

Double

by Katrien De Blauwer

Opening: Thursday, Feb 8th 2018 from 6 to 9 pm, in the presence of the artist
Show: February 9th - April 7th 2018

FIFTY ONE

Gallery FIFTY ONE is thrilled to announce its first solo show of Antwerp based artist Katrien De Blauwer (Belgium, 1969). 'Double' presents new works, full of movement, sensuality and, above all, mystery.

The collages of Katrien De Blauwer flirt with fashion, dance, cinema, and photography. Some call her a "photographer without a camera". Others would define her work as "post-photography". Using magazine images from the 1920s until the 1960s, her work is all about recollection. Like a photographer, De Blauwer cuts/reframes images, pasting them together with others, or with monochrome strips from those same magazines. This process is a spontaneous one, kindred to the methods of a painter as well. While creating, De Blauwer uses different palettes with limbs, still lives, dark tones, colours... She applies her old and worn materials very sparingly, thus producing precious and fragile pieces of art, that are, moreover, of an exceptional openness and appeal.

The artist is a master of composition, contrast and atmosphere. 'Double' offers a selection of very recent work (2017-2018) in which she has come to focus more and more on one single image per collage. Between intense 'Red Scenes' and sensuous 'Blue Scenes', we discover a subtle, grayish universe, gingerly interspersed with colourful touches. In 'Red Scenes (20)', for the first time, we witness how the artist physically transcends the boundaries of the small format to which she has been so faithful until now.

The spectator enters into a sensual, ambiguous, but nonetheless clean-cut atmosphere that reminds us strongly of film noir or nouvelle vague cinema. The artist's indebtedness to photography and cinema is indisputable. Recurring titles, such as 'Jump Cuts' or 'Dark Scenes', clearly hint at cinematic language. Likewise, the title of this exhibition, 'Double', refers to stand-ins for movie actors in explicit or dangerous scenes. The subjects on view are doubles of elegant women. They are arrested in their movement, performing an unseen action, watching or desiring something that has been literally cut away from them. De Blauwer, scissors and glue in hand, keeps us wondering about what is going on exactly. Here, the 'incomplete' images are arranged in such a way that, together, for the duration of the exhibition, they compose a new (im)possible film scenario.

Katrien De Blauwer studied art in Ghent and fashion in Antwerp. She has produced three monographs: 'Inappropriate repetitions' (2012), 'I do not want to disappear silently into the night' (2014) and 'Stills' (2016). Her work was first shown by the gallery in the group exhibition 'Seventeen by FIFTY ONE' and at Paris Photo 2017. Currently De Blauwer is also taking part in the group exhibition 'Photo Friction' at Cultuurcentrum Mechelen (until April 15th 2018).