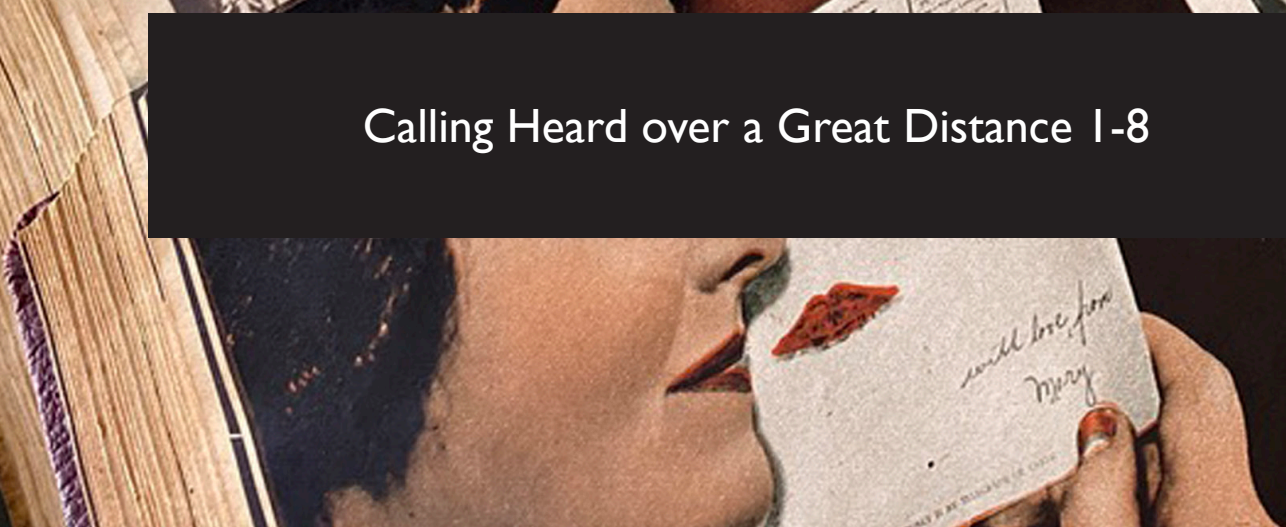




Artistic contribution

Calling Heard over a Great Distance 1-8



Calling Heard over a Great Distance I-8

Ane Mette Ruge, 2022

The series of pictures is the first part of a continued project.

The title *Calling Heard over a Great Distance I-8* refers to the poetical context of the project.

Even without knowledge of the course of history and the proximity of war in the present, these volumes of the weekly magazine *Billedbladet* (eng. The Picture Magazine) with the printing technique of the time, the materiality of the paper and the grey tones of the images, as well as the teeming stories in the magazine, convey to us a strong sense of the spirit of the end of the 1930s; a time when the world, without yet realising it, was on the threshold of World War II – a time when a popular medium such as *Billedbladet* uncritically published enthusiastic reports from marches with stretched, raised arms and impressive descriptions of the development of German society.

The overwhelming pictorial material is, on a personal level, also a way for me to witness the world and the space that surrounded my recently deceased mother who was a teenager in the years up to 1940. During the war years, as a grammar school student, she was involved in resistance work and at the age of 18 spent the last six months of the war in the prison camp Frøslev.

It is not an intention to thematise my mother's life or the tragedy of the war.

Rather it is an attempt to expose the surroundings by a deliberate omission of informative facts. In this way, the contours are exposed of what was on a personal and hidden level a young woman's fateful years, and high politically an imminent collapse of all normality in Europe. A world where strange stories of confidence in the future, pseudo-scientific inventions and show business seem to be structures that hold the world together.

This surrounding world of forms is represented in the series of pictures by a photographic-painterly palette of manipulating montages of images, more or less empty of reference, from the popular reports of the time in *Billedbladet*, which precisely in 1938 was published for the first time.

Formally, there is a reference in the concept to Hito Steyrl's essay 'In defense of the poor image' in which 'the poor image' is described as a humble image fragment whose objective quality and statement is constantly deteriorating/changing in an endless transit through the digital media-machinery.

I let the transit and circulation of the image take as its point of departure a visual universe from 90 years ago and 'recall it over a great distance' through investigation and repeated analogue and digital processing.

Hopefully, a sense of vibrating connection to a prewar period will arise that in perhaps far too many ways resembles our age.







Ane Mette Ruge f. 1955, works in an interdisciplinary field between media, genres, and language systems. She employs digital techniques such as video, sound, photography and AI, often in installation formats. <https://www.ruge.dk>
