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Lessons in looking

The answer to the question of what can be seen in an Albert van Westing print is not as simple as it may sound. What we see is partly determined by how we choose to look. Or, more accurately: by the position from which we look.

Standing too close to a Van Westing will reveal only an abstract grid of circular dots, in various sizes and colours. Stand too far away and the image becomes cold, lacking in involvement for the viewer.

Somewhere in between is where the magic happens.

Somewhere between these two visual extremes we see a man getting undressed, and the image is distanced enough to be divested of the all-too-personal, yet close enough to draw the viewer in. It is precisely at this point that the image is both intimate and universal, both exceptional and everyday.

The subjects chosen by Van Westing could not be more ordinary: a man lying down or getting undressed, blooming daffodils, a door being opened - to name but a few examples. He seeks out a moment of calm within transition, revealing an image that is 'in motion'. This is also the reason why many titles of his pieces are verbs.

He begins with his photograph which he modifies using both analogue and digital imaging techniques, just enough until the image has attained a measure of distance and abstraction whilst also intensifying the viewing experience. The shutter time of 1/60-th of a second is unimportant, what matters is the time needed afterwards to connect with the image. Time to look and time to see.

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www.albertvanwesting.nl