

THE WOMAN NEXT DOOR

Exhibition: 25.01 - 22.02.14



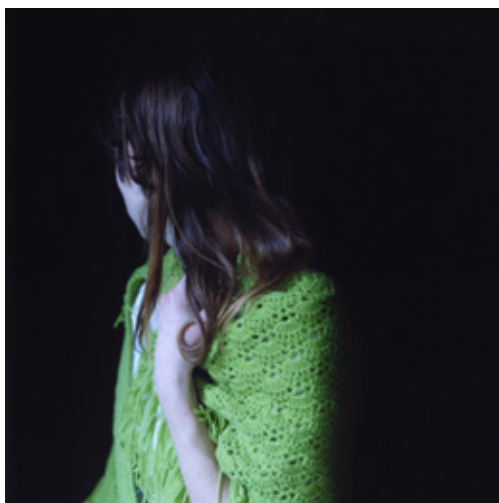
Nelli Palomäki, *Becky at 23*, 2011 - © courtesy Gallery Taik Persons

Curator: Charlotte Boudon

**Helena Almeida, Anne-lise Broyer, Paz Corona, Laura Henno, Claudia Huidobro, Karen Knorr, Ellen Kooi, Juul Kraijer, Katinka Lampe, Anni Leppälä, Elisabeth Llach, Patricia et Marie-France Martin, Marie Maurel de Maillé, Nelli Palomäki, Catherine Poncin, Doro-thée Smith, Claire Tabouret, Janaina Tschäpe, Francesca Woodman
Et Laurent Fiévet**

THE WOMAN NEXT DOOR

Opening: 25.01 - 3pm to 8pm



Laura Henno, *A tree of Night*, 2004

This exhibition evokes a theatre where women play all the possible roles from the position of direction to action. The stage varies: the interior of a bourgeois villa, the rooms of an abandoned house where stories seep out of walls and furniture, out of an artist's or a photographer's studio. Those women-heroines act in the shadows of streets lined with buildings, trees or a river bed.

The tone alludes to tragedies. But the end of the story remains in suspense and the interpretation open to the viewer's own appreciation. Here, heroines don't yield to the temptation that consumes Mathilde, the leading figure in Truffaut's movie. They're driven by the same blast as the artists that create them: without whose gaze or gesture, they could as well have stayed off-stage, aside, next door.

If the scenery and stories change from one piece to the other, every single one develops –on its own or in an ensemble– the portrait of a specific woman. Be it faint or loud, smooth or squeaky, imperceptible or deafening, a female voice emerges, a face appears, and a woman is embodied in the artwork. What this woman decries (be she real or imaginary) is translated by this other woman: the artist. In this echo chamber, a woman appears next to another and their respective stories –lived or imagined– resonate with each other.

Favoring feminine subjects, these artists speak of themselves as well as of long-standing patterns. Some start their work by a re-enactment of characters they know and whose references can be artistic (pictorial, literary or cinematic) as well as popular, while others pick anonymous ones, deliberately chosen amongst their relatives.



Catherine Poncin, *Série Entre-Actes*, 1997



Katinka Lampe, *Sans titre*, 2013

The diversity of media that these artists dive into is a way of engaging more thoroughly with the issue of the feminine image. If some revive painting, others refer to pictorial models, using codes which belong to the photographic medium. Their choices of black and white or colour becomes the vehicle of their speech on the subject whilst at the same time it could also be used to challenge it. Photographic classical portraits stand alongside found images that combine together to create new works. Sculpture

and video add movement to the ballet of those feminine portraits and multiply its echo.

These mixed-media artists deform or even break the fetters of the portrait's traditional codes, examining value and questioning the very basis of the often stereotyped and fantasized historical and contemporary representations of the feminine. Different images reflect the changes in women's social status over the years, as women tried to define themselves and take their position in a masculine-dominated society. The artists play on a re-interpretation of woman's perception through the various representations one could have of womanhood. In between two extremes –the traditional point of view of a sensitive, weak, fragile and needy woman and the strong, independent, in control of herself, a masculinized woman's image which feminism praised and created– the one these artists propose is an image discharged of all those clichés and finely shaded. The image of a woman that can melt into several characters, wear different clothes, and live with all of them.

It is those different women that one can find in these artworks, the feminine characters in the works are as complex as the artists who shape them.



Janaína Tschape, *Batwoman*, 2001

It is those dialogues between the authors and their works, that in this gathering give birth to a pluralist, and richly diverse vision of their individual re-enactment, a more essential vision of womanhood. This exhibition engages with a kaleidoscopic image of women through which the curtain of the everyday life and its triviality unveils a feminine wonder-room leading us out of the ordinary.

Charlotte Boudon, Paris, 2013



Patricia et Marie-France Martin, Extrait de la vidéo *C'est COMME Être*, 2003



Dorothée Smith, Sans titre, Série *Sub Limis*, 2010



Anni Leppälä, Untitled-morning-light, 2013



Elisabeth Llach, «Ne t'inquiète pas #216», 2009