Golden Rain
Golden Rain
By Michael Petry

A project for On the Edge
organised by Hå gamle prestegard
as part of Stavanger 2008
at the Eigeroya lighthouse, Egersund, Norway
The Story of Danae

In Greek myth, the twins Akrisios and Proitos fought even in the womb. In later life, after Akrisios had become King of Argos, Proitos could not bear to be his subject and left to found his own kingdom in Tiryns.

Akrisios only had a single child, a daughter whom he named Danae (Greek for parched). The Oracle at Delphi warned Akrisios that Danae’s fate was to give birth to a son who would kill him, the King. In defiance of the Oracle, Akrisios locked Danae into a tower of bronze where she would remain a virgin; no suitor could reach her, and she could not escape. But Danae was beautiful, and had caught the eye of Zeus, King of the Gods, who transformed himself into a shower of gold, and rained through the barred windows of the tower, falling upon Danae and making her pregnant.

Danae gave birth to a son, Perseus. Akrisios was wary of killing the child of a god, and decided instead to lock his daughter and grandson in a wooden chest, which he ordered to be thrown into the Aegean. But Zeus was looking on, and ordered his brother, Poseidon, God of the Sea, to save them. Poseidon carried the wooden box in his foamy fingers to the island of Serifos, where it was washed ashore and found by Diktys. Diktys swore to protect Danae and Perseus, who over the years grew to be handsome and strong.

Diktys had a twin brother, Polydektes. Like Akrisios and Proitos, the twins were violently jealous of one another; and Polydektes had fought and beaten Diktys for possession of the Kingdom of Serifos. Polydektes now decided to take Danae from Diktys as well, but decided first to dispose of Perseus by commanding him to fetch the head of the Gorgon Medusa, whose gaze could turn mortals to stone.

Perseus, with the help and gifts from the gods, succeeded in many tasks and adventures before returning to save Danae and Diktys, and turning Polydektes and his army to stone. Perseus also announced that he planned to visit Argos and meet his grandfather, Akrisios, who fled for his life, leaving the vacant throne for Perseus to be made king.

Several years later Perseus was asked to participate in the athletic games at Larissa. Perseus was a famed discus thrower; but when he sent a disc high into the air the wind caught it and threw it into the crowd killing an old man. Perseus rushed to the man’s aid only to find that he had killed Akrisios, his grandfather.

No man can escape his fate.

Danae visualized

This story of Danae has been well known throughout the millennia, and many artists have depicted the famous shower of gold. In the Greek Orientalizing period (700 – 600 B.C.) we see depictions of Perseus’ adventures as well as in the Classical Period (480 – 330 B.C.) on pottery and in sculptures. In the Roman Imperial period (30 B.C. – 300 A.D.) a mosaic from house (of Horses), in Carthage, depicts Danae catching Golden Rain in her clothing (that is falling off her shoulders). The unknown artist also shows her breasts, as do most of those who have depicted her over the centuries. In a wall painting from the house of Regina Margherita at Pompeii Danae is also depicted catching Golden Rain in the folds of her drapery. A Renaissance painting by Jan Gossaert shows Danae catching Golden Rain in her clothing as she sits in a church like structure, where the rain falls in through a series of windows.
The lighthouse at Egersund is made of metal, and is one of the first of its kind. When I was asked to make a work for Stavanger 2008 Danae’s imprisonment in a tower of bronze immediately sprang to mind. The work comprises 100 mirrored golden vessels suspended down the centre of the lighthouse and over its five floors. Each vessel, shaped like a raindrop, a tear, or possibly an odd bottle is sealed at the top by a cork. Inside each vessel I have placed a text, image, drawing, photograph, object or idea sent to me by other artists (of all media), authors, and architects, who I have invited to join me in the lighthouse. For lighthouses are about communication: they were built to speak to those offshore of the safety and the danger of the sea. Light told the story, as it often does in the depictions of Danae. From one perspective, light is merely information to be decoded by our nerves and brains, the carrier of information that remains golden in our minds. Memory is encoded in the light for it is never the actual thing we see, only the light that bounces off the stuff of the world. The real mass is dark to us. We can touch or taste those real objects we encounter in life, but as far as seeing goes… turn off the light, does the coin really disappear? Does the ship cease to exist without the light of the shore? We see only a reflection, the mirrored bounce of photons off of mass. This is the language of things.

And so to bed, or at least so to the bedrock, the dark grey rock that holds up the erect tower that is the lighthouse at Egersund.

Stavanger is located in the Rogaland region on the west coast of Norway and has its own tradition of sailing ships, towers and story telling. Stavanger has been chosen along with Liverpool in the UK as the European Cities of Culture for 2008. A year long festival of visual and performing arts will take place in each city and its surrounding environment. Rogaland’s many lighthouses no longer function as guardians of the shore (thanks to satellite navigation) and six of them have been turned over to artists for this project.

When I was offered the chance to make an installation at Egersund I thought of the classical tale of Danae and wanted to link the past with the present, the origin of western culture with a site already deep with its own myths and the erotic realm of today, always a concern in my work.
So we must speak, and so I have asked 100 creative people to think about what they would say, draw or mark, or place inside a bottle if they were locked in such a tower with only these golden vessels as a means of discourse with the outside world. If they too were on the edge, what would they place in the golden bottle? Each response is documented so that its contents can be seen in this book, which accompanies the project. Each piece, after being photographed, has been permanently sealed in one of the bottles. Each piece will therefore remain forever sealed and undelivered, the bottles filled with potential.

I want my project to be a discussion with other artists as much as the artefact that I have installed in the lighthouse - for lighthouses are there to speak of danger of the people inside them, and I have asked others to speak as well. I had no idea what people would send me from around the world, for I have invited artists from across the globe. Like a genie in each bottle, each contribution speaks of the individual wishes, desires or fears of its author, and each participant has offered an insight into themselves and their artistic language. I hope that visitors to the installation will want to see the originals by peering through the reflective gold surfaces and desire to know which piece is in which bottle. I no longer know myself, for I also have to be a viewer, and so have deliberately not marked them out in any way that might enable me to know what is in each bottle.
On the site there is a boathouse that has been wrecked by storms and floods. Its doors open directly to the sea and floorboards are strewn about as if by a giant, or perhaps a god. Sitting in the mess is precious cargo, a silver glass box. In fact, it is the inside cast of a wooden box. The skill of the glass blower has enabled the cargo to come into being and it sits on the floor, stoppered. It too is full of potential. It too is a mirror and it reflects the mess, and the room, and the beholder. Zeus commanded the gods to give his son Perseus gifts to slay the Gordon, including a mirrored shield to look into so that he could see the face and shape of Medusa without being turned to stone, for her reflection, her twin, was harmless. So too the viewer gazes upon themselves. They stand at the edge of the world, the water lapping outside but a few metres away, icy cold, not like the warm Aegean. A swim perhaps - the Norwegians say it makes you strong.

The Norse stories also tell of heroic men who fought demons and swam the cold seas and sailed in wooden ships. These heroes were blond or had bright red hair like Klimt’s Danae, while Perseus would have been dark, tanned by the sun, not kissed by the snow. Yet a hero is a vision of what we would like to be, a mirror of ourselves if only we too were truly born of the gods. Yet our feet are surely made of clay, the rain is never gold, the message never found, there is only hope, golden hope.

On the site there are several out-buildings where an education centre is located. In the centre there is an activity room where all the visitors to the lighthouse are able to make and place their own message in a bottle. A local distillery has provided glass bottles that will be available to each visitor. A printed sheet of paper tells the story of the myth and the On the Edge project. The sheet provides information for whoever should find the bottle how to send a photo of themselves with the bottle, or a simple email letting us know where it was found. On the reverse of the page all visitors can write their own message or make a drawing. They then can seal the bottle and release it near the lighthouse into the North Sea where the Gulf Stream will take it on a journey. We are using glass bottles as they are the most environmentally positive, and should they break on their voyage, they might wash ashore as beach glass, gently sanded by time and in time they will return to silica, which all glass is made from; a return journey from sand to glass to sand. The paper will also be biodegradable should the bottles sink, smash or land where no one finds them.

This part of the project extends not only to the visitors of the work, but to a larger global reach on a physical level and a virtual one. While communication today is instantaneous, the bottles remind us of the poetry of the written word, the hand made mark, the beauty of the real, the moments of hope that connection might be made between two people on different shores.

The Child

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When I was little I made a private space in the top of the closet in my room. It was just big enough for me sitting in there, and when I closed the closet door I felt the dark silence around me. I could be in there for hours. In there I felt my presence eternal. The thoughts of being locked in a tower brings me back to my childhood’s feelings of eternal life, though this time with a knowledge of life’s limitations.

What is left of me when I have passed?

I remember something I once read from an interview with Christian Boltanski: “You die twice, - the first death could be called the little death. Dead, but still remembered and kept alive of all the people who knew you. The second, and a more severe death, is the one when all people who knew you also die: the effacement of the memory.”

What is left of me when they have passed?

Thinking of the edge of being, the edge of presence, I could cry out for attention, I could put my hair at the outside hoping to be saved like Rapunzel, - instead I approach my inner self. The only thing I have for sure is me, my life, and I leave behind an embroidered mandala of hair from my body and head, on semi transparent silk, an almost invisible, but personal object, a part of me, my DNA, my link to the universe; a Prelude for Eternity.

Mandala is the generic name for any plan, chart or geometric pattern that represents the cosmos metaphysically and symbolically. It represents a microcosm of the universe, from the standpoint of man, with gates to the north, west, south and east.
Sue Arrowsmith

FLUFFY, 2008, pink pencil, 26 x 10 cm (RAAS)

Halldór Ásgeirsson

Passenger of the light, 2008, inkjet print on paper; 21 x 30 cm
Per Barclay
Kruyt, 2008, gunpowder, dimensions variable

Travis Barker
Moisture on the Breath of God, 2008, freshwater pearls, dimensions variable
Phyllida Barlow

untitled: string, 2008, string and balloon, 22 x 18 x 3 cm, dimensions variable

Jan Kjetil Bjørheim

Uten tittel (untitled), 2008, candle, 25.5 x 2 cm, match 4.5 x 0.3 cm
Amelia Black
Untitled (black swan effect), 2008, fired clay 2.5 x 3 cm (RAAS)

Eliza Bonham Carter
TATTARRATTAT, 2008, metal wire, dimensions variable

This is a work in two parts, the first as photographed no longer exists as it is squeezed to form a shape suitable for entry into Michael Petry’s golden tear. The second form is to remain undocumented.

Trattarrattat is the longest palindrome in the OED2, which calls it a nonce word. The OED2 shows a single use in 1922 by James Joyce in Ulysses: ‘I knew his tattarrattat at the door’.
Per Christian Brown
Darkness Shades Me, 2008, colour photograph, 21 x 29.5 cm

Sophie Buxton
Leaving the Garden, 2008, etching, (RAAS)
Hi Michael,

Hope you have received the material I left for you with Chris.

Soon you should be getting the disc with three images of the place where I have been working recently in London, where this material was collected. The site is called Woolwich Teardrop. It is a part of the former Woolwich Arsenal, the historic munitions factory currently the subject of a regeneration scheme. Choose the image that serves your purpose best. Don’t crop the image and title it ‘Woolwich Teardrop’.

The material is spoil from one of the pits excavated by archaeologists working in advance of the building work that will transform the site. Before it became an important centre for the development and production of military munitions it was a centre in Medieval times of ceramic manufacture. Many kilns were found and excavated and the source of a characteristic everyday London ceramic from the C15th was established. Lying under this layer was an enormous earthwork in the form of a massive Roman drainage ditch, an attempt undertaken almost 2000 years ago to harness the marshy landscape of the banks of the Thames.

All the best,

Simon

Simon Callery
Woolwich Teardrop, 2008, soil

The pipe bowl was found by the river Thames (London) and the lock of hair is my son’s from his first hair cut. It seems right that the pipe bowl should return to the sea transformed as a vessel for the lock of hair. Locks of hair have been used as love tokens dating back as early as the eighteenth century. It will be a memento of the most precious thing in my life.

Gloria Carlos
Love Token, 2008, clay pipe bowl, child’s hair bound with 18kt. gold thread, overall dimensions 5.5 x 2 cm
This work explores the idea of dance-based movement constituting language - a communication which is felt rather than understood. Dancers’ rapid improvisational movements are used as the basis of ephemeral mark-making upon the image surface. The resulting work consists of a wide variety of luminous markings which form a kaleidoscope of sensation-words that function well outside the perimeter of discursive language.

Mara Castilho
Love me, Love me not, 2007, 1/5, inkjet on canvas, 41 x 35 cm

Lia Chavez
Untitled 15, Moving Mind, 2008, 10 X 30 cm, digital print
Alain Chiaradia
A. Kron’s Double Blind, L’art des Caresses en 14 Confidences, 1988-2008, mixed media on book, 14 x 22.5 cm, Authors: Sonja Dicquemare recalled by Alain Chiaradia

Maria Chevska
Head over heals and away, 2007, red and black ink on tape measure, 60 inches
Judith Cowan
I am the rain, 2008, gold thread embroidered onto a linen handkerchief, 26 x 26 cm

Anne-Marie Creamer
Locked, 2002, ink on paper, 18 x 24 cm
Mikey Cuddihy

Shape for Golden Rain, 2008, ink and pencil on envelope, red paint on paper, paperclip, 18 x 24 cm

Elizabeth Croft

Untitled, 2008, pencil and inkjet on draughtsman’s paper, 21 x 29.5 cm
The earth turned to bring us closer; 
it spun on itself and within us, 
and finally joined us together in this dream 
as written in the Symposium. 
Nights passed by, snowfalls and solstices; 
time passed in minutes and millennia. 
An ox cart that was on its way to Nineveh 
arrived in Nebraska. 
A rooster was singing some distance from the world, 
in one of the thousand pre–lives of our fathers. 
The earth was spinning with its music 
carrying us on board; 
it didn’t stop turning a single moment 
as if so much love, so much that’s miraculous 
was only an adagio written long ago 
in the Symposium’s score.

Eugenio Montejo
Translated by Peter Boyle

Matthew Dalziel + Louise Scullion
a copy of the poem The Earth Turned to Bring Us Closer by Eugenio Montejo

Ian Davenport
My emergency painting kit, 2008, painting kit, brush 19.5 x .5 cm, tubes each 6 x 2 cm (RAAS)
Deb A. Davis
Essences, 2007, seed, beads, thread, beeswax, blood, sweat, vaginal fluids, 2 x 15 cm (RAAS)

Angela de la Cruz
Deflated 2008, white balloon to be inflated inside the glass vessel, dimensions variable
Suspension

Your body suspended
In the humming blue heat,
Spherical particles
Of sunlight illuminating
Your luminous skin, water
Droplets rising in three-
Dimensional space to
Meet your glorious beauty.

The whole vision, a liquid
Stereoscope of desire.
I hold it in my eyes,
Walk around your floating
Loveliness, parallaxing
Your body with the moss
Green trees behind; for a
Moment you are mine forever.

It is as if time has stopped.
A bird hangs in the air
Above you, wings spread,
Spanning the solid space
In mid-flight, its feathers
A filigree of perfection.
I know it cannot last.
I blink, and it is gone.

Richard Dyer
Suspension, 2008

Roberto Ekholm
Far Away, 2008, wood, self adhesive stickers, vinyl text, each cube 2.5 x 2.5 cm
Thomas Hylland Eriksen

Thalassa!

Asked, doubtless by an adoring disciple, about the nature of truth, the German polymath and iconoclast Rudolf Steiner is said to have responded with a counter-question: “What is the truth about a mountain?” Responding to his own question, the ageing sage said that one could approach the mountain from the north, from the south, from the east and from the west – and, indeed, from above – and one would see different things. And one might add: you could approach the mountain with the mind of a mountaineer; a geologist; a skier; a landscape painter… So what is truth? Perhaps the most lasting contribution of European thought to world culture is the insight that all these views of the mountain are equally true, and that we need a world where they all have a rightful place.

Like a mountain, the sea can also be approached from many sides, and its face shifts continuously, chameleonlike. The sea can be anything to anybody. It is the perfect symbol. As the Stavanger author Alexander Kielland wrote, “It is not true that the sea is faithless, for it has never promised anything; without claim, without obligation, free, pure, and genuine beats the mighty heart, the last sound one in an ailing world.” The sea connects and opens. It channels trade and fishing, escape and tragedy. Work and leisure. Light and darkness. Fear and hope.

The North Sea, this great but firmly bounded mare nostrum of the north, bracketed by historians who have been preoccupied with their national or imperial histories, never formed part of an empire. For centuries it has united us, the people of the North Sea. It is grey and deep blue, muddy and crisp. Tempered by the Gulf Stream, it shifts from inviting to forbidding as the seasons change. The North Sea makes a Norwegian feel less of a foreigner in Kiel than in Munich, closer to home in Norwich or Aberdeen than in Bristol or Liverpool. Vikings crossed it, and before them the invading tribes who would later be known as the Anglo-Saxons. The sea mixes.

So what is truth? It is not the what that matters, it is the how. The sea can be anything to anybody. It unites us. It makes us whole. Do not ask questions. Rejoice.

Simon English

All those defeated by life’s experience pray for hope., 2008, mixed media on paper, 41 x 18.5 cm
BACKGROUND AND THOUGHTS FOR MY WORK:
As a child I grew up on a small farm near Obrestad Lighthouse. The farm was run by my mother and father, in addition my father was a lighthouse keeper.

Wind and weather was important in work both on farm and in lighthouse. My father where watching the sky and clouds, thus estimating the weather to come.

He went his watches: Light on and off, estimating the fog when to start the foghorn, measuring the amount of precipitation, sending the "Met" to the weather forecast central on rain, wind and clouds.

My father watched the light and the lighthouse. As a small girl I often joined his guards, lying in the broad window frame. From there I could over-look the sea until sleeping.

Father read and wrote a lot at guard. Not the least he wrote letters. And that’s what I want to be part of the “Golden Rain” project: A letter from him, written in the guardroom in his lighthouse, with comments on daily life and a little on the work as a lighthouse keeper.

It became to me a magic thought letting my late father continue "watching" light and weather: thus stretching a line between present time, past and future. This could be a source of power to me, sitting alone in tower with "The golden bottle".

Jens Erland
GOLDEN EYE TOOTH, idea: 14.03.08, execution: 24.03.08, eye tooth with a gold crown, glue, fishing net thread, (RAAS), photograph by Olav Garborg

Karen Erland
Letter from the Lighthouse Keeper, written 26.05.1968, one envelope with two sheets of paper, written on four sides, size of the envelope 11.4 cm high, 16.3 cm wide, weight 10g, photographs by Olav Garborg
Nick Fox
bittersweet slice, 2008, chrysanthemum flower cut from acrylic paint, 12 x 18 cm (RAAS)

Michael Gabriel
Message, 2008, pencil and collage on handmade paper with gold leaf, 17 x 21 cm (RAAS)
It is time to leave
To jump into that sky
I see it before me
So perfect and beautiful
You have to jump to grab a piece
And hold it with a piece of string
Only thing is it is a long way down
I guess the sky can wait
Love has not tied me down just yet
For some day lying in the arms of love
The sky will be easier to reach
And one will not have to climb so high
To grab a bit

The object I have enclosed is a USB data storage device holding digital information in the form of ones and zeros that represent photos, drawings, poetry, animation and audio. It is accessible when the device is connected to a computer. Each fragment is related in that they are a part of a passage of time going up to the top of St Paul’s Cathedral with a view of the heavens above.

This information in the future will eventually become inaccessible because the device turns obsolete and unusable due to the movement of technological innovation trapping this information inside permanently. Sealed in its own time zone within the golden raindrops with a cork to seed the future.

It would in a sense as Robert Smitherson talked about be a non-space within a non-space, a forgotten memory, a surreal myth that merges into the past once being of the future and present until someone tries to reactivate the device in the future present to find out what is on the device. It’s lost knowledge waiting to create a whole moment once again.

Jon Gershon
Past, Present and Future, 2008, USB drive, 1.5 x 2.5 cm (RAAS)

Sunil Gupta
The New Pre-Raphaelites #2, Delhi 2008, photograph, Commissioned by Autograph/ABP, London
Martin Gustavsson
Wrth of God, 2008, ink on a clear transparency sheet, 29.5 x 21 cm

Wendy Hanson
Grafting For the Thin Skinned (I Love You), 2008, stitched and embroidered rose petals, 15 x 13 cm (RAAS)
Anthony Harris

Links, 2007/2008, glass, steel, dimensions variable (RAAS)

William Hartman

Mea Culpa, 2008, inkjet on paper, 21 x 29.5 cm

O MY GOD U R BUT MYTH
Joseph Havel
*Over two metres of Lust, 2008, collar labels woven with the word lust in yellow, each label, 2 cm x 5.5 cm, total length 180 cm (RAAS)*

Denise Hawrysió
*The protagonist discovers, 2008, inkjet on paper, 21 x 29.5 cm*
Whenever you see four colored bars, side by side, in the following order: terra cotta, orange, orange, terra cotta, you will remember embracing your father.

David Hutchinson
TOOT, 2007, acrylic and ink on paper; 20.5 x 25 cm

Giedymin Jablonski
SOS Rosary, 2008, paper, plastic foil, steel clamp, flax from Lithuania, fine silver; card element each piece 12 x 10 cm, knotted cord 60 x 1 cm
Terrell James
Remnants from a walk along the shore, 1994/2008, four pieces, plaster casts, with Texas sand, dimensions variable

Nathan Slate Joseph
Bon Voyage, 2008, colour photograph, 21.5 x 28 cm
Juliane Jung
Die Fähigkeit zu Trauern (the ability to grieve), 2008, tear stained page from her father’s manuscript for a novel, 21 x 29.5 cm

Hosook Kang
Love Story, 2008, two watercolours on paper, each 30.5 x 23 cm
(From My Ghost Stories—an excerpt)

I am in my veins that pulse for your gentle moments, your splendor; your intensity I miss, your youth, my desire perpetual, in streets of my solitude, my longing for your breath, your nipples that I will never again see rise to their impossible apex, your severity that once made me spasm when I woke up to your hidden embrace, your skin that is my second skin, that I wear everyday as I slowly ache, your genius that I wish I could nurture, your hands, my failure in not knowing why you want me, your honesty, my lack of courage to take you forever, you as my songbird, I hear your violin, how I gave you to loss, they will never understand, who will never understand if I had you, not that I want you, you who are my scream vision from centuries past, the white of your teeth in love motion, the horror of losing you my zenith that you are that I may never that I will always.

HK Zamani
2007
Laura Lark
Life ..., 2008, ink and paint on vellum, 15.2 x 22 cm (RAAS)

Darryl Lauster
Eumoeus, 2008, 14 x 21.5 cm (RAAS)

How forsaken,
the kleos of the men
who build houses
grow cabbage
and pave roads.
They bear the plow
the weight of the concrete
and the taste
of wilted lettuce
in a plastic
sandwich wrapper.

They are the only heroes left...
Matt Leiderstam
View, 2004, printed paper and colour gels, each 8.2 × 3.8 cm (RAAS)

Micah Lexier
He Loves Me Not, 2008, ink on paper, 21 × 29.5 cm
Julia Manheim
Necklace for Dione, 2008, Rescue Remedy pastilles, memory stick, nylon, safety pin, each pastille 1.5 x 0.5 cm, total length 74 cm

Desire
Marcella Giulia Lorenzi
Desire, 2008, digital print, 21 x 30 cm
Stuart Mayes
Letter to John, 2008, handwritten text scorched on thermal paper, torn to the height of both men, 359.5 x 1.7 cm (RAAS)

Rosemarie McGoldrick
The Practicality of Flight in a Locked Room, 2008, ink on paper, 21 x 28 cm, origami birds each 2 x 2 cm
Lisa Morgan
Rose Otto infused handkerchief, 2007, rose essence on antique cotton handkerchief embroidered with a rose, 25.5 x 25.5 cm

Wojciech Mokwinski
AVE VERUM CORPUS IN VITRO, 2008, laboratory glass, Goldwasser, rubber, injection needle, pubic hair, 21 x 1.5 cm

“Ave verum corpus in vitro”

“God died” F. Nietzsche
“If there’s no God, then everything is allowed” F. Dostoyevsky

“If God exists, then everything is allowed”

W. Y. Mokwinski
About 2500 years after Zeus’ action -
About 2000 years after Jesus Christ incarnation -
The Beatles declare themselves as more popular than Jesus Christ
Suppositions are increasing that Tom Cruise the leader
of the Scientologist church is himself a god

Today people incarnate in God
Simon Morley
Golden Acorn, 2007, gold paint on acorn, 2 x 4 cm (RAAS)

Bryan Mulvihill
1.21, 2008, ink on paper, reverse has a calligraphy by the artist, 21 x 28 cm

Oliver Hennet Idaho Bratken was born in 1877 in the small coastal village of Nordre Honningsvåg, Nordvåg, Finnmark, the north of five sisters. In 1895 at the age of 18 she and her younger sister, Ragna, were engaged to accompany a village woman, who was already pregnant, to meet her husband who had found land in North Dakota, USA, after a long trip via boat to Hammerfest, Norway, to New York, and a 5-day train ride to reach her husband. The family did not want the lady in such a condition to travel alone. In North Dakota, Oliver met Edward Anderson, from Cottageby, Sweden, who had also left with the husband. Oliver and Edward married in 1908 and Canada was offering 50 acres to home—settlers in Southern Alberta. They started a ranch outside the city of Medicine Hat, where my mother Edith was born in 1916 along with her 3 sisters and two brothers. Edward passed away in 1949 and Oliver lived on the ranch to 1963 with her oldest son, Clarence. She was never able to return to Norway, never saw again her parents or her 3 remaining sisters. Edith moved to Vancouver in 1956 where I was born in 1950. Although I have travelled many times around the planet, I have never been to Norway or Sweden. My advice to anyone who finds this message is be very careful about leaving the place where you are. You may end up like Olive and never get back to home again, nor see your own mother and father again, once you have gone. Be content where you are. Don’t be tempted by the devil (14.1.2008, Puri Orissa, India, www.worldofaparty.com).
Piotr Nathan  
*Ledo and the swan*, 2008, photocopy collage, string, condom, semen, 29 cm in diameter

Terry New  
*Private Parts Sacred Sites*, 2008, two inkjet prints on paper, each 21 x 29.5 cm
Frode Gundorf Nielsen

Made in water, 2002, digital print, 17.9 x 13.4 cm (RAAS)

Monika Oechsler

Polaris Alpha Ursae Minor - after Laszlo, 2008, digital print, 21 x 30 cm
The River Jordan

Historically and religiously, the Jordan River is considered to be one of the world’s most sacred rivers. Marking the border between Jordan, Israel and the West Bank, it flows through the Great Rift Valley into the Dead Sea, a salt lake at 420 metres below sea level, whose shores are the lowest point on the surface of the Earth on dry land.

In biblical history the Jordan appears as the scene of several miracles, the first taking place when the Jordan, near Jericho, was crossed by the Israelites entering the Promised Land (Joshua 3:15-17). The Prophet Elisha performed two miracles at the Jordan: he healed Naaman by having him bathe in its waters, and he made the axe head of one of the “children of the prophets” float, by throwing a piece of wood into the water (2 Kings 5:14; 6:6). The New Testament states that John the Baptist baptized unto repentance in the Jordan (Matthew 3:5-6; Mark 1:5; Luke 3:3; John 1:28). Jesus was also baptized by John in the Jordan (Matthew 3:13; Mark 1:9; Luke 3:21; 4:1).

The waters of the Jordan are an extremely important resource to the dry lands of the area and are a bone of contention between Lebanon, Syria, Jordan, Israel and the Palestinians. In September 2006 a problem arose with contamination just downstream, raw sewage is flowing into the water. Only small sections of the Jordan’s upper portion, near the Sea of Galilee, have been kept pristine for baptisms. In 2007, Friends of the Earth Middle East named Jordan River as one of the world’s 100 most endangered ecological sites, due in part to lack of cooperation between Israel and the neighboring Arab states.


Satellite Photograph of the Dead Sea by NASA; not protected by copyright

Uriel Orlow

Holy Water, 2008, capped glass bottle with water from the river Jordan, 4.5 x 2 cm, certificate of authenticity, 16.8 x 23.8 cm

Kjell Pahrl-Iversen

Untitled, 2008, ink on paper; 22 x 18.5 cm

The smallest thing in this unheeded landscape - a silly flower thats stands like a lighthouse.
“Ancient lovers believed a kiss would literally unite their souls, because the spirit was said to be carried in one’s breath.”

(Eve Glicksman)
Ruudt Peters
The Penis, 2007, carved wood, 12 x 2.3 cm (RAAS)

Jacqui Poncelet
All Around and Everywhere, 2008, ink, and ink on paper cut-outs of eyes on clear transparent cylinder; height 30 cm
Karen Pontoppidan
*for you I let my weapons down*, 2008, heart made of a shot – from the shotgun of someone I love, 8 x 8 mm (RAAS)

Daniel Rees
*The pips from an apple I picked from my Grandmother’s Garden*, 2008, watercolour on paper and apple seeds, 32 x 24 cm
Pipilotti Rist
Bottle Post for Michael Petry, 2008, video still by Rist, colour toner print (laser) on paper, 37.7 x 21.4 cm

Liam Reeves
Panacea, 2008, blown glass, 2.5 x 4 cm
Chad Sager
Twelve Links (Two Sides), 2008, ink and gesso on two sides of a sheet of paper, 21 x 29.7 cm

Maya Schindler
IMPOSSIBLE, 2007, print, dimensions variable
Eric Schnell
“This sail will carry you forward it needs only the faintest hint of sun – for journeys into endless dark, 2008, ink and pencil on paper; 9 x 20 cm (RAAS)"

Rebecca Scott
“Same Difference, 2008, pen and ink on paper; 35 x 22 cm”
If I were locked in such a tower, I would send images of what I would see everyday, through the lens that surrounds the light at the top of the lighthouse - an inverted dreamlike landscape into which I can escape and imagine other landscapes, but also one in which the horizon offers no stability or comfort.

Berni Searle
Working images for On the Edge project at Obrestad Fyr, 2008, inkjet on paper

Fin Serck-Hanssen
Untitled, 2007, colour inkjet print on paper; 12 x 12 cm (RAAS)
What! You want me up and out? All better? Right now?

Go fuck yourself; it’s nice and warm in here.
See, the stretch between you and me is too great. You are just you, I don’t want to be you, hold you, love you, place my tongue on you, pull my nails down you so you scream; put my fist inside you.
This exoskeleton cases me. It shields me from you. All of you. And now you want to prise me out, spoon my flesh from the steel so that I may walk; the distance between you and me diminished. So that I may take steps and glide across time and space to be near you, So that we can go to the theatre, maybe watch movies. So that I can read you Gilbert and George at the Tate, my neck craning to see their words, wearing a dress of silk roses and clutching thorn-less stems, while you stare rudely at me.

No.

No.

No.

Leave me. What was hidden, all wrong, is now pushed out. It is exterior, hanging for all to see. But you want to drive it back in, put your knuckle over it as you grind it into my stomach lining. All better! You want to make me work, tick-tock, tick-tock all new for you. The perfect march of my heels amongst glossy smiles, taut backs and manicured nails. I glance out of the window, so close to being there, touching you, the rain. I imagine your breath, once whispering on my skin. But now I am here, sinking within my exoskeleton, thinking and resting. Think. Think again. I start to roam feverish, pacing through no particular place. Everything lives here, every thought is equal. Then I rest. My body is let loose but the flesh let down.

Still

This way, I’ll never be you. My body is no longer yours, the bit in between no longer begs and bleeds. It belongs only to the dreaming. In here. Alone. Irreversible.

Caroline Smith
The Edge, 2008
Rob Smith
Hadleigh Castle, 2008, pinhole photograph, 12.7 x 17.7 cm (RAAS)

Terry Smith
Time takes a cigarette, 2008, a shilling, a second of film, a second of sound, each envelope 6 x 10 cm (RAAS)
Bente Sommerfeldt-Colberg

Waiting for you, 2008, embroidered handkerchief, 39 x 40.5 cm

Daniel Sturgis

Untitled, 2008, acrylic on paper; 20.8 x 13.4 cm
Czech artist Adéla Svobodová gave me this drawing during a meeting in Prague arranged by a mutual friend, the artist Michal Peichoucek. A few nights before I had told Michal two stories, one after the other; the first about the invitation to take part in the exhibition ‘Golden Rain,’ in Norway with its reference to the myth of Danae and her young son trapped in a tower for which I told him I wanted to think about the implications of a trapped life, and the other my account of the recent tragic sudden suicide and funeral of a 14-year-old boy within my family circle. The two stories and the two young boys somehow misguidedly became conflated in Michal’s mind and he fixed his imagination on the trapped life I’d talked of representing the young dead boy rather than the Greek myth, which it occurred to him could be symbolised fittingly by putting an egg into a bottle. You know by chance I know exactly the right person who could teach you the trick of putting an egg into a bottle said Michal, and so he quickly contacted Adéla Svobodová, who at that time had an exhibition in Prague which looked at the resonance of magic tricks whose secrets she closely guarded. I found this confusion between the two stories and the two young boys, one mythical and one real, intriguing and so went along to the meeting. I found Adéla so moved by Michal’s story of my wanting to honour the memory of the dead young boy by putting an egg into a bottle that despite the fact that she usually kept the details of her magic tricks a closely guarded secret she generously gave me this finely detailed drawing as a gift. Anne-Marie Creamer

Adéla Svobodová
How to put an egg in a bottle, for Anne-Marie, 2007, pen on paper, 20.2 x 29.5 cm

Hege Tapio
The Hierophant, March 2008, photographic assemblage, 18 x 21 cm (RAAS)
"It is normal to be a little crazy, but crazy to be quite normal"

STEFFEN TAST

Steffen Tast
It is normal to be a little crazy, but crazy to be quite normal, 2008, ink on paper, 21 x 30 cm

Helge Torvund
The light you need exists, 2008
To the Sea

To step over the low wall that divides
Road from concrete walk above the shore
Brings sharply back something known long before--
The miniature gaiety of seashores.
Everything crowds under the low horizon:
Steep beach, blue water, towels, red bathing caps,
The small hushed waves' repeated fresh collapse
Up the warm yellow sand, and further off
A white steamer stuck in the afternoon--

Still going on, all of it, still going on!
To lie, eat, sleep in hearing of the surf
(Ears to transistors, that sound tame enough
Under the sky), or gently up and down
Lead the uncertain children, frilled in white
And grasping at enormous air; or wheel
The rigid old along for them to feel
A final summer; plainly still occurs
As half an annual pleasure, half a rite,

As when, happy at being on my own,
I searched the sand for Famous Cricketers,
Or, farther back, my parents, listeners
To the same seaside quack, first became known.
Strange to it now, I watch the cloudless scene:
The same clear water over smoothed pebbles,
The distant bathers' weak protesting trebles
Down at its edge, and then the cheap cigars,
The chocolate-papers, tea-leaves, and, between

The rocks, the rusting soup-tins, till the first
Few families start the trek back to the cars.
The white steamer has gone. Like breathed-on glass
The sunlight has turned milky. If the worst
Of flawless weather is our falling short,
It may be that through habit these do best,
Coming to the water clumsily undressed
Yearly; teaching their children by a sort
Of clowning; helping the old, too, as they ought.
-Philip Larkin

Andrew Tullis
To the Sea, a poem by Philip Larkin
Natalie Turner  
*Wish we were there - Danae X*, 2008, watercolour on postcard, 14.8 x 10.8 cm (RAAS)  

Marianna Uutinen  
*Jupiter was here, Perseus*, 2007, gold glitter paint on white underwear, 31 x 18.5 cm
Up on the heath I am strung upturned and waiting
Erect the stranger sweet beast.
"Who is it that tears me from myself?",
I cry back my head as strip after fine quality meat
strip of me
Is gently sliced off. Nude, growing bloody naked
For all to within see, dripping secrets out of me.
Peel me back the pain, through the probing ruining
blows
Steady and slow, coming down on my tender flayed
heart,
There above me my vengeful master Apollo’s handsome
smile,
Taunting me as with his tender fist that I have
finally come
To know my torn, oh so torn self, too late to see
Who it is that tore me from myself I knew so well.
Klaus Wehner
Perseus, 2008, inkjet print, 21 × 29 cm

Lynette Yiadom-Boakye
Man head, 2007, charcoal on paper, 30 × 35 cm
First published to accompany the exhibition

**Golden Rain:** A project for On the Edge, and Stavanger 2008
by Michael Petry

Hå gamle prestegard and the at the Eigeroya lighthouse, Egersund, Norway
May 4 – August 31, 2008

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Cover image: Michael Petry, Golden Rain, detail of bottles in the studio
Inside front cover: detail of bottles suspended in the artist’s studio
Inside back cover: bottle in the artist’s studio

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