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Press Release, August 7, 2014

A NEW EXHIBITION AT UNGE KUNSTNERES SAMFUND (UKS):

# REMORSEFUL TOIL PROBLEMS AND THE STRIVES OF HUMANITY

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## LARS BREKKE

August 15 – September 21, 2014 | Opening August 15th at 7pm



Den skal jo ha mer passion da. Rasjonell passion. Sånn at folk tenker yes!

### HOPELESS ENDEAVOR

An opening thesis: some problems are larger than others. This may seem obvious, but what if we have neglected to address the moral and philosophical implications of such an insight? What if you were to make it your main priority to prevent the same mistakes in the next, hypothetical future civilization?

The issue of problems is the basis for Lars Brekke's solo exhibition at Unge Kunstneres Samfund (UKS) — an exhibit which also marks the inauguration of

UKS' new location at Tullinløkka in downtown Oslo. The newly renovated, skylit hall, which until recently housed the Bårdar Dance Institute, has now been transformed to display a series of films screening in uniquely-designed booths and private cinema surroundings. Set in the deteriorated living room of a post-apocalyptic future, the films address humanity's regrets and the hopeless attempt to repair the damage — when it's already too late.

## **COLLAPSE**

The films introduce us to three young men in an otherwise completely abandoned world who more or less voluntarily take it upon themselves to fix that which they view as humankind's greatest mistake: the failure to systemize the relative size of problems. Their task poses linguistic, intellectual and interpersonal challenges, and there is a lurking suspicion that these may be the wrong people to tackle such an obstacle. The narrative begins to unravel throughout the various films, opening into a total collapse of distinction between import and irrationality, logic and absurdity, sobriety and the ridiculous.

Lars Brekke's previous productions have evolved from a fascination for everything from boating and Star Trek to gender issues, interspecies communication, cosmic catastrophes and the idea that there is something "external" to the reality shaped by linguistic concepts. The assumption that the size of a problem is essential to understanding the universe has also appeared among his earlier oeuvre, but here with *Remorseful Toils*, Brekke takes his largest step yet toward arriving at the core of the dilemma.

## **TRACES OF INTELLIGENCE**

While the exhibition's primary emphasis is on film media, *Remorseful Toils* also has a strong sculptural quality. Square ornaments designed after the golden ratio protrude from the floor- and wall-mounted film booths. This mathematical relationship can be found in nature but, when transmitted to manmade constructions, bears witness to a fundamentally intelligent civilization. An animated pyramid located at the room's centre and entitled *Universal Striving*, hints at the desire for and attempt to summarize the entire world in a holistic whole.

Although the sculptural forms bear the stamp of a particular futurism, they also stand as a contrast to the films' abstract methods for dealing with the exhibition themes. The architecture invites the audience to an awareness of their own bodies: the wall-mounted booths conceal viewers' torsos while exposing their lower halves—as a perverse kind of changing room—and the floor-booths allow one to crawl inside and hide, or to stick a head out and flirt with the neighbour — whatever suits you best.

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## ABOUT THE ARTIST

**Lars Brekke** (b. Tromsø, 1983; lives and works in Oslo and Skånevik) studied at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts and at the Piet Zwart Institute in Rotterdam, 2012. Through varying collaborations and individual practice, his work has been shown at, among others the Museum for Contemporary Art (Oslo), the Kunstnerforbundet (Oslo), Kölnische Kunstverein (Cologne), Galleri D.O.R. (Brussels), and Reena Spaulings (New York), as well as in solo exhibitions at the project space Konkret and the artist-run NoPlace. In 2009 he was awarded the Einar Granum Art Prize (Kunstpris). The exhibition at UKS is his first large solo exhibition.

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All exhibitions at UKS' full-scale programme are juried by the UKS jury and curated by Johanne Nordby Wernø.

The exhibit *Remorseful Toils: Problems and the Strives of Humanity* is supported by the Norwegian Cultural Council and Billedkunstnernes Vederlagsfond.

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High definition photos from the exhibition available upon request.