

Prelude: Forever Someone Else

14 Oct – 18 Nov 2017 at GRIMM in Amsterdam, Netherlands

9 OCTOBER 2017



Prelude: Forever Someone Else. Courtesy of GRIMM

GRIMM is pleased to present a new solo exhibition by Desiree Dolron (NL, 1963) focused on photographs documenting her extensive travels. The exhibition is a prelude to a larger body of work that will be the subject of a new monograph, scheduled for publication in 2020.

The title 'Forever Someone Else' refers to a book of selected poems by Fernando Pessoa (1888-1935), a writer, philosopher, mystic and astrologer. Pessoa employed as many as 75 alter egos, referred to as heteronyms, which he deployed at will to disseminate various philosophical and theoretical views.

This exhibition reveals a body of work from Dolron never previously exhibited. Included are various self-portraits in such distinct environments that each becomes an alter ego of the artist, functioning much like Pessoa's heteronyms. The viewer witnesses the artist adapting, changing and evolving with each situation.

Starting with works from 1991, the exhibition presents photographs taken in Pakistan and India, depicting Romani, the world's oldest roaming nomad tribe. The earliest self-portrait in the exhibition features Dolron when she returned to the site in 1997, standing with an AK-47 amidst Taliban child soldiers.

In stark contrast is a group of images taken the same year (1997) at the Wigstock drag festival in New York City. Drag queens with big hair, self-made eccentric hats, and triumphant clothing are captured parading down the street. Dolron participates in celebration, posing with one of them in another self-portrait.

Three individual images are shown on another wall; a speeding car, symbolizing the American dream, taken in Cuba (2002), a portrait of a beautiful girl from the Dominican Republic gazing melancholically into the camera (2001) [image], and a desert landscape shot at night in Miami (1993); the blacks intense, the light subdued. Together, these three images promote ideas of power and status.

Pessoa treasured the 'dream' as the highest attainable end, the rest only a means to get there. We see the same ideas reflected in Dolron's work. 'Prelude: Forever Someone Else' embodies a sense of becoming that binds these works together. Everything is in a state of flux.

I know not what tomorrow will bring

(Pessoa's last writing, he died the next day, November 30th, 1935)

Desiree Dolron (Haarlem, 1963) lives and works in Amsterdam. Recently her work was the subject of a large mid-career retrospective at the Singer Museum in Laren (NL), with a new monograph about her famous Xteriors series designed by Irma Boom, published on the occasion.

Dolron's oeuvre ranges from documentary images and still lifes to portraiture and film. While she chooses to adopt different approaches depending on the body of work, her astonishingly technical application and eye for detail manage to give her photographs and films a timeless quality.

Dolron's work can be found in the following public and private collections: Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York, NY (US); The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, TX (US); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (NL); Museo Nacional Reina Sofia, Madrid (ES); Groninger Museum, Groningen (NL); Gemeentemuseum, The Hague (NL); Victoria and Albert Museum, London (UK); The Buhl Foundation, New York, NY (US); The Olbricht Collection, Berlin (DE); Ekard Collection, Wassenaar (NL) and many others.

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Opening hours

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Captions

1. Prelude: Forever Someone Else. Courtesy of GRIMM
2. Prelude: Forever Someone Else. Courtesy of GRIMM
3. Prelude: Forever Someone Else. Courtesy of GRIMM