MARIE KARLBERG

SOM ETT HÄNGLÅS

19/03/2026–11/04/2026

ISSUES presents Marie Karlberg's second solo show at the gallery. The first one took place at Grand Hôtel in 2015 and much water has since then passed under the bridges of Stockholm. Back then, Marie lived in New York City and was part of the underground scene while working at Reena Spualings Fine Art. She hosted night clubs, staged performances and had her work shown in the quinquennial survey exhibition *Greater NY* at MoMA PS1.

Marie moved back to Stockholm to finish her MFA where she within two years established herself as an essential part of the Stockholm art scene. Her gallery Beau Travail is not only an extension of her own art practice but a destination for international contemporary art.

While ISSUES has managed to establish itself in Stockholm with a roster of artists on a permanent address in the past eleven years, Marie has built a significant network of artists and professionals. We are pleased to tie a loop with Marie and the paintings of accumulated business cards and a newly written play that make up her show *Som ett hänglås* (Like a padlock). The show not only addresses the general perils of trying to enter the artworld but her own personal experience of navigating the global scene and her present role in it.

Curator, director, rektor and author Daniel Birnbaum has written the exhibition text.

MARIE KARLBERG (b. 1985, lives and works in Stockholm) began making art as a reaction to predetermined forms of social life. In 2025 she received her MFA from The Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm. ISSUES has presented the performances *Eating a Banana* in January 2025 and *Watching Paint Dry* in 2024. In 2015, a solo exhibition at Grand Hôtel in Stockholm as well as all three iterations of *Downtown Issues*. In November 2025, New Theater in Los Angeles staged Marie's play *I'M JUST A SYMPTOM OF A MORAL DECAY*. Previously, Marie has staged *Nudge Articule*, a performance, at Art Basel Miami, hosted by MoMA PS1 (2023), presented the video *The Good Terrorist* in *Greater New York* at MoMA PS1, New York (2021) and taken part in The 9th Berlin Biennale (2016). Selected solo shows are *Illusion and Reality*, Tramps, New York (2019); *The Brutal Truth*, Bonny Poon, Paris (2018); *Conscious Consequences*, Plymouth Rock, Zürich (2018) and *Stranger in the Dark*, Reena Spaulings Fine Arts, New York (2014). She has staged performances at Company Gallery, New York (2020), Elevation1049, Gstaad (2019); Artists' Space, New York (2019) and Palais de Tokyo, Paris, (2017).

Marie opened her much celebrated gallery Beau Travail in 2024.

Marie's work is included in public collections such as The Schaulager Foundation, Münchenstein; Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris and Moderna Museet, Stockholm.

SELECTED PRESS:
Trädgårdskonst (review), Allerholm, Milou, Kunstkritikk, 2024/06/20
Greater New York Confirms Rather than Surprises (review), Schjeldahl, Peter, The New Yorker, 18/10/2021
Marie Karlberg Parodies the Social Conditions of Art's Production (review), Hamilton, Rainer Diana, Frieze Magazine, 23/01/2020

Marie Karlberg är en viktig person. Om du hyser det minsta tvivel är det bara att kasta ett öga på hennes visitkort. Beau Travail-kortet säger allt. Ett sånt kort kan inte tillhöra en nobody. Hon finns där, kondenserad, i kortets utformning. Hon kan spegla sig i det.

Det vet alla som fått det i utbyte mot sina egna kort. De kan samtidigt visa upp sina egna visitkort, precis som börsmäklarna i *American Psycho*. Tillsammans utgör korten en sorts valuta i en kulturell ekonomi. De spelar en roll i den värld i vilken Marie Karlberg investerat sin professionella persona.

Korten är brickor i ett kosmopolitiskt spel. Samtidigt är de porträtt av ägarna. I den meningen är den här utställningen ett slags porträttgalleri.

Själv har jag behövt mina egna brickor. Under några perioder spekulerade jag i flera valutor samtidigt. Mina kort bar logotyper: 1st Moscow Biennial, Biennale di Venezia, Städelschule, Artforum, Second Yokohama Triennial, Moderna Museet… Var alla dessa kort porträtt av mig?

“*Jag bär alltid med mig mitt visitkort*”, skrev Greve Kessler, en tysk konstskribent. Oscar Wilde skrev: “*Jag reser aldrig utan min dagbok. Man behöver alltid något sensationellt att läsa på tåget.*” Kessler gick längre i narcissism. Han nöjde sig med att gång på gång läsa sitt namn på visitkortet. Typografin var perfekt. Texten tryckt i grönt.

Daniel Birnbaum

Marie Karlberg is an important person. If you have any doubt, just look at her business card. Her card says everything: Beau Travail, "*nice work*". This kind of business card cannot belong to a nobody. She's there – condensed – in the design of the card. Like a mirror, she can see herself in it.

Anyone who has traded their card for hers knows this. Just like the stock brokers in *American Psycho*, it is something you show off. The cards make up a kind of currency in a cultural economy. They play a role in the world in which Marie Karlberg has invested her professional persona.

The business cards are pieces in a cosmopolitan game. At the same time, portraits of their owners. In that sense, this exhibition is a kind of portrait gallery.

Speaking for myself, I've made good use of my pieces. At times, I speculated in several currencies. My cards carried the logos of 1st Moscow Biennial, Biennale di Venezia, Städelschule, Artforum, Second Yokohama Triennial, Moderna Museet... Were all of these cards portraits of me?

"*I carry my business cards wherever I go*", wrote Count Kessler, the German art critic. Oscar Wilde wrote: "*I never travel without my diary. One should always have something sensational to read in the train.*" Kessler went further in his narcissism. He was content when he read his name on the card over and over again. The typography was perfect. The text printed in green.

Daniel Birnbaum