

# ARTFORUM

## “Marie Høeg Meets Klara Lidén”

ONE ARCHIVES GALLERY & MUSEUM

626 North Robertson Boulevard

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Between 1896 and 1905, photographer and suffragist Marie Høeg and Bolette Berg ran a fairly conservative photo studio in Horten, Norway, selling unremarkable landscapes and portraits—but their collection of self-portraits discovered in the 1980s records a private challenge to gender norms of the day. The first of two gallery rooms at ONE Archives spotlights five modest prints from Høeg’s glass negatives; the subject meets the camera’s gaze as she poses in long underwear, in a black frock, and wearing a long knife like a sword. On the back wall, in contrast with Høeg’s more assertive, even defiant posturing, a grainy slideshow ratchets through eighty black-and-white frames showing Swedish artist Klara Lidén slumping over the toilet in a bathroom stall. In *Untitled (Handicapped)*, 2007, the artist occupies a public rest room designated not M or F but “handicapped,” pushing the context of a gay and lesbian archive toward the androgynous territory of identity in general, and forcing an ideological comparison between “non-normative” bodies.

Thrown onto one of three walls papered with flattened cardboard boxes in the second room is a more subdued and poetic if unsubtle manifesto: Lidén’s 2008 *The Myth of Progress (Moonwalk)*. This piece reasserts the historical bent of the exhibition’s pairing. Cars and bikes fly through the frame, moving forward through a nocturnal urban landscape; but Lidén’s body slides backward, in profile, dressed in dark sweatshirt and jeans. This video is also a self-portrait—a pose conveying the desire to retract, rewind, slow down, and to counter restrictive, linear plots.

At least a century separates the self-imaging and self-identification of these two women—Lidén’s black artist outfit from Høeg’s black frock. From suffrage in the late nineteenth century to the gender binary in the early twenty-first, in some sense the parameters of feminism have less evolved than simply shifted. Instead, as with *Handicapped*, Lidén insists on the monotony of history; the floor of a public bathroom may not count as progress, but how much worse to forget how we got there.

— Travis Diehl



Marie Høeg, *untitled*, 1896-1905, photograph printed from glass negatives, 20 x 13 3/4".

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