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RUUD VAN EMPEL J'ACCUSE

SOLO SHOW NEW WORK

Opening: September 13, 4 p.m. – 7 p.m.

Venue: Flatland Gallery, Lijnbaansgracht 312-314, Amsterdam

Duration: 13 September 2014 till 18 October 2014

- RUUD VAN EMPEL'S new work can be interpreted as a direct indictment against today's culture of artificiality, fake authenticity and make-believe personas.
- The opening of J'ACCUSE will take place on September 13, 2014 starting at 4 pm by Andrea van Pol at Flatland Gallery, Amsterdam.

Flatland Gallery is pleased to present an exhibition of NEW WORKS by RUUD VAN EMPEL from September 13, 2014 until October 18th, 2014. Later this year these works will travel to New York, Atlanta and in 2015 to Berlin.

In J'ACCUSE, van Empel's exploration with the loss of innocence as a subject is in line with his former work but which has now transcended into something stronger. More poignant than before, his new compositions deliberately address people's disconnection with real life: the fact that we are permanently distracted and focused on constructing 'online' versions of our spatial identity. The web has become a mainstream occupation that only seems to deal with the examination of the nature of looking (voyeurism) and being looked at (transparency). There is no consciousness of what is valuable.

J'ACCUSE is practically an indictment against the *desirability* of the artificial world created by new media. In brilliant new Still Lifes, produced in monochrome palets, van Empel, has, by creating depth, imitated nature, and even magnified it. Through this exaggeration, these compositions with wood, meat, gold, gemstones and fish articulate the dichotomy of appearance and reality; the contact between photography and daily life. Some give an allegorical exploration of vanities, such as Still Life - Gold, that invites us to explore the matter of opulence and abundance, and in turn to consider head on the vulgarity of conspicuous consumption and exposure.

Our focus on insubstantiality is essentially embodied in a Still Life with transparent bubbles that splash in the air and also on a seemingly aquatic surface (Still Life - Bubbles). Nothing today has lasting real value, as could be said of our daily digital postings. The airy work calls to mind the conceptual work 'Salle Pacifique'(1984) by Dutch painter René Daniëls (Eindhoven, 1950). It finds a splendid counterpart in another Still Life with hard transparent crystals, representing eternity (Still Life – Cristal).



Of course, other artists inspired van Empel, such as Willem de Kooning and his woman daubed in pink paint in 'Rosy-fingered dawn at Louise Point' in 1963 and 'Two figures in a landscape' of 1986 - both in the collection of the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. This is where van Empel introduces his chunks of meat, like a grotesque butcher's display. (Still Life - Meat). A skinned pig's head faces his own pink other flesh. In the foreground is a large, staring bull's eye. The show doesn't end here. The artist has created four disturbing nudes; they are in pink.

It all goes toward conveying van Empel's underlying concept of genuine concern of how unsettling today's reality of virtual reality can be. Perhaps this is why van Empel chooses to present a genuine photograph of the presentator Andrea van Pol.

Biography of Ruud van Empel

Ruud van Empel (1958, Breda) lives and works in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. In 1981 he graduated at the Academy of Fine Arts Sint Joost in Breda. Van Empel was awarded the significant Charlotte Köhlerprize in 1993 and H.N. Werkmanprize in 2001. Since the 1990's Van Empel has received various solo and group exhibitions. Among some of his solo exhibitions are '*World and other series*', Museum het Valkhof, Nijmegen, The Netherlands (2007); the CB Collection Roppongi Noa, Tokyo, Japan (2008); '*spfw-Sao Paulo Fashion Week, The year of Holland in brazil*', Fundacao Bienal-Parque do Ibirapuera-portao-3, Sao Paulo, Brazil (2011), Groninger Museum, Groningen, The Netherlands (2011); 'Strange Beauty' MoPA-Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego, USA (2012); 'Ruud van Empel', FoMu, Fotomuseum Antwerpen, Belgium (2013) and 'Ruud van Empel', NoordBrabants Museum, 's-Hertogenbosch, The Netherlands (2014). Ruud van Empel's work has also been presented in numerous group exhibitions in Europe, the US and Asia (Japan, China, Korea). Some of the group exhibitions include '*Picturing Eden*', George Eastman House, Rochester, New York, USA (2006); '*Dangerous Beauty*', Chelsea Art Museum, New York, USA; '*An Instinctive Eye*', Pinchuk Art Center, Kiev, Ukraine (2007); '*Diana und Acteon*', Museum Kunst palast, Düsseldorf, Germany (2008); '*The Enchanted Garden*', The New Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand (2008); '*Ulsan International Photography Festival*', Ulsan Culture and Arts Center, Ulsan, Korea (2009); '*Small Adults*', Shay Arye Gallery, Tel Aviv, Israel (2010); '*Imagine Earth*', Seoul Arts Center Seoul, Korea (2011). His work is also featured in public and private collections, including, but not limited to The Alturas Foundation, San Antonio, Texas, USA; the Sir Elton John Collection, Atlanta, USA; the Arad Collection, London, UK; the C-Photo collection, London, UK; the Caldic Collection, Rotterdam, the Netherlands; The FNAC Collection, Paris, France; Flatland Foundation, Amsterdam; The J. Paul Getty Museum Collection, Los Angeles, USA; George Eastman House, Rochester NY, USA; the Groninger Museum, Groningen, the Netherlands; Christian Louboutin, Paris, New York; Colección Juan Redón, Barcelona, Spain; MoPA Museum of Photographic Arts, San Diego, USA; Fundación N.M.A.C., Cadiz, Spain; Generali Foundation, Vienna, Austria; the David Roberts Collection, London, UK; Des Moines Art Center, Des Moines, Iowa, USA; Noord Brabants Museum in 's Hertogenbosch; Museum Het Valkhof, Nijmegen; The Franks-Suss Collection London, UK; Tel Aviv Museum of Art Collection, Tel Aviv, Israel; Vente – Privee Collection, Paris, France and the Catlin Re Switzerland, Zurich, Switzerland.