

Ida Ekblad

STRANGE FREEDOMS

46 & 57 rue du Temple, 75004, Paris

13 April – 25 May 2024

Opening: Saturday, 13 April, 6 – 8 pm

'Do they smell? I try to make it look like my flowers smell like sparks and like whirlpools and drool. Like velour and roses emigrating. Like caustic soda, bleach, pussy and eyelashes. If the eyes are windows to the soul, then I guess my eyelashes are iron bars covering those.'

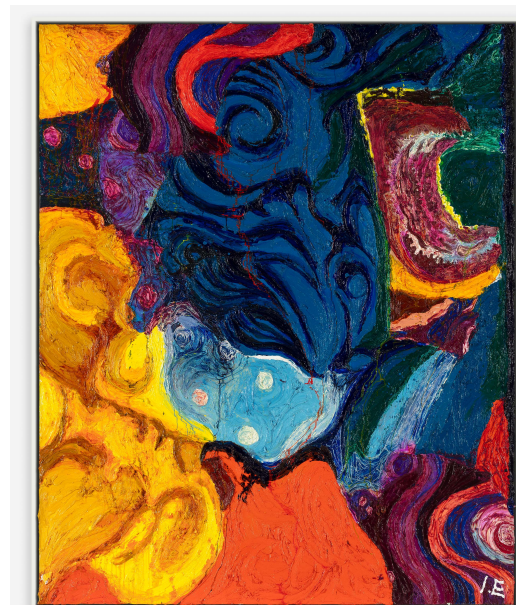
Ida Ekblad, 2024

Galerie Max Hetzler, Paris, is pleased to present *STRANGE FREEDOMS*, **Ida Ekblad's** fifth solo exhibition with the gallery.

Highlighting Ekblad's concept of collective nostalgia as well as her powerful expression of colours, distinct vibrancy and spontaneous forms, the exhibition brings together two monumental sculptures and a new series of paintings.

At the centre of the exhibition stands *GIRL FIRES UP STOVE* (*STRANGE FREEDOMS*), a cast iron stove, enamelled in royal blue with vermillion. Radiating strange freedoms, it appears like an image board or portal to another sphere. In Norway, stoves were traditionally the heart of every household. In an unforgiving climate, they were essential for heating, cooking and drying – a home was built around the fireplace. Peeping through a hole in the roof, the chimney pipe would connect the warmth of the indoors with the brisk cold outside. Highlighting their concurrent aesthetic function, Ekblad remarks: 'Images, poetry, emblems and patterns were cast onto the sides like in some sort of everted gallery, a black cube in iron. Scenes from folklore or the Bible, proverbs and little prayers were distributed into every home by way of the stoves.' Indeed, a closer glance at Ekblad's stove reveals elaborate reliefs, silhouettes and enigmatic phrases that draw the visitor into the artist's innovative universe. Adorned with her own imagery, slogans and recurring themes, it speaks to the appetites and demons of the artist's world.

On the walls surrounding the stove, a new body of impasto paintings infuse the space with their restless energy, rhythmic lines and vivacious allure. 'I try to chop up a world of visuals and stitch it back together with oil paint,' the artist explains. Flattened, abstracted and built back up, the paintings are animated with an infinite echo of the patterns, forms and iconography of the oven's decorative surface. Vibrant and bold, the canvases brim with dramatic arabesques and petalled floral blooms, spanning topography and time: Moscow in the '60s, Marilyn Monroe's umbrella, entangled Swedish lace in the form of a half-finished tablecloth.



Ida Ekblad, 2024

Photo: Uli Holz

Across the street, one of Ekblad's painted bronze sculptures, *AMPHIDROMIC ECHOES*, explores the same sensory urge as the paintings. Playfully teasing space and depth, its multi-perspective synthesis procures a gravity defying sense of instability. Following the same approach as her paintings, Ekblad engages a detonation of colours and abstract shapes into an intensely physical twist and turn of three-dimensionality. 'It's fiery and a little too big for the room,' she states. 'I pillage my own paintings for the parts, I mould and cast these parts in bronze, reassemble them intuitively and hand-paint them once more. Not unlike the stove but not entirely like it either. This sculpture is a sculpture. The paintings are paintings. The stove is a tool.'

Ida Ekblad (*1980, Oslo) lives and works in Oslo. The artist studied at the Oslo National Academy of the Arts (2007) and the Mountain School of Arts, Los Angeles (2008). She participated in the Venice Biennale in 2011 and 2017. In recent years, Ekblad's work has been exhibited internationally, including major exhibitions at Kunsthau Zürich (2024); KODE Art Museum, Bergen (2023); Kunstneres Hus, Oslo (2021); Kunsthalle Zürich; Museo Tamayo, Mexico City both (2019); Kunstverein Braunschweig (2018); Kunsthau Hamburg (2017); The National Museum of Art, Design and Architecture, Oslo (2013); Bergen Kunsthall; and Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm (2010).

The artist's works are in the collections of the Centre Pompidou, Paris; Christen Sveaas' Art Foundation, Jevnaker; Louisiana Museum of Modern Art, Humlebaek; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; British Museum, London; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Art Gallery of New South Wales, Sydney; Astrup Fearnley Museum of Modern Art, Oslo; Buffalo AKG Art Museum, New York; Migros Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zürich; Fondation Louis Vuitton, Paris; National Museum, Oslo; Center for Curatorial Studies at Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson; de la Cruz Collection, Miami; Rubell Museum, Miami; Museo Tamayo, Mexico, among others.

Further exhibitions and events

Berlin:

7 March – 28 April 2024

Tal R

Rosa See

Goethestraße 2/3, 10623

19 April – 1 June 2024

Sean Scully

Dark Yet

Bleibtreustraße 15/16 & 45, 10623 Berlin

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Kitchens

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3 May – 1 June 2024

Tursic & Mille

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Goethestraße 2/3, 10623

London:

23 April – 25 May 2024

Instinctive Gestures

Ida Ekblad, Jeff Elrod, Katharina Grosse, Mark Grotjahn,

Hans Hartung

41 Dover Street, W1S 4NS

Marfa:

9 May – 8 December 2024

Katharina Grosse

The Super Eight

1976 Antelope Hills Road

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