

It Wouldn't Be the Same Without You

A solo exhibition by Jon Erik Nyholm

Opening: August 14, 2026, 5-8 PM

Exhibition period: August 14 - September 19, 2026

Press release

Bricks Gallery is pleased to present *It Wouldn't Be the Same Without You*, a solo exhibition by Jon Erik Nyholm, with an opening reception on Friday, August 14, from 5-8 PM. This exhibition features seven oil paintings on canvas, all framed in waxed oak.

In Jon Erik Nyholm's series of new paintings, a number of questions seem to arise regarding the motifs. However, more important than the questions themselves is their order and hierarchy.

First, the functions of nature dissolve, such as flowers blooming and withering once more. The plant stems become cracks in a mirror, boding misfortune. We ask if humanity is to blame, but it appears subject to the same regime of dissolved and dismantled functions.

Is it a lush meadow, a flowerbed, or are we underwater? The landscape and the scene are ambiguous; the drama is equally unanchored. A tsunami of flowers. How are we to believe what we see when it does not stem from a recognisable point of origin? How are we to define our own belief when the ground beneath our feet is so fluid, opaque, and, not least, masquerades as all things at once? False landscape, dissolved identity.

The frozen ice landscape is sharp and impenetrable. Yet lush and rich in plant life. A lonely figure wanders through in a sleepwalking state, as if in a dream. Perhaps we are not being questioned about the figure's existence, but rather about the figure's needs and purpose in this world.

Painted in violet tones, as if to conjure images of the CIA's secret programmes in the late 1950s, where they force-fed unsuspecting subjects large amounts of LSD and locked them in coloured rooms to discover which colour had the most negative impact on the human psyche during prolonged isolation. Violet was a clear winner.

A yellow-brown painting stands flickering. Slowly, it mythologises itself into the tree of life. Seconds later, into the mushroom cloud of the atomic bomb, and finally, an abstraction of the cerebral cortex emerges. The human cockpit and control centre.

But the motif's control over itself has long been lost. It is in full mutation, and just like the flowers and plants that seem to grow out of the paintings, control over the motif is not a static presence. It buds, blossoms, withers, and dies, goes into dormancy, and is born anew.

Where Nyholm's previous paintings appeared as ghosts and transparent phantoms of residual energy from a defunct romantic landscape, it now feels as though the paintings have become a cyclical rebirth in an infinite wheel, constantly turning on its own axis, carrying the motif, the landscape, the human, the scene, and the drama along for the ride. A painting that moves toward the figurative, the recognisable, and the narrative, yet simultaneously dissolves, darkens, and branches out the understanding of itself in

all its vibrant and radiant simplicity. A painting that evokes a paradoxical sense of future nostalgia.

Of course, it wouldn't be the same without you and without the landscape. Without the memories and recollection, and without any preconceived images of what the world and its inhabitants look like. Without a collective history or point of origin.

Our hands are tied behind our backs and we are blindfolded on our way through Nyholm's grand garden.

But the path lights up and we can feel the warmth in our feet. Whether we are moving in the right direction is unknown. Perhaps it is irrelevant, as long as we and the landscape remain in motion.

Text by Peter Larsen

Jon Erik Nyholm (b. 1982) is a Danish artist born in Aarhus who now lives and works in Copenhagen (DK). He holds a MFA from both The Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts in Copenhagen (DK) and a BA from the University College for the Creative Arts in Canterbury (UK). Recent exhibitions include Market Art Fair with Bricks Gallery (2026, SE), 'Jord Uden Himmel' at Bricks Gallery (2025, DK), 'Det Nære Det Sære Det Smukke Det Store' at 1.SAL.100 (2024, DK), 'Verdant Fade' at Bricks Gallery (2022, DK), and 'Dear Hunter' at LIST (2019, DK).

The opening reception is sponsored by Nørrebro, offering beers and non-alcoholic drinks.

Pressemeddelelse

I Jon Erik Nyholms serie af nye malerier, synes der at være en række spørgsmål vedrørende motiverne. Men vigtigere end spørgsmålene synes at være rækkefølgen og hierarkiet af dem.

Først opløses naturens funktioner, såsom at blomster springer ud og visner igen. Plantestænglerne bliver til krakeleringer i et spejl, der varsler ulykke. Vi spørger om det er menneskenes skyld, men de lader til at være underlagt samme regime af opløste og afviklede funktioner.

Er det en frodig eng, et blomsterbed eller er vi under vandet? Landskabet og scenen er tvetydige, dramaet er ligeledes uforankret. En tsunami af blomster. Hvordan skal vi tro på det vi ser, når det ikke kommer fra et genkendeligt udgangspunkt? Hvordan skal vi selv definere vores tro, når grunden under vores fødder er så flydende og uigennemsigtig og ikke mindst udgiver sig for at være alle ting på en gang. Falsk landskab, opløst identitet.

Det frosne islandskab er spidst og uigennemtrængeligt. Dog frodigt og planterigt. En ensom skikkelse vandrer i søvngænger tilstand igennem som i en drøm. Måske bliver vi ikke stillet spørgsmål om figurens eksistens, men mere et spørgsmål om figurens behov og formål i denne verden.

Malet i violette toner som for at mane billeder frem af CIAs hemmelige programmer i sluthalvtredserne, hvor de tvangsfodrede intetanende med store mængder LSD og låste dem inde i farvede rum for at finde ud af hvilken farve der var mest negativt påvirkende for den menneskelige psyke ved længere isolation. Violet var en klar vinder.

Et gulbrunt maleri står og flimrer. Langsomt mytologiserer det sig til livets træ. Sekunder efter paddehatteskyen af atombomben og til sidst fremstår en abstraktion over hjernebarken. Det menneskelige cockpit og kontrolcenter.

Men motivets kontrol over sig selv er for længst gået tabt. Det er i fuld mutation og ligesom de blomster og planter der lader til at vokse ud af malerierne, er kontrollen over motivet ikke en statisk tilstedeværelse. Den springer ud, blomstrer, visner og dør, går i dvale og bliver født på ny.

Hvor Nyholms tidligere malerier fremstod som genfærd og gennemsigtige gengangere af restenergi fra et afdødt romantisk landskab, virker det nu som om malerierne er blevet en cyklisk genfødsel i et uendeligt hjul, der konstant drejer rundt om sig selv og har taget motivet, landskabet, mennesket, scenen og dramaet med på rejsen. Et maleri der bevæger sig hen imod det figurative, genkendelige og fortællende, men samtidigt opløser, formørker og forgrener forståelsen af sig selv i al sin vibrerende og strålende enkelthed. Et maleri der fremkalder en paradoksal følelse af fremtidsnostalgi.

Selvfølgelig ville det ikke være det samme uden dig og uden landskabet. Uden minderne og hukommelsen og uden nogen forudindtagede billeder af hvordan verden og dens beboere ser ud. Uden kollektiv historie eller udgangspunkt.

Vores hænder er bundet på ryggen, og vi har bind for øjnene på vej igennem Nyholms store have.

Men stien lyser op og vi kan mærke varmen i vores fødder. Om vi bevæger os i den rette retning vides ikke. Måske det ikke er relevant, så længe vi og landskabet er i bevægelse.

Tekst af Peter Larsen