

Rasmus Røhling  
*Häagen-Dazs*  
April 29th – May 26th, 2022



***Would it pop?***

2.

*Häagen-Dazs* is a show of new work by Rasmus Røhling composed, in his own words, through a kind of “lasagna logic.” Meaning is piled upon meaning in a “syntax of stupidity” whereby everything becomes more, rather than less, complicated. The following is laid out in layers to honor this method, and to guide the visitor through some of the exhibit’s reference points:

I.

In the late 1950s, without any hint of derivativeness of conceptual art still yet to come, the American co-founder of Häagen-Dazs, Reuben Mattus, sat at his kitchen table babbling strange syllables over and over until he created a unique, Danish-sounding proper noun for his iced cream company. Denmark was selected for its excellent reputation for dairy products as well as its exemplary treatment of the Jews during WWII. The name is thus the result of the founder’s private performance, which embodies his feelings about the country, his impression of its language, as well as all that the brand name has since come to signify.

II.

King Christian the Second ruled Denmark from 1513–23. In 1514, painter Michel Sittow was called to Copenhagen to produce a very small but powerful portrait of the new king. Today it resides in the collection of the Statens Museum for Kunst. Researchers recently used X-Ray technology to examine the regal painting, whereby they found a completed portrait of an entirely different sitter in golden fleece living underneath that of Christian II. The best guess is that the man below is Charles the Fifth, a Hapsburg relative (by marriage), deduced from his rather long chin.

III.

In Sittow’s day, paintings such as this portrait of Christian II were part of the visual economy of power. Today, scientific technology has overtaken the role of the artist as supreme imagemaker. The MRI scanner, paradoxically, is a powerful tool that can produce a 3D rendering of the insides of a human body that slides through it like a hot dog yet it itself cannot be photographed. While it is on, the magnets will destroy a camera, producing what the artist calls a “black hole of representation.” Hospitals, by contrast, are full of reproductions of artworks, particularly Impressionist and Post-Impressionist painting. The trauma of one’s procedure can thus fix itself in one’s psyche to a serene landscape by Monet or Seurat.

IV.

Moods or temperaments since the time of Hippocrates were associated with the body’s humors: melancholy, meaning black bile, was the depressive result of its excess. In 1514, Dürer etched a famous representation of the artist as melancholic. In a diptych painting zipped onto the legs of Colombia trekking pants, Venom, a virus from outer space manifested as a character in the Marvel universe is cast as Melancholia (or the depressed artist). In the second “panel”, a still-life style cornucopia made out of a Hövding airbag-style bike helmet displays a wealth of fresh fruits grown in different regions of the world. Written in Latin on the surface below are the words “welfare state prolapse” (approximate translation). The diptych is animated by a ventilator used to circulate the air in field hospitals and creates a kind of charmed snake sculpture (calling to mind the medical emblem of the Rod of Asclepius) bearing two distinct paintings at each of its ends. Like the airbag helmet, the field hospital is a form that pops up in times of war or other crises.

Amy Zion

3.



Rasmus Røhling. *Häagen-Dazs*. (Installation view)

4.



Rasmus Røhling. *Häagen-Dazs*. (Installation view)





Rasmus Røhling. *Lazaret (diptych)*, 2022.  
Utility ventilator, flexible PVC duct, zip-off hiking pants, steel, oil on canvas  
(Ø17 cm each). Dimensions vary with installation

















Rasmus Røhling. *Live X-ray feed of Michel Sittow's portrait of King Christian II, painted in 1515, currently in the collection of Statens Museum for Kunst, 2022.*  
DV video on loop 23min. mixed media. Dimensions vary with installation



Rasmus Røhling. *Live X-ray feed of Michel Sittow's portrait of King Christian II, painted in 1515, currently in the collection of Statens Museum for Kunst, 2022.* (Detail)



Rasmus Røhling. *Live X-ray feed of Michel Sittow's portrait of King Christian II, painted in 1515, currently in the collection of Statens Museum for Kunst, 2022.* (Detail)



Rasmus Røhling. *Live X-ray feed of Michel Sittow's portrait of King Christian II, painted in 1515, currently in the collection of Statens Museum for Kunst, 2022. (Detail)*





## Education

2008 – 2010 MFA, California Institute of the Arts, Los Angeles, US

2005 – 2008 BFA, The Jutland Academy of Fine Arts, DK

## Solo exhibitions

2022. *Häagen-Dazs*, C.C.C., Copenhagen, DK

2020. *Grommets*, C.C.C., Copenhagen, DK

2017. *Self Passage*, Primer, Kongens Lyngby, DK

2015. *Travis*, Metro pcs, Los Angeles, US

2015. *A.U.T.O.E.N.U.C.L.E.A.T.I.O.N.*, Sismógrafo, Porto, PT

2013. *Rage and Patience*, Human Ressources, Los Angeles, US

2013. *Elephants*, Years, Copenhagen, DK

2012. *The Hobby*, Pauline's New York, US

## Group exhibitions

2021. *Group Show*, C.C.C., Copenhagen, DK

2021. *Les Idiots*, Havebiennalen, Herlev, DK

2019. *Stereo Exchange*, Copenhagen, DK

2019. *Hamlet Prince of Jutland*, Institut Funder Bakke, DK

2018. *Motherload*, Skovsnogen Deep Forest Art Land, Kibæk, DK

2016. *New Rocks at the Beach*, SixtyEight Art Institute, DK

2015. *Carl Peter Andre*, Alt\_Cph, Copenhagen, DK

2015. *Negating Depressings*, SixtyEight Gallery, Copenhagen, DK

2014. *Plume*, CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco, US

2013. *Macho Man, Tell it to my Heart*, Artist Space, New York, US

2013. *Tell it to my Heart: Collected by Julie Ault*, Culturgest, Lisbon, PT

2013. *Tell it to my Heart: Collected by Julie Ault*, Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Basel, CH

2012. *The Hobby, The Artist' Congress: The Congress dOCUMENTA (13)*, Kassel, DE

2011. *Ever Ephemeral*, Signal and Inter Arts Center, Malmö, SE

2011. *Sempiternal*, Sommerudstilling, Den Frie Udstillingsbygning, Copenhagen, DK

2011. *Laus Angeles*. Espace Curtat, Lausanne, FR

2011. *Matta as Mel/Mel as Matta*, RioBravo Copenhagen, DK

2010. *Koh-i-noor in Sea & Space Explorations*, Sea & Space, Los Angeles, US

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Rasmus Røhling

B. 19862, Silkeborg, DK

Lives and works in Copenhagen, DK

Photo by Brian Kure

Design by Andreas Peitersen

Diptych painting, Left leg: (Venom and MRI scanner), Tobias Just

Diptych painting, Right leg: (Welfare state prolapse), Eigil Bakdal Jørgensen

X-ray portrait: Kristian Poulsen

Oak panel for X-ray portrait: Henrik Flensborg Hansen

Sewing: Anne-Mette Schultz and Lea Rahbek

Steel armature: Carl Røhling

Hövding 3 demo-model for still life painting kindly provided by Hövding Sverige AB

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