exhibitions will take place at Kevin Space, Vienna and MOSTYN, Llandudno.

Mathis Gasser is an artist who lives in London. Recent solo projects and group exhibitions have taken place at Schirn Kunsthalle, Frankfurt; La Rada, Locarno (both 2020); Lady Helen, London; Haus zur Liebe, Schaffhausen (both 2019); Château d'Orion, Orion; Kunsthalle Palazzo, Liestal; Fig., Tokyo (all 2018); Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris; Cordova, Barcelona; Chewday's, London; Kunsthaus Glarus, Glarus (all 2017); Piper Keys, London; Centre d'Edition Contemporaine, Geneva (both 2016). Forthcoming group exhibitions will take place at the Musée cantonal des beaux-arts Lausanne and Live in Your Head, Geneva.

Hergest first took place at Glasgow International within the group exhibition *Rough House*, curated by the Woodmill, in 2016. Subsequent presentations took place at Wallriss, Fribourg (2016); Cell Project Space, London; Live In Your Head, Geneva (both 2018); and Josey, Norwich (2020).

Planning Your Visit and Safety Precautions

Swiss Institute will allow a limited number of visitors at a time. Visitors are required to wear masks at all times and to keep six feet of distance to other visitors. Please check our website for the most up to date information: <https://www.swissinstitute.net/visit/>.

Swiss Institute will have hand sanitizer stations available for visitor use. Entry is free as always. Swiss Institute's hours are Wed/Thurs/Fri 2- 8pm, Sat 12-8pm, Sun 12-6pm.

About Swiss Institute

Founded in 1986, SI is an independent non-profit contemporary art institution dedicated to promoting forward-thinking and experimental art making through innovative exhibitions and programs. Committed to the highest standards of curatorial and educational excellence, SI serves as a platform for emerging artists, catalyzes new contexts for celebrated work, and fosters appreciation for under-recognized positions. Open to the public free-of-charge, SI seeks to explore how a national perspective can foster international conversations in the fields of visual and performing arts, design and architecture.

SI Programming is made possible in part with public funds from Pro Helvetia, Swiss Arts Council; the New York State Council on the Arts, with the support of Governor Andrew Cuomo and the New York State Legislature; and the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs in partnership with the City Council. Main sponsors include LUMA Foundation, the Andy Warhol Foundation for the Visual Arts, and Friends of SI. *Hergest: Trem* is made possible in part by the Swiss Institute Annual Exhibition Fund with leadership support provided by the LUMA Foundation, Max and Monique Burger, the Garcia Family Foundation, the Kevin Wendle Foundation, and the Freedman Family Foundation. SI gratefully acknowledges Swiss Re as SI ONSITE Partner, Vitra as Design Partner, Crozier Fine Arts as Preferred Shipping Art Logistics Partner, and SWISS as Travel Partner.

Press Contact:
press@swissinstitute.net
212.925.2035