

isabelle pateer: "unsettled" (2007-2012) at photofusion gallery

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Photofusion presents the first UK show of Dutch photographer Isabelle Pateer. The exhibition will show her most recent documentary project "Unsettled", which Isabelle has been working on since 2007. "Unsettled" focuses on the small Belgian village of Doel and the surrounding polder area (land reclaimed from the sea), on the border of Belgium and The Netherlands.

Since the 1970s the Antwerp harbour has been growing exponentially, so much so that the surrounding villages have had to be destroyed to make room for industrial expansions of new docks and warehouses. But in the last 10 years these plans proved to be too optimistic (if not megalomaniac), and when the economic crisis kicked in, the plans were put on hold. As a result, the village Doel nowadays looks rather desolate, and the remaining inhabitants are confronted with an uncertain future. To add to the cynicism, EU law requires that industrial expansions should be recompensed with the construction of nature reserves, resulting in yet more sacrifice of residency areas in the immediate surroundings.

These large-scale colour photographs capture, through a combination of landscape and metaphorical staged imagery, a place where living environments and heritage are disappearing due to both industrial and nature reserve interventions. The village of Doel is threatened by vast expansions of the port of Antwerp and related nature compensation plans, which has resulted in a captivating visual contrast between the artificial nature and culture of the area.

"Unsettled" consists of portraits of young inhabitants alternated by landscapes which together illustrate the direct effects of global political and economic shifts in these small towns and villages. The images have been made across both The Netherlands (Hedwigepolder) and Belgium (Doel, Kallo, Prosperpolder); the villages and polders which are involved in these industrial expansions and nature recompenations.

Isabelle Pateer lives and works in The Netherlands and Belgium. Her work has been exhibited worldwide, including Photo Ireland Festival 2012, the Fotofestival Lodz, Poland, 2012, where Isabelle was a finalist for the Grand Priz, and at the Daegu Photo Biennale, Korea. The series "Unsettled" has been awarded, published and exhibited internationally since 2008 and received a project grant from the Dutch 'Anna Cornelis foundation' in 2010. Isabelle has also been published in IM magazine, VIEW magazine, Rearview mirror, GUP magazine, and many more. To see more of Isabelle's work, please visit: www.isabellepateer.com.

A book publication is scheduled for release in late 2013. A preview of the book will be available throughout the show, with the option of pre-sales at an exhibition-only discounted price.

Venue: Photofusion, 17a Electric Lane, Brixton, London SW9 8LA

Open: 15th March – 26th April 2013

Launch Party & Artist Introduction: Thursday 14 March, 18.30 – 21:00

For more information visit: www.photofusion.org

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