

Galleri Riis

Olav Christopher Jenssen

Journal Vol. 07 / Book launch and exhibition

May 8 - June 7, 2025

In our annex space, we are pleased to present an exhibition and the launch of Journal Vol. 07, a new book by Olav Christopher Jenssen, published by Buchkunst Kleinheinrich, Münster (2025).

Jenssens's Journal series consists of mixed media works on paper, a body of work that has been ongoing since 1986 and reads like a diary of his artistic life. Last year marked the publication of Journal Vol. 08, containing works from 2023-24, encompassing a multitude of imagery and styles, from monochrome line drawings to richly textured and vibrantly coloured compositions made with various crayons, pastels, acrylic and watercolor paints.

Journal Vol. 07 focuses on a series of 72 watercolours, all with the same date, September 29th 2021 – executed with a limited palette of earthy colors; blacks, browns and plum, and together they constitute a whimsical allegory of shapes and figures from a fairytale world.

A selection of 27 watercolours from the series will be on view, and many of Jenssen's various publications from previous years will be available for browsing and purchase.

Olav Christopher Jenssen

Olav Christopher Jenssen (b. 1954 Sortland, Norway) is one of the foremost artists of his generation from the Nordic countries and has gained international recognition for his distinctive and multifaceted paintings, as well as for his idiosyncratic sculptures. His production includes drawing, watercolor, graphic works, book illustration and publications. Working simultaneously with multiple series and mediums, Jenssen alternates between the different works mentally and physically; from informal and rapidly painted pictures to more strict and formal paintings, in very large as well as intimate formats. Always exploring and adopting new methods and techniques, his works contain both continuity and diversity, therein emerging a rich visual vocabulary. The paintings open up a philosophical space for dialogue and reflection, encouraging the viewer to unveil strata of paint and decipher cryptic symbols, as on a journey through the history of abstract painting. Jenssen has over the years produced several public commissions ranging from murals and wall reliefs to freestanding monumental sculptures.

Jenssen lives and works in Berlin and in Lya, Sweden. He was appointed professor at Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Hamburg in 1996, and has since 2007 held a professorship at Hochschule für Bildende Künste Braunschweig in Germany. He is represented in important public collections, including the Museum of Modern Art, New York, Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Astrup Fearnley Museum, Oslo, Centre Pompidou, Paris, Kunstmuseum Bonn, Kiasma, Helsinki, Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Berlin, Marta Herford, Germany and The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design in Oslo. He has had major exhibitions at the Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo, Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki, and Kunstmuseum Bonn, Germany. Recent exhibitions include «Enigma» Marta Herford, Germany, «Journal – works on paper 1979-2012» Henie Onstad Art Centre, Høvikodden, Norway, «Olav Christopher Jenssen» Saarlandmuseum, Saarbrücken, Germany, «Estragon» Sprengel Museum, Hannover, Germany. In 2019, the Astrup Fearnley Museum in Oslo featured an impressive display of his works in the museums' collection.