

# SECRETARY OF THE INVISIBLE

exhibition ↵

[TANYA] [BUSSE]

[Curated] [by] [Karolin Tampere]

[04 mar] → [14 may]

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Tanya Busse is a visual artist working across moving-image, installation, and photography mediums. Her practice boasts the synthesis of nature often combined with an industrial, post-human presence. Busse is interested in deep-time, invisible architecture and how power is produced and articulated through materials, relationships and geographies. Currently based in Tromsø, Norway, much of her work is informed by the matrix of local-meeting-global flows, shimmering forward together.

The area where Busse lives is many things: a land for reindeer calving grounds and migratory routes on land and sea, and of oil plants and refineries, military bases, radar stations, and testing sites. Such dark activity suggests the need for some possible counter future to the apocalyptic one that these extractivisms are leading us to. This is where she situates her practice; it is an attempt to propose alternatives to the military-industrial complex, extractive industries, and larger colonial narratives through personal and collective projects.

As with her other projects, Busse's exhibition *Secretary of the Invisible* records what lies hidden and out-of-view, and grounds these things in the material force of images. Her photographs and moving-images digest cycles of organic growth and death, the production and consumption of power, and the mechanisms of energy distribution – both fabricated and naturally occurring.

There is a suggestion of an excess of materials: the blood, sweat and tears of the body, the tailings and waste from large-scale infrastructural projects – all traces of labor, love, and lived life.

The exhibition *Secretary of the Invisible* is specifically produced to be presented alongside the arrival of Tanya Busse on the island of São Miguel. With this selection of both existing and new works, the exhibition aims to act as a multilayered reference point and gentle support structure accompanying her upcoming research in the Azores. A generous introduction to her work and a physical meeting ground for sharing and establishing connections with Busse and her topics of interest, as she enters TEMPORADA #1 as the first artist in residence.

During this residency, the relationship between Busse's two primary points of reference – Atlantic Canada and Northern Norway – and now the Azores, will be the triangular departure point for her research, with a special focus on the ocean, as a key geographic space where tensions are regularly played out. In and along the rugged coasts, Busse will gather material, geological characteristics, and social traces of intangible political and economic processes, such as maritime zones, migration routes, military land development, and other abstract realities that exist within the islands.

## 1 SECRETARY OF THE INVISIBLE

Reflective Vinyl on Door, 176x704 cm  
2022

A wall piece made from Morse code that translates the title of the show – *Secretary of the Invisible*. Morse code is a method used in telecommunications to encode text. Letters are represented by combinations of light visuals or electric pulse signals. It has been used historically within the context of radio circuits, telegraph lines, undersea cables, and extensively in the shipping industry to communicate hidden messages over long distances, particularly across the Atlantic Ocean.

## 2 THE CRYSTAL WORLD

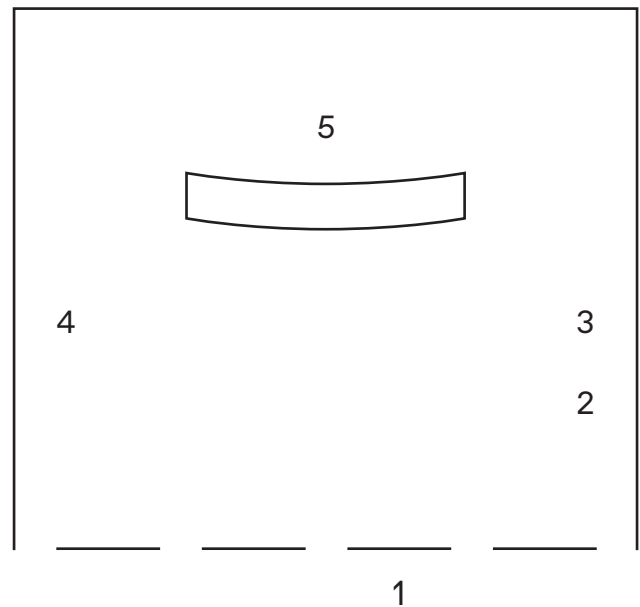
Inkjet Prints on Archival Photographic Paper, Plexi Glass,  
Steel Bolts  
2022

*The Crystal World* is a photographic series of 3D rendered arctic venomous plants. The arctic terrain is made up of craton bedrock and caledonian mountains. The flora and fauna are subarctic, and very few species have a morphology to the point of thorns, spines or prickles. There, plants are short, crooked, and bent from the wind- trying their hardest to conserve energy for the long, cold, dark winter. These four plants have evolved to develop biological and mechanical defenses, including venoms, toxins, and other necessary dirty tricks for survival. They are a hybrid of source images taken from the Botanical Institute at the Arctic University, and toxic materials that have been left in the northern landscape, such as radioactive particles, military weapons and scorch earth tactics.

## 3 TRANSFORMER

4K video, 3'  
2022

This new video looks at the contemporary landscape of windparks, particularly in the Tromsø region (Norway), and their relationship with prayer wheels, through quantum physics - a field that deals with the invisible. It is believed that windmills derive from prayer mills/ prayer wheels from ancient Asia. The purpose of the wheel in any form is that of pulling the mind back to the spiritual sphere of life. Visualizing the greater significance of windmills in our contemporary lives, this video asks if they may be chanting for a better future.



## 4 BLOOD, SWEAT AND TEARS

Inkjet prints on archival photographic paper, pine  
wood frame  
2021

The photographic series *Blood, Sweat and Tears* is made up of fluid samples taken from the artist and blown up 6000 times the original size through an electron microscope to reveal their ultrastructure. Where in previous works Busse was focused on the industrial exploitation of nature, for this series she's turned the gaze inwards towards the material consequences of affective labor - blood, sweat and tears - all traces of work, love, and lived life. In a process she calls *intraction*, she moves from the outer world of extraction to the inner world where the body itself becomes a mine.

## 5 THE POETS ANTIDOTE

HD video, 12'35''  
2020  
Soundtrack by Per Martinsen

*The Poets Antidote* came about against the backdrop of northern Europe: Cold War fears, a changing political landscape, and the remnants of post-military architecture. It was originally conceived for a site-specific project located in a now-defunct Nato submarine base, measuring in at 25 000 sqm. *The Poets Antidote* is the result of an ongoing conversation the artist has with a Noaidi (Sami shaman, poet and friend), in which they attempt to imagine a spell that destroys the war machine. Norway is one of the world's largest arms exporters, and in its own way, this work tries to confront the military-industrial complex through spiritual means. The visuals lead us through an iron ore processing factory, from beginning to end. This factory was used for steel production during World War II.