

Jari Silomäki

Framing the World

Opening: 24 November 2017, 6 – 9pm

Exhibition: 3 November – 10 February 2018

Gallery Taik Persons is highly pleased to present Jari Silomäki's solo exhibition *Framing the World*.

For this project, Silomäki collected more than two-hundred personal stories written on online platforms from all over the world, from people completely unknown to him. He translated a selection of these stories into a series of photographs that are now on display in the exhibition. Together, they form a collective narrative, in which the personas behind the aliases begin to unfold. Taking these online records as a starting point, he travels to the places described in the scenarios and events and thus begins to recreate his own interpretation of their personas. "I'm showing classical surfaces of identification," he says. The core of the work is to create the right atmosphere, the distilled, central tension that defines the life and persona behind each alias. Through the various sceneries and cultures of his protagonists, Silomäki leads the viewer to a certain intimacy: towards our very own core, where we all fear, desire, feel, and dream alike.

In 2006, Silomäki bought a collection of papers, found in the estate of an elderly lady: letters and notes, everything she had written over the course of her lifetime was packed away in waste bags. This finding inspired him to a photograph of a woman he never had met. "Reading through the bag's contents, I suddenly felt like I knew her very well", he describes his experience. The portrait was the beginning of *Framing the World. An Essay on the Organisation of Experience*.

Since the 1990s, Silomäki has dedicated himself to long-term projects such as *Rehearsals for Adulthood* (1997–2001) and *My Weather Diaries* (2011–2051). Rooted in classical documentary photography, his body of work can be perceived as a consistent visual play in which, as the dramaturge, he extensively writes photographic scenes, directs the actors and sets the stage. Throughout the years, Silomäki has been seeking a new form of documentary photography where he will narrate and describe a person: as an individual, a part of society and where they stand in the timeline of history.

From Lahti, Finland, to Capetown, South Africa, he understands the environment as an essential part of an individual story. After gaining the first virtual insights, Silomäki further investigates and travels to the subjects' hometowns: he photographs, gathers material and examines the neighbourhood, the social structures and homes. "Who decides whose stories matter?" Silomäki asked himself ten years ago when he began to browse through threads in online forums, searching for anonymous protagonists around the globe. The textual references have been his clues and guidelines, cumulating into a profile and a photographic portrait of a decisive moment, a turning point of an unknown online author's life.