

ABOUT PETRA REVENUE + LENA SELANDER (SWEDEN)

AN INTRO BY NELE HERZOG

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Lena and Petra came to Berlin-Neukölln following an impulse Petra had when they were drinking wine one night. Lena wanted to gain as an artist from being in other places in Europe, but during their previous visits here they have mostly experienced mainstream culture- so now they are glad to get to be part of a more stripped down version of the city. Petra says, that they have been enjoying themselves very much being faced with lots of unpredictable people and circumstances.

Coming from quite different educational backgrounds, Lena and Petra met when they were both working on a theatre play about seven suicidal women in Gothenburg. It had been written by Petra and Lena happened to be responsible for the scenery appearance. Lena had studied to become a set designer and an artist, then started working in theatre, where she not only designed and built the sets but also acted parts in plays. After having studied Social Anthropology and Scriptwriting, Petra started writing scripts for movies and tv-series simultaenously, The two became friends and when Petra produced her first movie called „Almost Elvis“, it was Lena who was responsible for the set design.

Lena went on to designing numerous theatre plays, tv-dramas and feature films during the next 40 years, then recently quit and went back to painting. Petra still writes scripts for tv-productions, teaches Scriptwriting and works on personal projects such as her latest book „Private“ or the movie „Motive“. The latter will be shown for the first

time ever at their Open Studio presentation at the Büro für bestimmte Dinge after moving on to screening for a bigger audience at the Art Museum of Gothenburg. Apart from this project Petra works on a film documenting her stay in Berlin that uses a similar narrating structure as „Motive“. Since she is interested in personal fiction and the ways people describe themselves and became bored of herself as a subject, she started interviewing artists, asking them about motives for their work. She hopes to uncover certain parallels to the culture her movie subjects live in by doing this. For her Berlin version of this, she relies on the simplest of movie techniques, deliberately positioning herself far off from the big movie-production-apparatus she is used to.

When asked about where their art may overlap in themes, Petra says it is „death“ because she particularly appreciates the dark elements in Lena's paintings. In return Lena says, that she likes Petra's drastic and humorous ways of affectionately describing people on the verge of nervous breakdowns. It does not come as a surprise that Petra chooses Lena to be the first artist interviewed in „Motives“. In that Lena talks about the symbolism featured in her paintings. She creates forest milieus that often include fantasy-like creatures whose identities lie somewhere in between the categories of human and animal. She feels that animal representations are easy to identify with and that the observer will much more likely react emotionally to an animal-like creature than to the display of a human being. During her stay in Neukölln she is preparing for a show in Paris and while doing so, intensely working on developing her unique way of painting, as she puts it.