

Nicolai Howalt & Trine Søndergaard

February 21 - April 13, 2013



Bruce Silverstein is pleased to present an exhibition of recent and early work by the artists Nicolai Howalt & Trine Søndergaard. Living and working together in Denmark, their art shares a history and evolution as well as an intersection, which becomes apparent in this mini-retrospective. This is the first show to incorporate multiple series by each artist (side-by-side) provoking a conversation regarding a mutual influence, either aesthetically perceptible, or sometimes more subtle—a joint exploration of fragile and ineffable motifs. Juxtaposing the artists' collaborative projects with their separate endeavors highlights a shared attention to their cultural heritage as well as an interest in marking transition, evolution, spaces of limbo, and

the continuum of life and time.

Both artists began their careers with an approach more toward the documentary—Søndergaard followed and chronicled the lives of female prostitutes on the streets of Copenhagen's red light district for her series, *Now That You Are Mine*, while Howalt, in a similar style, observed and captured the lives of a family in Denmark over several years for his project, *3x1*. Howalt's later series, *Boxers*—images of young boys before and after their first fight, and Søndergaard's *Versus*—photographs of individuals paired with a work of art from Copenhagen's Thorvaldsens Museum, are also aesthetically similar. Both series are about what is not pictured—the space between the photographs—a transition, a change, a relationship, that charges the images.

The artists' well-known joint project, *How to Hunt*, consists of layered, time-lapsed photographs of Danish hunting grounds, which like the *Megafossil* series (silkscreened images of a 1500 year old Kings Oak tree—a living fossil from the woods of Jægerspris north of Copenhagen), are monuments to the artists' Danish heritage and confront the topics of duration and time passage.

Søndergaard's *Strude* and *Guldnakke* images, as well her *Interior* series, emphasize a bridge (and a gap) between past and present. There is a quiet and engaging tension between the historic and the contemporary. Her *Monochrome Portraits* of friends and neighbors are remarkably revealing while also seemingly distant. The viewer can only perceive the sitters' "absence", their apparent concern with what is within, that which is occupying their thoughts—written on their face or perceived in a tilt of the head.

While Howalt's *Endings* (photographs of cremation ashes) his *Car Crash Series* and *Rusland* could be viewed as a fascination with death and destruction, the artist in fact sees his work as primarily concerned with life and its fragility. He draws inspiration from a line by T.S. Eliot, "The end is where we start from." His *Seahawks* series and *Borderline* project (images taken at the physical borders of Denmark), like

BRUCE SILVERSTEIN

Søndergaard's work, are images of contemporary Danish / Nordic cultural space that simultaneously reference and engage with the history of Danish / Scandinavian culture.

Howalt and Søndergaard's collaborative projects, *Dying Birds* (photogravures of the birds from their hunting scenes, taken at the moment of impact) and *Tree Zone* (portraits of the final trees struggling to grow at the tree line at high altitudes) are concerned with a space of limbo, the location between what was and is now.

Trine Søndergaard (b. 1972) graduated from Fatamorgana, The Danish School of Art Photography in 1996. In 2000 she received the Albert Renger Patzsch Award and has since then received numerous grants and fellowships, including a three-year working grant from The Danish Arts Foundation. She has exhibited in numerous solo and group exhibitions in Denmark and abroad. Søndergaard's works are included in major public and private collections, among them: MUSAC Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Castilla y Leon, Spain; The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA; The Hasselblad Foundation, Sweden; The Israel Museum, Jerusalem; and The Danish Arts Foundation, Denmark.

Nicolai Howalt (b.1970) was born in Copenhagen and graduated from Denmark's Photographic Art School Fatamorgana in 1992. He has exhibited at Statens Museum for Kunst, ARoS and Skagens Museum in Denmark. He has received a series of grants from the Hasselblad Foundation, The Danish Ministry of Culture, The Danish Arts Foundation and The Danish Arts Council. Nicolai Howalt's work is a part of numerous public collections, including The Israel Museum, Jerusalem; MUSAC, Spain, Maison Européenne de Photographie, France, The Museum of Fine Arts Houston, USA, Fondation Neuflyze Vie, France, Hiscox Art Project, USA. And in Denmark, The National Museum of Photography, The Danish Arts Foundation, Skagen Museum, Nykredit and Museet for Fotokunst, Brandts.

Upcoming Exhibitions:
24th Street
Keith A. Smith
April 18 – June 1, 2013