

PRESS RELEASE

## Ed van der Elsken

*Sweet Life*

September 7 – October 12, 2019.

Opening September 7, 5 - 7 pm

Annet Gelink Gallery is proud to present an exhibition with a special selection of photographs from Ed van der Elsken's legendary photo book *Sweet Life* (1966).



*Call and Ruby in front of their museum, Mojave Desert, USA, 1960*

August 1959, exactly 60 years ago, Ed van der Elsken (1925-1990) and his wife Gerda van der Veen set off on a fourteen-month journey around the world: to West and South Africa, the Malaysian Peninsula, the Philippines, Hong Kong, Japan, the United States and Mexico. In order to find funding for their travels, one of the commissions Van der Elsken took on was to report for the *Katholieke Illustratie*. During their travels Van der Elsken would regularly provide them with a report with photos and texts. But Van der Elsken's main goal was making a book. His book *Sweet Life* was published in 1966 and appeared in the Netherlands, Germany, Spain, the United States, France and Japan. Van der Elsken took care of the design of the book himself: after five different drafts and six years later, he finally managed to get *Sweet Life* published. This travelogue is a chronicle of Van der Elsken and Van der Veen's journey and their encounters with a range of people in the streets, varying from youngsters in Durban, to the refugees on the hills in Hong Kong, to youngsters in love in Mexico. In *Sweet Life* Van der Elsken celebrates life in high contrast images with dark and pessimistic undertones. Or, as described in *Camera in Love* (2017), "The photographic odyssey embodies Van der Elsken's sense of adventure, his entrepreneurial spirit, his inexhaustible fascination with people and other cultures".<sup>1</sup>

Besides iconic photos in black and white we also show 'new' discoveries in colour from his *Sweet Life* series. For example, the Zulu couple in Durban, which so far had only been known to us in black and white. Although, Van der Elsken vividly describes the couple in his book: "Dear, naïve Africans. Serious and sweet. I'm terribly proud of the picture at the right. (...) The youngsters at the right are Zulus, in Durban, South Africa. Brother and sister. (...) They were all dressed up in their best clothes - the girl in anklets, bracelets, necklaces, beaded corselet, ribbons in her braided hair, flaming orange sweater, enormous breasts, two or three capes; the boy just as colourful in his own way, with his riding breeches, carved walking stick, fancy sweater and scarf, satin-faced jacket, broad brimmed hat. They were unbelievably relaxed and straight forward - knockouts, both of them."<sup>2</sup>

In addition to the photographic travel journey of Van der Elsken's world trip, you will also find several colour portraits of 'couples' in the exhibition. Van der Elsken emphatically positions himself between his camera and the subject he is capturing. With his colour photography, Van der Elsken pays tribute to humankind and life around universal themes such as love, life and death. These colour images resonate with the current exhibition, *Lust for Life*, at the Nederlands Fotomuseum in Rotterdam. Joyful and intimate images, Van der Elsken at his best, are brought together in this exhibition.

Ed van der Elsken's (1925, Amsterdam -1990, Edam NL) work has recently been shown in major solo and group exhibitions at Nederlands Fotomuseum, Rotterdam (2019), Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (2018), Fundación MAPFRE, Madrid (2017-18), the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (2017), Jeu de Paume, Paris (2017).

He is highly acclaimed for his characteristic publications, the most memorable being 'Love on the Left Bank' (1956), 'Bagara' (1957), 'Jazz' (1959), 'Sweet Life' (1966), 'Eye Love You' (1977), 'Amsterdam!' (1979) and 'Once Upon a Time' (1991).

Ed van der Elsken's work is part of the collection of Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, Amsterdam (NL); The Art Institute of Chicago, Chicago (US); Modern Art Museum, Kawasaki (JP); MoMA, New York (US); Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (NL); Fotomuseum Den Haag (NL); Nederlands Fotomuseum, Rotterdam (NL); Museo Reina Sofia, Madrid (ES)

<sup>1</sup> Ed van der Elsken, 'Camera in Love', Prestel, 2017, p. 157.

<sup>2</sup> Ed van der Elsken, *Sweet Life*, Harry N. Abrams New York, 1966.

PRESS RELEASE

ANDERS DICKSON

*Bone Orchard*

September 7 – October 12, 2019

Opening September 7, 5 - 7 pm

Annet Gelink Gallery is proud to present the first presentation by Anders Dickson (1988, Wisconsin, US) in The Bakery.



*Cold Fern* (2019)

In the past year Anders Dickson has exchanged narrative themes for intuitive actions. The results of these actions become the leading forces in delineating how the works come together in its presentation and relevance within the exhibition framework.

For *Bone Orchard* the cool blue and green palette sets the ambience for the pictorial elements to be triggered. In the largest painting *Bluefall* a pallid dusk scene implies figures voyeuristically peering from behind a bush towards an expansive color field. The work is originally inspired by Édouard Vuillard's painting *The Album* (1895) but also gained influence from impressions from scenes by Hieronymus Bosch and Jean-Honoré Fragonard. This is reflected in the sketches of an image of ghostly figures subject to devious drives and desires.

Next to this painting there are two smaller works. One of the two paintings is a reduced white field: it shows a crack in the ice of a frozen lake and the open water, rippling in the wind as the sun is reflected in its waters. Barely visible are the indentations of footsteps leading to the crack in the ice surface. The third painting is a more surreal image, titled *Vespertine Summer Flower*, with fleeting colors and forms. A figure may be distinguished in the dark, holding its stomach. Each of these paintings are all executed in a similar palette and mood. The forms, coincidentally, seem to activate one another in a way similar to static electricity, almost as if they're bouncing back and forth from wood panel to wood panel.

At first sight the sculptures present a more voluminous and perhaps functional indication for utilizable machines and forms. However, the two- and three-dimensional works create an energetic environment by their interplay. The interaction frequently suggests transitional spaces, borders between a here and an elsewhere that might be physical, psychological or both.

**Anders Dickson** (1988, Wisconsin, USA) is an artist in residence at De Ateliers, Amsterdam (NL) and studied at the fine arts academy in Karlsruhe (DE), the Städelschule in Frankfurt (DE), the Albert Ludwigs University in Freiburg im Breisgau (DE) and the University of Minnesota at the Philosophy Department in Duluth and Twin Cities (US).

Dickson's work was recently shown in solo and group exhibitions at De Ateliers, Amsterdam (2019), Lovaas Projects, Munich (2019), The Oracle, Berlin (2018), Robert Grunenberger Gallery, Berlin (2019), The Beach Office, Berlin (2017).

Dickson has an upcoming solo exhibition at Galeria Wschód in Warsaw.