

Belenius is pleased to present the gallery's first solo show Drip Drop by Astrid Kajsa Nylander.

Drip Drop

Button by button by button, role playing. A childhood memory of grandmother's colour-sorted button collection. Thread in, thread out, thread through and tie a knot on the thread. Astrid Kajsa Nylander indulge in the joy of colour and experiments with reality. Her minijobs are hyper-realistic, decorative and colourful, but have an underlying daunting tone. They form intricate patterns where they are fixed on the wall, and the threads over the surface of the paintings are braided together like something akin to runic writing. She lays them out in irregular patterns composing new formations. They bounce off their wall-hung seats and look for each other. They are fascinating geometric figures reminiscent of pop art, and yet something completely different. They are of a world of their own.

One can understand that the kaleidoscopic flowers of the American artist Judy Chicago have inspired Nylander. And just like the flowers of Georgia O'Keeffe, also American, the size and magnification of everyday small things has become important to Nylander. It may not just be a coincidence that the new paintings, those of the roses, now require space. Extensive space next to the buttons. Intrusively large. The roses turn their outcast, enlarged faces straight onto the viewer. For us humans the meaning of the rose is associated with love, gratitude and friendship. In literature, the rose has a given place. The most famous literary rose quote is "A rose is a rose is a rose" which Gertrude Stein states in her poem Sacred Emily in 1913, an explanation that everything is just the way it is. To me, Nylander's roses belong to the same wave of thought. They are what they are, even if they are absurd. They are seductive and stylized, peculiarly vibrant and far from the stiff marzipan flower of the common birthday cake. It shines with obvious love, an individually coloured rose for each and every one of us.

My thoughts drift toward sculpture, to Claes Oldenburg's enlarged everyday things. Nevertheless, Nylander is two-dimensional and rather sees herself as a successor to René Magritte's surreal, figurative and contradictory painting. Her world contains circles of the Drop-out idea — the fantasy of dropping out of society — the dream of a simpler life. Are they unrealistic thoughts as in Magritte's pictures? Or completely logical, since our society looks this way? Her ideas make their mark on the cycle of things in the pictures. While she sheds tears over the leafy plant in a beautiful garden where the water gives the pattern of antique floor panes extra strength, the colour cables tie knots on themselves. Nylander has a strong sense of colouring, and from her cornucopia rays of

colour flow, like easily digestible caramels, where you are impelled to raise a warning flag so as not to be tempted to consume them.

/Lena Holger, May 2022

Astrid Kajsa Nylander was born in Gothenburg in 1989 and lives and works in Stockholm. She studied at Hochschule für Bildende Künste Hamburg for professors Jutta Koether and Hanne Loreck and graduated with an MFA in 2018. Previous solo exhibitions include Page, NYC (2020) and Kunstvererin Seigen (2019). Astrid Kajsa Nylander is represented in the collection of Moderna Museet in Stockholm, where some of the works from her ongoing series "Minijobs" are currently shown.