

Galleri Riis

Arne Malmedal

Masterworks 1991-2013

January 18 - February 24, 2024

In collaboration with Arne Malmedal's estate, we are pleased to present a selection of important works from the last two decades of Arne Malmedal's productive years, from the early 1990's until 2013.

Since the late 1980's, Malmedal has explored the possibilities concerning figure / ground / image / frame in several large paintings that were mainly executed in earth colors referencing the natural world. These works were shown at Kunstnernes Hus, Oslo in 1994, together with monochrome paintings on fiberglass scrim, canvases framed by window-like grids, and paintings where a boxy frame structure was fully integrated into the painting. The exhibition manifested his position in the Norwegian art scene as a vital and experimental abstract painter with a playful approach towards the history of the medium.

In the paintings from the early 2000s, light became an important motif for Malmedal. He was preoccupied with portraying color as pure light, resulting in paintings where a monochrome field resides on the canvas, framed by a white surface, reminiscent of American artist James Turrell's spatial light installations. Several of these works were central to Malmedal's retrospective exhibition at The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design in Oslo, 2003, and display his delicate treatment of color and texture in large compelling and contemplative paintings.

From 2007 to 2013 Malmedal mounted four solo exhibitions with Galleri Riis, including what became his final. The (2013) exhibition was a major effort for the artist who already struggled with Parkinson's disease. His last paintings contained several new and experimental methods and approaches, e.g. the use of paint rollers, which yielded an opulent texture, and the presence of distinct and vital brushstrokes. In hindsight these works can be seen both as a summary of his artistic endeavors and an ambition to explore new paths.

The exhibition *Masterworks 1991-2013* occupies all of the gallery's exhibition rooms with significant works which demonstrate the triumph of his achievement over this period.

The Norwegian painter and printmaker Arne Malmedal (1937-2018) was educated at the National College of Art and Design in Oslo 1956-1960 and made his debut in 1963 with an exhibition of prints at Holst Halvorsens Kunsthandel in Oslo. Alongside a continuous studio practice and exhibition activity, he was also an educator and curator. He was the founder and head of the department of printmaking at the National College of Arts and Craft in Oslo in the 1970s, and as Chairman of Kunstnernes Hus in Oslo in the 1980s, he introduced important international artists and exhibitions to the Norwegian audience.

In 2003/04, Malmedal was honored with a retrospective exhibition at The National Museum in Oslo and Kode in Bergen (Bergen Art Museum). Malmedal's artistic output is marked by exploration and experiments towards the painting's medium, support, texture and the relation between picture and frame. His abstract pictorial language spans poetic color-field paintings and natural lyricism, often evoking spaces of vast depth.