

KOOS BREUKEL

GENERATION

WING 5 DECEMBER 2003 - 15 FEBRUARY 2004

The photographer, Koos Breukel, is one of the most renowned present-day portrait photographers in the Netherlands. The exhibition at the Pori Art Museum presents his photographs from the past 15 years including his most recent works. Breukel works on a black and white series of members of his own generation. The exhibition includes more intimate photographic diaries of his close friend made with a small format camera.

Breukel's large format photographs fall into the category of classic portrait photography. Breukel depicts his sitters full face, three-quarter or full length. The large format film makes his images very sharp. All details of the subject's clothing and skin come across extremely well in the photograph. By rendering the skin of the subject as precisely as possible Breukel depicts his sitters' personality in a very intimate way and is able to bring out traces of his/her life history. Breukel confronts us with the life and existence of our fellow man, who is not 'just' one of the masses, but a unique individual.

Portrait photography is one of the classical genres of photographic history. Portrait photography, as all photography, is connected with the current social conventions. Its scale is wide, ranging from passport photos to group portraits in which individuals are usually depicted as anonymous members representing a social group. Traditional portrait photography seeks to depict the personality or social status of the person. Koos Breukel's intense portraits emphasise the individual's being and existence by bringing forth the corporeality of the person. Similarities can be found between his work and that of Robert Frank, Richard Avedon and Diane Arbus.

Koos Breukel was born in 1962 in The Hague, the Netherlands. Breukel lives and works in Amsterdam. His photographs have been published in numerous magazines. He has also published several photo books, including *Wretched Skin* (1994), *Hyde* (1996), *Dierenleven* (2000). Koos Breukel's exhibition was produced by the Nederlands fotomuseum, Rotterdam. It is part of the Visual Community Network project. The cooperative project between five European institutions includes, in addition to Pori Art Museum and the Nederlands fotomuseum, BALTIC, the Centre for Contemporary Art, Gateshead, Bergen kunstmuseum, Bergen and BildMuseet, Umeå.

