



**PRESS RELEASE**

**Svein Flygari Johansen**

Am I making up what really happened?

**Exhibition: 11 November 2011 – 12 February 2012**

**Thursday-Sunday 11am-5pm Preview Friday 11 November from 6.30pm**

Svein Flygari Johansen is a creature of the forest and fjord. He spends the summer months high up inside the Arctic Circle, wild salmon fishing on the river near which he grew up in the northernmost city in the world – Alta. Otherwise he is based in Oslo engaged with the international discourse of contemporary art. A fundamental identification with nature is at the core of Flygari's work where imagery from the organic world connects with high technology.

The work links themes of indigenous culture, capitalist meltdown, patriotism and global politics with materials ranging from sticks and stones to complex computer programming. Code for all Flygari's digital works is written by Jonny Bradley with whom he has collaborated since 2001.

Water is a motif that runs through Flygari's artworks: his local Alta-Kautokeino waterway was the site of the only instance of civil unrest in Norway's recent history: a political controversy in 1978 that centred around Sámi land rights and had a huge impact on the national psyche. The disjunction between ancient and contemporary cultural identities is a recurring focus for his work and several earlier pieces on the theme will be recreated for this exhibition, to complement a major new commission.

This will be the first time that Svein Flygari Johansen has exhibited in the UK, despite the significant influence his work has had in Norway as an artist and curator. As part of the project, Flygari has invited younger artists Frode Halvorsen and Jorid Levke Eide to make new work for the ongoing FlatScreen programme in Beaconsfield's canteen gallery.

This is the third in the Beaconsfield series *Phase*, which turns the spotlight on mid-career artists with whom the organisation has a significant relationship. Beaconsfield first worked with Svein Flygari Johansen in 1999, co-curating *British Links* for Oslo's Nasjonalmuseet for Kunst and Henie Onstad Kunstsenter.

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***Beaconsfield... is distinguished by its history of providing a forum for extraordinary events and exhibitions, stimulating passionate, candid and robust debate about art's production and its ideological underpinnings... Sheena Wagstaff, Chief Curator, Tate Modern.***