



amstel gallery



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This booklet gives an impression of the of artists represented by Amstel Gallery.
More art and information: www.amstelgallery.com.



Alex&Felix

'13 Queens' – wondrous creatures gaze from the works of alex and felix, casting a spell over the viewer which is here to stay. There are foreign worlds waiting to be discovered, filled with very well known objects of our everyday reality – although staged in an unexpected way beyond recognition, draped up as chequered costumes full of shapes and colours.

For more than 14 years, alexandfelix – alias the two artists Alex Gertschen and Felix Meier – have built their dream worlds together, bringing them to life in lusciously composed photographic productions. One of their trademarks is the construction of dramatic backdrops. From initial ideas sketches are developed before the hard work begins: timbering, glueing, painting and constructing, up to the point where a small universe starts to take shape. With a complexity that is unique in their field, the artists craft every single detail of their various sceneries themselves. What follows are the costumes and staging of the models with colours and materials that come close to a baroque opulence. In an age of computer manipulation, this working method appears anachronistical, but much more than that, it comes across as refreshingly authentic.

'13 Queens' is an intriguing gallery of showily dressed dignitaries – definitely not from this world. The more one contemplates a picture the less obvious it becomes that there is actually a queen in its midst: the magic emanates from the details, from the objects used for purposes other than intended and their creative reinterpretation – from the desire to find even more unexpected details.

'Under construction' is the conceptual continuation of 13 Queens. At the center, man creating his personal universe positioning himself at its core. Our characters are rather a reflection of their own perpetually changing mental constructs.

In a world that values personal responsibility, every wish seems only to require the will to make it reality. Man is not just the guard of his own fortune but even its creator.

Everybody is looking for a unique perspective, a personal angle, the frame and depth. You give yourself and your surrounding meaning and direction, you arrange views, attitudes and you structure what you see according to your own parameters. You create magnificence and monstrosity to be surely misunderstood by other creatures that have their own differing perspectives and viewpoints.

Under Construction consists of 6 pictures. Its aim is neither to criticize nor to moralise. But careful observation is encouraged to develop one's very own personal stories in the worlds created.





Agniet Snoep

Agniet Snoep was raised in Rotterdam in a family focused on Dutch history of art. Her father, now retired, was the director of the Historical Museum of Rotterdam. Her mother is a descendant of Ambrosius Bosschaert, a famous 17th-century Dutch painter of still lifes.

In 1989 Agniet started taking evening classes at the Rietveld Art Academy in Amsterdam, moved to daytime classes a year later at the Audiovisual department, inspired by movies including those of David Lynch and Peter Greenaway.

Agniet graduated in 1994 with an installation that was subsequently exhibited in 1995 at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam in a group show called Couplet IV, curated by Rudi Fuchs, with artists like Jan Fabre. As a result she received a government grant to further develop her artistic skills using video, computers and photography.

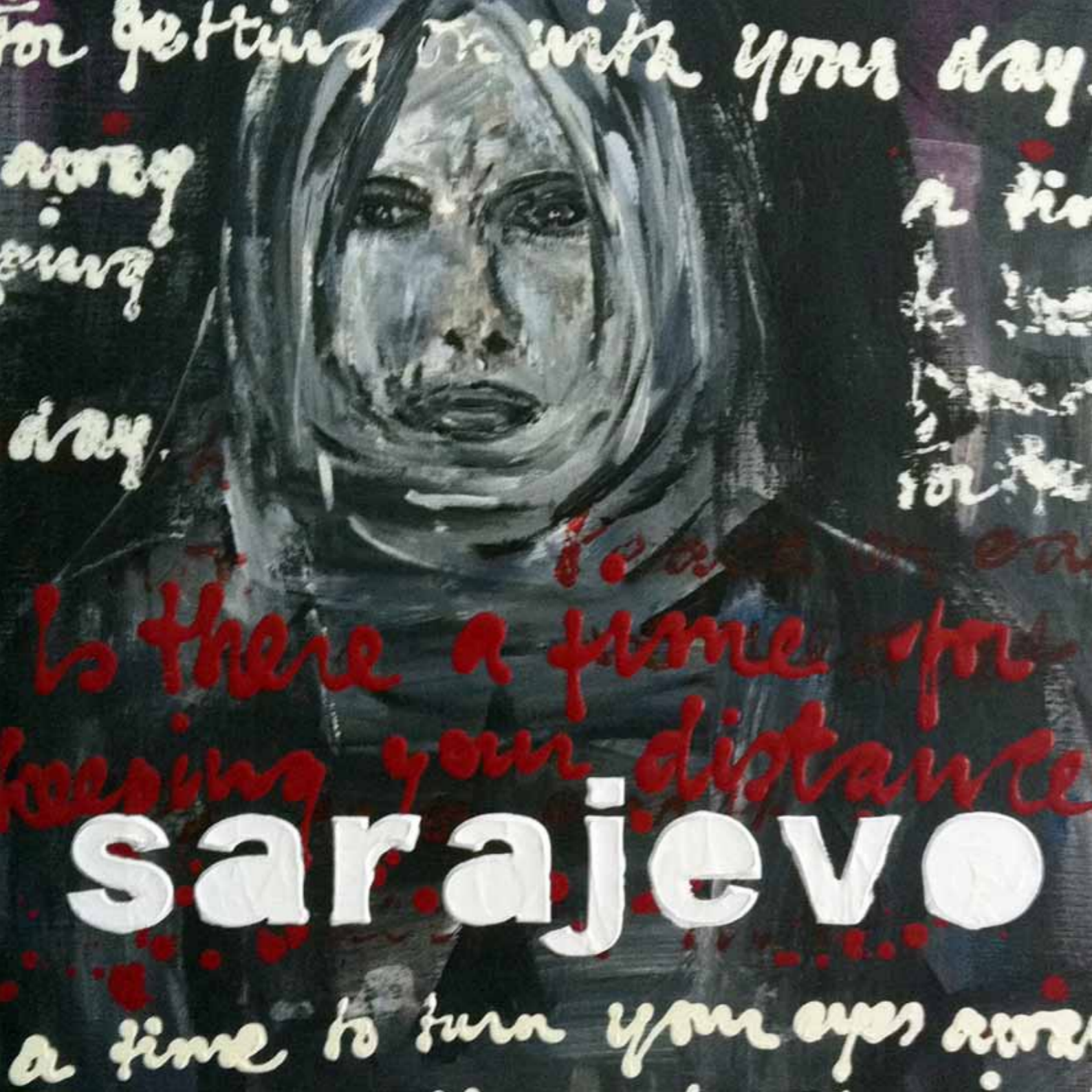
Agniet moved to New York City. In a sidewalk stall in Soho, she found rings with beetles cast in resin. Later on beetles became her main characters. She taught Adobe Photoshop classes to students varying from high school to computer professionals.

In 2005 she started her current body of work, developing a series with beetles, inspired on the story 'Metamorphosis' by Franz Kafka, where a man (Gregor Samsa) suddenly wakes up as a beetle. In Agniet's work beetles adopt a human form in mounted photographs of scenes or film-stills, as fragments of surreptitious interaction.

In 2009 she made a video installation with disproportionately large and iridescent beetles who breath, sigh, growl with a loudly beating heart and two triptychs with man-sized beetles, standing as guards, eye-to-eye with the spectator.

In 2010 she found inspiration in a small painting of her ancestor Ambrosius Bosschaert, showing a dead frog surrounded by flies. The painting, now in the collection of Fondation Custodia (Frits Lugt) in Paris, is wonderfully interpreted and described in the 1930s by the famous Dutch writer/attorney F. Bordewijk who saw the painting at an exhibition in the gallery of the well-known Jewish art dealer J. Goudstikker in Amsterdam. While escaping the Nazis in May, 1940, Goudstikker tragically fell in the hold of the ship taking him to England, fatally breaking his neck. The small painting of Bosschaert inspired Agniet to make a series of still lifes featuring beetles, flowers, shells and other objects often found in 17th century still life painting, in a non-traditional stage setting.





Ruud de Wild

Miss Sarajevo – a statement of destruction and edification

13

E non so più pregare
E nell'amore non so più sperare
E quell'amore non so più aspettare

These tree lines manifest lines of destruction when you hear them with the weary ear of negative emotions. On the other hand you can find hope in the lines. For it is a question if its relevant to have something so foolish like a beauty pageant in a country torn apart by hate. Does the celebration of beauty becomes a run from reality or is it a sign of hope? That not all is lost and that this shallow, cursory event gives broken souls the change to see the sun again?

De Wild: 'My whole life I'm struggling with destruction and edification. Just like a snake who cast off its skin and moves on new, I am combining long repressed emotions captioned in lyrics, written by others. The canvas becomes my confidant. And when finished, it shows how everything can change if you deal with the confrontation with your own conclusion. That you can move on and that you can leave things in the past.'

Ruud was born on April 24, 1969 in Hilversum. He grew up as a second youngest in a family of 11 children. Ruud lived his life since childhood with two passions: music and typography. The typography seems almost innate, partly because he comes from a printers family. His father was a graphic artist. Ruud was always found in the design studio. Here he developed his love for letters and typography.

Ruud started painting when he was about twenty years old. His works are clearly a marvelous combination of his devotion for typography, letters, lyrics and music.

Besides his paintings, Ruud makes various other art statements. He designed a book cover for Ronald Giphart, an album cover for a Dutch rock band and he designed a room at the Hotel Americain in Amsterdam. He also made several exhibitions, for example in the Museum Jan van der Togt in Amstelveen. His work can be found in many private and corporate art collections from all over the world.

*you'll realize when love
comes a cool time to stay*

WHERE THERE'S GOLD

*When there's nothing left to buy it's only love that
gets you high. When it need to have that feeling
once again. When there's no place left to roam.
follow your heart to bring you home*

only love that gets you high





Mel Bagshaw

Working initially with film and hand colour printing, these early experiments led to his chosen media of digital capture and digital postproduction.

Dollface (2008-2010) looks at the roles, dress and stages of women that have been discussed, celebrated, desired and fetishised by society as a whole. These are roles, where women have a strong visual identity and a potentially underlying dominance and sexual power. Taking recognisable working roles of women, many of which are often seen as service roles, weak or un-empowered, these direct confrontational images reveal the power and possibilities of these roles and transform them into powerful symbols of female supremacy. These uniforms are a powerful way of representing and defining our image, starting from our first presentation to the world, our baby clothes. These clothes begin the process of our image presentation, description of gender and sexuality to the world.

Using one model throughout serves to illustrate the power of women, with makeup and dress, to manipulate, adapt, reinvent and represent themselves in numerous different guises and personas.

The photographs can be viewed individually or as a sequence of 12 images that form a cohesive narrative and a metaphorical journey of development, growth, female identity and empowerment. The model Marta Ovod, who collaborated on the work, evolves into a photographer, which is now her chosen career. She is stripped bare at the end of the sequence as she is at the beginning of the narrative.

The photographs in the *9Lives* series take inspiration from classic childhood fears, turning ordinary environments into the unsettling and unexpected. This is a look behind the facades of respectable houses; beyond the high walls and security cameras where something dubious is taking place in the manicured lawns of suburbia. All of his photographs have elements of normality, in some sense even an idyllic scene, but perhaps only at first glance. They show something familiar but with a dark twist, an uncomfortable feeling and a sense of unease. 'I am inspired by trying to unlock all those dark places where images of childhood memories linger' says Bagshaw. 'These images, like fragments from a movie, are what I attempt to capture with a combination of concept, light and colour.'





David Kretschmer

Looking in a mirror is one of the most intimate moments for people. You open yourself, observe your appearance, your face, every little wrinkle and flaw. Unconsciously you start a kind of conversation with your mirror image. But this conversation could never be objective as every person sees a contrast between the mirror image and the image they have in mind. So every minor deviation these two images have is a reason to doubt and to complain about. The paradoxical on this is, that the prettier a person is the more she complains. The closer they are to perfection the fussier they get. The smallest pimple in a young girls face is an essential flaw whereas a deep scar in the face of an old man is a sign for experience and boldness.

The series 'Mirrors' shows this contradictory view on beauty the society has in perfection. Four beautiful young girls, looking very doubting and insecure. As they are almost perfect looking, they observe themselves very strict and criticize every single flaw on their body and face.

The four guys are in complete contrast to the girls. They are not perfect at all but they look very confident at themselves and don't care about any beauty ideals. They are not pristine but they are satisfied.

The observer shares a very intimate moment with an unknown person and turns into a voyeur. He gets involved into the conversation, the person in the mirror has. He looks at the particular characteristics of the men but he is also searching for the flaws and imperfection of the women so it turns out that he, as a part of the society shares the paradoxical sense of beauty.

All images were made at Studio Erwin Olaf in Amsterdam, the Netherlands in 2010.

David is a regular assistant of Erwin Olaf and in 2011 he won the Prix de la Photographie and the Canon Profifoto Award.

20 Marieke | 21 David 22 Bellei (top) Christina (bottom) | 23 Marit
24 Anton (top) Martin (bottom) | 25 Marc







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