

**'MAGICAL WORLD'**  
BY JOHANNA BILLING

14 OCTOBER – 13 NOVEMBER  
PRIVATE VIEW 13 OCTOBER, 6 – 8 PM

HOLLYBUSH GARDENS is pleased to present *Magical World* a new work by Johanna Billing.

---

Billing's work is often characterised by an investigation into existential situations that have emerged out of a given socio- geographical context. Early works such as *Project for a Revolution* (Stockholm, 2000) and *Missing Out* (Stockholm, 2001) present groups of people enacting simple non-activities such as waiting and breathing. These 'actions' imply a metaphorical reading of culture at large. Billing chose *You Don't Love me Yet*, written by American songwriter Roky Erickson (1984), to be performed during an ongoing tour that began in 2003. The tour included multiple live interpretations by local participants at each venue. This project played with the potential of covers and their invitation for subversion and reclamation. *You Don't Love me Yet* also formed the basis of a video work (2003). In *Look Out!* (London, 2003), an estate agent shows an incongruous bunch of youngsters around a new luxury development. The work highlights the process of gentrification by contrasting dilapidated council housing and public spaces with the newness and unaffordability of the development.

*Magical World* is a result of collaboration with a group of children from a free after-school music club based at a run down 1980s cultural centre in Dubrava, a suburb of Zagreb, Croatia. The focus of the work is a group of children rehearsing *Magical World*, chosen by Billing and written by the black American singer Sidney Barnes (1968), who was part of the group Rotary Connection. *Magical World* captures the momentous shift between old and new economic and ideological systems. A personal transition is expressed by the song that could also be said to allude to the fast-paced development taking place in a relatively young country facing European Union demands for future integration into the group of member states. This is further articulated as the children struggle to handle the arrival of the international use of English, and as such follows the meaning of the lyrics. The song is at times both melancholic and existential and is conceivably at odds with their tender age. The rehearsal is interwoven with life outside, leading up to an intimate performance by the children in their music class.

Johanna Billing lives and works in Stockholm, Sweden. Recent exhibitions include the 9th Istanbul Biennial (2005), Adam, Smart Project Space, Amsterdam (2005), *If I can't dance, I don't want to be part of your revolution*, Performance tour, The Netherlands (2005), Moscow Biennale (2005), *You Don't Love me Yet* tour, Milton Keynes Gallery (2005), *Studio Works*, Milch at Gainsborough Studios (2003), *You Don't Love me Yet*, Frieze Art Fair (2003) and Venice Biennale (2003).

---

GALLERY OPEN 1 – 6 PM  
THURSDAY – SUNDAY  
OR BY APPOINTMENT

HOLLYBUSH GARDENS  
UNIT 2, BJ HOUSE  
10 – 14 HOLLYBUSH GARDENS  
LONDON E2 9QP

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT  
LISA PANTING OR MALIN STÅHL

TEL: 0207 739 9651  
INFO@HOLLYBUSHGARDENS.CO.UK