

Zuiderzee Museum acquires portraits Koos Breukel

The Zuiderzee Museum has obtained a unique series of portrait photographs by portrait photographer Koos Breukel, entitled *Before the Eyes of Job*. It concerns an emotionally charged subject: mourning after a child's death. The complete series of portraits is an exclusive work and comprises twenty-four pictures.

For this series Koos Breukel contacted parents of children buried in the Volendam churchyard – victims of the café fire on New Year's Eve 2001, but also of children who met their deaths in other ways. *Before the Eyes of Job* is a subdued collection of portrait photographs that offer a poignant picture of Volendam today.

With this series Breukel breaks the silence round a child's death and captures a historic moment from the past of Volendam and of this country. The Volendam fire of New Year's Eve had an enormous impact in the whole of the Netherlands.

The series is a valuable contemporary addition to the special collection of work in the Zuiderzee Museum pertaining to Volendam. Its purchase could be realized with the help of the Mondrian Foundation. The photographs are currently on display as part of *Volendam*, a comprehensive retrospective of historical and contemporary work about this village. The exhibition is a great success and has therefore been prolonged until 2 May 2010.

Koos Breukel (1962) is one of the best contemporary Dutch portrait photographers. Among his projects after his graduation were a series of portraits of survivors of the Faro plane crash, a series about Michael Matthews, the theatrical producer who died from AIDS in 1996, and portraits of Jan Wolkers, Job Cohen and Lucian Freud. Breukel seeks to find out to what extent people have suffered from the adversities of life and have managed to cope with them. *Before the Eyes of Job* was made in conjunction with writer-journalist Pieter van den Blink, to whom the parents concerned really opened up when they told him about the death of their children and the period afterwards.

About the Zuiderzee Museum

The Zuiderzee Museum presents Dutch art, fashion, design and heritage at the interface of land and water. Inside and outside the Museum buildings and throughout the year, expositions and events are organized that demonstrate interrelationships between the collection and current developments in the world of art and culture. Contemporary and classical themes are assigned a surprising angle of approach. www.zuiderzeemuseum.nl.

Note for the editor (not for publication):

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