

Issue 16 – Amanda Moström

SOS / Sculptors on Sculpture is a series of weekly condensed interviews with early career contemporary sculptors.

Amanda Moström makes work that appears flawed and wobbled by glitches, but remains beautiful by virtue of its rich inexactitude. Domestic scale, architectural structures act as transformational backdrops to sculptural objects. These are to be looked at and walked around, but also touched, sat on, eaten. Materially rich, the work is touched and touches, physically and psychologically. It allows for, or implies, some kind of social gathering and to some extent relies on an audience to complete the work by physically engaging with it in one way or another.

SOS: We find ourselves at Issue 16 of our series of interviews with early career artists. This issue is the final issue of 2020 and I would like to open by asking you to reflect on your experiences of this year and your aims and hopes for 2021.

AM: Woosh what a year to try and sum up, 2020 is the year of recognising screaming inequalities, roaring injustices and systemic abuse. If 2020 personally has taught me anything it is that I'm a privileged baby girl with a lot of emotions.

I hope 2021 will continue to be chaotic and wild, I hope it will whip the world into being a better place for all people. I hope that racial injustice will not be forgiven or forgotten, I hope current and historic systems will be abolished and I hope that power will be distributed equally and democratically.

I also hope that we as people will sort of give in to chaos and embrace change rather than let fear lead us, I think both on a small scale and on a large scale 2020 has been dramatic but change

has been forced upon people and I think a lot of people have experienced different urgencies that has shifted their focus or needs in life.

SOS: Mobility is very important to you and your practice. Were you able to find new ways of being mobile in this time or have you had to embrace a more fixed reality?

AM: I find so much comfort in being mobile and being "free" that this year has forced me to sit with so many uncomfortable feelings around



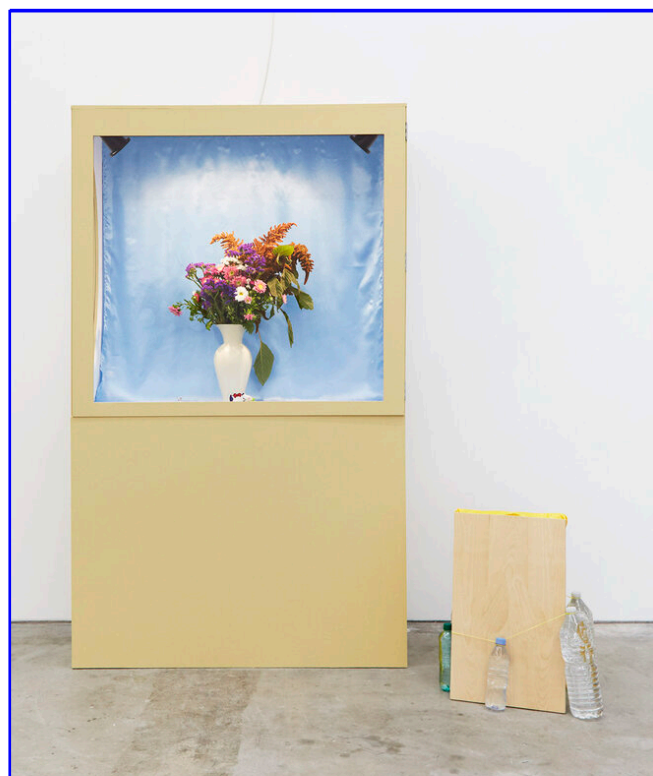
'Rosen' 2019, Bronze, fabric and paper.
108 x 65 x 27cm.

being fixed in one place. Ultimately I am very privileged to have a choice of where I live and in effect how I live. My mobility has developed in my head and in my dreams in particular, flicking through past years photos and daydreaming has become a really resourceful tool for me. I have felt so soppy and fulfilled to actively think about past experiences and to actively enjoy them and reminisce about them now. It's been emotional.

I've felt inspired by my Nan in particular, she has had numerous events that have made her physical world still and small, in response she has embraced and continues to embrace her physical limitations and has started to draw, she draws places and beings and they are fully made up and exist in her mind. They are wild and busy and silly, and she is fully occupied by this self made reality. I find it furiously inspiring to see her create these drawings and alternative worlds.

SOS: You are currently based in Sweden and utilising your sisters barn as a studio. How much does location affect the ideas and subsequent work that you make?

AM: I am a sponge in all its meanings, I make work in a way that I think may be quite similar to journaling, I rarely see all the connections or symbolism in the work that I make as I am making it, the process of making goes hand in hand with how my thoughts and opinions form. Often after a show or having been separated from a body of work I become much fonder of it, as I can see all the connections and read it. Similar to being confused in a feeling as you are living it but afterwards you can look at it clearly and understand where and why it came about. Working in the barn and being in the countryside has had a huge effect on my work, the physical difference between being in a big city and being



'Toya', 2019, MDF, plexiglass, flowers, bird-toys, fabric, and spotlights. 202 x 120 x 51cm.

in a tiny rural village makes all the senses work differently, I have never really kept a studio in London, it has felt more as a strain than a gain and being able to have a longstanding place that is fully mine is a whole new world.

SOS: 4. [Guest Question] This guest question comes from a wonderful interview between Damien Ortega and Catherine Spencer in 2016. 'Humour and play are very important to you. Do you have any particular hopes for how people will react to [your work?]'

AM: I have always had very strong feelings around the expectations on what people are supposed to feel or exchange around and with art. This is also where I find my interest in challenging the spaces where we usually view art, my approach to this has changed during the years but play in a physical sense is where it all started, this was when I made a lot of swings.



The swings were uncomfortable on so many levels in a gallery setting, the health and safety restrictions shit-their-pants when you place a functioning swing in a gallery setting. And the unraveling complexities around creating an element of play in these places really highlight my interest in the meaning of play, the social engagement, the politics, its awkward and also basic connection point for humans to engage with each other and themselves.

I find it almost impossible not to include humour whilst making work, as the whole experience of life and therefore also making art is all very absurd, humour connects the dots and encourages bravery for both the artist and the viewer, an encouraged giggle softens the borders between me and the other. Humour really is the essence of connection.

So in short, I hope people can read these themes and conscious thoughts when viewing my work, but ultimately I hope they feel included and comfortable in the space, that there's room for them to be hungover, not bothered, hungry or whatever the emotions are.



'KNOW'(detail), 2018, Bronze.
45 x 24 x 10cm – 8.5kg.

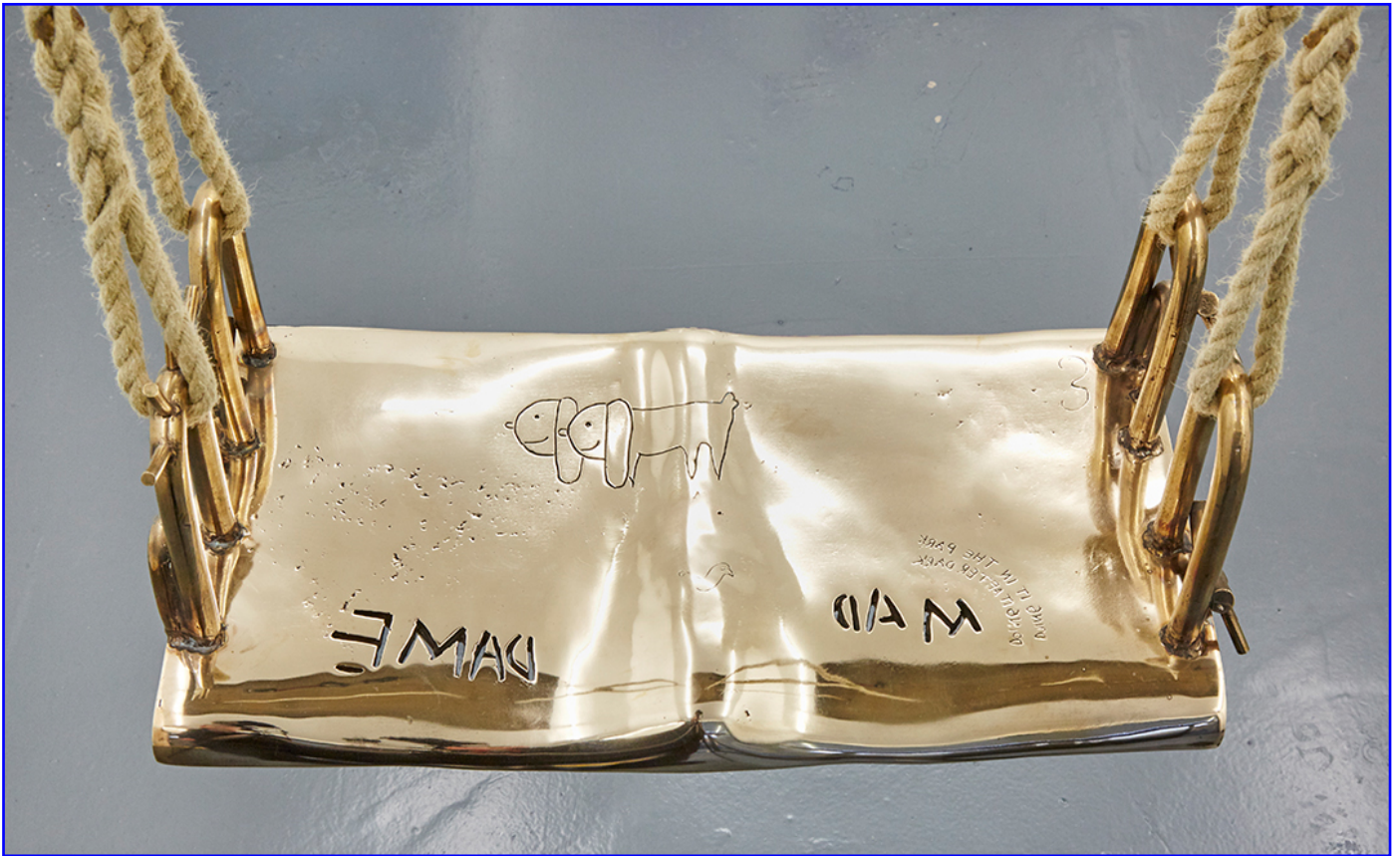


SOS: You use a wide range of materials within your work, from more traditional materials such as bronze to found objects. Where does inspiration come from for you?

AM: Materials usually has an array of reasons for being the materials that they are or come to be, I have a similar situation to having an angel on one shoulder and a devil on the other, as a judgement panel on how I choose materials. I have a real appreciation for well made things, anything dear, but I always need the materials to make sense, or do something outside of just being a nice thing. So there's two voices I try to marry when I develop work. One who's horny for pretty making and a romantic, and one who's really bored with objects and thinks things are useless without easy access or clear function. The artists that I am in love with are all performers or media/text/dance based. So I think that's why it's important for me that materials are difficult,



TOP RIGHT: Installation view of
"Matriarch Beach" at Galerie Chloe
Salgado in Paris.



they just don't sit comfortably or easily with me. I also try to be conscious of what I as the maker get out of working with a certain material, some materials are pure joy, and others are complete torture. Collaborating has been the most important of materials for me, it naturally changes how you make work as you're working with people who bring different skills and knowledge and self into the work, it makes the process way more joyous and learning stays present.

Materials also come to me by things I see on the street, for example I have been obsessed by how things are weighed down to stay in place, controlling movement, so in an urban setting it would be sandbags draped over street cones or whatever. Also ugly and nice go so smoothly together, a plastic bottle next to a 100 hours crafted object, it's just a beautiful marriage.

SOS: Besides your practice what's filling your time right now? Are there any books /television / podcasts you'd recommend?

AM: I am really enjoying Big mouth, a cartoon about horny teenagers. I also watched all of the Sopranos and the Wire. I am listening to a load of different podcasts, some tarot reading ones and they really have been terrifyingly accurate and nourishing. I've been keeping an eye on events that galleries are hosting online which has been super valuable. The books I have leaned against are Queer Phenomenology by Sara Ahmed, The weird and the eerie by Mark Fisher and everything written by Claudia Rankine. I have been treating myself to buying books, I usually never do as I move around a lot. It's complicated to grow a library but I have really enjoyed gathering gems on a bookshelf, buying books and growing potatoes has made me feel rich this year.

TOP: "Doing it in the park, doing it after dark" (detail), 2017, Bronze and synthetic hemp rope.



Interviewer: Josh Wright