

## Anne-Karin Furunes

### *Reassembling Reality*

**21<sup>st</sup> January – 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2022**

Over the past two decades, Anne-Karin Furunes' art has mainly consisted of portraits, usually of women, based on original photographs discovered by the artist in a wide range of different archives. Her interest lies in how historical events affected these people and how their situations are reflected in the pictures. The portraits remind us of human dignity and value even in dire conditions.

During the two decades that Furunes has shown her work, another thematic strand has run alongside her portraits, namely pictures of nature, trees, landscapes, plants. While working for a commission for the FRAM centre (High North Research Centre for Climate and the Environment) in Tromsø, from 2016 to 2018, she discovered archives of arctic nature and life. She also found long-term, ongoing documentation of calving icebergs in Svalbard compiled by glaciologists working at the Norwegian Polar Institute. The pictures clearly show the dramatic changes caused by the ongoing melting of the icebergs as a consequence of climate change. Furunes' first calving iceberg picture dates to 2019, and during the last couple of years, she has returned to these dramatic, tragic scenes and made a suite of large-scale works on the theme.

She has continued using her signature perforation technique but, at times, expanded it by adding a layer of colour which intensifies and deepens the optical effect of the image.

We are today becoming increasingly informed and conscious of the catastrophic consequences of global warming and are aware of the crucial changes required to tackle this great challenge of our time. All this is common knowledge today in every home. Meanwhile, our time is imbued by a sense of growing alarm, and the present pandemic further increases the feeling of hopelessness to which we easily succumb.

Witnessing incidents like the calving icebergs, Anne-Karin Furunes is acutely aware that we all need to change our ways of consuming and become increasingly conscious of what we may lose or, in some tragic cases, have already lost. As an artist, she wishes to remind us of the beauty of nature, which will be lost forever unless we change our habits of consuming both in our private lives but also on the national and global level. The losses are life-threatening to all living beings. As we know, scientists are working intensively on solutions. As an artist, Furunes chooses to look at what is in danger of being lost should we fail to understand the new realities of the world. New pictures are needed to give us strength, confidence and belief in a new reality, a possible future in which we can continue to admire nature's beauty and live in harmony with other living beings. It may sound overly idealistic, but as we already know, this is what is at stake.

Anne-Karin Furunes' portraits depict human victims of history, while her present works reflect an all-encompassing state of nature where nothing is guaranteed unless we drastically change our way of living. The paintings shown in this exhibition remind us of the sublime beauty we are in danger of losing.

Maaretta Jaukkuri