

JENNY'S

Eirik Sæther
Blow 2
May 27 – July 8, 2017

It is a daily anxiety that we all encounter, the simple prospect of doing too much or perhaps not enough. The act of consumption becomes destructive, while also inviting the possibility to reveal one's imagined self. *I'm worried I haven't drunk enough...*, the title of Eirik Sæther's series of enamel and copper works lining the walls, draws on the desire for excess in the place of doubt. Each work features a repeated anthropomorphic silhouette, encased in lush, expressive colors and sketches done in a state of automatic drawing, or possibly under the influence.

Fashioned like an abandoned interior, Sæther's wall and carpet installation is anchored by a collage adorned with a central bronze plaque in the hands of a female figure, embossed with the words "Arsonists Appreciated." Echoing the language of personalized nameplates which demarcate private homes and entrances, the words solicit a dangerous, consuming force. The installation is a montage composed of found materials, textiles, and hand sewn pieces — a recurring tableaux in Sæther's practice. An adept scavenger and gleaner, he dresses up an otherwise ordinary scenario, synthesizing traditional surfaces with cultural references, while incorporating a personal language of his own prismatic, affected self. The scene sets a stage for possible catastrophe, poised with an invitation.

Two carnivorous plants on elaborate platforms and embellished in fabric, fur, and costume elements serve as deceptively friendly hosts. A reference to the cult classic musical *Little Shop of Horrors*, in which a plant is used to attract visitors into the shop and subsequently demands their blood, these two totemic creatures serve to cultivate an alluring facade. With their bases assembled from deconstructed accessories and layers of clothing, the plants emerge from the top, suggesting the desire for mobility while being entrapped by their own ornamentation. Sæther's practice is a perpetual mediation between embellishment and concealment, assembling layered works that are fused with the visual and social language he acquires.

The plant in the *Little Shop of Horrors* undergoes a transformation fueled by consumption of human flesh, and is appropriately named Audrey 2 after the co-owner of the store (a desired victim). The "Blow" in Sæther's *Blow 2* is none other than the infamous, glamorous Isabella Blow, a British socialite and fashion editor known as much for her penchant for outrageous hats and costume as for her tragic, self-induced demise. Mimicking the shelf of a store in which a product is endlessly duplicated, the silhouette in the enamel panels refers to a bottle of weed killer, the poison of choice for Isabella Blow's final act. Both banal and poignant, the product of weed killer itself is meant for harvesting a manicured facade, while its function easily becomes fatally destructive. Simultaneously vulgar and sincere, Blow - like Sæther - holds a deep understanding and appreciation for a veneer of ornamentation, often to mask the intense pressure of performing.

Eirik Sæther (b. 1983) graduated from Oslo Academy of the Arts' MFA program in 2010. He was a founding member of the artist group Institutt for Degenerert Kunst (2008–15) in Oslo, and his work has been shown both in Norway and abroad. Previous exhibitions and projects include the solo exhibition *World's Youngest* at Édouard Montassut, Paris (2017), participation in the 9th Berlin Biennale (2016), the solo exhibition *INNESTEMME* organized by Jenny's at 47 Canal, New York (2015), and the exhibition *Unshelling and Shelling Again*, which he curated for Kunsthall Stavanger and Diorama, Oslo (2014). Upcoming exhibitions in summer 2017 include the Sculpture Biennial in Oslo. His first solo exhibition at a Scandinavian institution is currently being held at Kunstneres Hus in Oslo, organized by the Unge Kunstneres Samfund / The Young Artists Society.