

Fredrik Værsløv

Fredrik Værsløv's New Curtain Bangs

394 Broadway
September 6 - October 19
Opening Reception:
Friday, September 6

SUBTERFUGE

Fredrik Vaerslev's latest body of work consists of large strips of painted cotton (i.e., *canvas*) arranged and displayed as sets of bunched-up *curtains*.

Firstly: on the basic level of biography, these works reference one of the artist's oldest aesthetic experiences: a primal, prelingual sense that his mother's choice of bright colors and brash patterns for covering up his childhood home's windows had something deliberately "artful" about it. Art, in young Vaerslev's mind, began with the look and feel of certain curtains – and that's as close as one would get to the *idea* of art in smalltown Norway in the 1980s. Over the years, such biographical details have grown in importance in making sense of the artist's caustic, workaday experiments in high-end painterly abstraction. And no such detail is of greater consequence, in this regard, than the *social* charge of these formative experiences – which are, inevitably, a matter of *class*.

Secondly: on the slightly more elevated level of the artist's continuing interrogation of the codes and conventions that constitute the expanded field of painting, Vaerslev's curtain paintings seem to question the age-old metaphor of painting as a window onto the world – *any* window, *any* world. Perhaps these paintings are the very curtains designed to sabotage this epochal dream of total transparency instead? What if painting *isn't* a window on the world – but a *screen* (aha!) draped across this very window? These questions recall some of the best-known curtains in twentieth-century painting, namely the dull brown pair framing the canvas inside René Magritte's iconic *La condition humaine* (1933), which depicts a painted landscape obscuring the actual landscape, hinted at through the window frame seen in the background, after which it is painted. The curtain is the *mise-en-abîme* of the seeing mind – of spirit bedeviled by scopophilia ("what's *behind* this?"), so to speak.

Thirdly, and finally: on the Olympian level of founding myths and memes, the legend of the fifth-century Greek painter Zeuxis as recounted in Pliny the Elder's *Natural History* comes to mind: "The contemporaries and rivals of Zeuxis were Timanthes, Androcydes, Eupompus, and Parrhasius. This last, it is said, entered into a pictorial contest with Zeuxis,

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who represented some grapes, painted so naturally that the birds flew towards the spot where the picture was exhibited. Parrhasius, on the other hand, exhibited a curtain, drawn with such singular truthfulness, that Zeuxis, elated with the judgment which had been passed upon his work by the birds, haughtily demanded that the curtain should be drawn aside to let the picture be seen. Upon finding his mistake, with a great degree of ingenuous candor he admitted that he had been surpassed, for that whereas he himself had only deceived the birds, Parrhasius had deceived him, an artist.” This story lies at the basis of many themes and tropes that have helped shape the history of painting, not the least of which pertains to the “scandal” of realism – but the one that concerns us most here is the ancient notion that *drapery* allowed artists to show off their skill and mastery of the material at hand, which has led some commentators to suggest a “secret history of painting” in which the figuring of drapery (curtains and the like) helped pave the way for the advent of abstraction in art. (*Sure.*)

Let’s think of it as art’s ultimate curtain call: there may be “nothing to see here.” Or *not*.

Dieter Roelstraete

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394 BROADWAY



FREDRIK VÆRSLEV
*Untitled (New York Curtain
Bang #4)*, 2024

Spray paint on cotton canvas,
steel rod
87 x 52 ¼ inches (221 x 132.7
cm.)
(FV24-005)



FREDRIK VÆRSLEV
*Untitled (New York Curtain
Bang #6)*, 2024

Spray paint on cotton canvas,
steel rod
87 x 54 5/8 inches (221 x
138.7 cm.)
(FV24-007)



FREDRIK VÆRSLEV
*Untitled (New York Curtain
Bang #3)*, 2024

Spray paint on cotton canvas,
steel rod
69 x 73 ¾ inches (175.3 x
187.3 cm.)
(FV24-004)



FREDRIK VÆRSLEV
*Untitled (New York Curtain
Bang #5)*, 2024

Spray paint on cotton canvas,
steel rod
84 5/8 x 54 5/8 inches (214.9
x 138.7 cm.)
(FV24-006)

OFFICE



FREDRIK VÆRSLEV
*Untitled (New York Curtain
Bang #1)*, 2024

Spray paint on cotton canvas,
steel rod
4 parts: 86 5/8 x 52 1/4 inches
(220 x 132.7 cm.)
(FV24-002)

Fredrik Værsløv

BORN MOSS, NORWAY, 1979
LIVES AND WORKS IN DRØBAK, NORWAY

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 *Fredrik Værsløv's New Curtain Bangs*, Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York, NY
Fredrik Værsløv's Curtain Bangs, Galerie Mehdi Chouakri, Berlin, Germany
- 2023 *Fredrik Værsløv: Platting*, Haugar Kunstmuseum, Tønsberg, Norway
- 2022 *LE RENNE*, Fonds regional d'art contemporain Bretagne, Rennes, France
LOUISE LAWLER / FREDRIK VÆRSLEV, Indipendenza, Rome, Italy
World Paintings, Gió Marconi Gallery, Milan, Italy
- 2019 Städtische Galerie Delmenhorst, Delmenhorst, Germany
Kunstnerforbundet, Oslo, Norway
- 2018 Giuliani Foundation, Rome, Italy
Fredrik Værsløv, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo, Norway
Fredrik Værsløv, Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn, Germany
- 2017 *Fredrik Værsløv*, Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen, Switzerland
Merman, Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York, NY
- 2016 *Fredrik Værsløv*, Gio' Marconi, Milan, Italy
Kunsthall Aarhus, Aarhus, Denmark
Le Consortium, Dijon, France
Le Bergen Kunsthall, Bergen, Norway
- 2015 STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo, Norway
Museo Marino Marini, Firenze, Italy
CAC - Passerelle, Brest, France
La Constance du jardinier, CNEAI, Chatou, France
- 2014 *A Shore Thing*, Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York, NY
It Girl, Johan Berggren Gallery, Malmö, Sweden
East Bound and Down, The Power Station, Dallas, TX
Luminar Cité, Lisbon, Portugal
- 2013 *Groundhog Day*, Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York, NY
Choppy Times, Gió Marconi, Milano, Italy
The World Is Your Oyster, Circus, Berlin, Germany
Drøbak, Drøbak Kunstforening, Drøbak, Norway

- 2012 *Lanterne rouge*, STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo, Norway
Sunny side up!, Indipendenza Studio, Rome, Italy
That came out a little country, Front Desk Apparatus, New York, NY
Johan Berggren Gallery, Malmö, Sweden
- 2011 *TORO*, Tomorrow Gallery, Toronto, Canada
LISTE 16, Johan Berggren Gallery, Basel, Switzerland
The Secrets of Aging Well, CIRCUS Gallery, Berlin, Germany
I'm gonna keep a happy thought and assume this is just a negotiation tactic, curated by Eivind Furnesvik, STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo, Norway
- 2010 *Panels and Patios*, Johan Berggren Gallery, Malmö, Sweden
Swap Paintings # 3 vs. Anne Britt Vørslev (6 ROOFTOPS 4 FRANKFURT), ECONOMY, Frankfurt, Germany
MFA Exhibition, KHM, Malmö, Sweden
Ideal Setting for Per-Oskar Leu's If You Can Remember It, You Weren't Really There (2006), Galleri Ping Pong, Malmö
- 2009 *Swap Paintings # 4 vs. Anne Britt Vørslev (Venice Match)*, Studio, Venice, Italy
Shelf Paintings (Pottery in October) (decorations by Dan Rees), STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo, Norway
(Her bor Ann-Kristin og Andreas), door I-3, Frankfurt, Germany

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS

- 2024 *In the House of the Trembling Eye*, Aspen Art Museum, Aspen, CO
- 2023 *Georg Herold & Fredrik Vørslev*, Gerhardsen Gerner, Oslo, Norway
EVERYBODY TALKS ABOUT THE WEATHER, Fondazione Prada, Venice, Italy
- 2022 *Minimalism-Maximalism-Mechanissmmm Act 1–Act 2*, Art Sonje Center, Seoul, South Korea
Christen Sveaas Art Foundation: The Travel Bureau, Selected by Paulina Olowska, Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK
- 2021 *'I KNOW WHERE I'M GOING – WHO CAN I BE NOW'*, The Modern Institute, Glasgow, UK
House of Perception, Antenna Space, Shanghai
- 2018 *Faithless Pictures*, National Museum of Norway Oslo, Norway
- 2017 *How It's Made*, Carl Kostyál Gallery, London, UK
Working/Not Working, CANADA 331, New York, NY
National Art School Gallery, Sydney, Australia
Ramiken Crucible, New York
The Promise, Index– The Swedish Contemporary Art Foundation, Stockholm, Sweden
How It's Made, curated by Matt Williams, Carl Kostyal, Stockholm, Sweden
- 2016 *He is left handed and walks with a cane*, Galleri Riis, Stockholm, Sweden

- 2015 *CHER(E)S AMI(E)S (DEAR FRIENDS)*, Centre Pompidou, Paris, France
NN-A NN-A NN-A, Astrup Fearnley Museet, Oslo, Norway
Fredrik Værsløv & Veit Laurent Kurz, Johan Berggren Gallery, Malmö, Sweden
- 2014 *Seven Reeds*, Overduin & Co., Los Angeles, CA
Lé Almanach -14, Lé Consortium, Dijon, France
Second View, Johan Berggren Gallery, Malmö, Sweden
Tegnebiennalen, Oslo, curated by Oslo Kunsthall
Galerie Mehdi Chouakri, Berlin, Germany
- 2013 *Backa in i framtiden*, Lunds Konsthall, Lund
Sea Salt and Cross Passes, curated by Eivind Furnesvik, The Modern Institute, Glasgow, United Kingdom
Nicolas Ceccaldi & Fredrik Værsløv, Billedrommet, Tønsberg (two-person with Nicolas Ceccaldi)
Flex-Sil Reloaded, Kunsthalle St.Gallen
Awaiting Immanence, curated by Peter J. Amdam, Isbrytaren, Stockholm, Sweden
Lies About Painting, Moderna Museet, Malmö, Sweden
- 2012 *Rubbish*, Johan Berggren Gallery, Malmö (two-person with Ståle Vold)
Oscar knows Gardar. Gardar knows Matias. Matias knows Fredrik. Fredrik sort of knows Gardar. Gardar knows Marius And that Gardar knows Matias we already know. But Matias also knows Anders, STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo, Norway
Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
Drøbak Kunstforening, Drøbak, Norway
Kunsthalle Andratx, Mallorca, curated by Friederike Nymphius
Collaborations & Interventions, curated by Friederike Nymphius, Kunsthalle Andratx, Mallorca, Spain
I think and that is all I am, Thomas Duncan Gallery, Los Angeles, CA
- 2011 *Priority Moments*, curated by Nicky Verber, Herald St, London, United Kingdom
The Confidence-man, Tanya Leighton, Berlin, Germany
Le Printemps de Septembre, curated by Anne Pontégnie, Toulouse, France
Patterns of Intention, curated by Silvie Jo Buschmann, CIRCUS Gallery, Berlin, Germany
PANG AEA. SUPERKONTINENT, curated by Tiril Hasselknippe, Inter Arts Centre (IAC), Malmö
Art Los Angeles Contemporary, STANDARD (OSLO), Los Angeles, CA
- 2010 *SPÅR - Konstmuseets nyförvärv*, Malmö Konstmuseum, Malmö, Sweden
When do you see yourself in ten years?, curated by Eivind Furnesvik, STANDARD (OSLO), Oslo, Norway
2000 Lillestrøm, curated by Geir Haraldseth, Akerhus Kunstsenter, Lillestrøm, Norway

- LISTE 15 (with Johan Berggren Gallery), Basel, Switzerland
Inter Arts Centre (IAC), curated by Gertrud Sandqvist, Malmö,
Sweden
Zak Kitnick / Fredrik Værsløv, curated by Geir Haraldseth, Johan
Berggren Gallery, Malmö, Sweden
*Ideal Setting for Per-Oskar Leu's "If you can remember it you weren't
really there"*, 2006, Galleri Ping Pong, Malmö, Sweden
- 2009 *Heinzberger, Leu, Munro and Værsløv Guyton*, Parisa Kind Gallery,
Frankfurt, Germany
Local - Meat is my veg, The Caribic Residency, Hamburg, Germany
First View, Johan Berggren Gallery, Malmö, Sweden
FIRST VIEW - in 2 parts, Johan Berggren Gallery, Malmö, Sweden
What is not but could be if (Part 2), Neue Alte Brücke, Frankfurt a.M,
Germany
Snowball Editions, Calendar 2009, Oslo, Norway
On MODERN LIVING, Yearly Exhibition, Malmö Art Academy,
Malmö, Sweden
Fredrik, Charlotte & Leif for Johan Berggren, Johan Berggren Gallery,
Malmö, Sweden
- 2008 *RUNDGANG*, Staedelschule, Frankfurt, Germany
Sink the Boat Before it Sails, BASIS, Frankfurt, Germany
At, By, For, Around the House, Koh-I-Noor, Copenhagen, Denmark
At, By, For, Around the House, curated by Ivo André Bras & Israel
Guarda, Hospital Julio de Matos, Lisbon, Portugal
Botnik Space-Off, Botnik Studios, Gerleborg, Sweden
PhiIosopher in I AM A MAN, Parade with Arto Lindsay, Portikus,
MMK and the Staedelschule, Frankfurt, Germany
- 2007 *Crosskick / Platform #4* (curated by Dr.Martin Engler & Stefan Berg),
Hannover Kunstverein, Hannover, Germany
A Day in the Sun, Botnik Studios, Gerleborg, Sweden
Oslo – Malmö, curated by Gertrud Sandqvist & Per Maning, Galleri
21:24 & 21:25, Oslo, Norway
- 2006 *Malmö – Oslo*, curated by Gertrud Sandqvist & Per Maning, Galleri
PEEP, Malmö, Sweden Skandinavian Spastic, Sjokoladefabrikken,
Oslo, Norway

CURATED EXHIBITIONS AND PROJECTS

- 2014 *Paperwork*, Landings, Vestfossen
2013 *Get Out of Town*, Johan Berggren Gallery, Malmö
2012 *Rony Chandra, works on paper*, curated by Fredrik Værsløv, Landings
/ 1, Vestfossen
2011 *Something Old Something New, Something Borrowed, Something
Blue*, curated by Fredrik Værsløv for Landings, Kornhäuschen,
Aschaffenburg e.V.
2010 *Small size, medium, big*, curated by Fredrik Værsløv and Per Christian

- Brath, Landings / 3, Vestfossen
Something Old Something New, Something Borrowed, Something Blue, curated by Fredrik Værsløv for Landings ECONOMY, London, United Kingdom
- 2009 *Ceccaldi / Holen / Leu*, curated by Fredrik Værsløv, Landings / 1, / 2 & / 3, Vestfossen
- 2008 *Ståle Vold, 20 years in conversation with Duchamp*, Johns, Ryman and more, curated by Fredrik Værsløv, Landings / 1, Vestfossen

PUBLICATIONS

- 2020 Fredrik Værsløv: *World Paintings*, Mousse Publishing
Fredrik Værsløv: *Open Window*, Mousse Publishing
- 2017 Fredrik Værsløv: *The Dining Room*, Teknisk Industri
- 2018 Fredrik Værsløv, Astrup Fearnley Museet
- 2016 *The Constant Gardener*, Hatje Cantz, Germany
East Bound and Down, The Power Station
All Around Amateur, Volume 1, Sternberg Press
All Around Amateur, Volume 2, Sternberg Press
- 2015 *Reality Bites*, Mousse Publishing
- 2014 *It Girl*. Null & Void Publishers, Sweden
- 2013 Fredrik Værsløv, Mousse Publishing
- 2012 Fredrik Værsløv: *The rich man's breakfast, the shopkeeper's lunch, the poor man's supper*, STANDARD OSLO
- 2009 *Younger Than Jesus - Artist Directory*, PHAIDON

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- 2016 "Stimulating Teamwork." *Texte Zur Kunst*, September
- 2015 Carmine, Giovanni. Interview. *Mousse Magazine*
- 2014 Troncy, Eric. Interview. *Frog Magazine*, September
- 2013 Andersson, Axel. *berlinartlink.com*
- 2012 Gabrielsen, Stian. "Gulvet i Maleriet." Norsk Kunstårbo
D'Aurzio, Michele. *Kaleidoscope*
Pahle Bjerke, Mona. *Standardoppskrift*, NRK
Maleri mellom kunst og hverdag, Kjetil Roed, Aftenposten,
August 25 Markisemalerier, Erlend Hammer. *Dagbladet*,
September 5
- Værsløvs metode, Ingvild Krogvig, *Morgenbladet* 34, September 21
- 2011 Beeson, John. "Fredrik Værsløv at Circus, Berlin." *Frieze Online Magazine*, May 25
- Hewitt, Simon. *ANNUAL*
- Rosales, Esperanza. "Finishing Touches." *MOUSSE Magazine* nr. 28,

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- 2010 April-May
Horvei, Maria. "NY Standard." *SMUG*, November 29
Skylstad, Kristian. "Fredrik Værsløv kommer aldri til å få barn." *kunstkritikk.no* October 26
Narvehed, Lotta. "Ideal Settings." *METRO*, November 2
Historeförankring, Carolina Söderholm, *Sydsvenskan*, November 2
Sticken, schleifen, sägen, Christoph Schütte, *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*
- 2009 Younger Than Jesus - Artist Directory, PHAIDON
Olsson, Tommy. "Kveldskurs gone wrong." *Morgenbladet*.
23.10.2009
Artig radbrekking av gamle helter. Øivind Storm Bjerke.
Klassekampen, October 14
Værsløv, Klassekampen, June 7
- 2008 Opp fra kjelleren, Lars Elton, *VG*. July 26
At, By, For, Around the House, (IP)

PUBLIC COLLECTIONS

Capc Museum of Contemporary Art, Bordeaux, France
Astrup Fearnley, Oslo, Norway
Centre Pompidou, Paris, France
Institute of Contemporary Art, Miami, FL, USA
Le Consortium, Dijon, France
Malmö Konstmuseum, Malmö, Sweden
Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden
Nasjonalmuseet, Oslo, Norway
RISD museum, Providence, RI, USA

GRANTS

- 2011 International Support, OCA - Office for Contemporary Art, Norway
2010 Three-year working grant, Norsk Kulturråd
2009 International Support, OCA - Office for Contemporary Art, Norway
International Support, OCA - Office for Contemporary Art, Norway

OTHER

Director and founder of Landings Project Space, Vestfossen, Norway
Landings Journal and Landings Editions