

SASKIA NEUMAN GALLERY

Matti Hoffner

The ocean's busy on the phone

02.10 – 01.11.2025

A splash of paint on a piece of wood, a crumpled dish rack, a coil from an old mattress – Matti Hoffner's sculptural world begins with what has already lived. Found objects, worn surfaces, and seemingly forgotten materials carry traces of past lives. They are not symbols or representations, but bodies that speak of, and emulate time. At a first glance, the objects appear to have their own identities, yet in Hoffner's hands new qualities and directions emerge.

The exhibition *The ocean's busy on the phone*, presented in the gallery's project space, introduces Hoffner's visual world to a wider audience. His practice is rooted in attentiveness to the material's personal voice, making visible what has been readily discarded. A dialogue between form and content unfolds, where cracks and dirt become scars of earlier experiences. It is an intuitive process, in which the conversation between artist and material reveals itself through choreographic gestures. The sculptures are arranged not to direct a narrative, but to create an open dramaturgy. They depend as much on each other as they do on the space and the viewer. The works give the impression of being in constant motion – an abstract poetry of form and materiality, where feeling often precedes thought. The artist describes it as 'the hands, not the head, knowing best'.

The expression resonates with Robert Rauschenberg's *Combines*, Phyllida Barlow's sculptural instability, Simone Fattal's archaeological storytelling, as well as Rachel Whiteread's fascination with the architectural, the corporal within a sculptural context. Throughout these processes Hoffner's practice stands firmly on its own. His gaze is deeply intuitive, animistic even; the artist's work, his assemblages evoke a sense of tenderness for what seems forgotten.

To experience Hoffner's process is to witness a constant shift between control and surrender. In the act of making, objects acquire new meanings, yet never fully lose their personal narrative, their history. A charge remains – a residue of the past that seeps into this new context. It is precisely in this tension, between then and now, that something palpably alive emerges. The sculptures communicate, though not in a language we can readily understand, and that perhaps, is the point.

Matti Hoffner (b.1999, Karlshamn, Sweden). BFA Konstfack 2025. *The Ocean's on the Phone* is his first exhibition at Saskia Neuman Gallery.