

BIENVENU STEINBERG & PARTNER



Mia Enell, DEEPLY, 2019. Acrylic on canvas. 75 x 92 in./ 190.5 x 234 cm

Mia Enell

Large Paintings

March 3 – April 2, 2022

Opening reception: Thursday March 3 from 6 to 8pm

Bienvenu Steinberg & Partner is pleased to present Large Paintings, Mia Enell's first exhibition with the gallery. Enell grew up in a family of painters between Gothenburg, Sweden and Antwerp, Belgium, and graduated from the Nyckelvik Art School in Stockholm in 1987 followed by École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts, Paris, DNSAP (MFA). Subsequently, she spent a decade in Paris. In the mid-90s, the artist moved to New York where she lives and works. The exhibition consists of six paintings from a larger body of work, produced over the past two years. A selection of drawings will also be on view.

Enell is best known for paintings and drawings that depict the eccentricities of her inner life. "In traditional Scandinavian fashion, Enell summons the dark humor of her Swedish roots in order to grapple with expressing that which is typically somber. When Enell

flattens the imagery of taboos on her canvas, they become comic parables and make truth more digestible". (Alaina Claire Feldman in "Mia Enell, Large Painting", a catalog published in conjunction with the exhibition. Alaina Claire Feldman is the Director and Curator of Mishkin Gallery at Baruch College, City University of New York.)

Visions and haiku-like phrases inspired by dreams and the life of the unconscious are at the heart of Enell's work. A strange relationship of word and image is in play. Her paintings seem to freeze images from an ongoing flow of free association: a horse covered in eyes, a split meat-bed, a woman in deep pain, a crying tree, a flock of flying butts... "I often wake up late at night with clear visions or words that later develop into a painting. At times the work is automatic. The paintings are distilled and simplified, but open up if you spend time with them. When finished they take on a bold presence, a "oneness" (Mia Enell, 2022).

Her characters stare at us, seemingly caught in a dilemma of uncertainty, unsure about their place in the world. The monumental figures seem to all be women. "Is that because I am also a woman or because women are emerging from under something that has kept them down for a long time?" Enell wonders. There is hope that one will recover a lasting emotional connection that won't be denied nor rendered invisible. Through her carefully defined colors and shapes, all on one plane without using perspective, Enell renders the unconscious hyper visible, an elephant in the room.

Mia Enell's work has been shown internationally. Select exhibitions include: Drawing Biennial, Drawing Room, London (2021); Emmanuel Barbault Gallery, New York (2018); C.O.D. (Center for Openness and Dialogue), Tirana, Albania (2018); Arena Vestfossen, Norway (2013); Kulturhuset, Stockholm, Sweden (2011); Third Streaming, New York (2011); Colgate University Museum, Hamilton, New York (2006); Hellenic Museum, Chicago, IL, UP&CO, New York and London (2008, 2004, 2002); The New York Public Library (2006); Nordic Heritage Museum, Seattle, WA (2004); Centre Régional d'Art Contemporain, Sète, France (1999); Caisse des dépôts et Consignations, Paris (1999); Espace Paul Ricard, Paris (1999); Independent Center for Art & Photography, Paris (1997). Select collections include: FNAC, Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Paris; Los Angeles County Museum of Art (LACMA); Statens Konstråd, National Public Art Agency, Stockholm; Collection Teto Ahrenberg, Switzerland. She is a recipient of The Elfi von Kantzow Alvin Art Award (2021) and The American-Scandinavian Society, Cultural Grant Award (2004).

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