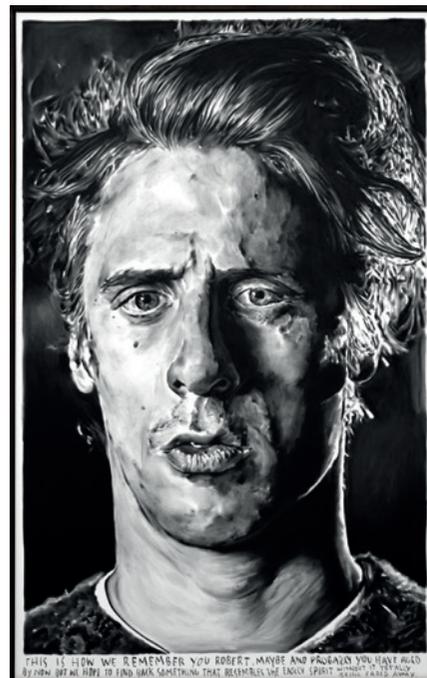




Our steps were measured and calm (2017).



This is how we remember you Robert (2017).

A WORLD IN BLACK AND WHITE

Artist's film-like work contains a universe in a single frame

TEXT: SALLY TIPPER | PHOTOS: COURTESY TIM VAN LAERE GALLERY, ANTWERP

Antwerp has a proud tradition of art. Peter Paul Rubens called it home in the 17th century, and the city continues to exert a pull on artists today. One of them is Rinus Van de Velde, whose large-scale charcoal drawings can be seen at the Tim Van Laere Gallery this autumn.

Van de Velde describes his drawings as one-shot movies, single pictures that tell a whole episode of a fictional life. "Everything plays out in sets that I make in my atelier, creating a fictional environment in which real things happen," he explains. "This tension between fiction and reality is an important theme in my work."

The artist, who studied sculpture before turning to drawing, draws on his training to create sets in his workshop using a variety of media. He lights and photographs them, and the resulting images are the starting point for his works. "I consider making

these environments to be sculpture," he says. "In my exhibition I show these objects, people and artefacts as component parts of a whole installation. Along with the drawings, they make up my universe."

Antwerp has always had a great attraction for artists, Van de Velde points out, thanks to its role in art history throughout the centuries. Important places in the city are graced with statues of artists instead of notable politicians, and numerous contemporary artists live and work there.

He will be exhibiting in September and October at the city's Tim Van Laere Gallery, a place with which he has a very close relationship. "Tim Van Laere is an artist's gallerist, and the gallery is a special place in Antwerp. It's where artists come together and explore what's going on in contemporary art," he says. "The artist always comes first, and he's created a community whose diversity and energy are always tangible."

People should not be shy visiting a gallery, he believes, regardless of what they know about contemporary art. "You can go in any time and look at an exhibition in peace, stay as long as you want and ask for explanations or not, as you like," he says. "At the Tim Van Laere Gallery, there's a real openness and generosity towards the public. If you're curious, just go in – there's a whole world to discover."

Web: www.timvanlaeregallery.com

Rinus Van de Velde (left) and Tim Van Laere.

