

## **The Maria Bonnier Dahlin Foundation Grant Recipients 2024**

11 dec 2024 – 19 jan 2025

The Maria Bonnier Dahlin Foundation annually awards grants to young artists to support and promote their work. As part of the grant, an extensive exhibition is produced at Bonniers Konsthall where their works are shown to a large audience, often for the first time. The 2024 grant recipients explore in their artistry the human relationship to the world around them through sculpture and installation. They share an interest in architecture and a fascination with found objects. Anastasia Savinova transforms these materials into unique sculptural constructions that reflect on our ecology, while Erik Thörnqvist explores how abstract ideas and ideologies can take physical form through objects and social structures.

By reshaping traditional objects, Erik Thörnqvist (b. 1994) gives them new symbolic meaning that express agency and freedom, beyond their original functions. Particularly interested in the role of ornamentation within modernism, he questions its place in designed environments and explores how these aesthetic expressions can create space for subversive interpretations and queer representation. Deliberately coded and ambiguous, Thörnqvist's works resist easy interpretations and defy norms in a powerful way, engaging the viewer to confront social issues and creating new narratives where body and identity can be renegotiated and redefined.

*Raum Planner* (2024) presents a 1:1 detail of the interior of Villa Müller, inspired by Adolf Loos's 'Raumplan' concept, where rooms are given different height levels based on their function rather than being placed on separate floors. Here Thörnqvist explores the boundary between private and public, with themes of transparency and voyeurism. Inspired by architectural historian Beatriz Colomina's analysis of Villa Müller in *Sexuality and Space* (1992), the work explores the tension between power and vulnerability, especially through an elevated seating area that allows for both observing and being observed.

The installation *Un chant d'amour* (2024), inspired by Jean Genet's film with the same title, links to Thörnqvist's themes through its exploration of boundaries, intimacy and the structures that dictates human interaction. Through the architecture of the prison and a scene where two prisoners share cigarette smoke through a straw to overcome isolation, the film highlights how people can be both close and unreachable. This reflects Thörnqvist's interest in the body and power in constructed environments. Above all, the installation creates a place where fiction and reality meet – where we can fantasise about who is on the other side.

### **About Erik Thörnqvist**

Erik Thörnqvist grew up in Luleå and graduated from the Royal Institute of Art in 2023 with a Master's degree in Fine Arts. Through sculpture, Thörnqvist explores how abstract ideas become concrete forms in our world. One aspect of Thörnqvist's artistic practice is to redefine the modernist view of ornamentation within designed environments. He explores how this aesthetic ideal has reshaped our relationship to the body, and how it can provide a site for subversion and queer identity. By appropriating and re-evaluating

the ornamental, he explores its potential as a vehicle for other narratives. Thörnqvist has previously exhibited at the Luleå Biennial 2020 – Time on Earth, SOMA (Mexico City), Lunds Konsthall, Final Hot Desert (Salt Lake City), KIN Museum of Contemporary Art (Kiruna), Konstnärshuset and Luleå Konsthall. He lives and works in Stockholm.

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Photography: Jean-Baptiste Béranger