

Ronald Schmets

Ronald Schmets' inspiration was born in South Limburg in the Netherlands. The Catholic boys' school he went to in the southernmost tip of the Netherlands was housed in an old marlstone building that originally served a monastery. The religious prints and statues made a powerful impression on the young Schmets. He was struck by the contrast in the images of Jesus and Mary. While the Son of God was depicted virtually naked and in a way that was almost erotic, his mother was always heavily robed and exceptionally serene. "I'm going to reverse those roles when I grow up", he thought. In line with the tradition of the great artists of the Renaissance, saintly women swathed in fluttering robes play a leading role in his work. Always surrounded by religious references and symbols. Visions of the feminine as virgin, lover and mother ? a power that men will never possess. His work constantly returns to the theme of the saintly women of days gone by. Pictures of women depicted with respect. Women who radiate serenity and composure.

Schmets' latest series, "FEMINA SANCTA", pays tribute to saintly women such as Mary Magdalene, Joan of Arc, Saint Theresa and Saint Bernadette of Lourdes, all of whom are depicted in Renaissance style 2008. Schmets draws his inspiration from celebrated artists such as Botticelli, Rubens, Bouguereau, Waterhouse and Klimt.

Schmets started painting and drawing at the age of four and sold his first painting at the age of twelve. When he was fourteen he was given an old Zenith camera as a birthday present and quickly developed a love of photography. He was the youngest student ever to start studying at the KABK Royal Academy of Art in The Hague.

As a graphic designer he was able to combine his love of photography with designing and painting. He then completed a short postgraduate course in photography at the St. Joost Academy in Breda. In his first reportages Schmets focused on "the real person and their environment".

A quick pencil sketch eventually results in image that is sometimes made up of 35 different photographs. He sometimes even combines photographs of three different models in order to be able to evoke the feminine archetype he has in mind as fully as possible. He starts by photographing the background. Then he lights the models and props accordingly. He prints the image on metallic paper, a technique that combines digital print with a developing tray. Eventually the print is stuck on dibond and embedded in three layers of synthetic resin. This then becomes the lens through which the print is perceived. This approach enables Schmets to give each image its own unique look.

BIOGRAPHY

He was born the 14 of June 1962 at the Austrian Embassy in The Hague, Netherlands.

EDUCATION

HAVO (Higher Level General Secondary Education),

KABK Royal Academy of Art in The Hague, graphic and typographic design with a major in photography, St. Joost in Breda, photography.

EXHIBITIONS

2016

Envie d Art gallery, London

AAF Hong Kong

2014

713 gallery, Knokke, Belgium

Kunsthuizen gallery, Leiden, Netherlands

Sophie Maree gallery, The Hague, Netherlands

Zofier gallery, Nieuweschoot, Netherlands

2013

Envie d Art gallery, Paris VII

AAF Brussels, London

713 gallery, Knokke, Belgium

Sophie Maree gallery, The Hague, Netherlands

Zofier gallery, Nieuweschoot, Netherlands

2012

AAF Brussels, London, Amsterdam

Envie d Art gallery, Paris

Sophie Maree gallery, The Hague, Netherlands

2011

AAF Brussels

Envie d Art gallery, Paris VII

2010

AAF Brussels

ICO gallery, New York

Envie d Art gallery, Paris

2009

"Femina Sancta", Envie d Art, Paris

2008

AAF Amsterdam

"Femina Sancta", De Gallery, The Hague

2006

"Baroque Blue", Lecce

2005

Sent 32 works to Los Angeles for an exhibition planned in Laguna Beach at the end of 2006
Kunstraai, Amsterdam

2004

"Ode aan de Hofvijver" (Ode to the Hofvijver), exhibition involving 172
artists, The Hague
"The Ultimate Tribute to Women", Supperclub, Amsterdam

2002

"Art Salon", Hoorn
"Icons of Prague", National Theatre, Prague
Winner of the Salvador Dali Award 2002, Prague
"Icons of Prague", Galerie Miro, Prague

2001

"New Icons", La Grande Arche, Paris

2000

"Nieuwste Iconen" (Newest Icons), Galerie Lantink, The Hague
Nominated for the prestigious ABC Annual Award

1999

"Nieuwe Iconen" (New Icons), Vondelkerk Amsterdam

1993

present working as a visual artist and advertising and fashion photographer for
companies and organisations such as KPN Mobile, Fortis, Erasmus MC, PricewaterhouseCoopers, Philip Morris, Orange, UK Paper, Connexion,
Kneipp, the Dutch Tax Authorities, The Dutch Ministry of Transport,
Public Works and Water Management, the Municipal Museum in The Hague,
Veronica Magazine (a weekly television magazine) and Body and Mind
(Netherlands) (a glossy monthly magazine)

1993

"De gedachten zijn vrij" (Thoughts are free), series printed in book form

1989

"House", Fodor Museum, Amsterdam
"Acid House", Nieuwe Revu (weekly magazine) and Club Veronica (youth magazine)

1988

"Leids studentenleven" (Student Life in Leiden), Leiden University
"Hip Hop", Galerie INKT, The Hague
"Den Haag bij Nacht" (The Hague at Night), City Hall, the Dutch Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries and the hall of the Central Station in The Hague

1987

"Vom Schriftgiessen" (?Type Founding?), Darmstadt, Frankfurt and the German Museum in Munich