

Being a faggot-spaceman *I am awesome.* 23.09.–29.10.2022

Being a faggot-spaceman I am awesome. is an exhibition of pornographic collages by the psychic and artist Ingo Swann that were unseen during his lifetime. Aside from Swann's work on psychic espionage during the Cold War, he was a painter, briefly a secretary at the UN, and had published several works of erotic fiction under a number of pseudonyms in the late 1960s. The exhibition combines the collages with a new sound installation that brings together an unpublished manuscript of queer erotic fiction by Swann and incorporates other elements from his life and work.

The exhibition is structured around two bodies of work by Swann that could be said to bookend his research in the psychic field, both of which were unseen during his lifetime and have subsequently been divided across different archives after his death in 2013. Having not been made public, and seemingly referring to Swann's private life and desire, this staging of the material also confronts Swann's own efforts to separate it through pseudonyms. It contends with the challenges of being homosexual pre-Stonewall and during the Cold War, especially Swann's connection to military espionage, given historic suspicions around the 'homosexual threat' propagated during McCarthyism.

Critically confronting the administrative and moralistic siloing of Swann's archive, the exhibition is a subjective, non-museological attempt to bring together several elements; the first comprises the pornographic collages, kept at the Leslie Lohman Museum in New York; the second element, relating to his research in para-psychology, preserved at the University of Georgia; the third set of materials incorporated here were deposited at the One Archives of the USC in Los Angeles, gathers Swann's largely queer erotic literary writings and explorations from the late 1960s.

Excerpts from unpublished or unfinished manuscripts such as *Pink Neon* - part one of the *Neon Trilogy* - and *Confessions of an Astrology Addict*, as well as preparatory notes for the epic poem *Expergere*, are included among the sources of the sound that plays through the different spaces of the gallery (floor plan: 1 (part 1); 16 (part 2); 19 (part 3)). This presentation of Swann's collages is contextualised through sound and stages an affective encounter,

foregrounding sensation, and proposing ambivalence as a way of asking theoretical and political questions. If our search for gayness within archives is often filled with political and personal yearning, how do we use affect to guide our encounters? What do we do with feelings such as an ambivalence around Swann and his work? How do we present these 'overlooked' works without resorting to hyperbole?

The Publik Universal Frxnd discovered Swann and his collage works in 2015, when they organised an unprecedented talks programme at the New York Porn Film Festival. The talks programme addressed pornography as a documentary object, and how its place in the archive or library is determined by library science and Victorian moralism. The combination of these two elements determine the form of the pornographic archive—cataloguing and preservation—and is the key to its categorisation, preventing thematic links it might have with documentary, literature, fine arts etc. because of the particular images it depicts.

The exhibition is curated by Gianmaria Andreetta, Luca Beeler, Publik Universal Frxnd, and Nina Wakeford.

The sound work *Being a faggot-spaceman I am awesome.* (by Gianmaria Andreetta, Publik Universal Frxnd, and Nina Wakeford, 2022) is read by Angharad Williams and recorded and edited by Martin Clarke.

Biography

Born in 1933 in Telluride, Colorado, USA, Swann graduated with a Bachelor of Arts in Biology. After a tour of duty in Korea and other places with the US Army, Swann moved to New York City. Not able to sustain himself financially as an artist, he began work at the UN, where he stayed until 1968. Following an epiphany in which he believed his pet chinchilla could read his mind, Swann became convinced of his own potential psychic abilities, and came to the attention of early experimenters in precognition at Stanford Research Institute (SRI), led by H. W. Puthoff and Russell Targ.

Swann was involved in 'psi' experiments at SRI between 1972-1990 primarily in 'remote viewing', a technique of applying precognition through the description of objects and events at a distance and in the future. In the context of the Cold War, SRI investigated whether such psychic phenomena had domestic and military application and received funding from the CIA under their "Stargate Project". Swann was radical in his belief that psychic seeing required no special ability and that anyone could train to be a remote viewer, leading to his cult status in psychic circles in North America and around the world.

In the late 1960s, Swann published erotic fiction under two pseudonyms 'Hero Haubold' and 'Defence Eakens'. During that period, he also contributed a collage work to *Screw: The Sex Review* (floor plan: 11). Swann considered his paintings as belonging to a new genre of cosmic art genre, editing a book with this title in 1975. Many of his paintings now form part of the collection at the American Visionary Art Museum in Baltimore, Maryland. Some paintings were sold into private collections, most notably to Texan real-estate developer Trammel Crow and to the foundation of the philanthropist Reed Erickson. Through the Erickson Educational Foundation, Erickson, himself a trans man, contributed millions of dollars to early LGBTQ movements, making the first significant contribution to research into transsexuality in the US in the 1960s and 70s, alongside funding other enquiries into parapsychology and dolphin communication.

As Ingo Swann he authored numerous books including: *To Kiss Earth Good-Bye* (1975), *Star Fire* (1978), *What Will Happen When the Soviets Take Over* (1980), *Natural ESP* (1987), *Everybody's Guide to Natural ESP* (1991), *Your Nostradamus Factor* (1993), *The Great Apparitions of Mary* (1996), *Penetration: The Question of Extraterrestrial and Human Telepathy* (1998), and *Psychic Sexuality* (1999). Published under imprints of Olympia Press, and under the pen names Defence Eakens: *Bigger than Life* (1971), *Honeymoon Perversion* (1971) – was also translated into German. Swann also served as the editor of the book *Cosmic Art* (1975).

As Hero Haubold he contributed to at least one magazine (*Screw: The Sex Review*) and published *Golden Balls* (1971).

Special Thanks to

Leslie-Lohman Museum of Art, New York

ONE Archives at the USC Libraries, Los Angeles

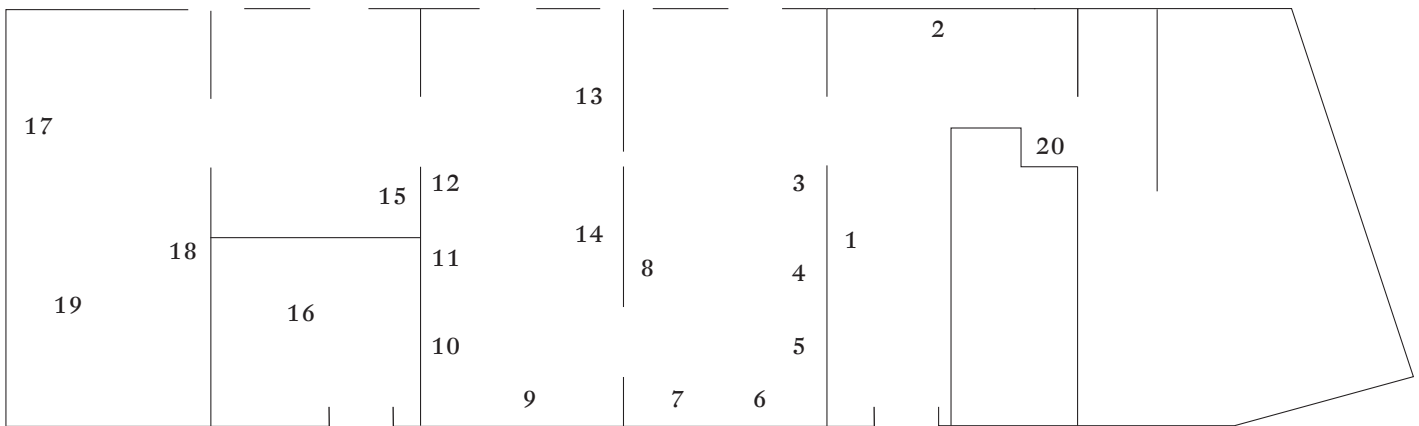
Goldsmiths, University of London

Pro Helvetia, Switzerland

Mondriaan Fund, Netherlands

HTSU Artist Cooperative, Amsterdam

FLOOR PLAN



1
Gianmaria Andreetta, Publik
Universal Frxnd and Nina
Wakeford
Being a faggot-spaceman I am awesome., part 1, 2022
Read by Angharad Williams
Recorded and edited by Martin
Clarke
Single channel audio
7 mins

2
Ingo Swann
An Alternative, n. d.
Collage
45.5 x 61 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.40)

3
Ingo Swann
*There's nothing like a great work of
art*, 1994
Collage
40.5 x 30.5 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.1)

4
Ingo Swann
*Portrait of an Overexcited Homo-
phobe*, n. d.
Collage
45.5 x 61 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.50)

5
Ingo Swann
Oh! God! – Social Comment Series,
n. d.
Collage
45.5 x 61 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.47)

6
Ingo Swann
Labors, n. d.
Collage
28 x 21 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.52)

7
Ingo Swann
*Tourists Arriving to Seek the
Mineotaur in his Towering Maze –
Erotic Beyond Series*, n. d.
Collage
45.5 x 61 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.68)

8
Ingo Swann
*Our Society Wants Cock - In Secret -
Out Behind the Cafe*, n. d.
Collage
35.5 x 19.5 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.82)

9
Ingo Swann
*Love in the Afternoon Work Break
Harvesting a Ripe Dick – Social
Comment Series*, n. d.
Collage
45.5 x 61 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.59)

10
Ingo Swann
*Oh! Yes! Oh! Yes! Oh! No! Oh!
No!*, n. d.
Collage
61 x 45.5 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.43)

11
Hero Haubold (Ingo Swann)
Collage
Screw: The Sex Review, Vol. 1,
No. 6, pp. 10-11, 7 March
1969
Magazine
2 x (38 x 29 cm)

12
Ingo Swann
Dreaming the Power, n. d.
Collage
45.5 x 61 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.78)

13
Ingo Swann
*All Subjects are not Equal – Social
Comment Series*, n. d.
Collage
61 x 45.5 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.39)

14
Ingo Swann
Untitled, n. d.
Collage
45.5 x 61 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.64)

15
Ingo Swann
Mortal Sadism, n. d.
Collage
35.5 x 19.5 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.81)

16
Gianmaria Andreetta, Publik
Universal Frxnd and Nina
Wakeford
Being a faggot-spaceman I am awesome., part 2, 2022
Read by Angharad Williams
Recorded and edited by Martin
Clarke
Single channel audio
3 mins

17
After Dark, Vol. 6, No. 10, p.
52, February 1974
Magazine
20.3 x 28 cm
The Leslie-Lohman Museum of
Art, New York

18
Ingo Swann
Untitled, n. d.
Collage
33 x 52 cm
Courtesy the Leslie-Lohman
Museum of Art, Gift of the Ingo
Swann Estate (2014.20.72)

19
Gianmaria Andreetta, Publik
Universal Frxnd and Nina
Wakeford
Being a faggot-spaceman I am awesome., part 3, 2022
Read by Angharad Williams
Recorded and edited by Martin
Clarke
Single channel audio
12 mins

20
Photos of Ingo Swann, n. d.
Contact sheet
2 x (5 x 5 cm)
The Leslie-Lohman Museum of
Art, New York

Exhibition opening
Thu, September 22, 2022,
5–9pm

Guided tour with sign-language
translation
Fri, October 10, 2022, 6pm



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Saturday
12–4pm