

# RYAN LEE

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## Anne-Karin Furunes

*Of Nordic Archives*

May 19 - June 30, 2016

Opening: Thursday, May 19, 6-8PM

RYAN LEE is pleased to announce Anne-Karin Furunes: *Of Nordic Archives*, a solo exhibition of her most recent body of work that brings together portraits of men, women, and children from Finland, Norway, and Sápmi, who suffered sterilization and documentation at the hands of their government between 1900 and 1939. In conjunction will be a site-specific painting in RLWindow. This is her first solo show in the US in more than five years.

In the “Of Faces” series, Furunes explores the modernist social theory of eugenics during the early 20th century, when the movement spread worldwide. Culling through thousands of photographs from an archive held in Sweden’s Carolina Rediviva at Uppsala University, the country’s oldest university library, Furunes departs from this collection of photographs to consider untold histories through portraiture. Her choosing of the most striking photographs speaks to a humanness that establishes a connection even across time. As Furunes tackles the ethical complications of modernist theories that aimed to improve the genetic quality of the human population through racial and social sterilization, she wishes to dismantle the automation of the archives by highlighting the portraits of individuals into the gallery space. Her interest in these stories stems from a consideration of those who were silenced, ignored, or otherwise neglected in the retelling of history. This subtle shift from data, a record of documentation of mental or racial deficiencies, to an august and sobering portrait suggests that Furunes’ process of aestheticization is part of a humanistic tradition.

For the last two decades, Furunes has developed a signature technique of perforation that considers photographic and digital elements of space, light, and material as a basis for her acrylic works on canvas. The punctured holes in her canvases mimic the halftone process, most popular in periodicals, though Furunes does not employ a computer to create the image but instead does everything by hand. Substituting ink for light, she creates a star pattern on a diagonal grid to presents this mass media technique in a larger format and within a contemporary framework. Using the original photograph as a point of departure, she makes simple but deliberate choices through color, cropping, light, and perspective.

A leading artist of Scandinavia in painting and public commissions, Anne-Karin Furunes (b. 1961, Ørland, Norway) was trained as an architect and artist, and received her degree from the Trondheim Academy of Fine Art, NTNU. Currently her work is on view at the Espoo Museum of Modern Art through March 2017 and she was included in *Proportio*, Palazzo Fortuny’s exhibition in conjunction with the 56th Venice Biennale. Her work has been the subject of important solo shows, most recently at Kimen Cultural Centre at Stjørdal Kunstforening; Palazzo Fortuny, Venice; Millesgården, Stockholm; Västerås Konstmuseum, Sweden; Trondheim Kunstmuseum, Norway; and the University of Wyoming Art Museum, US. Large-scale commissions of her work have been realized at Oslo’s Barcode Project, Deutsche Bank, Sydney; St. Olavs Hospital, Trondheim, the Trondheim Airport, and The National Theatre Station, Oslo, among others. She is represented in prominent public collections worldwide including Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki; Kistefos Museum, Norway; Museum of Arts and Design, New York; Museum of Art, Trondheim; National Museum Beijing; and National Museum of Contemporary Art, Oslo. Furunes lives and works in Stjørdal, Norway.

Forthcoming exhibitions include 9 Objects (Jul 13-Aug 27) and Andrew Raftery (Sept 8 - Nov 5, 2016). Contact Abby Margulies at [abymarguliespr@gmail.com](mailto:abymarguliespr@gmail.com) or 614-827-5810 for press inquiries.