

TAL R

The Forest in My Eyebrow
13 October - 26 November 2022



Tim Van Laere Gallery is pleased to present its second solo exhibition by Tal R: The Forest in My Eyebrow. This exhibition shows a new series of works that resulted from a confrontation between the artist and an opening in the forest, created by trees that had been cut down. The opening, which curiously seemed to form the shape of an eye, compelled the artist to make a series of drawings, which he later reworked in his studio into colored drawings on paper, woodcuts, and large-scale paintings. In addition to these works, Tal also presents a new bronze sculpture in the outdoor patio of the gallery.

“There is a strange coincidence in the Danish language that the word forest ‘skovbryn’ and eyebrow ‘øjenbryn’ are very similar to each other,” Tal explains, referring to the title of the exhibition. “So when I saw this eye-shaped space of cut-down trees in the forest, I was intrigued. I took a chair and sat there daily to draw. While I was drawing, I asked myself: What exactly am I looking for? What is it that I am drawing? What am I doing here? When you have been doing this for years, it is no longer about copying the forest. It is no longer about registration. You are doing something else. Something you might not be aware of yourself. So when I talk about an eyebrow and the edge of the forest, it is actually me wondering: How long do I really see the forest before me, and after which amount of time do I start to invent the forest? I think that is a question many artists can relate to. When you draw something outside from yourself, for how long do you see it? What do you actually see? And when do you start to invent your version of it? When do you start to use the world as a mirror for something else you experience in life?”

“This exhibition is about the drawings I made there, moving my chair around in this eye-shaped cut-down forest. I sat down and thought about what I was seeing, and where its meaning lies. Because when you see a tree outside your window you never can communicate all its details. You have to take what I call ‘your artist mathematics’. This is similar to how you would explain a tree over the phone; you have to decide which information is important. That is the first thing you do as an artist: you make a selection.”

Working across a diverse range of media including painting, drawing, print, textiles, sculpture, and furniture, Tal R questions our conceptions and presumptions about our surrounding reality. Through his own systematization of the world, with what he calls his ‘artist mathematics’, he tries to understand the physical world he sees before him and the abstract objects he knows by thought alone. This particular quest he began on small pieces of paper in the forest, with black and white drawings. After returning to his studio, Tal transformed these pieces of paper into colored drawings, which is when he found his vocabulary on the subject. Then, he started making woodcuts, trying out new configurations. As soon as things became more clear to him, these woodcuts turned into large-scale paintings, each with their own language and their own necessity for color.

Tal R (°1967 Tel Aviv, Israel. Lives and works in Copenhagen) has exhibited internationally, institutional solo exhibitions were held at: Glyptoteket, Denmark; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Denmark; Odrupgaard, Denmark; Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Netherlands; Hastings Contemporary, UK; Museum of Contemporary Art Detroit, USA; Museum of Modern Art, Denmark; Pinakothek der Moderne, Germany; Museum Kunstpalast, Germany; Magasin III Museum & Foundation for Contemporary Art, Sweden; Kunsthalle zu Kiel, Germany; Kunsthalle Tübingen, Germany; Holstebro Kunstmuseum, Denmark; Essl Museum, Austria; Instituto de Artes Gráficas de Oaxaca, Mexico; Centro Cultural dos Correios, Brazil; Kunsthalle Mannheim, Germany; Statens Museum for Kunst, Denmark; Horsens Kunstmuseum, Denmark; Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Denmark, among many others. Tal R's work is included in many notable collections worldwide, including Centre Pompidou, Paris; Museum Kunstpalast, Germany; The Art Institute of Chicago, USA; Essl Museum, Austria; Magasin III Museum & Foundation for Contemporary Art, Sweden; Bonnefanten Museum, Holland; Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma, Finland, and many private collections.