

BELLISSIMO THORSSON

OLA VASILJEVA IN CONVERSATION WITH HELGI THORSSON

Anybody invited to realize a project in 1646 is asked to engage in conversation with a previously unknown correspondent.

This conversation takes place via e-mail and stretches through the whole period during which the artists develop their initial idea into final results. 1646 invites the correspondent at the other end of this contact to figure his/her way through this actual process.

In trying to picture what result the artists' work is going to, such exchange can become a reflection on the amount of otherwise untraceable choices of the moment which make up to the artists' practice.

This issue is part of the exhibition by Helgi Thorsson, *Bellissimo Thorsson*, February 26 2016 in 1646.

This artist
Helgi Thorsson

This correspondent
Ola Vasiljeva

Concept and design
Nico Feragnoli

1646.

Boekhorststraat 125, 2512 cn, The Hague
The Netherlands

<http://1646.nl> - info@1646.nl

Ola Vasiljeva [OV] - Helgi Thorsson [HT]

Dear Helgi,

I know your work a little bit - a few years ago I saw a wonderful bar or maybe it was a lamp or a farmer's leg- or maybe a combination of all three at Kees van Gelder.

And then I saw many many paintings and sculptures, balding heads and voluptuous ladies, animal smokers, the undead cats, homeless ghosts and all was always surrounded by so much magic and so much fun.

At Art Rotterdam I met again a curious bar and all these vessels and furniture pieces who are also always someone else too. So many spirits - animal and alcoholic!

From the introduction to your *Bellissimo Thorsson* show I read that you visited a few mediums, who unraveled some hidden knowledge. Looking at your work it feels like even your chair or a little teapot knows more than any medium on planet Earth. How did you end up at a hypnotist this time?



HT - OV

I was in a show with a spiritual artist in Iceland and there I met a hypnotist, I was curious about it. I found out that he was in the same building as my accountant, next time I went with some papers I dropped by the hypnotist, he was free and gave me a session, not for free it was rather pricy, but normally he would only interview people in first session to see if people are stable or not. I assured him I was totally ok and stable so he could just get on with it, and it worked, in a sense: I got in a weird daydream stage and saw all these bright colors much more intense than if you just imagine things and colors, it was as watching a projection in my head.

I did not really go to the mediums for the show, but I went to them and they told me this stuff - that is the truth. Why I went is just for curiosity, and when I was asked to write a text, this came to me and so it came to be for the exhibition which perhaps is true? I need to go again.



OV - HT

I love this multi-eyed and multi-headed cat, he looks multi-hypnotized by the calm dog next to him. And I love the idea of a building which accommodates an accountant and a hypnotist and who knows what else. Some of your furniture pieces look like they come from interiors of similar worlds. Where does the name "Domti" come from?

HT - OV

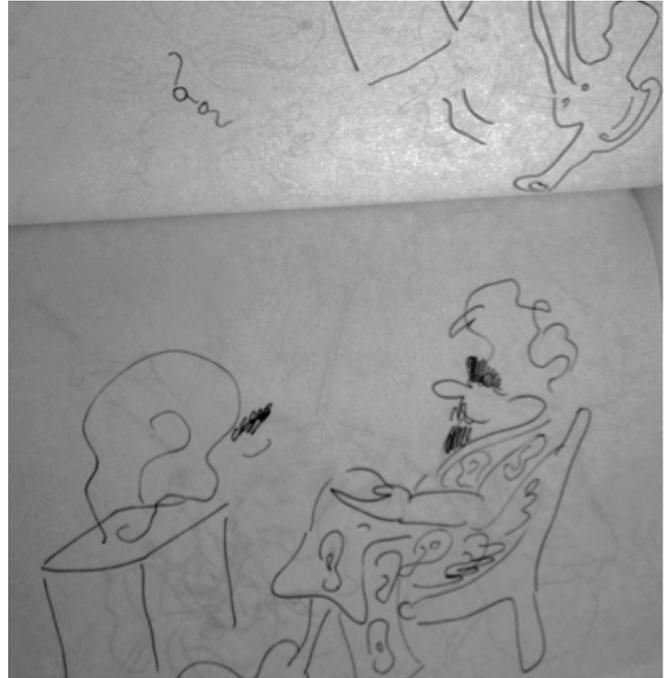
Domti was a shop that sold cheap stuff in Smáratorg shopping center in Iceland, my grandfather had huge belief in this shop and was always giving members of the family stuff from there, this was not appreciated. The shop stopped, I like the name and my grandfather.

Another strange thing about the accountant, he was great and helped me a lot getting back years of overpaid tax, but this time I went to the hypnotist, he was not in and I sent him emails and phoned him but never got

hold of him. One day I went again in that building and his office was gone, I never heard again from him and I have had bad luck with my tax.

OV - HT

Maybe you should move your studio to this building where some mysterious characters appear and disappear. There must be some portal that the magical accountant and practical hypnotist keep on exchanging. And what about the pan flute music?



HT - OV

Yes true, but the accountant is disappearing like that all the time, I was told. I must work a bit, then I will have coffee and send something about the pan flute.

(Helgi disappeared too)

OV - HT

While you take a small break - I was thinking that your stories and your work follow a dream logic, full of gaps and past lives and other kind of lives. Maybe it's Iceland, so rich in mythic imagination or maybe its just you lucky to be tapping all the time into some web of wild intelligence.

I myself feed heavily on my dreams, for example. Which often influences my work too. So it's also like going to a medium - only instead of going, I am going to sleep. I rely on this and appreciate the door, which opens in sleep very much. And sometimes the information that comes through dreams gets mixed with the reality information and it makes the knowledge so pleasantly elusive and blurry. I like blurry things and especially in art I

love everything blurry and open. This brings me back to your ceramics inspired by flute music..

HT - OV

Yes I find dreams help and what comes to me in dreams or in between wake and sleep is what I take most seriously. One of the most famous medium of our time Edgar Cayce said we should all listen to our dreams and write them down and learn to use them in our daily life, and that we all have psychic powers?

Pan flute music was kind of joke but I got into it and I have been playing pan flute music for my ceramics and I believe that with the right technique of the future I can play it back through the vases, they are very much alive.

So that's how the ceramics got influenced by the pan flute, also there is a big mystery surrounding the Atlantis and ancient civilizations and perhaps its music from that time?

OV - HT

That is a wonderful way to converse with your vases - that you play music for them and then they become the instrument too. In shamanic cultures it's also common to create pottery to the sound of music or a song.

I have been very interested in how sound influences shapes. Usually it is the form of an instrument that shapes the sound, but with your approach it seems to go both ways.

Oh and Im sure your vases are alive!

What I like about your work so much is that it is full of story. It does not tell a story, but the story tells it. I think our world is full of facts, but the story is often disappearing. By "a story" I don't mean a narrative or an explanation, but rather a myth, personal magic, something mad and ancient but unpredictable and unexplainable, because it's much older than facts. It can be traced back through some echoes of dreams, a child's imagination and language - or art - like yours. And with you it is not an occasional discovery, but such a rich source of this savage and pure otherworldliness.

Can't wait to see Belissimo Thorsson! And I wish you to find Echo in your vases and of course for the accountant to find back the right portal!

