

Press Release to the Exhibition:

SCANDINAVIAN FIGURATIVE ART

Egill Jacobsen (1910-1998), **Ejler Bille** (1910-2004), **Carl-Henning Pedersen** (1913-2007), **Asger Jorn** (1914-1973), **Mogens Balle** (1921-1988), **Per Kirkeby** (b. 1938), **Olav Christopher Jenssen** (b. 1954), **Timo Jakola** (b. 1957), **Robert Lucander** (b. 1962), **Susanne Johansson (Ex-Simonson)** (b. 1969), **Kathrine Ærtebjerg** (b. 1969), **Maria Nordin** (b. 1980)

DIE GALERIE Frankfurt am Main

Opening: Wednesday, 23 January 2013, 6:30 PM

Exhibition: 24 January – 17 March 2013

Is it possible to present an overview of the artistic output of a European region that has a surface area more than three times the size of Germany? Are there common cross-generational characteristics – a typically "Nordic" form of art? The extremely lively contemporary art scene of Scandinavia has long since established itself beyond the national borders, easily and successfully holding its own in the international canon.

Under the title *Scandinavian Figurative Art*, DIE GALERIE continues its series of exhibitions devoted to noteworthy modern and contemporary art of a specific region. In this regard, over the past year DIE GALERIE has hosted similar exhibitions dedicated to Italy, Spain, Korea and Austria at our house in Frankfurt's Westend. Scandinavia is a particularly rich source and fascinating foundation in this respect, as the region supplied significant input and inspiration to the international art of the 20th century.



Following the Second World War, among others the Danish protagonists of the CoBra art movement – **Asger Jorn**, **Carl-Henning Pedersen**, **Mogens Balle**, **Ejler Bille** and **Egill Jacobsen** – were the inspiration to an entire generation of young artists. A strong leaning towards abstraction and above all an enjoyment of narrative elements in art as well as a preoccupation with Nordic folk tales and myths flowed into the artistic vocabulary of the CoBra art group. With the exception of the internationally renowned **Asger Jorn**, who as of 1955 lived permanently in France and Italy, the remaining Danish CoBra artists enjoyed great national success and recognition – but abroad

they are still very much a "discovery".

The exhibition spans from the painters of the CoBra group – who are firmly anchored in the program of DIE GALERIE – to a variety of exciting contemporary positions that are exemplarily represented by selected internationally respected artists. The objective of the exhibition is less to present a comprehensive analysis of the art scene of the Scandinavian countries than to reveal where and how traditions have been continued and adapted to individual geographic characteristics or blended into tendencies of a global art scene.



DIE GALERIE



The Dane **Per Kirkeby**, a long-standing instructor at both the State Academy of Fine Arts Karlsruhe and the Städelschule in Frankfurt, is undoubtedly one of the most prominent artists of the exhibition. He is accompanied by two "shooting stars" of the Nordic art scene, both of whom have professorships at German art academies: the Finland-born **Robert Lucander**, who currently resides in Berlin and teaches at the Berlin University of the Arts, and the Dane **Olav Christopher Jenssen**, who is an instructor of

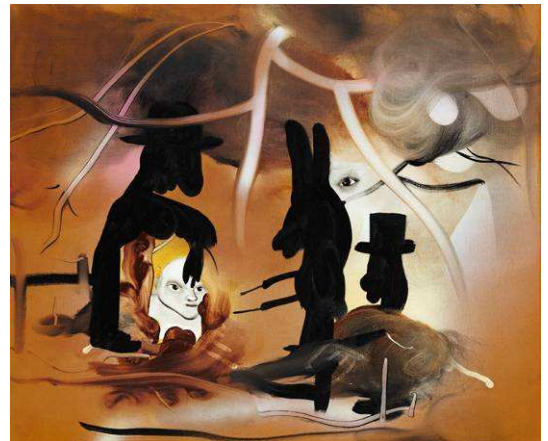
painting at the Braunschweig University of Art.



Three young painters from Sweden and Denmark describe the internal and external conditions of humanity in quite different ways in their work: The vaguely formulated figures of **Susanne Johansson** are averted and aloof, refusing all communication with those facing them. Sometimes they appear stony, frozen in their movement. In her paintings, **Susanne Johansson** succeeds in creating moods and in awakening associations and visual memories that are verbally inexpressible but can be conveyed in images.

The Danish painter **Kathrine Ærtebjerg** is a highly talented and imaginative storyteller, a talent that connects her to traditions of Nordic art. Her protagonists often move within a forest-like web of shapes and lines, calling to mind Hansel and Gretel or the characters found in the fairytales of Hans Christian Andersen. That which occasionally appears humorous or caricatural leads, at second glance, to confusion or irritation:

the figures move within a tangled labyrinth, dissolve into their environment, or are haunted by dark shapes.



In only a few years the young Swedish painter **Maria Nordin** has developed a distinctive style, one which combines a brilliantly controlled watercolor technique with the technologies of photo and film. She combines series of watercolor portraits into film sequences, for example, which play back snatches of time in short loops of a few seconds of movement. In pieces like this as well as in her often large-scale works on paper, the reflected view of humanity establishes a disturbing intimacy with the viewer due to the exaggerated photorealism and extreme close-up view. In turn, the fixated expression of the depicted person also appears to "undress" the viewer and thus evokes a fascinating and electrifying interaction that is difficult to elude.



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Susanne Johansson (Ex-Simonson)
Kathrine Ærtebjerg
Maria Nordin

Curator: Elke Mohr, M.A.

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(Private viewing – prior reservation required)

Selected artists as well as Grete Balle, the widow of Mogens Balle, will be present.

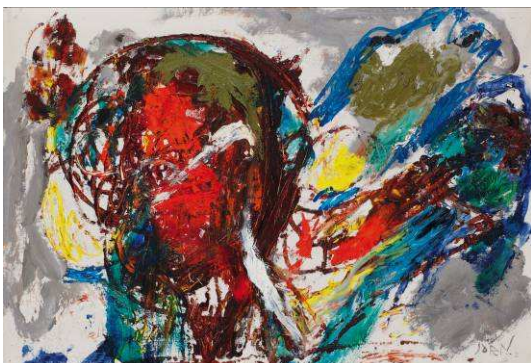
Duration of the Exhibition: 24 January - 17 March 2013

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Opening Hours: Mo - Fr 9 AM - 6 PM; Sa 10 AM - 2 PM
and by appointment

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Press Photos:



Asger Jorn
Douleur silencieuse
1960
Oil on canvas
61.5 x 90 cm



Mogens Balle
Untitled
1965
Oil on canvas
100 x 125 cm



Per Kirkeby
Untitled
2012
Mixed media on Masonite
122 x 122 cm



Robert Lucander
Marja
2007
Acrylic and pencil on wood
70 x 100 x 2.5 cm



Maria Nordin
Behind the Laughing Veil
2011
Installation consisting of 16 watercolors and video
Each 21 x 30 cm