

## SEVENTEEN by FIFTY ONE

Opening: Saturday, April 29th 2017 from 2 until 6 pm

Show: May 2th - June 24th 2017

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FIFTY ONE

GALLERY FIFTY ONE is honoured to announce SEVENTEEN by FIFTY ONE, a group exhibition celebrating the seventeenth anniversary of the gallery. Pictures of well-known street photographers will be shown along artists who include photography in their work in a non-conventional way, both in terms of their method as to the medium they use. The gallery's purpose to create a dialogue between photography and works on paper will also be further explored.

In their artistic practices, Alison Rossiter (US, 1953) and Bruno V. Roels (Belgium, 1976) reflect on the intrinsic properties of photography and the limiting predetermined rules of the medium. Roels uses the reproductive quality of the photographic process to create unique, repetitive multiples, consisting of prints that are all subtle variations of the same negative. The latter questions the definition of a photograph as a reproduction of reality.

By developing and partially manipulating expired and unprocessed photo sheets, Rossiter obtains geometric shapes and abstract compositions that often resemble landscapes. The resulting different textures and tonalities are due to the ageing process of the material.

By working with decayed photo paper, Rossiter grants a piece of photographic history a new, contemporary meaning. Appropriation of historical sources also lies at the root of the graphic novel-like drawings of Marcel van Eeden (Netherlands, 1965). Van Eeden incorporates historical images, stories and personages found in books, magazines and papers dating from before his birth year, into fictive story-lines. Every drawing can also be considered as an image on its own.

In a same way Katrien De Blauwer (Belgium, 1969) cuts images from old magazines and newspapers and reassembles them into a new, autobiographical narrative that is far removed from their original meaning. The collages on show feature elegant women who's faces are covered or cut away, illustrating the intimate yet anonymous and universal character of De Blauwer's oeuvre.

The emotional and personal nature of De Blauwer's work reminds the viewer of the drawings ARPAÏS du bois (Belgium, 1973) makes as a way to canalise the overload of impressions she receives in everyday life. Through her images and texts, du bois comments on the world we live in, forcing us to take time to reflect on the fundamental questions in life.

In the series 'Stones', Tom Butler (UK, 1979) presents self-portraits in which he performs different poses while simultaneously seeking privacy by covering up his face. The contradiction of displaying an artwork that is essentially about hiding is a constant in his oeuvre.

Dirk de Zoete (Belgium, 1969) is evenly fascinated by the idea of life as a performance. Influenced by the theatre sets and costumes of the German Bauhaus and Russian Constructivism, de Zoete organises happenings in which imaginative personages pose in front of his camera. Their masks are based on self-portraits of the artist. The schematic drawings on show are two dimensional reports of those events.

In their own way, Sergio Larrain (Chile, 1931 – 07.02.2012), William Klein (US, 1928), Harry Gruyaert (Belgium, 1941) and Saul Leiter (US, 1923 - 26.11.2013) all added new elements to street photography. Their innovation often emerges from a background in other disciplines, like painting and filmmaking.

Larrain's sensitive photographs of homeless people and children in the streets of Paris and Santiago showcase his particular sense for composition, often using vertical frames and creating unusual viewpoints by placing his camera on the ground. His poetic series on the Chilean port city Valparaiso achieved a mythical status.

The graphic, snapshot-like images of both Klein as Gruyaert give away their influences from film. Klein's outspoken, direct and bold style is characterised by the use of a wide-angle lens, soft focus and experiments with printing procedures to obtain blur, distortion and grain in his images.

Gruyaert's pictures are primarily structured by colour, form, light and movement. He is often celebrated as a European pioneer in colour photography, a title he has in common with Leiter. The latter's recognisable multilayered compositions and use of reflections, condensed surfaces and obstructions are well-known among the general public.

We are looking forward to welcoming you at the exhibition and celebrate the seventeenth anniversary of the gallery.