

PRESS RELEASE

# Sunneva Ása Weisshappel: Odd Girl Out

15 September – 14 October 2023

Preview: 14 September, 6-8 pm

980 Madison Ave, New York, NY 10075



Robilant+Voena is pleased to announce an exhibition of new works by Icelandic artist **Sunneva Ása Weisshappel**. This is Weisshappel's second solo show with R+V, expanding upon the successful exhibition in London that took place in 2022, entitled *Sunneva Ása Weisshappel: New Work*.

A compelling exploration of the **femininity and coming of age**, the works draw upon Weisshappel's experiences growing up as a teenager in the 2000s and take inspiration from the ideas put forth in the book *Odd Girl Out* by Rachel Simmons. Imbued with a bitter nostalgia, the canvases capture the multi-faceted experience of growing up: the whimsy of trying on various personas and **deciding who to become**, accompanied by **growing pains and feelings of isolation**. They confront the **hidden aggression** and vindictive elements often present in relationships among young girls, shedding light on the **covert bullying** that is rampant in adolescence—the **alienation of girls as perpetrated by girls** through means of social exclusion and rumors. **Weisshappel** reflects upon the desire to fit in, navigating the subtle and perilous hierarchies of the school playground or the teenage party, and be accepted by one's peers.

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*Slumber Party II, 2023 (240 x 285 cm).*

**Sunneva Ása Weisshappel** is an Icelandic artist whose work interrogates the multifaceted nature of the human experience. Born in 1989, she graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree from the Iceland University of the Arts in 2013. Currently, she is pursuing a joint MFA in Fine Arts at the Goldsmith University in London and the Iceland University of the Arts. In her work, she draws upon her own experiences to challenge herself and her audiences.

Through strange and forceful combinations of materials, she transforms collections of found objects into complex, multi-layered canvases. From delicate textiles conjuring ghostly shapes of female bodies, to hair, teeth and wax evoking the texture of human skin, her works extend beyond the two-dimensional canvas, loaded with cultural and symbolic meaning. She compares her paintings to human beings: *'complex, beautiful, ugly, multifaceted, full of contrasts, mistakes, feelings, and contradictions'*.

Weisshappel's highly personal artistic practice touches upon universal and autobiographical themes. As well as working with installation and video art, the artist primarily focuses on painting and performance, which combine in her present body of work to explore what is possible in the act of painting. In addition, she has had a career as a production designer for projects produced by studios such as Netflix and Focus Films, and won awards for her costume design in the theater production of *Njála*, which ran at the Reykjavik City Theatre.

### Press contacts

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By elucidating this phenomenon, Weisshappel seeks to **disrupt the narrative of docile femininity** in girlhood. Instead, she offers a raw perspective, **subverting the notion that aggression is solely a masculine trait** while exploring the more **discreet manifestation of female powerplay**. The result is a candid, and sometimes uncomfortable, glimpse at the synchronous truth of women and girls as both victims and perpetrators.

Using an eclectic yet considered range of materials, including found objects such as Barbie dolls, zippers, patches on denim jeans, and glitter, the artist creates canvases with layers of distinct elements. Through this process, she explores the coarser side of femininity, juxtaposing delicate and seemingly innocent elements with robust, raw, and fragmented materials. In the artist's words: *'The palette, symbols, titles, and abstract language employed in my art are deeply influenced by my personal experiences, resources, and the era and environment in which they took place'*.

R+V

**Notes to editor**

Robilant+Voena is a partnership of art dealers Edmondo di Robilant and Marco Voena. They launched R+V in London in 2004. Further gallery spaces were opened in Milan in 2009, and Paris and New York in 2020. R+V has distinguished itself as one of the leading international art dealers in Old Master paintings, as well as 20th-century Italian art. The gallery has sold paintings and works of art to many important private and royal collectors and museums including the Brooklyn Museum of Art, the Frick Collection, the Gallerie dell'Accademia Venice, the Louvre Abu Dhabi, the Metropolitan Museum of Art, the National Gallery London, the National Gallery of Stockholm, the Museum of Western Art Tokyo, and the Pinacoteca di Brera Milan. Robilant+Voena is represented at the most prestigious fine art fairs in the world, and is committed to its active exhibitions program and the publication of books and scholarly catalogues.

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**Upcoming exhibitions**

R+V, Milan: *Cesar Santos. InFormal*, 22 September - 27 October 2023

*Arte + Collezionismo*, Palazzo Brancaccio, Roma, 28 September - 2 October 2023

R+V, London: *Daniel Ambrosi and the Landscapes of Capability Brown*, 6 October - 8 December 2023

R+V, New York: *Harumi Klossowska de Rola: Hayawan*, 20 October – 22 November 2023