

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

National Nordic Museum Opens Exhibition of Acclaimed Artist, *Anne-Karin Furunes: Illuminating Nordic Archives*

The exhibition illuminates stark realities and forgotten stories through unique artistic technique.

SEATTLE, WA (03.14.25)— The National Nordic Museum is pleased to announce their next special exhibition, [*Anne-Karin Furunes: Illuminating Nordic Archives*](#) (March 15, 2025, to June 8, 2025). In her first solo U.S. museum exhibition since 2010, Furunes explores the victimization of humans and the fragility of nature through her innovative artistic technique.

Furunes, a trailblazer in contemporary Scandinavian art, transforms archival photographs into luminous works by meticulously hand-punching thousands of holes into canvas. Her meditative process, which substitutes light for paint in black-and-white paintings. In other works, images coalesce from the perforations paired with patterns of cyan, magenta, and yellow dots that mimic the halftone process of printing techniques.

“The exhibition underscores Furunes’s deep commitment to archival research in rich repositories of photographs and scientific exploration in some of the world’s most remote regions,” said Leslie Anne Anderson, Chief Curator of the National Nordic Museum. “Drawing from historical and contemporary photographs, her works transcend time, sparking emotion, igniting dialogue, and inviting profound reflection.”

Furunes will present paintings that magnify the stark realities climate change, capturing the beauty and vulnerability of nature in her signature perforated style. Inspired by the historic and recent photography of Svalbard, a Norwegian archipelago situated between the North Pole and Norway. She studies the pioneering autochrome photographs captured by botanist Hanna Resvoll-Holmsen (1873 – 1943) more than a century ago, alongside her own more recent documentation of glacial recession and ice calving.

Another group of paintings on display exposes the victimization of humans through the portraits of people from Finland, Norway, and Sápmi who were subjected to government-ordered sterilization and documentation between 1900 and 1939. Drawn from her “Of Faces” series, these haunting portraits raise awareness of the Nordic countries’ participation in harmful eugenics practices in the early 20th century. These works honor the memory of those silenced by history, revealing a painful chapter in the Nordic region’s past.

The National Nordic Museum organized complementary programming to enrich the exhibition experience and provide deeper context on the subjects Furunes’ highlights in her work.

Saturday, March 22nd: Artist in Conversation

Anne-Karin Furunes will discuss her research in the archives and the raw material that inspires her monumental paintings. She will also discuss how her unique process developed to convey the immateriality of memory and the surfacing of hidden history.

Wednesday, March 26th: The Past, Present, and Future of Svalbard’s Glaciers

Dr. Veijo Pohjola a renowned Professor at Uppsala University, who specializes in glaciology and has led over 25 expeditions to Svalbard, will explore documentary of evidence of glacial recession on the Svalbard archipelago, which is warming more quickly than other areas of the Arctic.

Tuesday, April 29th: Visual Typologies and Race Biology in the Nordics with Maja Hagerman
Swedish writer and filmmaker Maja Hagerman will discuss the spread of racial theories among academic communities in the Nordic countries (between 1910 and 1935), focusing on Swedish race biologist Herman Lundborg. Lundborg was the focus of Hagerman's 2015 documentary and her book of the same year.

"We are thrilled to present this extraordinary exhibition as part of the National Nordic Museum's 2025 bicentennial celebration of Norwegian immigration to the United States," said Lath Carlson, CEO of the National Nordic Museum. "Furunes' work offers a profound exploration of Nordic history and identity, making it a powerful and fitting addition to this milestone year."

This exhibition is organized by National Nordic Museum Chief Curator, Leslie Anne Anderson, with the artist.

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About the Artist

Anne-Karin Furunes (b. 1961, Ørland, Norway) is a leading artist of Scandinavia in painting and public commissions. Since 1992, Furunes has developed a signature technique of perforating canvas or metal that considers photographic and digital elements of space, light and material. The punctured holes in her works mimic the halftone process, most popularly used in periodicals. Furunes does not employ a computer to create the image however, but composes it manually. Trained as an artist and architect, Furunes received her degree from the Trondheim Academy of Fine Art in Norway. Furunes lives and works in Stjørdal, Norway.

She is represented in prominent public collections worldwide including the Espoo Museum of Modern Art, Finland; Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Finland; Kistefos Museum, Norway; Museum of Arts and Design, NY; Museum of Art, Norway; Palazzo Fortuny, Italy; National Museum, China; National Museum of Contemporary Art, Norway and the Tromsø Museum of Contemporary Art, Norway; among others.

About the National Nordic Museum

The National Nordic Museum is the only museum in the United States that showcases the impact and influence of Nordic values and innovation in contemporary society and tells the story of 12,000 years of Nordic history and culture, across all five Nordic countries (Denmark, Finland, Iceland, Norway, and Sweden) as well as three autonomous regions (Greenland, the Faroe Islands, and Åland) and the cultural region of Sápmi.

Awarded a national designation by an Act of Congress in 2019, the Museum shares Nordic culture with people of all ages and backgrounds through exhibitions, a collection of 80,000 objects, unique educational and cultural experiences, and by serving as a community gathering place.

For more information, visit: www.nordicmuseum.org.

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