

Intimacy and mystery

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Marianne Arnbäck's art can hardly be said to be discreet. Her large paintings, which are now on show at Galleri Malen in Borstahusen, Landskrona, unveil reality by means of mystique and intimacy. In a painting named "The communion of plants" I penetrate into a dense jungle of rhubarb plants whose trunks and leaves have adopted grotesque shapes. In another painting I find myself in a forest of tree trunks, naked, exposed ...

Here nature is intense, alive, vibrant and possesses a palpable power. There are no people and animals here; here it is all the subtle nuances of nature that create life and accentuate what is going on.

These paintings, where Marianne Arnbäck skilfully applies layers of paint to create different nuances, contain a stillness, a calm that is appealing.

But her art can change very fast. In other paintings, where animals and people are exposed, I find more anxiety, a watchfulness that may instill peace as well as a threat. Both people and animals carry secrets and silence. This applies to the four naked women in a group, each one turning towards one of the four cardinal points. They are surrounded by the sea, yes, water and bodies enter into a tentative symbiosis. As in a tapestry, Marianne Arnbäck calls forth a geometrical pattern in nature that finds its way into the women's firm bodies.

Nature and animals are merged in the painting "Guardians" as well. The dogs turn into mythological shapes watching the road that disappears into the darkness. The tree trunks along the road form a wall against the threatening, the unknown. I have no idea what they are on their guard against, all I know is that this painting makes me uncomfortable.

This is where I quickly go back to Arnbäck's studies of nature. Even though her forceful close encounter makes nature more mysterious and mythical than the nature I experience and live in every day, I feel safer here.

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