

Emily Gernild

*We Breathe the Same Flesh*

28 August - 19 October 2024

It is with great pleasure that Galleri Bo Bjerggaard presents Emily Gernild's latest exhibition, *We Breathe the Same Flesh*, which runs from 28 August to 19 October 2024.

The lemon and other living organisms have long been a preferred subject for Emily Gernild, and after a stay on a lemon farm in Spain, she delved into the groundbreaking thoughts of the Italian natural philosopher Emanuele Coccia on the connections between humans, nature, and existence.

Coccia, known for his philosophical approach to the significance of nature, highlights how plants are fundamental to the maintenance of life. He points out that plants, without our request, convert sunlight and carbon dioxide into oxygen through photosynthesis and are thus the only living beings that actively give life to others. This fundamental dependence on the life force of plants, which Coccia describes as a "first form of cannibalism," is a central theme in Gernild's exhibition. Through her paintings, Gernild explores how we, like plants, live in constant exchange with the world around us—we breathe because plants live.

"It is not cute romanticism when Coccia speaks of breathing as an act conditioned by extreme dependence on the lives of others. It is a 'first form of cannibalism,' for every single day we draw nourishment from gases emitted by plants: We can simply only live by virtue of the lives of others. "

In works such as *Haven*, *Bevidnet*, and *Noli Mi Tangere*, Emily Gernild expresses what Coccia conveys in words: Here, it is as if figures and flowers merge, as if they draw nourishment from each other. It is not just an uplifting movement; it is also transgressive and wild—being eaten and eating others for the sake of survival." (Bodil Skovgaard)

In *We Breathe the Same Flesh*, Gernild takes the idea further by considering plants not merely as biological entities but also as aesthetic and philosophical subjects. Her works reflect on photosynthesis as a process that dissolves the boundary between subject and object—a profound thought that challenges the traditional way of viewing the world.

The exhibition presents a series of works where Gernild, through her distinctive use of colour and detailed compositions, creates an intense dialogue between beauty and decay, pleasure and pain. The works, with their warm tones and flower-like forms, invite us to reflect on the cycle of life and the constant transformation of which we are all a part.

A catalogue with text written by Bodil Skovgaard will be published for the exhibition.