

' Behind the changing forms of nature is an immutable pure reality '
Piet Mondrian, 1872-1944

RISE & DECLINE, a photographic study
Marja Sterck

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Marja Sterck has a fascination for nature. Humans, animals and plants have her undivided attention and get her undiminished interest. This focus is in its work visible in the great dark portraits of young women, the photos of dead birds or small monochrome images of maple leaves.

Sterck is a photographer par excellence. Her photographs are technically perfect and aesthetically. She self-controlled to use the medium and is capable of complete freedom. She zooms until the grain is a geometric grit which is barely perceptible to the naked eye. The front and back of a tulip become a dance choreography and the thin squirming leaves of Japanese maples are feathers. The flowers and plants are dead. They are given a new life in Sterck's photos.

The images of Sterck occur in nature but are made in the studio. They do not wait for the right time but creates. With her staged images she emphasizes the full force and delicate vulnerability and that living things. At the beginning, the end and everything in between.

Sterck's portraits of young women with grass between their curled lips pucker or a plucked or overblown plant in their hands, are at the tipping point of life and decay. They are a symbol of youthful innocence with attributes symbolizing the impermanence of this young life plucked grass, dry leaves and dead plant. The girls are prickly, angrily and forcefully. At the same time the soft grass and poppies fragile.

For this exhibition the curator has made a selection from the oeuvre of Sterck. The works on display show an overview of work within the chosen theme.

"In decline, everything lives."
Marja Sterck

The fascination for 'nature' of Sterck does not fall from the sky. With some biologists in the family is this interest in plants, humans and animals not strange. But Sterck studies the elements not as a scientist but as an artist. Thereby getting her pictures a different aesthetic value.

Marja Sterck has her studio in the Gruyter Fabriek. Since her graduation (1988, Academy of Fine Arts, Tilburg) she works commissioned and exhibited among others in Gemeentemuseum, Zaanstad and 's-Hertogenbosch. Her work is included in several art collections.

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