

DOLBY CHADWICK GALLERY

Jesper Blåder

Beyond the Edge

June 6 - July 6, 2019

Dolby Chadwick Gallery is pleased to announce *Beyond the Edge*, an exhibition of recent work by Jesper Blåder. This will be the gallery's first show with the Swedish artist, who paints haunting and enigmatic worlds that are unequivocally rooted in our own.

Blåder began his career as an abstract painter. This legacy persists in his style, as evidenced by intersecting and overlapping geometric planes, strong graphic elements, and an emphasis on color as a vehicle for storytelling. Blåder always starts with color, and his vivid and unexpected choices—which can shift dramatically during the art-making process—intensify the works' emotional impact. These are deeply contemplative and even melancholic paintings, though they never feel overwrought or desolate. "I paint about life as I see it, from my point of view," Blåder notes. "I think the world is a very strange place, and I make strange paintings because that's how life is." This atmosphere of the strange and the fantastic is partly generated by narrative ambiguity. Blåder plunges his viewers into the middle of stories that teeter between radically different plot lines. The scenes are open and unhinged, ready to play out in any number of ways, just like life.

His paintings typically feature a landscape, as well as one or two people, or an architectural element such as a house, and sometimes both. Blåder finds people to be among the most interesting subject matter: not only is it impossible to ever know another person completely, it is also a feat to truly know oneself. He is likewise fascinated by homes as spaces in which people live. With their public, street-facing façades and hidden, interior lives, houses suggest the presence of people while also mirroring how they are designed and operate. The mainspring of these relational dynamics is a push and pull between knowledge and darkness, between being seen and hiding, which the artist elicits through symbols of communication and connection—or lack thereof.

In That Way (2018), for example, a young girl gazes out at us with deep, pathos-laden eyes that lock onto ours. She points off to her left, drawing our attention to a male figure in the midground who has been cryptically rendered via negative space. And yet, the trajectory of the line created by her gesture just barely fails to intersect this distant apparition and instead continues on, beyond the edge of the picture plane. What is going on here, and to whom or what is she pointing? What is she trying to show or tell us? What lies outside our frame of vision? This and other paintings are composed of multiple panels to form an irregularly shaped canvas, emphasizing the borders themselves and, in so doing, the circumscribed nature of knowledge in general. What we see is only part of the story. It is our job to fill in the rest.

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Attempts at connecting and making contact—with other people, with ourselves, with other realms—are also signaled by the satellite dish and radio tower in *White Villa* (2016), the searching female figure in *Far, Far Away* (2018), and the fusing of two heads in *Me* (2016) and frequent pairing of figures across his oeuvre, among other elements. Many of the paintings also feature small rectangular fields teeming with even smaller, colorful squares. These moments of pixilation suggest scrambled knowledge and thwarted transmission, and reflect the mosaic-like aesthetic of the works themselves, with their half-rendered landscapes, partial skies, and missing links.

In considering his art, Bläder notes how in the movies, a scene of a man walking in the woods unaccompanied by music is just that—a man walking in the woods. But if you add a soundtrack, especially one that is portentous in nature, then all of a sudden the air becomes thick with possibility and you understand that something is about to happen. “That’s the feeling that I want in my paintings,” Bläder explains.

Jesper Bläder was born in 1968 in Stockholm and lives and works in Örebro. In 1995, he graduated from Örebro Art College. Bläder has exhibited extensively across Europe, especially within Sweden, and his work can be found in the collections of Vetlanda Museum and Örebro Regional Museum, among other public institutions. This is his first exhibition at the Dolby Chadwick Gallery.

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Jesper Blåder

Örebro, Sweden

Education

1990-93, 1994-95 Örebro Art College

Selected Solo Exhibitions

- 2019 Dolby Chadwick Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 2018 Sander Gallery Linköping
Galleri Höman, Örebro
- 2016 Gislaved Public art gallery
Motala Public art gallery
- 2015 Ebeling Museum, Torshälla
- 2014 Örsta Gallery, Kumla
- 2012 Sander Gallery, Linköping
Panncentralen Gallery, Mariestad
- 2011 PS, Göteborg
- 2010 Hallsberg Public art gallery
Konstfrämjandet, Örebro
- 2008-09 Vetlanda Museum
- 2008 Örsta Gallery Kumla
- 2007 Arvika Public art gallery
Vänersborg Public art gallery
- 2006 Arboga Public art gallery
- 2005 Örnsköldsvik Public art gallery
Örebro Public art gallery
- 2003 Bohus Gallery, Uddevalla
- 2001 Nora Public art gallery
- 2000 Moment, Ängelholm
- 1998 Konstfrämjandet, Karlstad
- 1996 Karlskoga Public art gallery

Selected Group Exhibitions

- 2017 NorART, Nora
- 2016 Canal, London
Kunst Zurich,
Art Elysee, Paris

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- 2013 Vilnius Painting Triennial, Contemporary Art Centre, Lithuania
- 2010 Nicolai House of Design, Kolding, Denmark
- 2008 OpenART
- 2006 Örebro Museum
Örebro Public art gallery
- 2005 Eklund Wallmark Gallery, Stockholm
- 2003 Konstfrämjandet, Örebro
- 2001 Örebro Public art gallery
- 1999 Kumla Public art gallery
- 1996 Liljevalchs, Stockholm
- 1995 The National museum, Stockholm

Public Commissions

- 2018 Karmen, ÖBO
- 2009 Tallkronan, Orebro Municipality
Hangaren Orebro Municipality
- 2006 Senapen, OBO

Public Collections

- Vetlanda Museum
- Örebro Regional Museum
- Landstinget Västernorrland
- Landstinget i Östergötland
- Västra Götalandsregionen
- Region Skåne
- Örebro Lans Landsting
- Vänersborg Municipality
- Linköping Municipality
- Hallsberg Municipality
- Örebro Municipality
- Karlskoga Municipality
- Nora Municipality
- Örnsköldsvik Municipality
- Katrineholm Municipality
- Västerås Municipality
- Ängelholm Municipality
- Lindesberg Municipality
- Folkets Hus och Parker

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Grants

Längmanska Culture Fundation

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Örebro Läns Landsting, Culture grant

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