



16th INTERNATIONAL TEXTILE AND FASHION CONFERENCES

PRESENTATION OF THE 10 SELECTED PHOTOGRAPHERS

Sunday, the 24th of April 2016 / 2.00 pm

Moderated by **Raphaëlle Stopin**, Artistic Director

With:

Anaïs Boileau (France), **Jojakim Cortis & Adrian Sonderegger** (Allemagne / Suisse), **Maja Daniels** (Suède), **Louise Desnos** (France), **Vendula Knopova** (République tchèque), **Sasha Kurmaz** (Ukraine), **Jason Larkin** (Royaume-Uni), **Emilie Régnier** (Canada / Haïti), **Ilona Szwarc** (Etats-Unis / Pologne), **Fleur van Dodewaard** (Pays-Bas)

Raphaëlle Stopin

The purpose of this session is to introduce the 10 photographers that have been selected for the competition this year and who are showing their work in the vaulted rooms of Villa Noailles. The exhibit is opened to the public until the 22nd of May.

This competition was created 16 years ago based on the same prerequisites as those governing the fashion competition i.e. promote original narratives and defend “author” photography. You will not necessarily see fashion photos but rather authors who express themselves using their own language; this is the specificity we wish to advocate with a jury that is renewed each year and made up of 10 personalities. The idea is to bring together these photographers and personalities of the image world. And it so happens that several collaborations were thus initiated during the last editions.

Regarding the selection process, you should know that we receive about 750 candidacies of which we keep 10%. We ask those 70 selected photographers to send prints that the jury looks at in January. We retain 10 photographers. Then, we have a discussion with the photographers to determine which works we wish them to exhibit here and how. During the Festival, they individually meet each member of the jury which enables them to have a more extensive understanding of their work and a clearer idea on the new paths each photographer can propose.

The fact of being nominated in the last 10, given the international attention the Festival benefits from and the number of submitted candidacies each year, is a victory by itself. And after, of course, there are the awards: The Jury’s Grand Prize which testifies of an authentic support for the winner in terms of visibility and also in financial terms since this award includes a cash prize offered by the Chanel house. Other endowments have been put in place such as the Elie Saab prize which offers an artistic residency in Beirut and consists in producing a free portrait of the Lebanese capital, and the Memorieslab prize which enables the award winner to produce prints for a certain amount.

I will pass the microphone to Anaïs Boileau to introduce herself and her work, Plein Soleil.

Anaïs Boileau



Plein Soleil is about a community of women sunbathing. They expose themselves along the coast of the seaside towns marked by lighting, bright and very colorful architecture. This work is based on a reality I could observe, women lazing on the Mediterranean seaside. I was very inspired by this segment of the population in retirement who are moving to the South to enjoy comfort and to live where life is pleasant.



I photographed my mum, her friends and also the women around me. I wanted to bring a look funny and tender about them, because all this work was like a game and an exchange about their image – these are women who are getting old. Lost behind their sunglasses and accessories, they are distant and pensive, absorbed by the sun. We never see their eyes with their solarium glasses and that makes them impersonal. Between documentary and fiction, this project reveals a desire for exoticism. The places are important, with white sand, palm trees and sun.

There is a dimension of artificiality in this world of appearance. There is also a temporality game between these women and the architecture, because both are modeled the same way by my camera and by the sunlight.



I focus heavily my work on architecture, on the form, the shadows of constructions, etc. The general idea of the project was to show a very generic South and to talk about my origins and where I come from. Thank you.

Raphaëlle Stopin

Thanks a lot, Anaïs. Jojakim Cortis and Adrian Sonderegger, you have the floor...

Jojakim Cortis

Our work is called Icons. We are working with icon photographs that everybody knows and have on their mind. What we are doing is to take those famous photographs and we reconstruct them in our studio, using different kinds of materials. It is important for us to make it clear that it's not a Photoshop work; everything is handcrafted. When we are building photographs in our studio, we are stepping back a little bit to show the surroundings so the viewer can realize how we are doing the picture – what material we are using, what tools...



Adrian Sonderegger

We really don't want to cheat the viewer. It is important that the image recreated is very realistic. But at the same time, we are showing everything. If someone comes to us and asks, How did you do this? We can always answer, Look at the picture, you'll find it out by yourself. A lot of pictures are iconic images which means they stand for a change, either photography, press, war...

For example, this one stands for the end of the Vietnam war.



Jojakim Cortis

A lot of pictures we use and reconstruct are political. But it was not our initial intention to do political work; the work is more about photography itself; what an image tells us. It's about reality, can we trust photographs? So we are playing with the middle of the picture, the part which is famous, and with the surroundings.

Adrian Sonderegger

The inner image was a moment in time, a fraction of a second. We recreate them in our studio so they don't have a time until we finish our work. The surroundings are documentary; it shows the material we use.

We are going to publish a book next year with 40 images – it will be a kind of history repeating itself.

Raphaëlle Stopin

Sometimes, you also include the reference picture in the frame...

Jojakim Cortis

Yes, we do that sometimes. We put parts of the original picture but we don't do that systematically; it's not about comparing with the original. You have to compare with what you have on your mind.



Raphaëlle Stopin

Thank you. Maja, it is your turn.

Maja Daniels

A language is something natural and given, not something you have to think about. There is a lot in the language that connects someone with a place or home... It's mysterious and it is this mystery around this very specific and ancient language called Elfdalian that I was interested in for my project. It's a language my family has spoken for hundreds of years. It brought me back to Sweden after many years living abroad. Linguists, historians have studied this language, but no one really knows how such a small community that hasn't been really isolated managed to preserve it in this part of Sweden.



This is more or less the language the Vikings used to speak. Very few people speak Elfdalian today, and I am not one of them, sadly. To engage photographically with a language might seem counterintuitive or strange. But because I am a non-speaker, that mute engagement yet created a narrative theme like the most natural thing for me to do. It made the whole project really personal, since I am using a lot of my own fantasies about this place. It was also the birthplace of Swedish witch hunts in the 1500's. So, maybe those two things are linked...I tend to believe that there was a rebellious community that did not want to conform. There is a strange kind of tale I am creating through my images, a tale that is revealing part of the language while keeping the secret, not giving anything away. Thanks.



Raphaëlle Stopin

Maja, could you tell us about your next project?

Maja Daniels

This project leads me to work with archives from a photographer who lived in the same region a hundred years ago. He was also interested in the mystery surrounding languages, superstitions and the history of this specific place. I am also working on developing a film around the project.



Raphaëlle Stopin

Thank you.

We will now hear Louise Desnos who studies decorative arts.

Louise Desnos

I am going to start with a quote from Raoul Vaneigem about laziness: “Between him and the environment, the contemplative insouciance is enough to forge a network of subtle analogies. He perceives one thousand presences within the grass, the leaves, a cloud, a perfume, a wall, a furniture, a rock. Suddenly, the feeling of being linked to the soil by the private veins of life grabs him.”



Acedia is a state of pain and affliction linked to the lack of motivation. It is a Latin word related to the way of life of the monks who lived apart from the rest of society, in their loneliness. It is a component of sloth, which is one of the seven deadly sins in Christian religion – and actually the mother of all sins. In my opinion, laziness can be something positive, that gives you creativity, free time – and time is, maybe, the first freedom we have. You can feel a state of grace and find ideas off laziness.



It can also be a way to resist at the pace of contemporary world, to its relentless acceleration, to its competitive capitalist system, its infinite entertainment media. There is a collective unconscious idea that time belongs to humanity, that is why sloth is considered as a fault and the acedia is the sense of guilt that you are not using your abilities, the sense that you can't have this state of grace in laziness.

I started this project on acedia by taking photos rather instinctively. Then I read a book by Ivan Goncharov called Oblomov, and then other books about laziness. Oblomov defends the idea that laziness could be the ultimate wisdom. I did a lot of research on laziness, its iconography,

its history. All the images exhibited here have some close frame, because laziness is a feeling withdrawn to itself. I also wanted to talk about the medium of photography, which is a two-dimensional one – I wanted flat images. I use a dark filter to put, between the reality and the viewer, the subjectivity of acedia. Sometimes, the character disappears as well, falling side away ... Thank you.



Raphaëlle Stopin

Thanks. Vendula Knopova, from the Czech Republic.

Vendula Knopova

My English could be some kind of torture for you! Ear to my business card and the small movie which will speak for me.

“Tutorial is the best of harddrive of my mum which had to undergo appropriate selection of shots showing home pets and natural disasters. My mum is called Lenka. She is a completely normal mum and casual user of a digital camera. It's sometimes enough to just remember certain moments, especially the less important ones. I am Vendula and I belong to the folder Big Kids. My role is a siblings' icon and a black sheep. But most of all I am an independent observer who remixes the final collection with situational shots. I have got 3 sisters and 3 brothers and we all live in solitary house in countryside. We don't have a Tesco club card and Coca-Cola is only bought on medical prescription.

I don't like waiting, deep water, motivational book, rhubarb, chatter about cooking and my legs. But I like outsiders, raffaello, people who awake early, smell of spring, candy crash game, song Amanita from Animal collective and freedom.”

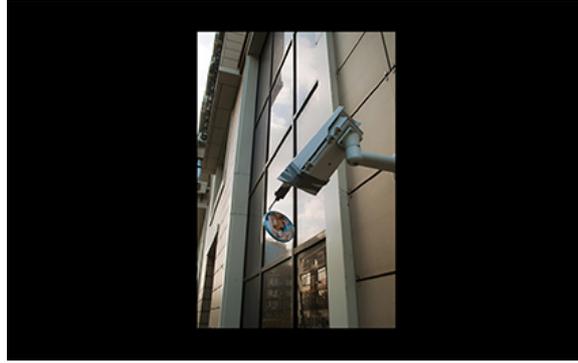
Raphaëlle Stopin

Thank you, Vendula. Sasha, from Ukraine.

Sasha Kurmaz

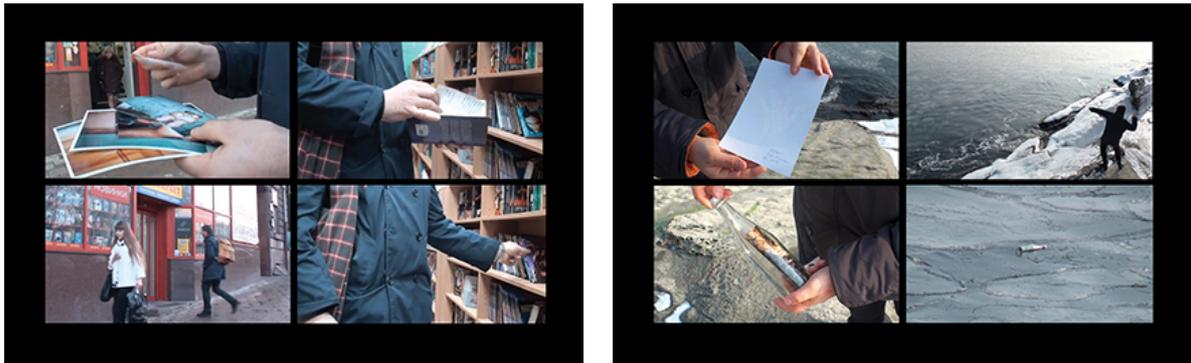
Photography for me is a conceptual practice. I think photography today is much more images inside a frame, a book, on websites or social networks.

I try to use images in public contexts. I will show some different examples of public interaction with my photographic images. On the screen, you can see images of beautiful ladies put on the wall side.



It looks like funny stuff, but after a while, a security guy came and asks me to remove it. As he looks all the day at screens and see always the same dull things, I proposed him to look at those beautiful ladies. The discussion went on, speaking of his work, enjoyment... and I realized that photography can be much more than just images, it can be a link between the audience and myself. It can be a new way to connect with people and have a conversation.

After this work, I started to take photos from archives and put them inside books from a bookstore: This way, I could share them. I am trying to remove borders and limits that exist in museums, galleries, festivals and even within books themselves. The goal is to always get closer to the viewer, by any means.



A hundred years ago, before Internet, mobiles, people were throwing bottles in the water to send letters: I am trying to use these methods to share images, it is a kind of experimental work. All my practice is about questions and answers, it is a kind of dialogue, it is anthropologic.

There you see 4 pictures. I put photographs of local people, including homeless people, on big advertising panels in Kiev, in a typical commercial place. It was a surprise to me to see that nobody cared, the people just went away. I did something similar in Vienna a year ago, in summer time, but the context, the people, the mind, the relation were different; I made a series of portrait of people living in the street, asking money and I put the images in the city street. It was only for one month, the reaction was completely different, people were taking photos of my work.



The top image shows a banner which is the traditional way to advertise, to present commercial informations in Eastern Europe. What is interesting there is that people make it in a “do it yourself” way. Even if you have a small shop, you can put on the banner some images, some text and share the information. In Katowice, Poland, I reconstructed publicity banners, taking photos of it, cutting everything but the smiling faces that I put back on the banner in a larger format. That was amazing stuff. It is all about photography and what it is today. You don’t need a photo camera, you just have to think about it, to open your mind.

This picture was taken in a Japanese restaurant in Kiev. It was empty because of the economical crisis, but you could see there a lot of ugly advertisements. I made a picture with brands, the one you see looks like coca cola cans, but if you focus on it, you will find it strange. I have distorted it to show people how to smoke weed, and with Heineken cans pictures, how to make Molotov cocktails!



I put the images on the window and wait for reactions. And there were no reactions from the Government – my images stayed there for a while!

Raphaëlle Stopin

Thank you. We will now hear Jason Larkin.

Jason Larkin

I have found myself living in South Africa for three years. I was actually working on another project called Tales from The City of Gold. South Africa is a hugely complex space and the documentary project that I did explored lots of different themes and the legacy of gold mining on the Johannesburg... The undeniable inequality that you see in this country is something hard to ignore. It is also a difficult subject to think about and moreover, to communicate and

examine. There are lots of reportage or photo journalism that shows it, you can feel oversaturated.



Still, South Africa is one of the most unequal place in the world, and this needs to be talked about – obviously, a lot of that is because of the apartheid legacy. A lot of people are waiting for things to change, and that’s what I think could express the tension between those that have and those that don’t. And as you move throughout the city, you realize there are lots of people waiting around. I started to talk to these people, asking them what they were waiting for and the implications. It is mostly because of the geographic zoning that happened during apartheid. But they were people waiting for other reasons as well – at the time; it was the hottest week of the year; so people would position themselves in the shade whilst they were waiting, for whatever reason. That’s when I thought that there were images that could capture the larger anxiety of waiting throughout the country. There was this idea as well of being left behind and left in the shadow. This became a visual metaphor of people moving on while others don’t. Over the last 25 years in South Africa, things have change dramatically, but it’s obviously still a huge struggle. I had conversations with these individuals and I know exactly why they were waiting and how long.

In the past, I worked with writers, with journalists. There is always a text element to the work that I do, but with this I decided to remove all the personal information, to strip it away and leave only the period of time. So the text is still pretty integral, it is very minimal.



I hope that by removing the ability for the viewer to connect to each individual, and share that waiting, not in disrespect of who those people are and their situation, it is more to allow these images to speak wider. Everybody has waited at some point during the day, waiting is a universal act, whether it is a consequential act or not. Also, one of the final result of having most of the faces obscured allows this sort of anonymous waiting to feel more like a city-wide experience. And you get left with just a posture of this person within this environment.

Hopefully all these elements allow the work to breathe further outside a South African issue.

Still, I feel text is important, I commissioned four writers to respond others themes on waiting, fictional or non fictional, from both South Africa and UK.

With the work, there is a website where you can read the larger theme of waiting.

Raphaëlle Stopin

Thank you, Jason. Emilie Régnier is next.

Emilie Régnier

I am a Canadian photographer but I spent a part of my childhood in Central Africa. After my studies in photography I moved back to Africa almost 8 years ago. I have been based in Senegal, Ivory Coast and Mali. So my work is mainly about my vision of Africa in general, even though I am trying to break away from stereotypes of photojournalism and to show something I consider more accurate: Africa is the only growing continent right now economically. The project I am presenting is about hair. I have done it in Ivory Coast. There is a black line in the middle of each photo: It's something I took from local photographers, who are using a technique to cut the negative – it's mainly done for economical reason; it has nothing to do with aesthetic. By doing two frames for each person they photograph, they can show two perspectives of each haircut. They cut the negative and stich them on one frame. They will go and sell those 'postcards' to different hairdressers so they can illustrate their books.

When I did this project, I thought that Black women wearing wigs or having blonde hair was somehow of a neocolonial heritage. Maybe it was in the beginning, but it became a cultural and social phenomenon of its own. There is really a link to their culture and their social background.



When you ask those women, “Why do you choose this haircut? Who would you like to look like?” They will all answer Beyoncé or Rihanna, but they feel Rihanna’ style is a little bit too plane for them. They need to make it wilder. This very huge American influence in Western Africa has become stronger with the Internet and the social media.

The traditional photographers work in this kind of laboratory, local version of Central Dupon, and are using these very old machines that give their photos an inspiring seventies look.



I am working right now on a project about leopard, through which I am trying to build bridges between the Western world and the African world. In Africa, leopard is a huge symbol of power, worn only by kings and tribal chiefs. In Europe and everywhere else in the world, leopard is more of a fashion symbol. I am trying to explore and show how the Westerners were influenced by tribal chiefs during the colonies, how this code was brought back and re-appropriated without being questioned in terms of origin and meaning. When I buy leopard dress I don't necessarily think about African kings. Here, I am presenting a world tour of leopard; this is in Senegal; a photograph of a muslim women wearing a leopard dress; this one is in Paris, a French DJ who dresses quite often with this fabric; this is in Congo-Kinshasa, a tribal chief, he has this leopard fur that he inherited from his father. In African culture, they are considered almost as kings. This one is in South Africa, a Zulu man living in a traditional village, and in the Zulu culture, leopard is one of the stronger symbols of power, the leopard being considered the smartest of all animals, the lion being nice to look at but quite stupid.



Here is a photo of Mubutu, the former dictator who ruled Congo for almost forty years. He was called the leopard of Kinshasa, and he was wearing his leopard hat to position himself as the tribal chief of all the Congo. This is in Texas, Larry is a tattoo artist, he is entirely covered with leopard tattoos.

In this project, I am trying to link Africa, Western world, fashion, urban street and all the different forms leopard can take in contemporary culture.

Raphaëlle Stopin

Thank you. Ilona, it is your turn.

Ilona Srwarc

The project I am presenting here at the Festival is a triptych which began with the idea to look for my doppelgänger. I started doing castings to find women who look like me in the United States. I was born and raised in Warsaw and I immigrated to the US about 8 years ago.



Do I look American? Do I look Polish and how identities are related to appearance? Are they connected or disconnected? To answer those questions, I wanted to talk about this process I have been experiencing as an immigrant. I was trying to make myself imperceptible in society by transforming the way I look. With that background, I had the idea of using stage makeup tutorials. As the makeup artist, I transform the American doppelgänger through three makeup sessions. The first part is called “I am a woman and I feast on memory”, the second one is called “I am a woman and I play the horror of my flesh” – this series is a little more playful and engages painting and mark making to the point the model faces go even grotesque. As it was important for me to develop the conceptual layer of the work, it was also essential to develop the narrative behind it. That’s why, in a way, I directed the character and created the portrait like the backstage of the scenes. On the right side you see a mask that I also used in the 3rd series. So, all the series in that sense are connected.

This one exhibited here at the Festival along with the book is called “I am a woman and I cast no shadow”: it starts like the other series with the actress entering the studio. First I take her picture, before the transformation. And slowly, I start to deconstruct her initial and normal appearance. This is a tutorial to make a mask and a pressure on her face. I strip away from her identity, take away everything that makes her a woman and treat the body as a form. In the end, you don’t recognize her, you don’t know if she is a man or a woman.

The last image is a figure from the mythology, that of Janus. By looking at it, I look at myself, my future and my past at the same time.



This picture shows how the work function as a book mimicking the form of a fake beauty or fashion magazine – the head cover is the before and the back cover is the after.

Raphaëlle Stopin

Thanks, Ilona. And now, Fleur van Dodewaard.

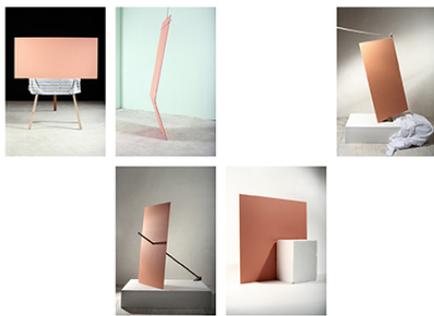
Fleur van Dodewaard

I realized over the last few days when talking to the jury and to the press that the best way to present my work is to show a few different projects, not to interpret too much but to give you an idea of what I have been doing over the last three years.

I chose six projects, the first one is from 2010 and then one of each year up to 2016. I just pick three of them to talk about it today but you can see those that are hanged downstairs which will give you more information about my background.

Also, before I started to study photography, I studied fine arts and theatre – there are always elements of different fields present in my work, painting, sculpting, staging, fiction and play.

Nude Studies, which is from 2010, was inspired by a book about 19th century nude painting. At the back of the book, there are photographs from the painter studios, showing the models as well. The painters used all kind of tools to keep the models in the required position for a very long time – the hand is hanging in a rope or their foot is leaning on a piece of wood...I used these elements to have my own models lean on and I created abstract forms out of it. Altogether that makes a nude study. The photos are actually quite small in this view but they show a lot of details of how these elements are made and constructed.



NUDE STUDIES / 2010 / series of 5 images / 70 x 47 cm / inkjet prints



SUN SET SERIES / 2011 / series of 13 images / 50 x 37,5 + 80 x 60 cm / inkjet prints

The Sunset series is inspired by two photographic interesting objects - the mirror which always shows something other than itself, it makes it almost un-photographable, - and the sunset, which is probably the most banal or cliché subject or object. From there, I just started to construct and make sculptures in the studio. In that case, I am using photography as a sculpting element, so there are the sculptures and the look towards them; the sculptures only exist in this photographic form.

131 Variations is another series, from 2013. It is a remake of Sol Lewitt's "122 Variations of Incomplete Open Cubes". I constructed one sculpture after the other. It is made with found piece of wood, my idea being to always construct something simple from very basic materials I find on the street or are cheap and easy to get. Overall, it is like a three dimensional drawing I create images from afterwards. I created the 122 cubes but finally when I looked at the images, I realized I had made quite a lot of mistakes. I forgot some variations, doubled others and even created variations that were nonexistent in Lewitt's work. I decided to take all the unplanned mistakes and emphasized them in the final version. I made a book from the work I had done that shows also the variations I forgot in an empty page, the double one in two pages and an extra chapter added at the end.

So this series is also about failure, about trying to appropriate something but ending up with your own way of doing things. Thank you for your attention.

Raphaëlle Stopin

Are there any questions from the audience?

From the floor,

I am very interested in the work process of Jojakim and Adrian. I would like to know what the models represent to you. What is your relation to them before, during and after the making?

Jojakim Cortis

We do keep the models after we did the images, but only for a while because we need space to work. But we keep small parts of it – so maybe in the future, we will reuse them for a show. The models are very instable and therefore it is very hard to get them for a show, to bring them to another country for instance.

Adrian Sonderegger

Maybe what we have done is like a trophy, not really something to show outside.

Raphaëlle Stopin

Before concluding, be reminded that some of the photographers in competition have published books that are on sale at the boutique of the Villa. Thank you all.