

## **Rita LUNDQVIST**

September 10-October 24, 2009

### **Gallery 2**

**for immediate release**

Tanya Bonakdar Gallery is very pleased to present a selection of sublime new paintings by the renowned and influential Swedish painter Rita Lundqvist. Exhibiting throughout Sweden and Europe for decades, this is Lundqvist's second solo exhibition with the gallery.

Combining minimal forms and figures to create compositions that suggest hidden narratives, Lundqvist's paintings are subtle yet powerful, pulling the viewer into their enigmatic world. Exquisitely and precisely rendered, Lundqvist's flatly geometric compositions are uniform in scale and perspective, often featuring a stark horizon line that divides the space and foregrounds a single figure or figures engaged in mysterious activities. The contrast between the lyrical nature of Lundqvist's figures and the economy of her landscapes illustrates her unique balance of the traditional, the folk-inspired, and the contemporary within succinct, narrative driven tableaux.

While each of the new works that comprise the exhibition does present some narrative action, the meaning of the compositions are cryptic, as the figures in each painting relate ambiguously with one another and with the viewer. In "Two girls and two boys" a row of figures seem to look out of the image at the viewer but their gaze is opaque and impenetrable. Nearby in a separate work, a man holding his hat looks over his shoulder at some unknown activity that is taking place outside of the picture's frame. Every gesture is subtle, but all are purposeful, and together they seem to suggest the presence of one larger story, as if each painting were an episode in a tale that is known to the figures themselves but left to the viewer to assemble. This overarching story, however, is merely suggested and is not as important as the single moment each painting depicts; indeed every work contains its own discrete world in which character and storyline are distilled down to their most basic narrative and compositional essence.

The enigmatic nature of the figures' activities within these storylines stands in contrast to their meticulous and precise execution. Dividing the canvas into swaths of color, Lundqvist layers her boys and girls over a background of mossy greens, indigos, muted grays, and pale glowing yellows. The simplicity of the compositions highlights their construction, and Lundqvist's brushstrokes themselves become descriptive elements of the work. Minimal in nature, Lundqvist's paintings are nevertheless packed with art historical references; their spare composition resonates with contemporary and modern abstraction, while their flatness recalls early renaissance painting, and their obscured narrative structures and references to folk art evoke surrealism.

Living and working in Stockholm, Lundqvist has had numerous solo shows both in Sweden and abroad and her work is well represented in many institutions, including the Moderna Museet, Stockholm, Sweden; Borås Konstmuseum, Borås, Sweden; Göteborgs Konstmuseum, Göteborgs, Sweden; Malmö Konstmuseum, Malmö, Sweden; among others. In 2000 she was elected a member of the Royal Swedish Academy of Fine Arts.

For further information please feel free to contact the gallery at 212-414-4144 or [mail@tanyabonakdargallery.com](mailto:mail@tanyabonakdargallery.com).