



**HISTORISCHE
HUIZEN GENT**

Exhibition BIEKE DEPOORTER. PHOTOGRAPHY

I am about to call it a Day

The St. Peter's Abbey is coming up to speed for its photography exhibitions. Since 2010 the abbey has drawn a clear line in its summer programming and focuses on photography. In 2012 the programme will include three excellent photographic exhibitions. The first in line is called *I am about to call it a Day* by the young photographer Bieke Depoorter from Ghent, which will be open to visitors from Friday 25 May to Sunday, September 23, 2012.

In recent years Bieke Depoorter has travelled with an open mind through Russia and America. This exhibition presents the report of her extraordinary experiences and encounters.

For *Ou Menya* Bieke Depoorter travelled on the Trans-Siberian express through Russia for three months. She spoke no Russian and as an aid carried with her a piece of paper containing a text translated into Russian: 'I am looking for a place to spend the night. Do you know anyone who might have a spare bed or chair? I have no special needs and have a sleeping bag with me. I do not wish to stay in a hotel as I have little money and I want to see how people live in Russia. May I perhaps sleep at your house? Thank you for the help!'

The note proved very effective and every night the young photographer found a place to sleep. Casual encounters determined where she slept. She travelled from family to family in forgotten villages. Filled with curiosity, she entered unknown, often wondrous worlds. She never knew where she would end up the next night. People treated her to stories and conversations she could not understand one word of. She found herself enjoying music and songs, lots of vodka and outstanding food or linking arms with someone and going for a late night walk before bedtime. She slept on the floor or in a bed and sometimes was even loaned a clean pair of pyjamas. The children she met were open and direct and curious about their unexpected guest. The adults did not allow her presence to hamper them in any way. They simply followed their daily rituals: cooking, fishing, playing with the kids, cutting hair, having a nightly wash in the snow, dressing and undressing, waking up. Bieke only took photos at intense moments when she felt deeply involved with what she saw. The resulting photos don't only show you something but mainly allow you to be who you are. Photos that allow you to share the powerful impressions of someone who first and foremost enters the various locations as a person.

Bieke Depoorter did the very same thing again in the United States. She called the series *I am about to call it a Day*. Also during this *work in progress* she found herself being surprised again and again. She never knew where her next contact would bring her. Her photographs give the impression of being fleeting, almost stolen moments in the lives of others. They are direct, but never without respect. They are a visual poem that draws the viewer into the loving gaze of their maker.

Bieke Depoorter (b. 1986) graduated in 2009 at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts (KASK) in Ghent and immediately won the HP Magnum Expression Award for her graduation project *Ou Menya*. In 2011 she became a member of the Tendance Floue photographic collective.

On April 20, 2012 World Press Photo in Amsterdam announced that Bieke Depoorter was of twelve selected international photographers who get the chance and honour to attend the Joop Swart Masterclass. On April 24, 2012 Bieke Depoorter's recently published photobook *Ou Menya* (Lannoo) was also awarded a prize as Best Styled Book 2012. Naturally, the book will be available at the exhibition.

PRACTICAL INFO

Bieke Depoorter's photographic exhibition, *I am about to call it a Day*, will be open to the public from Friday 25th May to Sunday 23rd September 2012 in St. Peter's Abbey.

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OPENING TIMES

closed on Monday
open from Tuesday to Sunday from 10 am to 6 pm
by way of exception open on the first Monday of the Gentse Feesten

ADMISSION

individual visitors: 5 euro
discount rate: 3,75 euro
free admission for under-18s

CONTACT

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