

GALLERI NICOLAI WALLNER

Eva Helene Pade
Moment of Transitions
August 19 - October 22 | 2022

Galleri Nicolai Wallner is pleased to present *Moment of Transitions*—our first solo exhibition with Eva Helene Pade.

Moment of Transitions explores social dissolution, unravelling, and collapse. Transitions are spaces of uncertainty. They hold no unified conclusions nor promise of a better tomorrow. The crowd screams in fear and moans in lust, groans in pain, dances, stares in stunned silence, and flees in panic, unbound by societal restraint. The grin of pain mirrors the smile of laughter as the grotesque turns satirical in the theatre of life. At the end of reason awaits chaos and absurdity. Faced with meaninglessness rationality falls away.

Moment of Transitions experiments with and subverts the traditions of Western art. Several of the exhibited works adopt the monumental scale traditionally reserved for history painting. Eva Helene Pade replaces the glorifying scenes of military victory and classical triumph that fill the walls of western museums with stories from the moment of collapse. The works indulge the ugly, the unruly, and the chaotic, and shift attention onto subjective embodied experience.

The intense emotions of the nearly life-sized figures renders disinterested contemplation absurd. The paintings dwell on feelings of ambiguity and ambivalence, not because they promise a way forward, but for the sake of discomfort. These works challenge us to question the core of human existence. *Moment of Transitions* draws on themes that have occupied Western artists for centuries and translates traditional subjects such as the female nude, the triumph of death, and the solo portrait for the present day. Pieter Bruegel the Elder, Francisco Goya, Edward Munch, James Ensor, and Otto Dix—who all questioned the limits of sanity in the face of absurdity, violence, and societal collapse form the core inspiration for the exhibition. The exhibition's relevance for the current moment cannot be overlooked. A psychological flash moment of an undone social order. The works present no solutions but encourage sustained reflection on the absurdity of the present. *Moment of Transitions* is a series of altars to the uncertainty of a changing world.

- Ane Cornelia Pade

Eva Helene Pade's work explores the emotions and intensity of human relationships. Working primarily within the medium of painting, people mingle from canvas to canvas. Absorbed in conversation, dancing, exchanging, being intimate—relationships unfold and deepen in timeless environments that could equally be nightclubs, bedrooms, romantic gardens or bustling crowds whose intentions remain ambiguous.

Pade's focus on the complexity of interrelationships finds its roots in a tradition of painting that includes extends through to the expressionist masters. This also extends to our own position as viewer, which shifts and is used in different ways within the work. In some paintings, it's as if we are invited to join in, encouraged to become part of a narrative that started before our arrival and will continue on once we leave. In other works, it feels as if we are strictly made to be an observer or voyeur allowed to look in from the outside or as if you were never intended to see it at all—as if you opened a door at a party and accidentally walked in on something private. Inversely, some works feel as if these roles are swapped and that it is the people in the paintings who are in fact observing us, peering directly into our own lives.

Both fervent and blasé, Eva Helene Pade's works echo our own mix of diverse feelings, love, melancholy, joy and jealousy, and all other emotions that constitute us as human.