



Sigrid Sandström, *Gust*, 2026. Acrylic on canvas. 150 × 250 cm | 59 1/16 × 98 7/16 in. Courtesy of the artist and Perrotin.

## SIGRID SANDSTRÖM

### SQUALL

**Private view: Thursday 26 March, 6-8pm**  
**Exhibition runs until Saturday 23 May 2026**

Perrotin is pleased to present *Squall*, Sigrid Sandström's first solo exhibition in London. Bringing together a new body of paintings, the artist explores expansive, atmospheric abstractions that evoke shifting skies, turbulence, and fragile states of equilibrium. Titled after a term that suggests both sudden meteorological change and piercing sound, the exhibition reflects Sandström's ongoing engagement with gesture, movement, and perception, while subtly addressing humanity's relationship to the natural world in an era of climatic uncertainty.

It would be misleading to describe Sigrid Sandström's new body of paintings as abstracted landscapes — for one thing, they do not appear to feature anything we might identify as land. Rather, if these works, with their swooping brush strokes and misty fields of colour, suggest a realm beyond that of pure paint, then surely it is the high enveloping sky. This is a place humanity can briefly visit, born up on steel wings in a blaze of fossil fuels, but can never truly inhabit. To look up to the heavens from the Earth is to be reminded of how limited we are, how finite. It is also to dream, perhaps, of how our finitude might be overcome.

The title of Sandström's exhibition, *Squall*, suggests both a meteorological phenomenon (a sudden gust of wind, or localised storm) and a sonic event (the loud, sharp crying of a bird, or a human infant). In her *Gale* paintings, what might be clouds or sulphurous vapour trails churn and torque across an extraordinary sequence of seven canvases, their translucent colours braiding and unbraiding, their shifting, diaphanous forms always threatening to thicken into something dark and dense, or else diffuse into nothingness. Looking at them, we might imagine the sound they'd make tearing across the open sky, a ragged yowl of protest against the world above them, or below. And yet, for all the kineticism of the *Gale* paintings— their palpable sense of fierce energies unleashed — when seen together they also have a rhythmic horizontality that imbues them with harmony, even a strange kind of serenity.

In William Shakespeare's play *Othello* (c.1630), the title character crosses a stormy sea, and on reaching safe harbour proclaims: 'O my soul's joy! If after every tempest comes such calms / May the winds blow till they have waken'd death'. Standing in the gallery space, might it be possible to look at Sandström's *Gale* series and experience a similarly untroubled state? The artist, after all, does



Sigríð Sandström, *Daunter*, 2026. Acrylic on canvas. 150 × 145 cm | 59 1/16 × 57 1/16 in. Courtesy of the artist and Perrotin.

not place us, as viewers, in the eye of her painterly storm. Rather, we witness it from afar, where its violence seemingly cannot touch us, and we are free, if we choose, to focus on the complex set of aesthetic and intellectual pleasures her maelstroms of pigment afford. To do so, however, would be to ignore how the weather system that appears to rage across the *Gale* paintings resonates in our era of climate emergency. Essayed in a palette that recalls a gloomy urban street choked with idling traffic, this storm is not, I suspect, merely the product of nature, still less some ancient thunder god. Rather, it speaks of our species' most self-destructive impulses, a vast carelessness in our custodianship of the Earth that has 'waken'd death' on a planetary scale.

Attend closely to the works in *Squall*, and we will note that many of them feature a circular motif, rendered with a geometric precision that contrasts sharply with Sandström's otherwise spontaneous gestural handling. In some paintings, such as *Slit*, this 'dot' is so small as to be barely visible. In others, such as *Gale III*, it is the dominant element of the composition. One of its functions is surely to give our eyes a solid point of focus amid the artist's deliquescing forms. Another is to indicate our relative distance from each canvas's abstract topography, and in so doing compel us to draw closer, or step back. Given how suggestive these paintings are of skiescapes, it's tempting to read Sandström's 'dots' as celestial bodies: not only the

Earth's own sun, moon and neighbouring planets, but perhaps any one of the countless, glowing orbs that fill the infinite heavens. *In Proximity* features two 'dots', one large and red, the other small and black, hanging in what looks like a sickly yellow troposphere, smudged with red light and grey, airborne toxins. Are we on some alien world, where twin suns rise every morning, or on our own rapidly warming home planet? There is an echo, here, of the iconography of medieval alchemy, in which the figure of the *sol niger*, or black counter-sun, represents the death of the old, and the birth of the new.

Sandström has observed that 'a haze tells you there is something behind the haze', and contemplating her miasmatic painting *Doublet*, or her foggy, crepuscular canvas *Daunter*, or indeed the vaporous tumult of *Gust*, we may experience a feeling that some vital visual information has been willfully obscured. This is not the case. These are, above all, abstract works, and as such are committed to full pictorial disclosure. At the same time, and for all their undoubted poise and beauty, Sandström's paintings have a restless quality, as though they were anticipating their own transfiguration. Like the sky, they reflect us back at ourselves. Like the sky, they do not stand still.

—  
Tom Morton