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Ole Jørgen Ness

Metis

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- This will be the first large exhibition of Ole Jørgen Ness's art since 2012, and it gives unique insight into his fascinating artistic practice
- Published to accompany the exhibition *Ole Jørgen Ness; Metis* at the National Museum, Oslo, running from December 3, 2026 to March 27, 2027
- It offers a deeper understanding of the works and themes the artist has worked with over several decades

In 2017 the National Museum received a significant gift from the artist Ole Jørgen Ness. Like Ness's oeuvre in general, the gift has great complexity. It sheds light on how we live today, the things that shape us, the tools we use to express ourselves and the significance of the artist's role in society.

Ness conceives of art as a 'living being', and he explores the relationships between mind and matter, nature and culture, and between the existential responsibility of the individual and the collective. In his art there are many layers of deeper meaning. A key metaphorical figure is the extinct Tasmanian devil – a 'different' and untameable animal that was demonised and almost exterminated during the colonial era.

The publication also presents the monumental drawing *Sketch for a Century* (2005), which has not been shown since it was exhibited in the National Gallery in 2005. It fills an entire wall from floor to ceiling, extending 26 meters lengthwise, and it contains a cosmos of mythical beings, fables and Roman gods. The drawing is a reaction to a one-sided, postmodern intellectualism. As a counterbalance, Ness wanted to create an overwhelming and dynamic work that combined historical references with personal experiences.

Text in English and Norwegian.

Ole Jørgen Ness (born 29 November 1961 in Bergen) is a Norwegian artist who lives and works in Oslo. In 2006, he was appointed the featured artist of the Bergen International Festival. He created a fifteen-meter-high feature wall for the foyer of the new building of the Norwegian National Archives. In Bergen, he produced silkscreen works and a sandblasted glass wall for Norsk Hydro. In 2010, his works were included in the exhibition *Good Night Then You... Surrealism in Norwegian Art 1930–2010* at the Stenersen Museum in Oslo.

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