

Press Release

55.6° North – Nordic Contemporary Art in a world in transition

ARKEN’s upcoming group exhibition 55.6° North – Arken’s Collection presents Nordic contemporary art as it unfolds right now – at a time of profound transition, with the Nordic region situated amid a series of far-reaching conflicts and transformations. From geopolitical shifts that are reshaping the region’s relationship with the United States and Russia and casting new light on the consequences of colonial power structures affecting different populations, to the tangible realities and impacts of climate change, the exhibition addresses some of the most pressing issues of our time.

The romanticised image of the Nordic region as a harmonious idyll is challenged by the 23 artists and artist groups featured in **55.6° North – Arken’s Collection** – named after the latitude on which Ishøj is located. The exhibition opens on 5 February 2026 and presents works from ARKEN’s own collection.

The artists and artist groups both look at the Nordic region from the outside in and from the inside out. Their works engage with urgent contemporary debates and agendas, while also forming part of the Danish cultural heritage. As such, they will offer future generations insight into the Nordic present as it is experienced here and now.

Head of Collection at ARKEN and curator of the exhibition, Dorthe Juul Rugaard, says:

“At this moment, there is a renewed focus on the Nordic region – both in the art world and in politics. Shifts in geopolitical power relations have reactivated the regional perspective and sparked an interest in re-examining regional communities through new lenses – including in art,” says Dorthe Juul Rugaard, continuing:

“What does it mean to be Nordic today? Which communities and values are at stake, who stands alongside them, and how do we use them?”

Dorthe Juul Rugaard also points out that several of the artists in the exhibition were born and raised in other parts of the world. Apolonia Sokol, for example, is of French-Polish origin and

lived in Denmark as a child and young adult. Kinga Bartis grew up in Hungary and now lives in Denmark, while Tabita Rezaire has roots in Guyana, France and Denmark.

The exhibition's artists cast highly diverse perspectives on the Nordic region. Greenlandic artist Inuuteq Storch photographs his everyday life in Greenland, offering an insider's view of his culture at a time when the traces of colonial history are still deeply felt. Swedish artist Emilia Bergmark looks out across the North Sea as both nature and a pressured frontline, where wild birds and fighter jets fill the sky, while fishing vessels, oil tankers and rubber ducks dominate the sea. Is the Nordic region a contemporary hotspot – or the end of the world?

In 55.6° North – Arken's Collection, contemporary art explores a wide range of artistic expressions and practices – from the ritualistic and mythical to the raw, corporeal and political. The exhibition paints a picture of a strong and open Nordic art scene that examines communities, values and power structures currently undergoing radical change.

55.6° North – Arken's Collection is a group exhibition featuring works from ARKEN's collection. Participating artists and artist groups include:

Nanna Abell, Villiam Miklos Andersen, Merete Barker, Kinga Bartis, Emilia Bergmark, Nina Beier & Bob Kil, Jóhan Martin Christiansen, Martin Brandt Hansen, Ditte Ejlerskov & EvaMarie Lindahl, Olafur Eliasson, Elmgreen & Dragset, Kåre Frang, Tore Hallas, Jessie Kleemann, Miriam Kongstad, Elina Merenmies, Esko Männikkö, Rasmus Myrup, Eva Helene Pade, Tabita Rezaire, Apolonia Sokol, Inuuteq Storch, SUPERFLEX.

ARKEN's 2026 exhibition programme is generously supported by the Augustinus Foundation.

The New Carlsberg Foundation, the 15 June Foundation, and private donors have supported the acquisition of works in the exhibition.