

# Galleri Riis

HÅVARD HOMSTVEDT

En Pil i Øyet / New paintings and sculptures

May 4 – June 19, 2021

*A visual impression is like an arrow to the eye. I am fascinated by this mental process, the sudden and then dawning mental processing of something in the surroundings. It's somewhere between confusion, understanding and misunderstanding. A shifting and productive place to be.*

*Or maybe it's like lightning. A transmission of energy covering distance. Something instant. If a sudden impression is like lightning, perhaps something frightening, painting can be a fear-conductor. Going from anxiety and fear to action. How to make sense of what has happened? Maybe it's in the form and in the act. To do something. To make something. Many of the motifs in the exhibition show figures doing something with their given circumstances. These people are often involved in absurd situations. A man drains water by drinking the water he is standing in. Time goes by, the water flows out below but the water line rises. Another picture shows a soft body trying to become a rock. Two figures grow together with arms reminiscent of branches. A character dreamlike drags his chosen one into a cave. These are figures driven by impulse and attempting to find meaning in a world without answers.*

*I feel great tenderness towards other people at a distance. Everything gets more complicated up close. In recent times this has become more clear. There are several pictures in the exhibition that have a bird's eye point of view. Something seen from a distance and from above. This perspective shows a connection that a more limited vantage point is missing. Maybe we're in a kind of "God mode" in a game. Viewers but also participants with completely different features than the others.*

*Every day on the way to the studio, I bike past a field with an enclosure for horses. There is little movement in these animals. It seems that they can stand completely still for a very long time. Are they supposed to be like that? Have they lost their own willpower? To what extent can one allow oneself to be governed by another's will? To depend on someone?*

*I fell off a horse when I was a child. It took off with me on its back. I remember how big it was and that I could not control it. It would not follow. I think of this push/pull when I see these animals. It is an negotiation between two different wills.*

*There's a lot of hope in wanting something very much and trying to give it a form. These paintings are created by layers upon layers, stitch by stitch, like a tapestry, hoping the lines will add up to a satisfying image. Yet, there is a let down there. It builds up and falls down. All the paintings in the exhibition are made in the same way, woven together with thick coats of paint. The paint is then scraped off and then new layers are applied in a patchwork of colors. Scratched color is shaped into sculptures reminiscent of melting snowmen.*

*Snowmen can be viewed as a memento mori. They are here on a cold and clear day, and then gone by sunlight. Perhaps the snowmen in the exhibition are startled. They are surprised to be alive, but at the same time disappointed by their own condition. Half melted and half frozen, they are in a transitional phase after thawing a good deal. What happens now? Can you hope for spring, or do*

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*you want winter back? Certain death or re-freezing. If you had the chance, would you begin life all over again? Maybe with some changes? Have another go at it? The paintings are still materializing. The sculptures as well.*

- Håvard Homstvedt, April 2021.

The exhibitions comprise new paintings in a variety of formats, executed with oil and pumice on aluminum panels, and sculptures built with discarded materials from the painting process.

This is Homstvedt's eight exhibition with the gallery, since his first in 2007.

Håvard Homstvedt (b. 1976) lives and works in Oslo. He received his artistic education from Yale University School of Art and Rhode Island School of Design in USA. His paintings have been characterised by their textile-like surfaces and thoroughly executed canvases, rich in materiality. He has simultaneously worked with multifaceted sculptural expressions, surreal painted bronze busts, idiosyncratic silhouette figures and reliefs intertwined with paintings in ambitious installations. Sculptures and paintings with a crafted treatment span the gamut from 'high' to 'low' in art, and also points to his interest in finding methods of rendering felt impressions rather than reality.