

# BUYSSE

## Press Release

### Willehad Eilers: *Cruel Summer*

11 April – 8 June 2026

Buyssse Gallery, Knokke

In collaboration with Harlan Levey Projects, Buyssse Gallery presents *Cruel Summer*, an exhibition by Willehad Eilers, produced with all the cruel promises of a summer at the seaside in mind.

Summer always promises too much.

It arrives overexposed and breathless, saturated with color and appetite. Everything ripens at once. The air itself seems charged, as if pleasure might tip into combustion. In Willehad Eilers' new body of work, nothing is neutral. Images vibrate. Forms swell and distort. What begins as sweetness quickly turns volatile. Hedonism does not sit still here. It pulses, hums, threatens to explode.

Eilers has long approached his practice as an investigation into the heuristically learned political and cultural mores that shape contemporary life. But he does not lecture. He performs. Through painting, installation, video, and drawing, he stages scenes that feel at once intimate and anthropological, playful and surgical. His lyricism disarms us. His humor seduces us. And then something shifts.

The crude gestures, exaggerated bodies, and almost cartoonish excess carry both mischievous confidence and a sharp awareness of the modern individual's compulsions: our grotesque fixations, our masturbatory loops of self consumption, our endless rehearsals of wanting.

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Pleasure becomes performance.  
Performance becomes identity.

Eilers inflates the quotidian until it becomes strange.

The works vibrate in that unstable zone between joy and collapse, humor and critique, indulgence and awareness. They do not deny pleasure. They insist on seeing it clearly.

A cruel summer, after all?

Too bright. Too loud. Too much.

Never enough and often not what we would have asked for.

Text by **Harlan Levey (Harlan Levey Projects)**.

#### Harvard Reference (text)

Levey, H. (2026) *Cruel Summer*. Exhibition text for *Willehad Eilers: Cruel Summer*, Buyssse Gallery, Knokke, 11 April – 8 June 2026. Text by Harlan Levey (Harlan Levey Projects).

#### Harvard Reference (Exhibition)

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Willehad Eilers, *The Sirens*, 2026, oil on canvas, 150 × 200 cm. © Willehad Eilers. Courtesy the artist and Harlan Levey Projects / Buysse Gallery.

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