



Jesper Just, *Seminarium* (2021). Video stills.

JESPER JUST

Seminarium

APRIL 23rd – JULY 4th 2021

With the total installation *Seminarium*, acclaimed Danish artist Jesper Just transforms Gammel Holtegaard into a tech-poetic hothouse for the bodies of plants and humans alike. Biology and technology fuse, virtually merging into a single organism living and breathing before our very eyes. In a series of brand-new works Jesper Just brings his seductive filmic style and distinctive visual universe into dialogue with the Baroque grounds and gardens at the manor gallery.

Gammel Holtegaard proudly presents a new solo exhibition by Danish artist Jesper Just (b. 1974). Jesper Just is one of Denmark's leading international art stars, famous for his ambitious, compelling film works with their hallmark perfected aesthetics. His film works are often shown in large, sculptural installations that involve the viewer as a participant. Similarly *Seminarium* reaches out into the exhibition space, making us witnesses to invisible, symbiotic interactions between plants, technology and the human body.

Seminarium is a total installation with six newly produced film works extending throughout the galleries at Gammel Holtegaard. The viewer is part of an intimate and sensual encounter with luminous, violet bodies and a floating woman, whose voice fills the exhibition like a commercial voice-over for a body-optimising product. *"Experience emotional wellness with clinically proven biofeedback technology"* the voice intones: *"Ready. Play. Feel ..."*

Seminarium addresses the perpetual human drive – past and present – to cultivate super-plants and super-bodies: to control nature and force it to assume specific shapes and properties.

The exhibition takes the history of the manor house as its starting point, a history that began in 1756, when royal architect Lauritz de Thurah designed and built Gammel Holtegaard. The Baroque gardens outside still stand as testimony to the human need to intervene in nature, forcing it to comply with a concept of universal symmetry.

Jesper Just's total installation incorporates the ideas behind these cultivated surroundings in an elaborate, sculptural ecosystem of plants and video screens. A network of plastic tubing, cables and glass vases twist and turn through the galleries, creating a hydroponic cultivation system where plants grow in water and are fed by the light emitted by filmed bodies. From fragmented LED screens hacked to function as grow lights violet human bodies transmit precisely the right light waves the plants need to make photosynthesis possible.

Film imagery, technology and organic processes form multiple mini-circuits within the installation. As the LED screens emit growth-enhancing light waves, the specific species of plant they feed can either be eaten or applied to the human body as a potential boost or cure in an exchange between plant forms and the human body.

Seminarium is the first time Jesper Just works with an Anthropocene perspective on nature. Using hard technology and soft poetry, the artist paints a science-fiction scenario in which nature, technology and the human meet in what the artist himself calls tech-poetics.

Jesper Just (b. 1974)

Since graduating from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts 2003 Jesper Just's work has been based on video in works renowned for their filmic precision and critical play on the visual tropes and narratives of mainstream media, not least when it comes to gender, human relationships and emotions. In recent years, live performances and large, architectural installations have added to his oeuvre. Jesper Just's works are often based on specific places and environments, with a focus on their complex meanings and patterns of movement and behaviour. Jesper Just lives and works in Berlin and New York.

Jesper Just has exhibited widely in Denmark and abroad, and his work is represented in museum collections worldwide, including the Metropolitan Museum of Art (USA), the Guggenheim Museum (USA), MoMA (USA), Tate Modern (UK), Kiasma (FI), Musée d'Art Moderne (LUX), Moderna Museet, (SE), The National Gallery of Denmark (DK) and Louisiana Museum of Modern Art (DK). Jesper Just's work has been shown several times at the Performa biennale in New York, and represented Denmark at the Venice Biennale in 2013.

Creative Workshop and Events Programme

Gammel Holtegaard is also launching a creative workshop based on the exhibition. With inspiration from the exhibition children and adults alike will be able to play and experiment with plants and visual media. The exhibition is also accompanied by an events programme, including a collaboration with the science and nature festival Bloom, where visitors can experience the artist in conversation with scientific researchers and others in the Baroque gardens outside the galleries. You can also see experience exhibition on our short, free *Art & Cider* guided tours, as well as our *Art and Garden Walks*. Please check our website for updates to the programme. The program is in Danish.

Exhibition Opening and Dates

Due to the current Covid-19 restrictions we are unable to hold the exhibition planned for Thursday April 22nd. The exhibition is officially open from Friday April 23rd up to and including Sunday July 4th, 2021.

Opening hours: Tuesday-Sunday: 12.00-17.00, Thursdays: 12.00-20.00. Closed Monday.

Danish public holidays: Friday April 30th, Sunday May 23rd & Monday May 24th: 12.00-17.00,
Thursday May 13th: 12.00-17.00.

COVID-19 Guidelines

Gammel Holtegaard follows the advice and guidelines of the Danish health authorities. We welcome all guests with a Covid passport – i.e. proof of vaccination or a negative test less than 72 hours prior to your arrival

It is not necessary to book a time for your visit.

Please check our website for any relevant changes or updates.

Press contact

For more information about the exhibition, previews or interviews with the artist please contact:

Nina Peitersen
Head of Communication
ninp@rudersdal.dk
+45 7268 5892

Press materials can be downloaded [here](#).

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