

Press Release

Mamma Andersson

Private view: 27 April 2017

Exhibition dates: 28 April – 27 May 2017



Mamma Andersson's fifth exhibition at Stephen Friedman Gallery focuses on a new series of unique woodcut prints. This is the artist's first solo presentation dedicated to this technique and marks an exciting development in her practice. These prints are emotive scenes and portraits of "*...characters who will not be pinned down: fleet of foot, they move swiftly across centuries, indifferent to mortality and geography*" (Jennifer Higgle, 2017). Andersson is known for her evocative paintings, creating worlds that have a near-hypnotic sense of familiarity with little trace of modern life. In addition to the prints, three large paintings on canvas expand upon the same stories and mysteries.

This is the first time that Andersson has reimagined her unique visual language through woodcut print. Each depicts an animal, person, place or object delicately and laboriously hand printed onto fine Japanese paper. This is an important step for Andersson who has long created wistful landscapes and domestic scenes. Each print is unique as the texture of the wood, the viscosity of the ink, and the placement of the woodblock cannot be repeated more than once. Andersson rejects the history of print-making and its aspiration of image reproduction. Instead she embraces the elements of chance involved in hand printing, using the slight slippage and misalignment of the images as part of the work. This creates a series in which the prints are all related, but in each the thick oily pigment tells a different story.

Andersson cultivated the idea for these prints at her summerhouse in Gotland, a wild and small island off the east coast of Sweden. The arrival of an old printing press gave the studio 'a new heart'. The hares, red deer, black cats and tall trees bending in the breeze provide a window into Andersson's beginnings as a landscape painter and the countryside of her childhood. Hunting and fishing remain a central part of Swedish culture and these references allude to Andersson's concern with the slippage of time and the ever-present desires of humanity.

Each of Andersson's exhibitions has a strong narrative. In this presentation the same image reoccurs in different colours. It is as though we are seeing a character at different points throughout the day, each time with a change of mood or sensibility. Presented together, the prints allow the viewer to conjure a tale from their imagination. Within this, each vignette has its own story to tell. The cave and the headless statue recount the discovery of a group of Roman sculptures from a grotto in Sperlonga, Italy in 1957. These

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relics, with limbs and heads missing, have a sense of mystery and childlike fantasy. Andersson has dressed the man in 1970s style shoes, a cape, and stockings to wear on his new journey. This reworking of time is characteristic of Andersson's work: *"Nothing is neat here. Nothing is clear. Nothing is stable – not even time"* (Jennifer Higgie, 2017).

The exhibition also includes three of Andersson's largest paintings to date, on canvas rather than the artist's usual wood panel. They relate closely to the prints in style and in technique. In one work, a fictional cave is brought to life from one's imagination or from a children's book. In another, a piano is depicted with delicate lace draped on top. We often hear the notes of a piano recorded, but it is played increasingly less and so represents a dying art. In the third, the viewer encounters the red deer also present in the prints, but here it is etched out in expressive brushstrokes.

Andersson is concerned with mundane signifiers of the everyday: the homes that people create for themselves, the objects and the people they surround themselves with, the stories they tell, the things they care about. These works are a metaphor for life and Andersson spins emotionally charged narratives with revitalised energy and imagination. This series of new paintings and prints further demonstrate Andersson's ability to create powerful images of the everyday world and imbue them with timeless intrigue and mystery.

Mamma Andersson was born 1962 in Luleå, Sweden. She lives and works in Stockholm, while also spending time in Gotland, Sweden.

Gallery hours: Tuesday to Friday, 10am - 6pm and Saturday, 11am - 5pm
For sales enquiries please contact: sales@stephenfriedman.com
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Rosie O'Reilly, Scott & Co: rosie@scott-andco.com

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Notes to Editors:

Recent solo exhibitions include 'Mamma Andersson & Tal R: Svanesang', Galleri Bo Bjerregaard, Copenhagen, Denmark and Galleri Magnus Karlsson, Stockholm, Sweden (2016); *'Behind the Curtain'*, David Zwirner, New York, USA (2015); 'Tick Tock' at Konsthallen, Luleå, Sweden (2013); 'Gooseberry', Stephen Friedman Gallery, London (2013); *'Dog Days'*, Galleri Magnus Karlsson, Stockholm, Sweden (2012); *'Dog Days'*, Museum Haus Esters, Krefeld, Germany (2012); Aspen Art Museum, Colorado, USA (2010) and Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin, Ireland (2009).

In 2007, Andersson was the subject of a critically acclaimed, mid-career survey at the Moderna Museet, Stockholm, which travelled to the Kunsthalle Helsinki and the Camden Arts Centre, London.

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Recent group exhibitions include; 'Collected Works! 30 years with the Maria Bonnier Dahlin Foundation', Bonniers Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden; 'Impressions. Five Centuries of Woodcuts', The National Museum of Art, Architecture and Design, Oslo, Norway; 'Har/Nu (Here/Now)', Artipelag, Stockholm, Sweden (2014); 'In Case We Don't Die', Torrance Art Museum, California, USA (2013); Stockholm Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden (2012); 'North by New York', New Nordic Art, Scandinavia House, New York, USA (2011); 'North by New York: New Nordic Art', Magasin 3 Stockholm Konsthall, Stockholm, Sweden (2010); 'Eight Contemporary Commentaries', Nationalmuseum, Stockholm, Sweden (2009).

In 2006, the artist won the Carnegie Art Award, a prestigious prize for Nordic contemporary painting, and she had a corresponding exhibition that travelled extensively in Europe. Her work was represented in the Nordic Pavilion at the 50th Venice Biennale (2003).

Andersson's works are included in prominent collections internationally, including the Dallas Museum of Art; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; Apoteket AB, Stockholm; Bonnier Dahlins Stiftelse, Stockholm; The Broad Art Foundation, California; City of Stockholm, Stockholm; Folkets Hus och Parker, Stockholm; Göteborgs Konstmuseum, Gothenburg; Kultur I Länet, Uppsala läns andsting, Uppsala; Malmö Konstmuseum, Malmö; Västerås Konstmuseum, Västerås and Satens Konstråd/National Public Art Council, Stockholm; Magasin III Museum and Foundation for Contemporary Art, Stockholm, Sweden; Centre Pompidou, Paris, France; Nasjonalmuseet, Oslo, Norway, among others.