CV
Lea Guldditte Hestelund (b. 1983) studied at Düsseldorf Art Academy in 2012-13, and graduated from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in 2015. Her work has been shown in Denmark and abroad in exhibitions at Værelset, ARoS, Kunsthall Aarhus, SAK Kunstbygning, Ystad Art Museum, Treignac Projet, Künstlerhaus Dortmund, Parallel Vienna, and CompleteBody in New York.

EVENTS
Friday 6 April 5-6pm
DEMONSTRATION: CARRIERS
On the opening night the series of works entitled Carriers, which is part of the exhibition, will be demonstrated. The Carriers are a kind of uniform designed for both human and non-human bodies.

Thursday 19 April 6.30pm
CONVERSATION: THINKING THROUGH FICTION
What potential does fiction possess as an approach to understand reality? On the occasion of the exhibition, Hestelund will in the company of author Olga Ravn as well as Dea Thune Antonsen and Ida Bencke from the Laboratory of Art and Ecology talk about how to think through fiction and the importance of communities and collaboration. The event will be in Danish.

Thursday 10 May 7.8 30pm
SOUND PERFORMANCE: XENIA XAMANEK (EQUIS)
For one evening, the exhibition provides the framework for a performative sound universe created by the musician Xenia Xamanek (Equis), who like Hestelund is interested in a fluid concept of the body and bodies in transition.

Friday 25 May 6-9pm
BOOK LAUNCH: DE ANSATTE
For the exhibition the author Olga Ravn has written a work of fiction, which is presented as one of the works in the installation. This evening, Overgaden invites you to the launch of the novel that will be published at Gyldendal.

THANK YOU
Lea Guldditte Hestelund would like to thank Olga Ravn, Lisbeth Jacobsen/Dufteriet, Tony Winkel Vasquez, Birk Bjerlo, Christine Overvad Hansen, Flemming Brian Nielsen/FBN Stenhuggeri AS, Kasper Holm Jensen, and Esben Gyldenløve. Also a thank you to all the carriers of Carriers on the opening night: Pia Eikaas, Nina Hestelund, Marianne S. Hestelund, Christian H. Pedersen, Nanna Stjernholm Jepsen, Mette Woller, Birk Bjerlo, Christine Overvad Hansen, Merete Jankowski, Zaratea Gaarden Hurtig, Marit Ting-Jeff, and Olga Ravn.


This exhibition folder can be downloaded from: overgaden.org

The exhibition is supported by:

Witnesses under the Influence – The Subtly Posthuman in the Sculptures of Hestelund
By Jacob Wamberg
natural forms, space matter. Despite their smoothly shining classical imperturbability, some of the sculptures even appear to have been shaped by the binds that tie them. A white, cylindrical sculpture (Marga TS_01A1) is laced like a Victorian corset, whereas others are reminiscent of parcels (Tentare NR_02A2), strung joints of meat (AI CM_03B3), or generic enslavement (Terra CA_01A1). They remind us of the corporal punishment and torture that have shaped the human and animal body throughout history, and also of the inversion of these forms of pain in the sadomasochistic desire of subcultural fetishes rituals.

If through her surrealistic approach Hestelund points back to modernism, and even further back to classicism, this in no way minimises the science fiction perspective. On the contrary, by insisting on elements that obviously belong to the established inventory of art, she identifies something alien-like if not post-human at the very roots of modernism, something our biotechnological age might finally have matured us sufficiently to uncover. The thoroughly digested present we spew up as the future is perhaps especially present in the art we thought we knew so well, but in which we have overlooked an inherent undermining of the human subject. Freud claimed the uncanny to be the familiar in unfamiliar places: ultimately the womb penetrating the armour of civilisation – the individual consciousness the adult subject believes itself securely ensconced within.1 The unsettling effect of Hestelund’s installation may thus be due to the fact that the future has always been concealed within what we until now have domesticated as ‘modern art’, and that the future leakage of art objects, the futuristic seepage into the present, recalls the fluid boundaries between the subject and the rest of the world, between body and object, and between the ego and non-ego last. I am like one of these objects.” (019)

It is all these posthuman as well as prehuman transgressions of boundaries that Hestelund strives to re-expose with her curious objects – and their relationship to the context and viewer. Most of the objects draw on the traditional relationship of marble sculptures with a perfect, complete and polished human form, but Hestelund’s body, as underlined by the recurrent fossil texture of the stone, turns towards vulnerability, fragmentation, and opening up to its surroundings. The normal development of its classical stem cells is arrested and twisted towards the organic, crystalline or even tool-like, recalling the cyborg – that post-human synthesis of the organic and mechanical. 2 Sporadic spray paint – in psychedelic blues or yellows – underlines this sabotage of classical ideals. In this anti-classical departure, belts, straps and cords are given commensurately more scope, becoming what the German philosopher Martin Heidegger called Zeug: clothing as technology in the broadest sense of the term.3 Yet it is clear that this technology is no longer a compliant tool for humans. Instead it is they, for better or worse, that are transformed. To underline that this technology and the objects it manipulates is not locked within its own metaphysical space, and can like Ravn’s novel reach out and interact with the space of the viewer, the exhibition opens with a performance by a group of people dressed in the same Carriers that enclose the objects.

Hestelund’s posthuman deconstruction of the coherent human body is particularly striking in the context of her previous work. At one juncture she was manically obsessed with the classical marble body and its flesh and blood reappearance in fitness culture. For her art academy graduation project she used bodybuilding to transform her own body into that of the figure of Discobolus (2014-15), as well as reconstructing fitness equipment in white marble. Just as the first round of deforming the classical human form in surrealism was simultaneous with the vitalist body culture cultivated by fascist and communist regimes in the 1920s and 1930s, Hestelund now enters the second round of deformation during totalitarianism’s late successor: the fitness culture of neoliberalism. And who could be better equipped to detonate the body perfected by force than someone who has inhabited it herself?