

## **minijobs & to-dos**

**Astrid Kajsa Nylander & Julie Koldby**

23 May – 21 June 2025

OTP Copenhagen is proud to present *minijobs & to-dos*, a two-person exhibition by Astrid Kajsa Nylander and Julie Koldby marking the first presentation by either artist with the gallery. Featuring new work from Nylander's *minijobs* series alongside a new group of whiteboard paintings by Koldby, the exhibition explores an approach to painting informed by performance, installation and themes of labour, professionalism and productivity.

The initial inspiration for Astrid Kajsa Nylander's *minijobs* came from her grandmother's collection of sewing buttons. It is these functional and decorative objects that the paintings depict, painted in trompe l'oeil to give the impression of threads looping in and out of holes as if the paintings were being fastened to the wall – holding together the fabric of the space. In Germany, "minijobs" refer to forms of marginal employment that are exempt from income tax and offer a maximum monthly salary of €556. This special category was originally intended to benefit married women with supposedly limited attachments to the labour market, because of their role as financial dependents within a traditional family model.

A certain kind of self-aware humour plays a critical role in these paintings. Their titles evoke both the small scale of their subject matter but also diminutive attitudes levelled at women's work in the domestic sphere and the realm of fine art throughout history. A latent eroticism hovers around the *minijobs*; the suffix "jobs" vaguely suggests the performance of a sexual act, whilst the movement of thread between holes in these paintings evokes ideas of the fetish object. Serial in nature and directly referencing collecting habits, the *minijobs* reflect on ideas of commodification and transaction, specifically in the work of women artists.

Julie Koldby's whiteboard paintings consist of stretched canvasses that have been primed with an industrial whiteboard paint. Once dry, the paint accurately reproduces the sort of glossy wipe-clean surface that you would expect to find in classrooms and conference rooms around the world. In recent months, Koldby has used these paintings as working surfaces in her studio, covering them with to-do lists, calculations, affirmations and doodles.

Text and image blend as specific and somewhat personal insights (shopping lists, travel arrangements, appointments, applications) and more enigmatic statements ("hvør er jeg?") are crossed out or swept away by a wiping hand to become abstract gestural traces. Koldby's use of the whiteboard deliberately references blackboard paintings by artists such as Per Kirkeby and Cy Twombly, but without the accompanying Romanticism. Koldby's own painterly aesthetic offers a mix of smoothness and resistance as the artist's hand glides across the slick surface in a process that combines fluidity with friction, emphasising functionality. Temporality also plays a key role as bold lines and colour fade, leaving faint traces as if the board hesitates to let go of what once was – resisting a total reset.

Both Nylander and Koldby adopt an approach to painting that reflects on the object quality of the work and that emphasises the performance of artistic labour. Whilst Nylander highlights the aesthetic symbolism of the button, she challenges us to identify connections between painting and sewing. Koldby is similarly interested in the overlap between artistic practice and other forms of labour. Bringing together elements of the office and the studio, these works seem to compare the role of the artist with other jobs, highlighting collapses between the private and professional in the process of managing life.

**Astrid Kajsa Nylander** (b. 1989, Gothenburg; SE) lives and works between Stockholm and Gotland, Sweden. She studied Drawing and Painting for prof. Jutta Koether at Hochschule für bildende Künste Hamburg and graduated with an MFA in 2018. Works by the artist are held in the permanent collection of Moderna Museet, Stockholm, as well as other public collections.

**Julie Koldby** (b. 1993, Copenhagen; DK) lives and works in Copenhagen, Denmark. She graduated with an MA in Sculpture from the Royal College of Art, London in 2022, having completed undergraduate study at Malmö Art Academy and Cooper Union School of Art, New York City.