

# gl Holtegaard

Press Release, May 2020



Anna Bjerger: Left. *Peek* (2020). Right. *Ash* (2019).

## ANNA BJERGER

### Dark Light

MAY 22th – JULY 12th, 2020

Press views by appointment from May 1st, 2020

**\*\*\*NB NEW OPENING DATE AFTER MAY 20TH\*\*\***

**With energetic brushstrokes and slow-paced precision Swedish artist Anna Bjerger conjures up a familiar and sensory visual universe harbouring undertones of longing and loneliness in her largest solo exhibition in Denmark to date at Gammel Holtegaard Art Centre.**

A woman's inscrutable gaze, a nonchalant hand holding a lit cigarette, a landscape of dark, wandering figures, a cucumber plant. The figurative motifs of Swedish artist Anna Bjerger are apparently simple yet enigmatic. Her paintings are supremely mastered, low-key, and intensely sensual.

For the exhibition *Dark Light* at Gammel Holtegaard Anna Bjerger has produced a series of new works – both small, intimate works and large, panoramic oil paintings, as well as painted lamps and garden chairs. All of them in poetic dialogue with the atmospheric Baroque complex of Gammel Holtegaard. Anna Bjerger's has created series of paintings for the specific setting where they are exhibited. Each series is inspired by the homelike atmosphere and Baroque architecture and historical gardens of Gammel Holtegaard. The artist takes us on a journey between light and darkness, from domestic interiors to wild, sublime nature.

Behind all of Anna Bjerger's paintings lie months of research during which the artist works on the basis of concept and narrative. She finds her motifs in photographs in the magazines, journals and old photo books she has in her personal archive.

The artist's visual universe and distinctive compositions generate associations with contemporary Instagram culture. Bare feet on a soft underlay, a well-positioned cheese in perfect lighting, a necklace on golden summer skin. The viewer is cast in the role of voyeur, given glimpses of fragmented, private imagery that are both fascinating and alluring. But Anna Bjerger does not tell us what to see in her works.

We are shown only a fragment of the whole, but enough to sense its ambiguous and ominous undertones. Is the woman in *Peek* hiding in fear, or did she just wake up? Is that blood or nail varnish under the fingernail in *Ash*? Small details that the viewer focuses on in the absence of any unambiguous message or meaning.

The essence of Anna Bjerger's does not lie in solely in her motifs. Bjerger is fascinated by the process of transformation between photograph and painting, and what happens when she grants a banal photograph attention and importance. The artist paints with a heightened sense of the connections between sight and touch. Regardless of whether the motif is painted with lively brushstrokes or in meticulous detail, the intense focus on surface, light and materiality is palpable.

Anna Bjerger's works are almost filmic. As viewers we find our eyes making connections between them, creating stories as we edit them together for our inner eye. It is here that drama and continuity emerge. All of a sudden we – exactly as the artist intends – stand with our own inner narrative created by the intimacy, uneasiness and poetry of her works.

## **Bio**

Anna Bjerger (b. 1973) lives and works in Småland, Sweden. She has a BA in Fine Art from Central St. Martin's School of Art and Design, London (1994-1997) and an MA in painting from the Royal College of Art (1999-2001). She has exhibited widely at galleries and museums nationally and internationally, and is represented in major collections including at Louisiana Museum of Modern Art (DK), Moderna Museet (SE), Stedelijk Museum (NL), The Akzo Nobel Art Foundation (NL), Collectie G+W Sittard (NL), Vinunic (SE), Zabłudowicz Collection (UK) and Sveriges Radio (SE).

## **Events Programme**

As a new initiative we have created a studio for children and adults within the exhibition – a base for inspiring family activities during the run of the exhibition. The exhibition is also accompanied by a series of events, including an evening with Anna Bjerger herself, in conversation with the author Dorthe Nors. Visitors are also invited to join our Art & Cider tours, focusing on selected works in the exhibition with a glass of Gl. Holtegaard's very own apple cider. The full programme will be published shortly at [www.glholtegaard.dk](http://www.glholtegaard.dk). The events are in Danish.

## **COVID-19**

Gammel Holtegaard operates in accordance with guidelines issued by the Danish authorities in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The reopening of the gallery is therefore constantly subject to necessary health and safety precautions.

This may result in changes in the exhibition's visitor's studio and other events. Updates will be published on our website.

## **Exhibition Dates and Opening**

The official opening of the exhibition is cancelled due to COVID-19.

The exhibition runs from Tuesday May 22<sup>th</sup> to Sunday July 12<sup>th</sup>.

Opening hours: Tuesday-Sunday 12.00-17.00, Thursdays 12.00-20.00. Closed on Mondays.

Danish public holidays: Thursday May 21<sup>st</sup>: 12.00-20.00, May 31<sup>st</sup> & June 1<sup>st</sup>: 12.00-17.00.

## **Press Previews**

The exhibition will be ready for viewing by appointment from Friday May 1<sup>st</sup>. To book please contact Gammel Holtegaard's Press and Communication officer Nina Peitersen.

**Press contact**

For more information about the exhibition, previews or interviews with the artist please contact:

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Press materials can be downloaded [here](#).

**Support**

The exhibition is generously supported by the Obel Foundation.

The Danish Art Foundation supports Gammel Holtegaard's exhibition programme.