

## **Esben Weile Kjær**

*Complete Collapse*

29 April - 04 June 2022

Rentemestervej 49, 2400 Copenhagen NV, Denmark

Andersen's is pleased to present Esben Weile Kjær's first solo exhibition, *Complete Collapse*, in the gallery.

In the exhibition *Complete Collapse*, Esben Weile Kjær takes as his starting point a series of original photographs from the 1920s dance marathons, which could last up to 1500 hours. Dance marathons were very popular, especially in the United States, through the 1920s and 1930s. Many unemployed people participated with the hope of becoming famous or receiving cash prizes. The public watched and bet money on the young dancing couples, like racehorses. In the photographs, we see these hopeful young dance couples collapsing in each other's arms after many hours of intense dancing and overexertion.

Esben Weile Kjær has translated the photographs into graphic motifs and then transformed them into leaded window panes. The motifs' graphic style is reminiscent of colorful propaganda, while the expression of the windows almost takes the form of colorful American billboards.

In this work, Esben Weile Kjær is interested in the way in which leaded panes have been used in a historical context to produce and maintain specific motifs, and how they have been included as a central part of architecture in churches, cabaret bars and casinos. Today, the leaded pane can be seen as a precursor to light boards and neon signs.

Along with the six leaded windows, the exhibition consists of a series of collages and a sculpture, also based on the photographs. The exhibition examines whether the ideology of our time is the dream of money and fame, and whether it (perhaps) naturally leads to a collapse?

At the same time, there's a deep fascination with pop culture's energetic, seductive, colorful, and glittering surfaces. The works' motifs have many natural similarities with the images from Esben Weile Kjær's already extensive performance practice and thus form a thematic common thread across time between young overworked bodies in eruptions, upheavals, collapses and uprisings.

Esben Weile Kjær's graduation work from the Royal Danish Academy of Fine Arts can be seen at Kunsthall Charlottenborg until 23 May 2022. The graduation work, which consists of a huge leaded window (3x4.5m), can be experienced in conjunction with the solo exhibition here in the gallery. The graduation work is based on a historical, almost mythological, event— the Dance Plague in 1518, when a group of people in Strasbourg danced themselves to death.

During the autumn of 2022, Esben Weile Kjær's universe can also be experienced at Berghain, Berlin, the Center Pompidou, Paris, and the Museum Tinguely, Basel.