



Wild Tree

Vanna Bowles

/

Texts by

Linn Cecilie Ulvin

*To my grandparents
Ulla and Artemi,
for their constant
love and support*

Wild Tree / 2009

Three-dimensional drawing 110 x 75 x 25 cm

Pencil and mixed media on paper





Thorns And Roses / 2010

Sculpture 100 x 100 x 100 cm

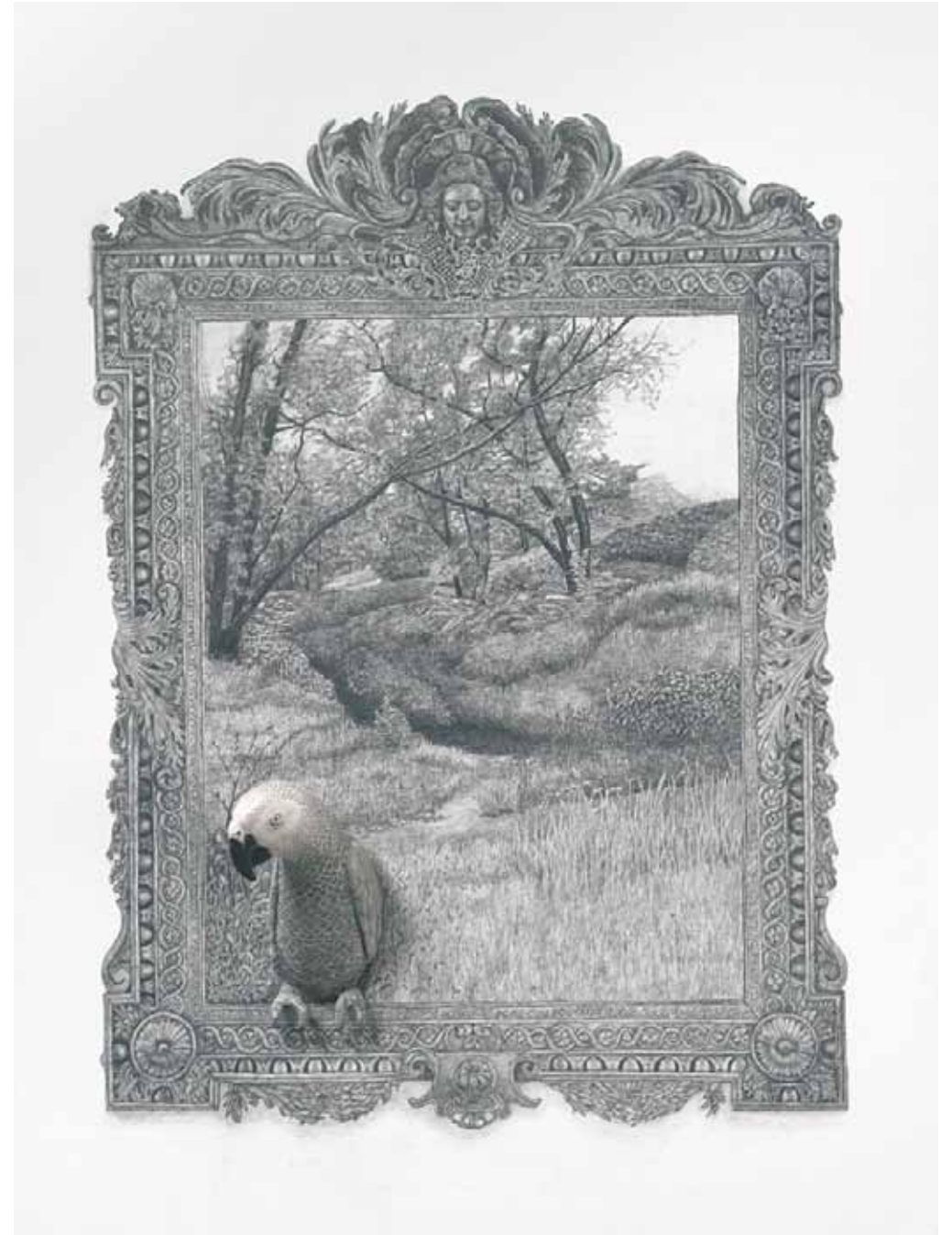
Mixed media

Sunflowers, red roses and twisted barbed wire. They are at the bottom of the garden. The woman's hands move like butterfly wings over the girl's thin skin. The girl has picked up the woman as if she were a thing someone had thrown away. She has put her arms over the woman's shoulder, as if they were close friends, as if she didn't want to leave her. The girl has not said why she has come, not smiled or looked the woman in the eyes. – Let's lie down in the grass, the girl says. There's no one nearby. The woman smiles, her surprise is obvious, but she does as the girl says. The girl kisses her neck. – Are you sure? the woman whispers. The girl nods and pulls her close. – How many times do I have to ask? the girl says.

Attached To Nature / 2010

Three-dimensional drawing 95 x 70 x 10 cm

Pencil and mixed media on paper





Cultivation / 2009

Three-dimensional drawing 70 x 70 x 15 cm

Pencil and mixed media on paper

The girl holds the knife as if her hand were a bird claw. Not a human hand. Not a beautiful hand with long fingers and bitten nails. They are sitting opposite each other at the table. The woman is watching the girl. The girl's knuckles have turned white from squeezing the knife so hard. Clink, clink, clink. The knife makes crackling noises as it meets the porcelain. She is struggling. When she cuts, it's as if she is struggling to saw through wooden logs. – When you look at me like that, you make me feel like a child, the girl says and looks down on her plate.



Growing Thoughts / 2009

Drawing 75 x 110 cm

Pencil on paper

Talk-think is what happens when you are talking to another person, but inside your own head. Thoughts and questions you ask inside your head, and answer, if you want to. Sometimes the girl has had problems keeping a serious face. You can talk-think the most incredible things. Often they don't even resemble anything she knows. As if someone else formulated the words. Someone who is older than she is. Someone who knows things she hasn't even read about in books. She doesn't know when she senses it. It's as if she has a built-in recorder in her head, which picks up the words and meanings of adults just as easily as what's being said by people her own age. She used to be called precocious. That doesn't happen anymore. The girl is so happy that she has trouble sitting still. She has found a new way to think without talking. It's a bit like talk-think, but it's much better. It-grows-out-of-her. If she doesn't want to, she doesn't need to use words at all. Instead she lets nature grow out of her. It usually turns out to be different bushes and branches. Mostly it starts in her own head. But it has happened that she has seen large landscapes in people's bodies.



Origins / 2009
Wall installation
Various pictures,
photographs and objects

The boxes with her great-grandmother's things stand next to the desk. If the woman stretches out her leg, she can touch them with her foot. It's mostly diaries and notebooks, there should be a few photographs as well. The woman has not asked for these boxes, but she can't bring herself to throw them out either. She remembers once, many years ago, around the time she had just moved away from home, and didn't say no to jumping into a skip if she came across one, to check and see if it might hold something of interest. Furniture, kitchen utensils, practical things. One day she came across a skip full of photos, letters and diaries. She still remembers the feeling of losing meaning. It was as if the weight of the flesh in her body pulled her towards the ground, and her stomach content continued the opposite way. Now it's different. The boxes don't matter so much. Nothing lasts forever. That is something she's trying to teach herself.



African Grey / 2009

Three-dimensional drawing 75 x 85 x 20 cm

Pencil and mixed media on paper

The girl is fascinated with the African continent. The rain forest. The animals. She isn't interested in the information the woman wants to show her. – I understand what you're saying. There's no end to the Western man's or woman's interest, either for the colonised or the post-colonised Africa, the woman says and looks at the girl. She tells her that she has inheritance by the case-load. – We have the same attitude to Africa as we have to ourselves, she continues. It's incomplete and superficial. There's no *one* Africa. Africa doesn't exist. Africa is a metaphor. Each one of us brings with us what Africa is.



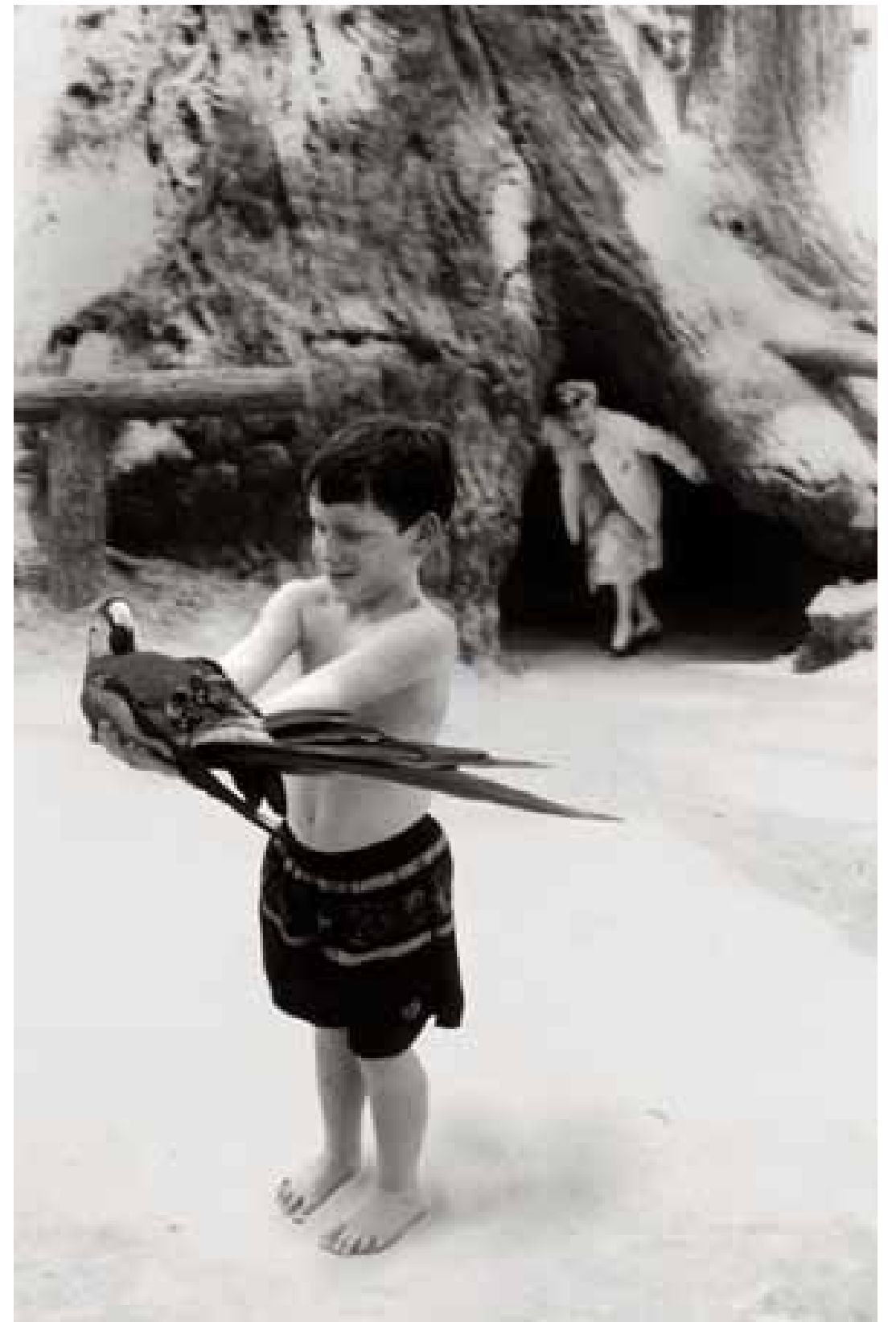
The Boy And The Budgie / 2010

Drawing 80 x 80 cm

Pencil on paper

They are looking at photographs of animals. Photographs they have taken of each other. They are looking at each other's hands, necks, arms. They are looking at pictures from the fifties, at pictures even further back in time. At the time when European explorers travelled to West-Africa. The boy's face. The fine lines. He looks serious.

In The Hands Of A Boy / 2009
Photo collage 15 x 10 cm







There's something about the woman's voice. The way she takes her time with certain words. She is tall and looks strong and lazy at the same time. Then there are the eyes. She looks straight at the one she's talking to, but after a while she breaks the stare, and so obviously that it's almost unpleasant, she looks somewhere else and continues to talk as if nothing has happened. She doesn't hide it. She knows that to look into someone's eyes can be the start of something, and that it's the time it takes that decides if it will develop into something more, or not. The girl can't foresee anything. Instead she forgets herself and stares until her eyes hurt.



Found Photo I / 2009

*Black-and-white photograph
8 x 11,5 cm*

Found Photo II / 2009

*Black-and-white photograph
8 x 7,5 cm*

Found Photo III / 2009

*Black-and-white photograph
9 x 6 cm*

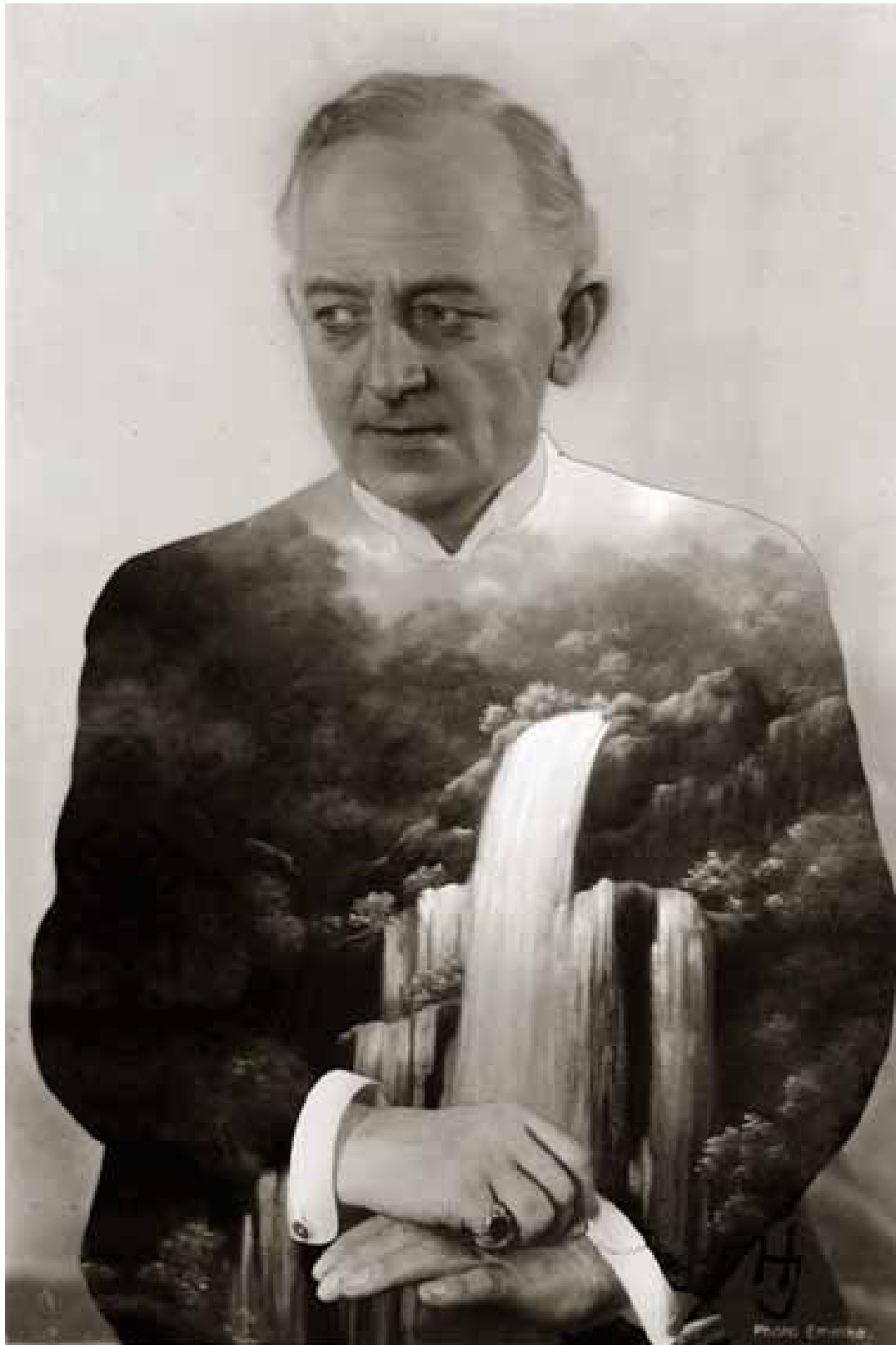
Found Photo IV / 2009

*Black-and-white photograph
6,5 x 9 cm*

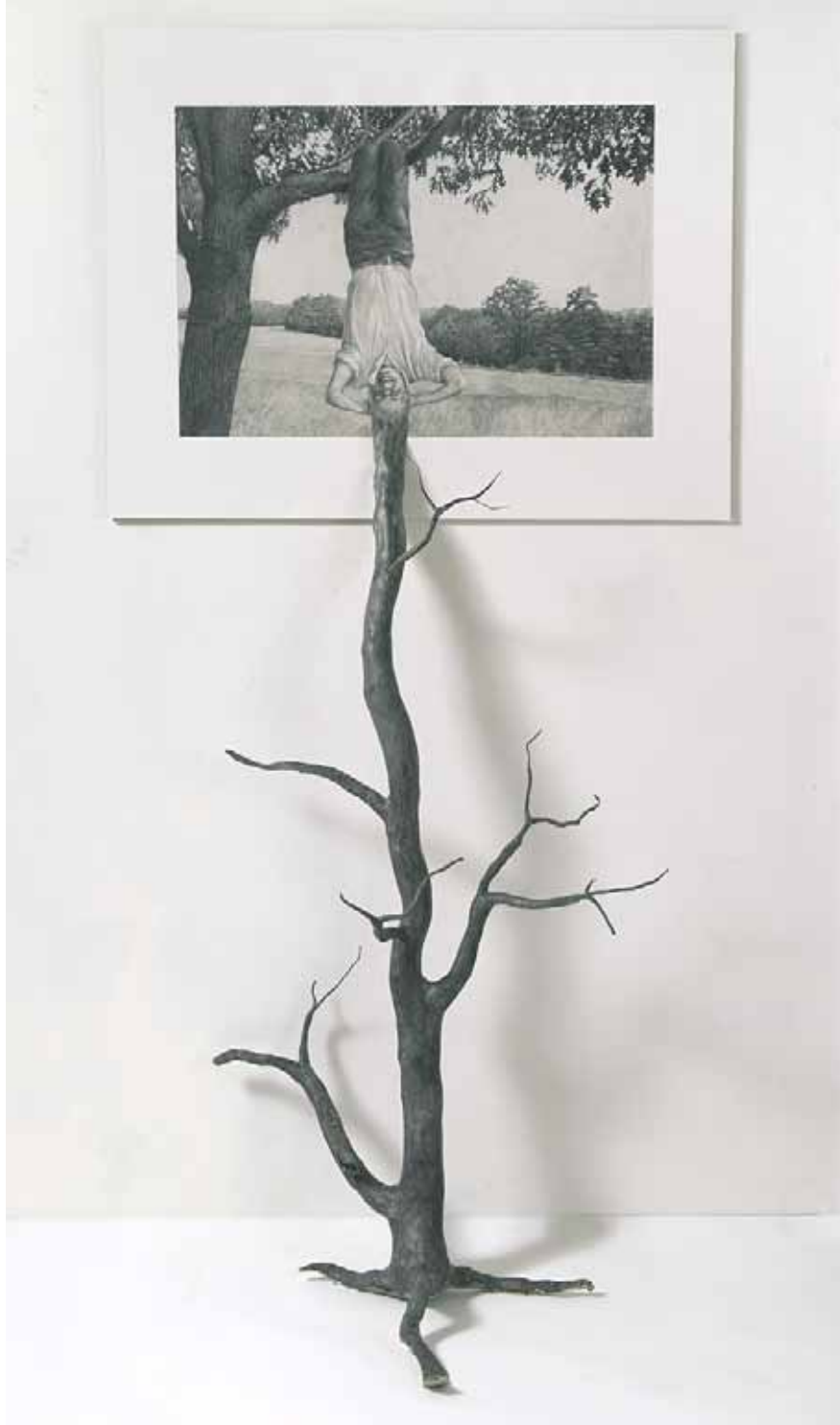
Found Photo V / 2009

*Black-and-white photograph
15 x 10 cm*

Falling / 2009
Photo collage 15 x 10 cm



An older man is walking along the pavement on the other side of the street. The girl feels her scalp itching. After a little while it starts to grow out of her head. It's a thorny bush. The bush has three small twigs. On one of the twigs a rose is growing. The man is looking another way. A lot of water swirls up from the man's collar, before it continues over his chest, and spreads out across his shoulders. Here the water narrows and is pushed into a waterfall across his abdomen.



Stretching The Mind / 2010

Drawing and sculpture 185 x 95 x 65 cm

Pencil on paper and papier maché

Parrot / 2010

Sculpture 48 x 26 x 26 cm

Mixed media





Gorilla hands have been known to be cut off to be used for ashtrays. They are cut off with a solid knife right beneath the knuckle, around where the artery branches out. The hand which has been able to hold fast and grip when the animal was swinging through the trees, has suddenly got a new function. Arm and hand are once and for all separated from each other. Body from body and meaning.

The photograph is taken in the middle of the day. They are lying on their backs next to each other in the grass, as excited as huge Christ-imitators. Seven mountain gorillas shot at close range with a shotgun. Their bodies are intact with heads and hands. Wrists, feet and chests are roped to poles, to stop the bodies from falling on the ground under transport. Their genitals are covered with green leaves. The gorillas have been carried on single stretchers through the dense forest. Men have cut down trees and cut them up into suitable lengths. The poles have been wedged under the animals. It has taken the strengths of several men to push the animals into place. It has been a long trip, and now the journey is over. On the plain, in a circle around them, people sit and watch. If it hadn't been for the ropes, you could imagine that the animals are sleeping their royal sleep.

Bush Stories / 2009

Three-dimensional drawing 110 x 75 x 25 cm

Pencil and mixed media on paper



Down The Garden / 2010

Three-dimensional drawing 60 x 65 x 12 cm

Pencil and papier maché on paper

Getting Through / 2010

Three-dimensional drawing 65 x 65 cm

Pencil and mixed media on paper





Grass And Flowers / 2010

Drawing 75 x 96 cm

Pencil on paper

Now and then the girl has a posture like a banana or a tree waving in the wind. Her back is hollow, and her breasts are hiding in there somewhere. But quite often, when she feels the situation is safe, she lifts her head and straightens up, and stands next to the woman, tall and grown-up. She'll often stand in that position for some time, while she smiles and focuses her eyes somewhere on the horizon. But it doesn't last long. With a nail-bitten forefinger she fishes out a piece of pink chewing gum from inside her mouth somewhere. There seems to be one lying in there at all times, ready to be used, so she can take it out when she needs it, coil it a few times around her fingertip, before she pushes the small, soft lump a couple of times against her lower lip and puts it back.



Biography Vanna Bowles

Born 1974 in Gothenburg, Sweden

1996 – 97

K V Art school, Gothenburg, Sweden

1998 – 2000

Hovedskous Art school, Gothenburg, Sweden

2003

Universität der Künste, Berlin, Germany

2000 – 04

The National Academy of Fine Art, Oslo, Norway

Selected solo exhibitions

2010

Angelika Knäpper Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden

Hordaland Art Centre, Bergen, Norway

Østfold Art Centre, Fredrikstad, Norway

2008

Dalsland Art Museum, Sweden

Angelika Knäpper Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden

2007

The Drawing Society's Gallery, Oslo, Norway

2006

Galleri Thomassen, Gothenburg, Sweden

Nordic Art Info, Oslo, Norway

2001

Galleri Thomassen, Gothenburg, Sweden

Selected group exhibitions

2010

Norwegian Surrealism 1930–2010, The Stenersen Museum, Oslo

Ficton, Kunstbanken, Hamar, Norway

2009

Dark Matters, Peder Balke Senteret, Toten, Norway

Newspeak, Galleri Babel, Trondheim, Norway

Market Art Fair, Stockholm, Sweden

2008

REAL, Haugar Vestfold Art Museum, Tønsberg, Norway

Art Copenhagen Art Fair, Denmark

Norwegian Pictures, Oslo City Hall, Norway

The Helsinki Biennale, Finland

Beijing International Art Biennale, China

The Drawing Biennale, Kunsternes Hus, Oslo, Norway

Let There Be Light, Elementi, Bitola, Makedonia and Christiansand Kunstforening, Norway

Market Art Fair, Stockholm, Sweden

2007

Art Copenhagen Art Fair, Denmark

Høstutstillingen, Kunstnerens Hus, Oslo, Norway

2006

Sweet Punch: Recent Nordic Video, The Physics Room, Christchurch, New Zealand

ARS 06, Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, Finland

2005

International Kansk Video Festival, Krasnoyarsk, Russia

2004

Bomuldsfabriken Kunsthall, Arendal, Norway

More Body, Kunstbanken, Hamar, Norway

2003

Sweet Punch, Gallery G.U.N. Oslo, Norway

Testimony, Kunstbanken, Hamar, Norway

Ich habe nichts gesagt, Gallery Subcomandante, Oslo, Norway

2002

Pugnae Spectaculum, Kunsternes Hus, Oslo, Norway

Collections

Malmö Art Museum, Sweden

Statoil/Hydro, Norway

Gothenburg Council, Sweden

The National Public Art Council, Sweden

Biography Linn Cecilie Ulvin /

Linn Cecilie Ulvin (born 1969 in Drammen, Norway), is an author and a visual artist. She is also trained as an actor/director, and works with text, installation and performance. Ulvin has shown performance and theatre work in Norway, Europe and China. She has published two novels, and texts in various literary fora.

Wild Tree / Vanna Bowles

Angelika Knäpper Gallery 2010

Translation / May-Brit Akerholt

Photography / Thomas Widerberg

Graphic design / Bergen

Print / Jernström Offset, Stockholm 2010

Paper / Munken Pure 150 g, Modigliani Neve 145 g, Galerie Art Gloss 150 g

Cover / Zeta Trade Natur & Halflinen 1137, Kaskad Mint 120 g

Edition: 500

Supported by / Vederlagsfondet and Hordaland Art Centre

Special thanks / Maria Joynt, Lise Gundersen,

Elna Hagemann, Tilda Lovell and Dorothy Ann Bøhler

HORDALAND ART CENTRE

ANGELIKA KNÄPPER GALLERY

ISBN 978-91-976955-5-8