

# SASKIA NEUMAN GALLERY

JOSEF JÄGNEFÄLT

*I told you I'd be home most of the day*

22.08 – 26.09.2024



Saskia Neuman Gallery is proud to present the Swedish artist Josef Jägnefält's first solo exhibition at the gallery. Jägnefält's practice is rooted in the history and tradition of painting. Suggestive faces of people and animals, meet the transience of time in furniture and objects that distort our perception of what defines reality and dream.

The exhibition *I told you I'd be home most of the day* presents a suite of new works that return to the object's function as a carrier of meaning and mediator. The title of the exhibition carries a special meaning in how objects have historically functioned as a means of expressing various human desires. In the early 18th century, the production of Staffordshire dogs started in Great Britain, which in the 1840s received an iconic design of Queen Victoria's favourite dog breed – the *Cavalier King Charles Spaniel*. The figurines of the two dogs standing side by side and facing the gaze of their observer were placed around the mantelpiece of the home and became a symbol of the bourgeoisie in Victorian England. But the tale of the figurine dogs uncovers how the placement and positioning of the dogs functioned as carriers of messages between the woman of the home and her lover. Back to back indicated her husband was home; but when their faces met it was an invitation to the lover that it was safe to visit. *I told you I'd be home most of the day* places us in the centre of the story – secrets and desires balance between absolute stillness and emotional crescendo, where the works become reflections of desire and longing in the most intimate rooms.

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