

NINO MIER GALLERY

LOS ANGELES | BRUSSELS | NEW YORK

PER ADOLFSEN

LAVA

Brussels | Allard 41

March 2 – April 6, 2024

Nino Mier Gallery is thrilled to present our first solo exhibition with Danish artist Per Adolfsen. Adolfsen's works on paper depict distorted and dramatic natural landscapes inspired by the topographies of Denmark and the desolate, rocky volcanic valleys of the Canary Islands. The presentation will be on view from March 2 – April 6, 2024 in Brussels.

The works on paper in *LAVA* are intimately scaled, beckoning the viewer to contemplate the relationship between humanity and nature. Prior to and during the pandemic, Adolfsen isolated himself near a forest in Denmark, delving into a quasi-monastic relationship with the natural world. This period of isolation marked the inception of a new series, where nature and its elements took center stage in his works. Throughout this period of seclusion, Adolfsen rigorously created drawings that both represented his surrounding environment and his inner, emotional landscape. The works evolved into a form of self-portraiture, capturing the essence of his daily experiences.

Alongside works inspired by the Danish countryside, the exhibition explores the acidic and hostile environments of volcanic landscapes. Originating from sketches executed during an extended stay on the Canary Islands – particularly Lanzarote – these drawings usher a transition from lush green trees and rivers to dry, jagged terrains. Returning to Denmark, the artist translated these observations into a series of drawings that capture the varying qualities of the desert. Despite their harsh appearances, these works teem with life, revealing how nature can adapt and flourish even in the most challenging circumstances.

Adolfsen's work finds auspices in Nordic expressionist painters, notably, the work of Edvard Munch. The work's vibrant color scheme and fluid brushstrokes capture the fragility and pain of life alongside its beauty. Likewise, Adolfsen's landscapes unfold in various emotional registers, as though an affective state felt by a human were delegated onto the rocks, trees, and hillsides of his compositions. Employing pencils as if they were brushes, Adolfsen skillfully delineates skies, seas, and rocky terrains with fine lines and serpentine shapes, imparting a sense of movement and texture to the work. Colors are also essential elements in his compositions, used to represent the different moments of the day and their corresponding lighting. Drawing inspiration from Japanese prints, he often leaves the sections of paper visible throughout the compositions, imbuing in them a sense of lightness and abstraction.

Adolfsen's representations of the natural world encompass both beauty and suffering, a duality distilled in the exhibition's titular image of lava seeping out from a volcano. The volcano's destructive natural force is also regenerative, creating new life after death. By exploring such polarities, *LAVA* is a testament to the enduring vitality and regenerative spirit inherent in the natural world.

Per Adolfsen (b. 1964 Odense, DK; lives and works in Odense, DK) has had solo exhibitions at Dianna Witte Gallery, Toronto, CA; The Anzai Gallery, Tokyo, JP; Sobering Galerie, Paris, FR; Gallery Thomas Jaeckel, New York, NY, US; among others. He has also participated in group exhibitions globally, including at RHODES Contemporary Art Gallery, London, UK; Knust Kunz Gallery, Munich, DE; Alexander Ochs, Berlin, DE; and Chrostoffer Egelund, Copenhagen, DK.