TANYA BONAKDAR GALLERY
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Rita Lundqvist
Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York
November 5 - December 18, 2026

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of new work by Rita Lundqvist, on view from November 5 - December 18, 2026. This is the artist's fourth exhibition with the gallery, and first in nearly ten years.

An exquisitely rendered group of new oil paintings on panel pulls the viewer into Lundqvist's enigmatic world of stillness and silence. With relentless consistency, the intimately scaled compositions feature a familiar vocabulary of figures and objects that appear engaged in mysterious activities. Discrete yet seemingly interconnected scenes depict a singular figure or pair in spiritual or ritual contexts, inviting varied narrative interpretations. In Lundqvist's work, the focus is always composition and color, with flattened forms and a subdued palette of muted greys, indigos, pale yellows, and ochres, imbuing them with a sense of sublimity. The spare scenes and scale of the works leave space for quiet contemplation.

In this particular series, each work offers viewers a satisfying sense of balance, both in composition and narration. A pair of men frame a row of saplings, one with a shovel and one with an ax. Two women stand side by side, as one loosely clutches a flower and the other remains noticeably empty-handed. Both women eye a discarded blossom at their feet. Even the lone figures pull on a sense of equilibrium - one character blends into a row of evenly spaced stones, while another is accompanied by two birds. Somehow the straightforward nature of the compositions mirrors the narrative tool of a fable's moral allegory. All the compositions utilize a stark horizon line that divides the fore and background of these abstract landscapes, referencing a divide between sky and earth, or heaven and hell. It could even be interpreted as a stage set, evoking the partition between reality and fiction. The work invites viewers to explore the individual surrealist, folk-inspired portraits while also understanding their connection as a larger, ascetic pictorial world.

Born in Hässleholm, Sweden in 1953, Lundqvist currently lives and works in Stockholm. She studied at The Royal University College of Fine Arts in Stockholm from 1980 to 1985 and was elected a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Fine Arts in 2000.

In 2011, she received the Barbro & Holger Bäckström's Art Scholarship, one of Sweden's largest grants, and subsequently presented a solo exhibition at Malmö Konsthall that fall. Other important solo presentations include Liljevalche Konsthall in Stockholm (2010) and Norrköpings Konstmuseum in Sweden (1999).

Her work was also included in The Carnegie Art Award, Nordic Painting, a traveling exhibition that opened at Arken Museum of Modern Art in Copenhagen (2001), and The Edstrand Foundation Art Prize at the former Rooseum (currently Moderna Museet Malmö) in Sweden (2000). Her paintings are represented in the collections of Sweden's Moderna Museet in Stockholm, Borås Konstmuseum, Göteborgs Konstmuseum, and Malmö Konstmuseum, among other museums.

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