

OPEN EYE GALLERY

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18 MAY – 25 AUG 2013

LOOK/13 Liverpool International Photography Festival



MAIN GALLERIES

CHARLES FRÉGER: THE WILD AND THE WISE

UPPER GALLERY

EVA STENRAM: DRAPE

Open Eye Gallery, under the new artistic directorship of **Lorenzo Fusi**, is delighted to present on the occasion of **LOOK/13** (Liverpool International Photography Festival) two new solo exhibitions. The work of **Charles Fréger** will be presented across the entire ground floor, whilst **Eva Stenram**'s latest project will be on view in the upper gallery space.

Directed and curated by **Patrick Henry**, LOOK/13 is a Photography Festival that takes place across various sites in and around Liverpool. Open Eye is a proud partner of the 2013 festival.

Charles Fréger: *The Wild and the Wise*

Charles Fréger (b. 1975) is a French photographer based in Rouen. The artist presents at Open Eye, for the first time in a British institution, a large selection of individual and collective portraits. Most series exhibited at Open Eye have been realised over the course of the last decade, whilst some of the projects on show are still ongoing.

Drawing from his rich and diverse body of work (including *The Wilder Mann* and the *Légionnaires: portraits photographiques et uniformes* series), Fréger interrogates photographic portraiture as a discipline, particularly in relation to cultural categories such as history or folklore.

Fréger has a keen interest in images that suggest ideas of collectivity. However, his subjects appear isolated and almost removed from the rest of society. Reflecting on the fragmentation of the Self, a condition and legacy of the Post Modern era, Fréger analyses different forms of human aggregation, looking at the group dynamics and codices that regulate their members' social interactions and behavior. A distinct sense of loss, a utopic and nostalgic longing for togetherness, permeates the artist's work, as he realises that the individuality of each sitter cannot but clash against the construction of any collective identity.

Eva Stenram: *Drape*

Eva Stenram (b.1 976) is a Swedish-born photographer, who lives and works in London. The artist brings together analogical archival material and digital manipulation, creating scenarios where the uncanny takes central stage. Stenram often uses found images, such as the negatives of pin-up shoots and thumbed centrefolds taken from old magazines, as her source of inspiration and working material. These are scanned and imported to digital files that the artist manipulates, reinterpreting at each time the image anew. In the *Drape* series (2012), the background – the drapes that give the show its title – and foreground are exchanged. Once the backdrop falls in front of the model (negating access to the subject and only showing glimpses of her objectified body), the viewer becomes fully aware of their voyeuristic desire and erotic impulses.

Her work questions our understanding of notions such as time and space, giving life to hybrid realms whose exact temporal and cultural coordinates are ambivalent and difficult to locate.

Similarly, in the series *pornography/forest_pic* (2004-2012), Stenram carefully removes the actors' bodies from pornographic images that have a forest as their background. Once the "action", the sexual intercourse, is erased from the photo, only a disturbing sense of uneasiness remains and the viewer is left with nothing but their frustration and disillusion.

NOTES TO EDITORS: Open Eye Gallery has been one of the UK's leading photography spaces since 1977, and is the only gallery dedicated to photography in the North West of England.

Gallery opening times: 10.30am to 5.30pm, Tuesday to Sunday. Closed Monday (except bank holidays).

FREE ENTRY

Funding: Open Eye Gallery receives regular funding from Arts Council England and Liverpool City Council. The capital project has received generous support from several major funders along with grants from trusts and foundations, corporate support and individual donations. Major funders include Liverpool Vision/ Northwest Development Agency and the National Lottery through Arts Council England. Support has also been received from the Foyle Foundation, Rootstein Hopkins Foundation, Granada Foundation and JSF Pollitzer Charitable Settlement.

Project team Architects: RCKa

Main Contractors: Braithwaites

Capital Project Partner: Countryside/Neptune Developments

For further press information, images, interview requests please contact:
marketing@openeye.org.uk or call 0151 236 6768.

Website: www.openeye.org.uk

Facebook: Open Eye Gallery

Twitter: @OpenEyeGallery

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LIVERPOOL INTERNATIONAL PHOTOGRAPHY FESTIVAL

LOOK/13 festival's delivery team is led by Patrick Henry (director) and Harjeet Kaur (festival manager). Patrick Henry was previously director of Open Eye Gallery, Liverpool (2004 -12) and curator of exhibitions at the National Media Museum (1998 -2004). Harjeet has curated and managed a range of national and international exhibitions and festivals for organisations including the British Council.

For further press information on LOOK/13, please contact Stephanie Knox at Margaret on 020 7923 2861 or steph@margaretlondon.com

Website: www.lookphotofestival.com

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