

GLADSTONE GALLERY

Cecilia Edefalk

Grote Hertstraat

12 Rue du Grand Cerf

September 7 - October 8

Opening September 7, 2022

Gladstone Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of historic work by Stockholm-based artist Cecilia Edefalk, with watercolors from her botanical series made in the late 1970s as well as two short films. Previously exhibited only in part at the Berkeley Art Museum and Pacific Film Archive, Norrköpings Konstmuseum, and Nordiska Akvarellmuseet alongside watercolors by Hilma af Klint, this expansive body of works on paper and film— some of which have never before been shown—meticulously documents the native plants of beaches and other natural sites along the coastline of Europe, observed during a series of significant road trips the artist took. Minimal yet layered, informative but abstract, these methodical compositions form a bridge between the artist's ethereal, conceptual practice and the physical world from which many of her ideas are borne.

Edefalk has distinguished herself as a pioneering artist who continually takes inspiration from history, memory, and experience, transforming these modalities into deeply spiritual works that connect to nature, light, and her imagination. Through the artist's chosen mediums—namely drawing, painting, sculpture, and film—Edefalk forms visual representations of complex, indescribable, or everyday phenomena through the materials she molds and projects.

For the series of watercolors and drawings, Edefalk uses the framework of a years-long road trip to Spain and Portugal; the distinctive coastlines of Wales, Sicily and Lampedusa; and various locations in Sweden while living in Germany. Working in collaboration with the botanist Anders Tehler, Edefalk carefully catalogs the specimens, attributes, and colors of each plant she encounters growing by the shores of Europe with the exacting research of a scientist or anthropologist. Delicate blossoming flowers, sturdy grasses, textured leaves, and sometimes small insects that are "visiting" the watercolor paper while the artist works are documented with both rigorous attention to detail and artistic expressiveness in how forms overlap and subtle watercolors are applied to each surface. The artist's interest in durational work is ever present and particularly significant with this series; often working on a series for years or decades, Edefalk demonstrates determination in her commitment to a project, as well as an embrace of the inevitable fluidity in the process. Like a biologist, Edefalk's hypotheses and conclusions are all part of her investigations into an idea. The tangible artifacts she leaves behind from these various excursions offer a wondrous and curious suite of carefully executed memories of the history of the earth and her personal journey.

Accompanying the suite of drawings, Edefalk also includes two films, one vertical format and one horizontal format, sourced from diapositive slide photographs she took while on her travels as a way of further cataloging the sites of her journeys and discoveries. Sites that may not linger. This documentary-style film offers another portal through which the artist studies the world around her work. Through this long-form portrayal of how she memorializes her experiences and research, this film adds yet another layer to the durational quality of Edefalk's practice. The second film depicts a woman whistling in call and response with the birds. Through both her works on paper and films, this installation demonstrates the multifacetedness of Edefalk's expansive approach to art and image making, respect for the inherent structure of forms and ideas, and lifelong appreciation for experiencing and connecting to nature.

Cecilia Edefalk was born in Norrköping and currently lives and works in Stockholm, Sweden. In 2020, her work was the subject of a major retrospective at Norrköping Museum of Art and in 2016 at Prins Eugens Waldmarsudde, Stockholm. She has had significant museum exhibitions around the world at institutions such as Moderna Museet, Stockholm; BAMPFA, Berkeley Art Museum; Crystal Palace, Stockholm; Parasol unit, London; The Art Institute of Chicago; Malmö Konstmuseum; Lunds Konsthall, Sweden, Nordiska Akvarellmuseet, Sweden; Kunsthalle Kiel, Germany; and Kunsthalle Bern. Her work has appeared in group shows, including Aargauer Kunsthau, Aarau; Moderna Museet, Malmö; Documenta 11, Kassel; the 22nd São Paulo Biennial; the Whitney Museum of American Art, New York; Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford; Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt; CCA Wattis Institute for Contemporary Art, San Francisco; and Musée d'art moderne de la Ville de Paris, Paris. Her work was the subject of a solo exhibition, "Heavens," at Lund Cathedral, Lund, Sweden, on view from July 16 – August 21, 2022. She is currently working on a public art commission for the Swedish State at Rosenbad in Stockholm produced by Art Agency Sweden, to be unveiled later this year.

For further information, please contact Andrew Huff: ahuff@gladstonegallery.com
Brussels gallery hours: Tuesday–Friday, 10am–6pm and Saturday, 12pm–6pm
New York gallery hours: Tuesday–Saturday, 10am–6pm