Lenke Rothman
The Necessities of Life and the Consequences of Dreams
Curated by Milan Ther
11. 9. – 17. 10. 2026

Lenke Rothman uses the title *The Necessities of Life and the Consequences of Dreams* more than once throughout her working career, which spans more than six decades. One such time the title appears for a collage containing a copper engraving of Ikarus and Daedalus framed by red and green fabric, lace, plastic foil, and a feather. Here Daedalus lovingly attaches the wings made of beeswax and feathers, pre-flight, while Ikarus' distorted pose suggests that his body already knows that it will fall.

A persistent and perpetual present, set between an unmovable past and an unknowable future, is at the center of Rothman's practice, which grapples with the beauty of the mundane, and the humor and irony of the everyday in life after the Shoah. Her body of work consists of a range of media and formats; drawings, paintings, and watercolors in the 1950s and early '60s give way to acrylic boxes, talismans, found and altered objects, and installations in the 1970s and '80s that grow from Rothman's attempt to embrace and hold the world that surrounds her through various collecting practices. The exhibition at Croy Nielsen builds on the survey *Quality of Life* (2026) at the Kunstverein in Hamburg organised by Milan Ther and Sarah Messerschmidt and traces the development, from the artist's paintings and vocabulary of stitches that give way to fabric collages and arranged objects in acrylic boxes, where the body and clothing fuse in intimate bondage as a membrane between personhood and the world, memory and the present.

- Milan Ther

Lenke Rothman was born in Kiskunfélegyháza, Hungary, in 1929. From 1944 to 1945 she was interned in Auschwitz, Guben and Bergen-Belsen, and was taken to Sweden in 1945 by the Red Cross. She spent the years 1945 to 1951 in hospitals in Sweden; attended art school in Stockholm from 1951 to 1955, and the Accademia di Belle Arti, Ravenna, Italy, in 1956 and 1957. She married Sivar Arnér in 1959; a son, Elias, was born in 1966. Member of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Sweden since 1976. Exhibited art in sveral group shows in Sweden and abroad since 1951, and had her first one-person show in 1960, followed by many more. Large retrospective exhibition at the Swedish Royal Academy of Art, Stockholm, 1976, and later a second one at the Dunker Art Museum, Helsingborg, 2008, while more recent surveys include exhibitions at Malmö Konsthal, 2024–5, and Kunstverein in Hamburg in 2026.

Rothman was a stage designer for the Stockholm National Theatre production of Strindberg's Easter, 1981. Program on creativity for Swedish television, 1979, and television program with Andy Warhol in 1981. Represented at the Modern Museum of Art, National Museum and Royal Swedish Library in Stockholm, the University of Uppsala, and in numerous private collections in Sweden, U.S.A., Finland, London and Paris. Swedish artist in residence in 1981 at P.S.1 in New York, and in 1984 at the Djerassi Foundation, Woodside, California. Author of Quality of Life, 1981, and OK OK NO New York, 1984, both published by Kalejdoskop, Ahus, Sweden.

Lenke Rothman died of leukemia in 2008.

The exhibition is part of Curated by – Vienna's annual gallery festival

A conversation between Milan Ther and Elias Arnér, Lenke Rothman's son and Head of Lenke Rothman Estate, will take place on Saturday, 12. 9. 2026, 16:00 at the gallery.