

FIFTY ONE

# NOTRE MER

16/05/2024 - 13/07/2024

Opening:

Thursday May 16th, 12-9 pm

Gallery FIFTY ONE  
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## Notre Mer

Group exhibition

Opening: Thursday, May 16th 2024, from 12 to 9 pm

Show: Friday, May 17th - July 13th 2024

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FIFTY ONE

Gallery FIFTY ONE is thrilled to announce a new group exhibition as part of the gallery's 25th anniversary celebration, dedicated entirely to the captivating theme of the sea. This exhibition serves as a continuation of the show which was curated on water back in 2011. Over the past 13 years, much has transpired, leading to a profound shift in our perception of water's significance in our lives. We've finally but still too slowly come to realise that the Earth's water resources are finite, amplifying the importance of conserving this precious element.

The sea embodies both breathtaking beauty and unforgiving brutality. Its waves possess the power to evoke sheer joy for surfers, yet they also harbour the potential for catastrophic destruction, wreaking havoc on countless individuals and entire communities. The tragic tsunamis that struck South Asia serve as poignant reminders of the sea's formidable power. Moreover, the Mediterranean, once revered as a picturesque destination for dreams and leisurely vacations, has tragically transformed in recent years. It has become a symbol of human negligence and environmental degradation, resembling more of a coffin and a trash bin than a sanctuary of serenity.

In this exhibition, the goal is to delve into the enchanting beauty, dreams, and poetry evoked by the sea. While various artists represented by the gallery have been invited to participate, including Katrien De Blauwer, Arpaïs Du Bois, Harry Gruyaert, Jacques Henri Lartigue, Eric Manigaud, Bruno V. Roels, Jacques Sonck, Deanna Templeton, Friederike von Rauch, Mark van den Brink and Masao Yamamoto, invitations were also extended to other admired artists, including David Shrigley, David Horvitz, Philip Aguirre y Otegui, Dirk Braeckman, Alexandre Christiaens, Romain Laprade, Nino Migliori, Erika Cotteleer, François Halard, Johan De Wilde and John van Oers.

With disciplines ranging from photography to works on paper and sculptures, vibrant dialogues and confrontations unfold. One may capture the ethereal beauty of the water through photography, while another may convey the allure of the sea through written prose (as illustrated by David Horvitz). Each artist approaches their work from their own sensory, aesthetic, poetic, or political perspective, leading us into the enchanting world of the sea, while prompting reflection on its role and relationship to humanity.

*"The theme of the seas, our sea, so beautifully expressed in the title, and water in a broader sense, is very close to my heart. Realising how dependent we are on it, and yet seeing how we only consider the oceans, seas, and waterways as our playground and field of exploitation, makes a person rebellious and sad. Without an urgent turnaround in our actions and thinking, our blue planet will become an uninhabitable place: climatically, in terms of biodiversity, and due to future wars over water.*

*Notre mer, notre vie."*

— Arpaïs Du Bois

Join us as we embark on this artistic journey, navigating the depths of the sea's mysteries and confronting the stark realities of its might.