

## Making sense

«Making sense» is the first solo exhibition by Esther Maria Bjørneboe (b.1971) at BGE. Bjørneboe works with abstract and colourful motifs on large canvases, combining strict composition with vitality and playfulness. Although nature can often be a source of inspiration, she further works to transform this into formal encounters on the pictorial surface that reflect memories and countless decisions that in turn seek something unified.

In Bjørneboe we see an alternation between a cool and analytical approach, and spontaneous improvisation. The process from idea to finished work is characterised by perseverance and exploration. She never uses sketches and rather lets one thing lead to another while she continuously chooses what will remain and what needs to be changed to find its role on the canvas. She compares the creative process to a search for something intangible. It is a hunt where you have to forget the rules, where you take with you all that happens in life, all that you are and all your memories. The key is the colours and how they act together, sometimes in harmony, sometimes in disharmony. They can reinforce each other, or drown each other out. The colours themselves have a lot of energy and must be kept in shape. Bjørneboe compares this to the moods and rhythm in music. It can become too loose, and must be tightened up, or it can become too tight, before you finally know when it is right.

Bjørneboe describes the experience of colours as being connected to the moment, to the present. Our reactions to colours are honest, they arise here and now. It is not about whether it is pretty, but about different temperaments that we intuitively perceive. The artworks represent an exploration, and a hope of finding a way into something that will always slip away. Several of the early modernists have inspired Bjørneboe, such as Paul Klee, Josef and Anni Albers and Paul Osipow. Goethe's theory of colour has also followed her throughout the years, with the theories about how light is refracted, and how colours are both static and fleeting, influenced by light, darkness, by each other, and by the eye of the viewer.

She says that on the one hand she is fascinated by the strict rules and tight harmony of the Bauhaus tradition, while on the other hand she is drawn towards breaking the rules of composition: "There has to be some debris. You need a stone in your shoe to pay attention". In her latest works, Bjørneboe continues to spin a thread from her previous series of paintings while adding something new by using oil stick. The technique has opened up a new discussion where colour and form become unpredictable, which draws the interest of the eye.

The exhibition title "Making sense" refers to the fact that all systems and methods are fallible, and that the work on the paintings is a constant attempt to counteract dogmatism, and maintain a nuanced and attentive gaze through what Bjørneboe describes as problem-solving approaches worked into the surface of the painting: "It is like standing in a river current - each corrective step is made to resist the forces, the speed and to find balance. What makes sense."

**Esther Maria Bjørneboe** lives and works in Oslo. She graduated from the Rogaland School of Art and Design and majored in the Department of Colour at the Norwegian School of Arts and Crafts (KHiO). Bjørneboe has a long history of exhibition activity and has been purchased by a number of private and public art collections, including the Oslo Municipality's art collection, KODE, KORO, Norges Bank, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs' art collection and more. In recent years, she has completed dozens of art commissions for public and municipal buildings, both locally, regionally and nationally.