

PAN

AMSTERDAM

MPV GALLERY



Kukat CXCVIII

Heikki Marila
Kukat CXCVIII, 2023
Oil on canvas
250x200 cm

Heikki Marila (b. 1966, Lahti, Finland) is regarded as one of the most important Finnish painters of his generation. Marila's paintings are monumental in scale and charged with a physical, almost sculptural materiality: thick, relief-like layers of oil paint that seem to lift off the canvas. His work constantly moves between opposites: the sublime and the repulsive, the spiritual and the corporeal, figuration and abstraction.

Within this body of work, the flower still lifes form one of the most beloved and recognizable series. Marila draws on the tradition of the 17th-century Dutch still life, particularly the work of Willem Claesz Heda and Abraham van Beyeren, but wrests the motif from its sheltered, domestic context and blows it up to an overwhelming, almost explosive scale. Petals become thickly applied, sculptural forms that appear to detach from the surface and scatter across the canvas like confetti; what begins as a classical bouquet ends in a lush, sometimes chaotic composition suspended between bloom and decay, beauty and transience.