

Rinus Van de Velde

A Life in A Day

31 August - 7 October 2023



Tim Van Laere Gallery presents *A Life in A Day*, Rinus Van de Velde's seventh solo exhibition at the gallery. In this exhibition, the artist not only presents new drawings in oil pastel, colored pencil, and charcoal but also premieres his third film, *A Life in A Day*, along with a selection of sculptures featured in the film.

Rinus Van de Velde's oeuvre reads like a multiverse, in which different storylines always run parallel to one another. He has already created several alter egos that allow him to appropriate different personas and explore worlds that do not (yet) belong to him. Throughout these different worlds, the constant anchor point is the artist himself. Through impersonations, constructed lies, and appropriations, he comes closer to uncovering the truth about his own identity and artistry.

His latest film also mirrors this process. In his debut film, *The Villagers*, Van de Velde started from a predefined narrative, in which the artist himself played a small role as spectator. That narrative already evolved into a more abstract form in his second film, *La Ruta Natural*. For this film, the artist had a mask made in his likeness allowing one of his assistants to embody the artist's role. This allowed Van de Velde to observe himself from a distance and portray and analyze his artistry. This same mask reappears in *A Life in A Day*. While *La Ruta Natural*'s storyline focused on the creation and destruction of his various alter egos, *A Life in A Day* delves into Van de Velde's artistry in a more intimate and pure way, inviting us to partake in the artist's inner process.

The film opens with a very mundane scene where the artist wakes up, gets dressed, and then walks out the door with his briefcase to start his day. The motif of the briefcase plays an important role here as the depiction of a bundle of thoughts, ideas, and visualizations. It also plays an important role in the encounter between the artist and his gallerist Tim Van Laere, with the briefcase symbolising the dialogue between the two figures. After his daily activities, the artist then enters his imaginary universe, where he walks into a natural scenery. Here, in his solitude, the artist finds a moment of peace and takes his place like a pleinairist to create new work. This desire is visible in the oil pastel drawings in the first space of the exhibition, where the majority focuses on natural landscapes. Then he takes a shortcut to an underground, deeply hidden space, where we find the artist's inner vault. Within this archive, the artist meticulously organizes all his ideas, thoughts, images, and texts. This process of exploration, deepening, appropriating, and reinventing also resonates within the exhibition, where charcoal, oil pastel, colored pencil drawings, and sculptures are showcased. All of these works speak volumes about the artist: about his ambitions, doubts, concerns, his moments of happiness, but also of loneliness, frustration, and sadness. The predominance of the artist's personal voice in all his works makes it possible for him to appropriate any style, without losing his own identity in it. Works by Picasso, Van Gogh, Ensor, Matisse, Armen Eloyan, and Alfred Wallis are unmistakably redirected to a Rinus Van de Velde. The fact that the artist looks a lot to his predecessors and also immerses himself completely in their work is also portrayed in his latest film, in which he defies gravity while climbing through a hatch into a swimming pool that refers to David Hockney. In this scene, too, Van de Velde appropriates the pool by the simple act of washing out his brushes in the pool, resulting in a transformation of the water's hue.

Rinus Van de Velde (b. 1983 in Leuven, Belgium) lives and works in Antwerp. Work by the artist is in several international collections, including S.M.A.K. (Ghent), M HKA (Antwerp), Royal Museums of Fine Arts of Belgium (Brussels), CAC (Malaga), Kunstmuseum Luzern (Lucerne), FRAC des Pays De La Loire (Nantes), Museum Voorlinden (Wassenaar), Kunstmuseum (The Hague), AZ Artgestion Collection (Bilbao), Kunsthalle Sao Paolo (Sao Paolo), KWM Art Center (Shanghai), KPN Art Collection (Netherlands), Stad Antwerpen (Antwerp), Erasmus University (Rotterdam), Belfius Art Collection (Brussels) and Coleccion Solo (Madrid).