

# G A L E R I E F O R S B L O M

## **Henry Wuorila-Stenberg**

Galerie Forsblom, April 26–June 2, 2024

Henry Wuorila-Stenberg's paintings emanate from a silent void – a void that is never static but instead keeps evolving in its nuances and cadences. For Wuorila-Stenberg, painting is a form of meditation and a quest for peace. Meditation has played a very important role in the artist's life for over forty years, and so it is only natural that his creative process flows from a similar all-encompassing, meditative state of emptying one's mind. His paintings' psychological and spiritual content seems to transcend what can be expressed in words. It is important for Wuorila-Stenberg that each painting has a fundamentally ineffable core. How can something for which there are no words be verbalized? Language fails as we confront a pristine rush of emotions that shakes us to our core.

Wuorila-Stenberg's expressionistic style is influenced by the years he spent studying art in West Berlin during the 1970s. His expressionism finds a counterpart in his paintings' equally striking surrealist elements. Themes and events related to the artist's own life are his primary source of inspiration, and his chosen colors are also linked to personal experiences. The artist in fact describes his relationship with color as an intensely psychological one. His raw choreographies of color impart their very own narratives, and their evocative textures endow color with a powerful material presence in his paintings.

Wuorila-Stenberg's process is totally intuitive: when he picks up the paintbrush, he has no idea where the journey will lead. The crucial thing is that he achieves a state of flow, and the stages and traces of the process must be visible on the canvas. Thumbing his nose at convention, Wuorila-Stenberg has always regarded painting as a vehicle of self-expression and identity-building. He describes painting as having grown easier with age; in his youth, he felt a greater need to define his place within the context of art history, but these days, he allows the process to flow freely, unfettered by labels and definitions.

Henry Wuorila-Stenberg (b. 1949) ranks among Finland's most acclaimed painters. This year marks his 50th artist anniversary. Wuorila-Stenberg has received numerous accolades, including the Pro Finlandia medal in 2004 and the Finland Award in 1996. His work is represented in the collections of the Gothenburg Museum of Art, EMMA Espoo Museum of Modern Art, HAM Helsinki Art Museum, the Wäinö Aaltonen Museum, and the Museum of Contemporary Art Kiasma. He has held solo exhibitions at venues including the Wäinö Aaltonen Museum, HAM Helsinki Art Museum, Hyvinkää Art Museum and Oulu Art Museum.