

LAVERONICA

arte contemporanea

via grimaldi 93
97015 modica (rg)
t. 09321881704
info@gallerialaveronica.it
www.gallerialaveronica.it

Johanna Billing

15 Years of You Don't Love Me Yet, 2002-2017

Opening Saturday, 30 December 2017, 7 p.m.

30.12.17 – 15.03.18

During the *You Don't Love Me Yet* live tour (2002—2017) local musicians, in 26 different cities were invited to cover the eponymous 1984 love song penned by Texan singer-songwriter Roky Erickson. In a diverse range of interpretations, each version reflected the participants' own personal style. In Teatro Garibaldi in Modica, Billing with Laveronica will organise a concert celebrating fifteen years of the project with fifteen new cover versions performed by local musicians and singers in continuous repetition over an afternoon on December 30th. Accompanying the performance an archival presentation with documentation from previous events, including roughly 300 cover versions will be on display in an exhibition at Laveronica Gallery.

Laveronica Arte Contemporanea is delighted to present the exhibition *15 Years of You Don't Love Me Yet, 2002-2017* by Johanna Billing. The exhibition looks back at the project where the cover version has been used as a catalyst to explore ways of maintaining originality as well as artistic integrity both on an individual and collective level. The ambivalence of the love song has been simultaneously used to explore the hesitant relationship between music and art. The first rendition of *You Don't Love me Yet* took place at Index– The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation in Stockholm in 2002 in which 21 acts each performed a version, in what turned out to become a very special repetitive micro-moment and portrait in time and place. What started as a local, and single event soon became an international phenomenon in which other musical communities wanted to share.

The initial performance event emerged from and sought to articulate observations that Johanna Billing held about Swedish society at the time [graduating from art school at the end the of 90s]. A drive towards individualism and independence had forged social norms, conventions and desires. The ambivalence towards themes grounded in relationships, or collaboration were also perhaps a rebuttal of the collectivism that had supposedly characterised Sweden's recent social past. Billing herself emerged from a cross art form practice, heavily involved in the independent music scene as writer, arranger, DJ as well as running her own record label make it happen (1998–2010). The organisational aspect of the project, to work with musicians on music's own terms, served as a key to the work and enacted a reflective response to the then growing interest in the art world in musical performances in galleries at openings and to 'enliven' the institutional context.

The practical aspect of the tour involved collaboration between music promoters from local venues and art institutions as a way to investigate and question the hierarchies between the different scenes as well as their respective modes of production, evaluation and expectations of 'artistic content'. Over 15 years, the constant repetition and production, from Stockholm to Toronto via Madrid, demonstrated an insatiable appetite for collectivism, for forums that included both amateurs and professional musicians alike from all ages, enacting the

format of the band on tour where limitless performances can only be seen as desirable in opposition to the prestige and rarefication often on offer in the visual art context.

To celebrate the multitudinous life of the project, a free online video archive will be launched during the exhibition in Modica, making it an accessible as a point of reference for the first time.

Johanna Billing, born in 1973 in Jönköping, Sweden attended Konstfack, International College of Arts, Crafts and Design, in Stockholm where she has lived and worked with video, film and performance since graduating in 1999. Recent solo exhibitions include, Keeping Time, Villa Croce (2016), Pulheim Jam Session, Glasmoog, Cologne (2015), I'm Gonna Live Anyhow until I Die, The Mac, Belfast (2012). She has participated in survey shows such as The Off Biennale Budapest, (2017), 4th Auckland Triennial, Auckland (2010), Documenta 12, Kassel (2007); Singapore Biennale (2006), 9th Istanbul Biennial; 1st Moscow Biennale (2005) and 50th Venice Biennale (2003).