

SASKIA NEUMAN GALLERY

Saskia Neuman Gallery is pleased to introduce Kasper Nordenström's first solo exhibition at the gallery, *Spegeldansen — Mirror Dance*. The exhibition presents a suite of work; painting and sculpture, where the elements of form and material create suspense and tension. The play between somber color and sleek shapes creates a presence, unearthing the work from a firm grip of stillness, where intention and identity are revealed simultaneously. Nordenström's work exposes feelings of shame, melancholy, and the inability to express oneself. A quiet storm. The impression of drama results in a dance, its finale uncertain, but always close by. The entirety of the exhibition gives way for the feeling of knocking on a door, pulling its handle and the scuffing at the floor – leading to a moment where something sealed, strained, and hidden will soon be released.

Kasper Nordenström was born in 1987 in Stockholm, where he lives and works. The visual expression the artist employs is stripped down, naked even. Purposefully and systematically, paint seems to have been scraped away, leaving raw canvases, where the traces of color tones defy a will to disappear, be swallowed whole. In fact, the paintings have been painted in their entirety on the back of the canvas. They're juxtaposed to panels where the canvas gives the impression of having been torn away, ripped from purpose. They are undressed, unprotected. The work exposes an inner fragility and look towards a state of a before and an after.

Nordenström's austere expression touches on the visual traditions of Arte Povera and post-minimalism. A dedication to simple materials and formations that speak of tactility, a complex clarity that questions convention and tradition. For Nordenström, the different properties of the materials become a meeting that is under constant observation. The forms are de-constructed, stripped to their origins, and pushed, right on the verge of destruction. The artist tames the material to its most extreme point. In the meeting between artist and material, an intimate relationship arises where affection, respect and perhaps contempt form a tangible charge in the work. These battles are constantly ongoing but hidden from the eyes of the outside world.

In the works *Stum (Mute)*, *Svacka (Falter)* and *Mättnad (Saturation)*, energy flows in constant movement. The meeting of linseed oil with the rough canvas is patient work. In several hundred layers, the color of the linseed oil slowly develops and creates natural shapes in the time-consuming drying processes. The colors change. *Falter* with its rich yellow tones look towards *Saturation*, which finds itself amidst a burning state, later reveals itself almost charred in the painting *Mute*. The artist allows the identity of the material to show, sharing and bearing all, while the surface is limited, closed even.

The exhibition *Mirror Dance* is Kasper Nordenström's first solo exhibition at Saskia Neuman Gallery and in Sweden. The artist graduated with an MFA from the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm, in 2021. The exhibition space is extended to the ALMA, location at Nybrogatan 8, where an additional suite of Nordenström's works are presented, this exhibition is titled *Eko — Echo*. The paintings comprise of mirrors where several layers of linseed oil paint take over it's the mirrors initial function, changing them into to relics, evoking mystery, and confusion. In steel scaffolding, Protea flowers sculpted in beeswax float and rest. Their devotional state refers to memories tied to the past, deeply rooted in the artist's inner space. In the separation from one another, the tension and dialogue that Kasper Nordenström's artistic practice directs is prolonged. Through the various rooms, a message meanders between the work, a faint voice whispers of a pending redemption, perhaps of something we are not yet able to fathom.

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