

Nathalie Djurberg & Hans Berg

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York

January 9 - February 21, 2025

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery is pleased to announce Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg's solo exhibition, *Only for the Wicked*, on view at Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York from January 9 - February 21, 2025.

An enchanting forest unfolds throughout the gallery with fantastical flora and fauna. In the entry, a colony of glistening gold beavers are nestled among a stack of bright blue branches. Notorious for building new pathways and changing the flow of water, these creatures embody the tangled thoughts hidden in the back of our minds before they come to the surface.

In the main space, a suite of seven new video works fill the room. In *Only for the Wicked*, protagonists and antagonists are interchangeable, their power structures morph and dissolve as the characters parade through the medieval settings. Played simultaneously, a range of surrogates – anthropomorphic characters, animals, and stereotypes — participate in violent and illicit activities, exploring the damaging effects of greed, power, shame, fear, desire, and over-consumption.

Upstairs, a monumental stone garden awaits, along with a soundscape from three stop-motion animations — *Dark Side of the Moon*, *A Pancake Moon*, *Howling at the Moon* — portraying contemporary fairy tales set in an ominous forest with a curious cast of characters. The sculptural stones are bursting open with flowers, gold crevices, or gems jutting from their surface, every corner reveals a sense of mystery or delight. In the next room, otherworldly flowers grow out of the wall and floors creating dreamlike landscape with vibrant birds perched throughout.

Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg have been collaborating for the past 20 years. Working in an intuitive and curious mode and uninhibited by traditional methods of art making, Djurberg laboriously handcrafts elaborate environments and characters out of clay, plasticene, foam, wire, fabric and paint resulting in a gummy, flamboyant aesthetic. The visceral textures conveyed in Djurberg's figures further elaborate the emotions provoked by their misdemeanors. Berg, a musician and composer, adds yet another layer of emotional depth through sound. With his compositions, drama is either reinforced or awkwardly highlighted by contrasting the portrayed scene.

Presenting familiar icons in perplexing circumstances forces us to consider our own biases, fears and fantasies and shines a light on the darkness our epoch aims to hide. Through their lens, we are forced to reckon with what it means to feel pleasure or pain and what it is to be male or female, victim or aggressor.

Nathalie Djurberg and Hans Berg are from Sweden and both currently reside there. They met in Berlin in 2004 and have been working together ever since.

The artists' collaborations have been exhibited widely around the world. In 2009, Djurberg & Berg presented their installation *The Experiment* at the 53rd Venice Biennial "Making Worlds" curated by Daniel Birnbaum where they were awarded the Silver Lion for Best Emerging Artists.

Other important solo presentations include National Nordic Museum, Seattle (2024); Songeun Art Space, Seoul (2024); Borås Konstmuseum, Sweden (2023); Musée d'Art Contemporain de Lyon, France (2023); Prada Rong Zhai, Shanghai (2022); Baltimore Museum of Art (2019); Schrin

Kunsthalle, Frankfurt (2019); MART, Rovereto (2019); Moderna Museet, Stockholm (2018); Stavanger Art Museum (MUST), Norway (2017); Sammlung Goetz, Munich, Germany (2015); Palais de Tokyo, Paris (2015); ARoS Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus, Denmark (2015); Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; New Museum, New York (2012); Camden Arts Center, London (2011); Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2011); Wexner Center for the Arts, Columbus, Ohio (2011); Natural History Museum, Basel (2010); Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2008); Fondazione Prada, Milan (2008); Kunsthalle Winterthur, Switzerland (2007).

The artists' works are represented in the collections of The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Kunsthaus Zürich, Zürich; Fondazione Prada, Milan; Goetz Collection, Munich; Whitechapel, London, among others.

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