

Sverre Malling: Adieu to Old England

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Surreal, fairytale-esque landscapes and characters are rendered in exquisite detail in Norwegian artist Sverre Malling's latest collection of drawings.



Address

533 Old York Road
London
SW18 1TG
United Kingdom

Date

Jan 23 - Feb 27
00:00 - 18:00

Location

Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

Surreal, fairytale-esque landscapes and characters are rendered in exquisite detail in Norwegian artist Sverre Malling's latest collection of drawings. Each image weaves together a multitude of sources, converging allusions to contemporary mass culture with figures and symbols from art history and literature to create a richly layered visual narrative that cuts through the currents of time. His forthcoming exhibition entitled *Adieu to Old England* at Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery's Wandsworth space in London pays tribute to the diversity of England's cultural and artistic heritage whilst also questioning the authority of conventional historic perspectives.

Malling has always been drawn to the illustrations and narratives from English folklore, taking a particular interest in 'the eccentric, the lost heroes, the people who find themselves on the outskirts of the norm.' This latest collection of drawings blends motifs from historic photography and art with the artist's own fictional characters and landscapes, whilst the highly detailed aesthetic takes inspiration from Victorian illustrators and the fairytale tradition. In a similar way to fairytale narratives, many of Malling's scenes appear innocent, playful and idyllic on the surface whilst the atmospheric charcoal shading and shadowy skies are suggestive of darker, macabre undertones. One drawing, for example, depicts an oversized floral plant surrounded by butterflies, but if we look more closely, the idyllic scene is complicated by a small skeleton (a traditional memento mori) at the plant's base, and a group of small children brandishing long thorns with which they have speared the butterflies. Here, as in several of Malling's artworks, brutality and innocence are not so much juxtaposed, but shown in coexistence to add a sense of mystery and depth to the narrative.

LONDON (WANDSWORTH)

Kristin Hjellegjerde Gallery

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Tuesday–Saturday: 11am–6pm

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