

For immediate release

## MAMMA ANDERSSON

### Behind the Curtain

January 8 – February 14, 2015

Opening reception: Thursday, January 8, 6 – 8 PM

Press preview with the artist: 10:30 AM



*Ceremony*, 2014  
Oil on panel  
43 1/4 x 38 3/8 inches (109.8 x 97.5 cm)

David Zwirner is pleased to present an exhibition of new works by Swedish artist Mamma Andersson. On view at 519 and 525 West 19th Street in New York will be the artist's latest body of paintings alongside two murals, made especially for this presentation.

Andersson's work often draws inspiration from archival photographs, filmic imagery, theater sets, and period interiors. Her evocative use of pictorial space and her juxtapositions of thick paint and textured washes have a unique and timeless quality, which is further enhanced by a conspicuous absence of contemporary signifiers. Typically composed of thin layers of acrylic and oil paint on panel board, her paintings employ a broad range of techniques, deftly shifting between stark graphic lines to loose washes and thickly rendered brushstrokes. With their richly detailed and complex surfaces, the artist's works stand as testaments to her deep engagement with the painterly process itself.

New works in the exhibition include interior settings that appear to be constructed for theatrical and domestic fictions. The compositions reverberate with signs of domesticity and femininity, yet ultimately remain enigmatic. Reflecting a gradual shift in Andersson's approach to figurative subject matter, characters in her present paintings seem based on toy versions and are distinguished by a distinctive, artificial quality. Representations of dolls appear throughout the new works, as is further exemplified by *Le Charme Discret de la Bourgeoise* that portrays two antique wooden dolls whose fabrication is revealed by their peg joints. Recalling shadow puppetry, *Hangman* shows a marionette-looking figure dangling from a wire, whose large shadow is projected onto the background.

Whereas the representation of dolls and toys is prominently on view in the aforementioned works, the reference is subtly implied in others such as *Behind the Curtain*, the painting which lends its title to the exhibition. One of the largest panels on view at over five feet in length, it depicts a heavily folded curtain and stage with two female dancers, whose shadowy bodies and stiff limbs give them the appearance of wooden dolls. In *Ceremony*, a closer viewpoint is used to depict two onstage dancers captured in midstep. Their superimposed look resembles children's paper dolls with their frozen pose, flattened color, and hard edge.

Characterized by their muted, high-contrast palette, the paintings in the exhibition address materiality and the interplay of light and shadow. Several feature darkly colored backgrounds and they, at times, result in almost eerie, still life arrangements

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of objects floating in space—most distinctly seen in paintings like *Garderobe*, in which articles of clothing have become divorced from the background and appear to exist in and of themselves. By presenting versions of everyday objects and stripping them of their contexts, the artist challenges their familiarity and allows them to be infused with deeper psychological meaning.

Also presented will be two murals painted by Andersson with compositions selected from this body of work. In 2014, she created her first mural at Artipelag in Stockholm on the occasion of the group exhibition *Here/Now* (through January 6, 2015). Murals reflect a recent development in the artist's practice, and by translating her paintings into complex wall-sized works, they stand as a new avenue for her to engage with scale as well as the ongoing themes central to her overall oeuvre.

**Mamma Andersson** was born in 1962 in Luleå, Sweden. She studied from 1986 to 1993 at the Royal University College of Fine Arts in Stockholm, where she continues to live and work. Since 2004, Andersson's work has been represented by David Zwirner. *Behind the Curtain* marks her third solo exhibition at the gallery in New York. Previous shows include *Who is sleeping on my pillow* (2010), a two-person exhibition with Jockum Nordström, and *Rooms Under the Influence* (2006), which marked the artist's United States debut.

In 2011, Andersson's work was the subject of a solo exhibition at Museum Haus Esters in Krefeld, Germany. She had her first museum solo show in the United States at the Aspen Art Museum, Colorado in 2010, and her first solo exhibition in Ireland at the Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin in 2009. In 2007, a critically acclaimed, mid-career survey of her work was organized by Moderna Museet, Stockholm, which traveled to Kunsthalle Helsinki and the Camden Arts Centre, London.

Work by the artist is represented in museum collections that include the Dallas Museum of Art; Göteborgs Konstmuseum, Gothenburg, Sweden; Hammer Museum, Los Angeles; Magasin 3 Stockholm Konsthall; Malmö Konstmuseum, Sweden; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; The Museum of Modern Art, New York; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; and Västerås Konstmuseum, Sweden.

### **Special Event**

**Book launch and signing with Mamma Andersson and Jockum Nordström at David Zwirner**

**Friday, January 9, 4 – 6 PM**

The artists will be signing copies of the eagerly awaited reprint of *Who is sleeping on my pillow*.

Originally published on the occasion of the 2010 exhibition at David Zwirner in New York, *Who is sleeping on my pillow* marked the first time Mamma Andersson and Jockum Nordström presented their work in concurrent solo shows, after spending half their lives together while maintaining separate practices. The book includes Andersson's and Nordström's work from the late 1980s to 2010 in over two hundred full-color plates, alongside favorite family snapshots and source materials. It is being reissued by David Zwirner Books to coincide with Nordström's exhibition at the gallery in London (November 28, 2014 – January 24, 2015) and Andersson's exhibition at the gallery in New York (January 8 – February 14, 2015).

**For more information about the book signing and to reserve signed copies, contact**

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**For all press inquiries and to RSVP to the January 8 press preview, contact**

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