

## PRESS RELEASE

*Viriditas – The Mystical in Art*  
14.04–04.06.2023

Opening 13.04.2023, 6–8pm



Still: Simone Hooymans. Chapel of Very Small Creations. Animation. 2022.

In the time period 14.04–03.06.2023, Tegnerforbundet – The Norwegian Drawing Center presents the exhibition *Viriditas – The Mystical in Art*. In the exhibition we present ten artists who work with the mystical, magical and spiritual both as a theme and a method. The exhibition consists of drawing, installation, sculpture and video, and is curated by Esra Duzen and Tanja Thorjussen.

**Participating artists:** Tia Maria Taylor Berry, Simone Hooymans, Taru Kallio, Kornelia Remø Klock, Päivi Laakso, Linda Morell, Sverre Malling, Astrid Mørland, Käte-Elin Madsen and Amalie Vestergaard Olsen.

### *Viriditas*

*Viriditas* is a word originating from Latin that refers to vitality, the fresh green color of plants, fertility and youthful vigor. It is associated with Hildegard Von Bingen (1098–1179) who used the word to describe spiritual and physical health in relation to the spiritual in nature.

### **The mystical, magical and spiritual in art**

In recent years the spiritual has found new footing in the field of art. Contemporary artists are working with the mystical, magical and spiritual as both a theme and a method. The theme has been explored in many exhibitions and publications internationally, such as the main exhibition at the 59th Venice Biennale *The Milk of Dreams*.

Pioneers within spiritual, surreal and abstract art, such as Hilma af Klint (1862–1944), Emma Kunz (1892–1963), Georgina Houghton (1814–1884), Leonora Carrington (1917–2011) and Ithell Colquhoun (1906–1988) have received great international recognition through large retrospective exhibitions. The history of art is now being rewritten, exploring a greater spiritual perspective. In the wake of the renewed interest in overlooked pioneers who were active 100 years ago, we have a new interest in the spiritual in art and an acceptance of this as a theme and work method.

### **Approaching the world through spirituality**

To possess and express an alternative spiritual freedom is political, feminist and critical of society. This is exemplified in the Spiritualist movement of the previous century, where drawing was central in communication with spirits and the dead. Practitioners used automatic writing and drawing in trance, as drawing is such a direct form of expression. Established power structures have throughout history suppressed these movements and portrayed these expressions as evil, crazy, hysterical and nonsensical.

In the age of technology and AI, there is once again interest in spirituality. Witchcraft, astrology, tarot, shamanism, the occult and magic is becoming more mainstream and used by artists as a tool to explore alternative power structures, feminism and anti-colonialism. Spirituality is being revived as a result of our renewed knowledge of the magical which has long been subdued by modern established society. Through art we seek new ways of living and visualize new futures.