

## ARTFORUM

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### Kerstin Brätsch

Munch Museet | Edvard Munchs Plass 1

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View of "Kerstin Brätsch: METAATEM." Photo: Uli Holz / Munchmuseet.

Throughout his life, Edvard Munch aimed to depict the psyche's interconnection with the cosmos through striking colors and hectic brushstrokes. Paintings like *The Human*

*Mountain*, 1909–10, and *The Sun*, 1910–11, bring the chaotic synergy between inner and outer spiritual existence onto the canvas. Despite their stylistic differences, the psychedelic abstract paintings in Kerstin Brätsch’s exhibition “METAATEM,” on view at the Munch Museum in Oslo, embody his quest to represent higher-level generative forces in connection with the human—forces that could also be said to be responsible for Brätsch’s signature technique: successively pouring one drop of diluted color on top of another. She handles this exchange between the intentionality of brushstrokes and the fortuity of ink drops by using traditional marbling processes (such as the seventeenth-century technique *stucco marmo*), made possible through collaborations with decorative painters, craftspeople, and fellow visual artists.

Brätsch’s own scenography is inhabited by works spanning the past decade of her career, all connected by recently produced large-format cardboard structures. The layered, modular *Cardboard Stands (stucco motifs)*, *Cardboard Seating (stucco motifs)*, and *Stucco Wall Structures* (all 2024) imitate stucco panels and function either as walls on which other works are displayed or benches on which to sit. Part of the ongoing series “Unstable Talismanic Rendering,” *Schrättel Rorschachs (with gratitude to master marbler Dirk Lange)* takes the form of a wallpaper with bright drops of pigment, ink, and watercolor expanding across a dark surface, resembling cellular organisms that generate, multiply, and mirror one another—like a vibrant Rorschach test onto which anything can be projected. It echoes the exhibition title, itself a mirrored word.

Multi-format paintings take over the space: Expanding and contracting, the works shift in scale, host other paintings on their surface, and form a chaotic symbiosis that questions traditional notions of authorship. Although Brätsch ultimately signs the artworks in the show, these can only be conceived and understood as collaborative endeavors. Her collaborators' contributions are typically acknowledged in titles and exhibition texts, but the work seems to function on another cosmic plane, one in which the universe's unpredictable energies also play a key role.

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