

FIFTY ONE

A group of elderly women are gathered around a pool table in a dimly lit room. The room has large windows with a view of the night sky. A hanging lamp illuminates the scene. The women are dressed in casual, comfortable clothing. One woman is leaning over the table, possibly demonstrating a shot. The overall atmosphere is social and relaxed.

HOMELAND Harry Gruyaert

07/09/2024 - 26/10/2024

Opening:

Saturday, September 7th, 2-6 pm

Gallery FIFTY ONE
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Homeland

Harry Gruyaert



Opening: Saturday, September 7th 2024, from 2 to 6 pm

Show: Saturday, September 7th - Saturday, October 26th 2024

Gallery FIFTY ONE is pleased to announce the opening of the exhibition 'Homeland' by Harry Gruyaert, which will be held from September 7 to October 26, 2024, at Gallery FIFTY ONE. This exhibition coincides with the release of the eponymous book by EXB.

Following *Roots* (2012) and *Made in Belgium* (2020), *Homeland* (2024) is Gruyaert's third book dedicated to Belgium. For this third book, Gruyaert delved into his archives to discover new images, also adding those he created in recent years.

The exhibition features around thirty images, most of which are previously unseen. In comparison to other great names in colour photography such as Saul Leiter, William Eggleston, or Stephen Shore and their exceptional use of colour and light, Harry Gruyaert's photographic approach is marked by a preference for the street, a place of unexpected encounters and surprises.

"What matters most to me as a photographer is what I call the 'Sense of place': the images must express a place and a moment in time." This sensitivity gives a particular depth to his works, creating an intimate connection between the image and the viewer.

"Nowhere, neither in Morocco nor in India nor in Belgium, have I sought to enter people's homes to photograph their living spaces and intimacy. My preferred place is the street. As soon as you enter someone's home, you establish a social relationship, you no longer have that freedom of a pickpocket that I love so much," he says.

As a "pickpocket," Harry Gruyaert shows us often tender, funny, and surreal photographs highlighting the "ordinary mysteries" of Belgium, often overlooked but deeply revealing of Belgian culture. By exploring his roots, Harry Gruyaert captures the visual diversity of the country. He uses colour to bring Belgian landscapes and everyday scenes to life, thus reflecting his affection for his homeland.

Upon returning to his country after a prolonged absence, Harry Gruyaert sought to avoid succumbing to melancholy. He thus abandoned black-and-white photography for the realism of vivid colours, as they allowed him to convey the strength of the two main phenomena he observed: attachment to traditions and rapid Americanisation. This dual perception of the country explains the variety of subjects that characterise his work.

The "*Homeland*" exhibition is a unique opportunity to discover and rediscover the work of Harry Gruyaert and explore Belgium through his eyes. The release of the eponymous book by EXB will allow visitors to extend this experience beyond the gallery walls.