

## 'Queens of the Tear Duct'

Tiril Hasselknippe

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It's been seven days now, a group of three women trudged along empty, deserted highways, a scene suggesting they are the lone survivors of beloved planet earth and the protagonists of this awkward scenario. They were cold and hungry yet in the face of their imminent death a giddy verbosity grew among our heroes: "So this is it, life after people. Weird how it happened eventually. Who saw that coming. So random." she said. „Look,“ she replied as they neared an old interchange, that now was merely a pastoral structure of ruins, „the world is beginning to flower into wounds. That road over there, it used to carry me to my lover, now it's going nowhere. Sad“. "I remember driving so fast, I had the impression that all the cars on the highway were stationary, the spinning earth racing beneath them to create an illusion of movement", one of them said. „There are no accidents, only nature throwing her weight around“. And another one added: "I once dreamt, that life is a highway, but too many roads bypass my way, or they never begin. I think i never woke up from that one“. Our group couldn't help but feel like a part of a weird dream of the past, recalling the solemn and tacky grandeur of disaster movies they so passionately binged on in the past. "Speaking of highways", the first one said, "i once read, that, according to the highway program of the 1950s, they were supposed to be used as avenues of escape for people living in big cities threatened by aerial attack or natural disaster“. "Well, that didn't work out," the second one said, "I once read, that they were build not only as symbols of expanded horizons, but to compensate for the loss of togetherness and safety." "Well that didn't work out, either. Sad.", the third one said and sighed. As a sudden sulkiness arose among

them, they looked up again facing the roads ahead. "A motion sculpture beautifully constructed and designed. The grand, curving sweep of the overpasses, the perfect symmetry of cloverleaf interchanges. Now it has exhausted its future", the first one said, trying on a morose language for size. „Now it's just rotting there, frozen, unused, undead. Like the spinal system of a huge corpse. Sad.“, the second one said. "Infrastructure. Infra means below," she said "it's a curious thing, the relationship between infrastructure and people. People say, its a projection, an externalization of our dreams or subconscious, our divested psyche, we emanate from it and our future emanates from it. So infrastructure is necessarily imaginative and speculative." The third one looked muddled: "But what happens when infrastructure dies, when everyone is dead, when it stops to be infra? Does it becomes pure structure, a purer object, is it free?" "Well," the first one dabbled with an explanation "it is itself and not itself at the same time, it partly forgets itself and us. Someone called this its fragility, the double truth of a thing. A thing is generally enclosed, secret and withdrawn. Its death just lays bare its otherness, it shows, that it's apart, that it's not like us. That makes us sad. Sadness is the attunement to the ungraspability of a thing. And inversely, beauty is when an object tunes to our vulnerability." Nobody seemed to be happy with that answer, so they stood there for a while of awkward silence, all of them quietly thinking about how they couldn't help but

experience the end of the word as a déjà vu. "Funny," one of them finally said looking around "i once saw something that looked like this. It was in the age of crisis ambience. The collapse as an endlessly stretched moment, when frenzy and melancholy seemed to fight over our collective psyche. Earth saw the death of faith. Death of structures. Death of ideals. Of empathy. Of the collective. Of feeling safe. Of the future. Of nature. Remember? We couldn't tell our dreams from our nightmares. Anyway, everything was soaked in this icy blue, with ethereal light and sound. The sculptures were tearing up and literally tearing up, evaporating and dispersing into the air we breathed. Seeing this landscape in its smallness, from the outside, from a present and a detached perspective at the same time, it was sort of like in a near death experience." A soft serenity spread in our little group. They felt that the plot had thickened, they felt a closure to this storyline, they felt that finally their lifetime and world time became congruent and they died.

Authors quoted and mis-quoted: JG Ballard, Hans Blumenberg, Dwight D. Eisenhower, Norman Bel Geddes, Tiril Hasselknippe, Paddy McAloon, Timothy Morton, Camille Paglia

(Baptist Ohrtmann)

*Queens of the Tear Duct* is Tiril Hasselknippe's second solo exhibition with the gallery and the title of a site-specific installation of concrete, epoxy resin and sound, spanning across the main exhibition space and unfolding a dystopic scenario of broken structures.

Tiril Hasselknippe (b. 1984, Arendal, Norway) lives and works in New York. She studied at Malmö Konsthögskola, Sweden (2008 - 2013) and the Cooper Union School of Art, New York (2010).

Solo exhibitions among others recently took part at Kunstverein Braunschweig, Germany; Tranen, Copenhagen (both 2016); Bianca d'Alessandro, Copenhagen; DREI, Cologne (both 2015); Grünerløkka Kunsthall, Oslo; Vestfossen Kunstlaboratorium, Vestfossen, Norway (both 2014), Club Midnight, Berlin (2013). The artist also had been contributing to shows at Centre de Création Contemporaine Olivier Debré, Tours, France (until June 2017); Nassauischer Kunstverein, Wiesbaden, Germany; Foksal Gallery, Warsaw; Museo d'Arte Contemporanea Villa Croce, Genova, Italy; A Palazzo Gallery, Brescia, Italy; Kunstmuseum, Stavanger, Norway; Dortmunder Kunstverein, Dortmund, Germany (all 2016); Plymouth Rock, Zurich; Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo (both 2015); KM Temporaer, Berlin; Sculpture Triennial, Odense, Denmark (both 2014); Malmö Konsthall, Sweden; Lund Konsthall, Sweden (both 2013); Oslo Kunstforening (2012) a.o..

This year will see solo exhibitions at DREI, Cologne (April) and Magenta Plains, New York (November) as well as the launch of a public artwork commission for the City of Lund, Sweden. A monograph is about to be published on the occasion of the artist's recent solo exhibition Station at Kunstverein Braunschweig, Germany.