

Eline McGeorge

With Space Blankets and Dark Matter Inside a Norwegian Paradox, 2013

Space blankets and rubber cut in strips and woven on a stretcher, 200 × 195 cm

A Future Journey on the Outside of the Norwegian Paradox, 2013

Space blankets cut in strips and woven on a stretcher, 200 × 195 cm

Biomat, 2013

Pencil on paper, 21 × 17 cm

With the Free Rider into the Oil Age and Beyond, 2014

Video montage and animation, HQ-video, sound, 12 min.

Artist book, 21 × 17 cm, 72 pages, edition 800



Installation view from *We Are Living on a Star*, Henie Onstad Kunstsenter, 2014
Photo: Øystein Thorvaldsen

The works presented by Eline McGeorge investigate paradoxes within the social democratic 'normality'. The use of science fiction and the grid are common denominators: the weaving grid, the grid façade of the High-rise governmental building in Oslo, and the Norwegian science fiction television series *Blindpassasjer* (1978). The series was directed by Stein Roger Bull and written by Jon Bing and Tor Åge Bringsværd—the latter two were strongly inspired by Harry Martinson's *Aniara*.

The plot in *Blindpassasjer*, which means *Stowaway*, is simple: After a completed research project on an unknown red planet, the Norwegian starship Marco Polo returns to headquarters. While the ship accelerates beyond the speed of light and the crew lies dormant, the silhouette of a figure appears on the surveillance monitors. The figure is a "biomat," an artificial human made out of a cloud of programmable molecules, who enters the starship from the unknown planet, and whose

mission is to protect the planet's ecological balance. Both the starship and the headquarters are considered a potential threat. McGeorge's video uses clips from *Blindpassasjer*, drawn animations, and documentary material to establish new connections between past, present, and future. As a result, the connections tell about Norway, Norwegian paradoxes, and the foundation of social democracy.

In both the video and the artist book, the plot from *Blindpassasjer* (referred to in these works as the *Free Rider*) is rewritten into a timeline that takes as a starting point the construction of the High-rise governmental building at the end of the 1950s and the social democratic ideas coded into its architecture. In the rewritten *Blindpassasjer* plot, the High-rise plays the role of the headquarters. The text follows some of the principles that laid the foundation of the social democratic model, the organization of Statoil, and the distribution of oil

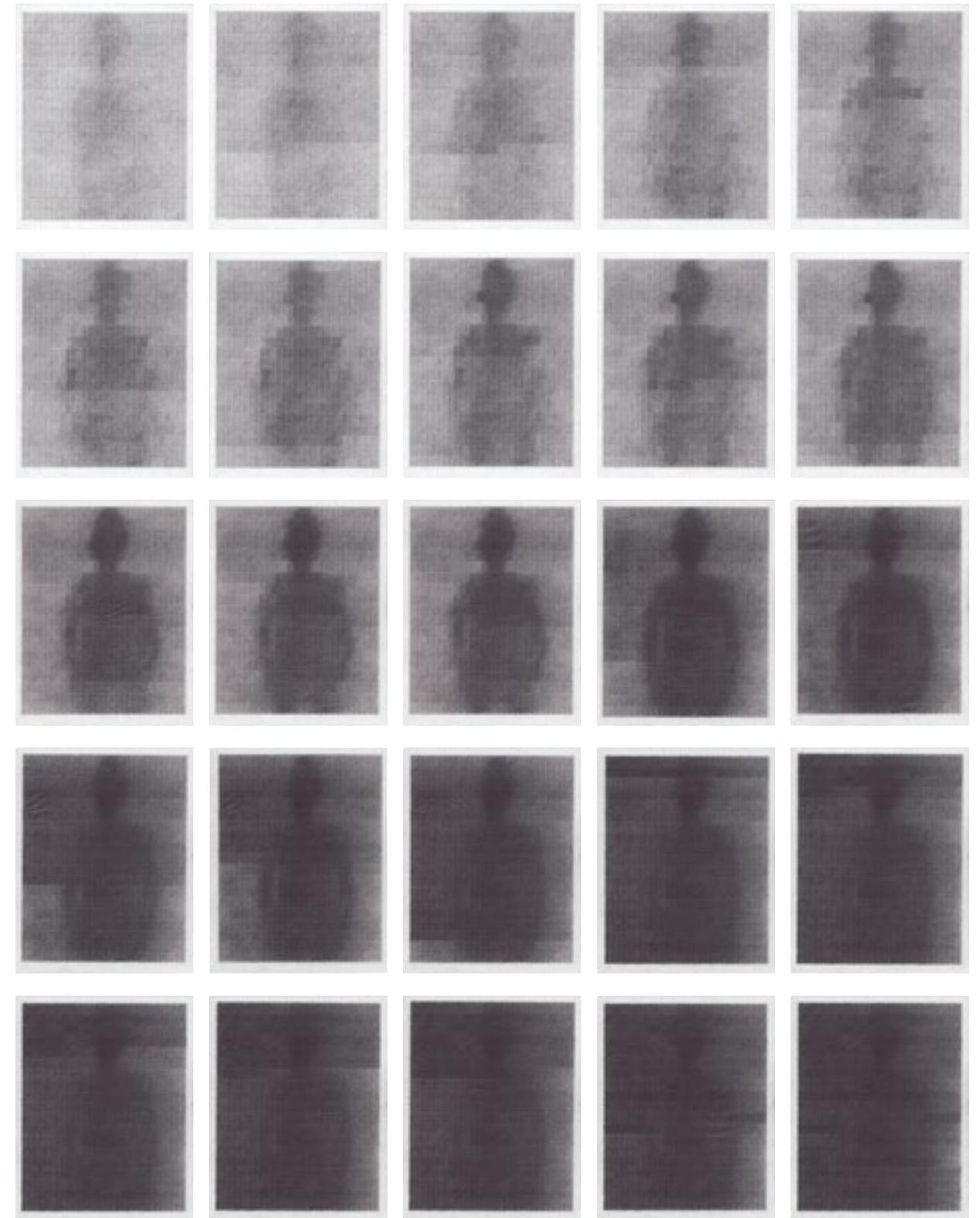
wealth. In McGeorge's video and artist book, themes from *Blindpassasjer* represent issues raised at the beginning of the oil age and changes the oil industry made to the Norwegian society at the time of the film (1978). The timeline continues up to today and today's version of Statoil as a multinational corporation, and further into a paradoxical future still haunted by the "biomat." The "happy ending" in *Blindpassasjer's* original plot, where the "biomat" is eliminated, is swapped with a parallel to *Aniara*, the epic poem that the tapestry *We Are Living on a Star* is believed to refer to.

In the apparently abstract pattern of the two woven works, another paradox is investigated. Their titles refer to a sociological term for the large gender segregation

within the Norwegian society—*The Norwegian Paradox*. The starting point of these works is an inquiry into the gender distribution of solo shows in Oslo galleries and of works purchased by national collections over the last years. Investigations, done by the artist, show that the proportions of artworks and shows made by women in different parts of the art sector are between twenty-one and twenty-six percent. The black rubber in the striped weave represent the "missing" artworks in these investigations, referred to by the artist as "dark matter," while the monochrome silver weave points towards a "vision" of equal visibility of artistic production.



Eline McGeorge, *With the Free Rider into the Oil Age and Beyond*, 2014
Artist book, 21 x 17 cm, 72 pages, edition 800



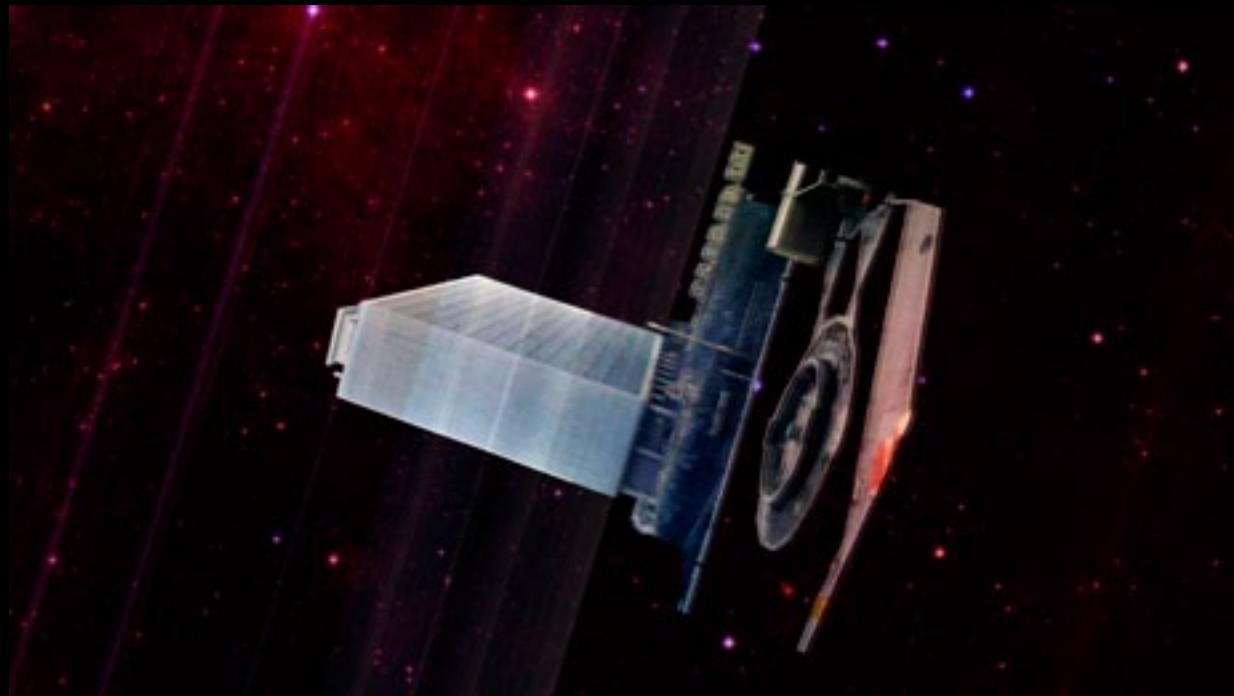
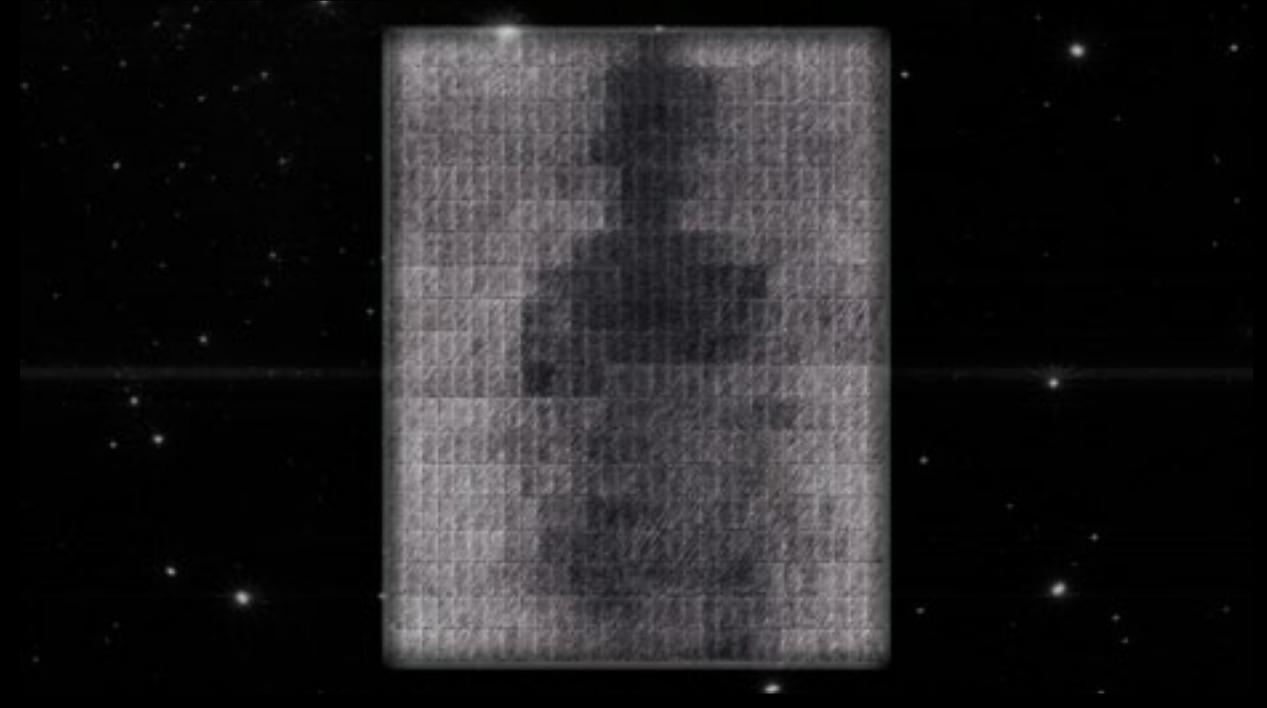
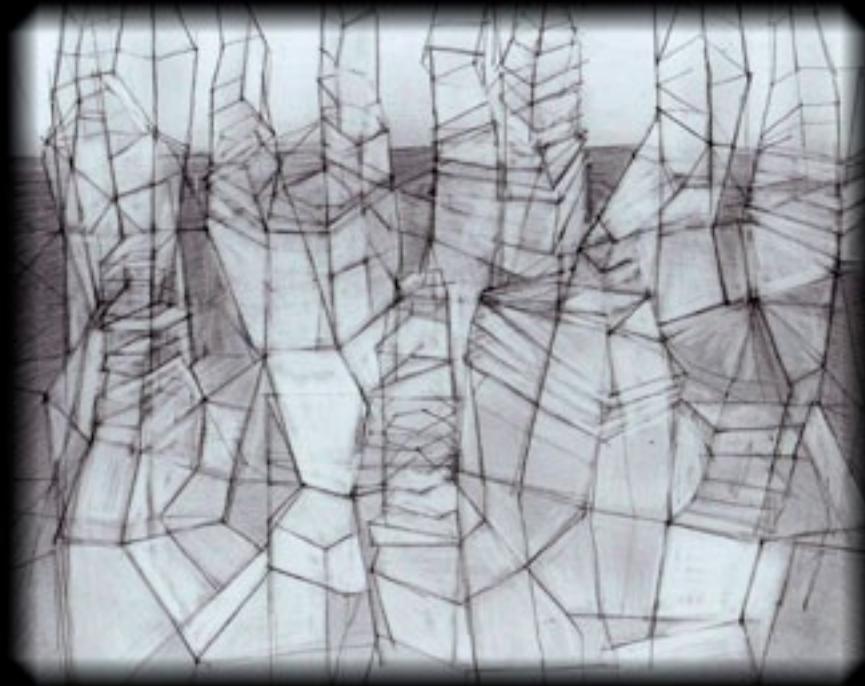
Eline McGeorge, *Biomat*, 2013
Drawings from animation process. Pencil on paper, 21 x 17 cm



Eline McGeorge, *A Future Journey on the Outside of the Norwegian Paradox*, 200 × 195 cm, 2013
Photo: Øystein Thorvaldsen



Eline McGeorge, *With Space Blankets and Dark Matter Inside a Norwegian Paradox*, 200 × 195 cm, 2013
Photo: Øystein Thorvaldsen



Eline McGeorge, stills from *With the Free Rider into the Oil Age and Beyond*, 2014