



Ruben van Schalm

Selected works
2013–2026

Holding the Light, 2026

BIOGRAPHY

Ruben van Schalm (b. 1988, Rotterdam) is a Dutch visual artist working between New York, Amsterdam and Tel Aviv. His photographs and films record light, water and weather, and the slow time of the natural world.

Van Schalm developed his practice in a long dialogue with Erwin Olaf, who mentored him until Olaf's death in 2023 and wrote the foreword to his first monograph, *Paradise* (Komma, 2020). The book is held in the research libraries of the Rijksmuseum, the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, the Getty Research Institute, the Library of Congress, the Tel Aviv Museum of Art and Museum Voorlinden.

His later series moved further into landscape: *Don't Stop Dreaming* (2025) places the body in the desert of Joshua Tree and Palm Springs; *Change* (2024) looks at the constant movement of bodies and environments. His ongoing series *The Natural World* turns to colour, atmosphere and light.

ARTIST STATEMENT

In nature, time slows — and attention returns.

I photograph the moments when a landscape stops being a view and becomes a condition: the minute before dawn when sea and sky share one colour, the edge where light turns sand to gold, the cloud that settles on a mountain and hides its shape.

My work began with the human body in landscape. Over time the figure has stepped back. In *The Natural World* the landscape itself carries the presence the body once held.

THIS SELECTION

From the body in nature to nature itself.

A selection of works, 2013–2026, in the order they were made. Across thirteen years the figure becomes smaller in the landscape, until only light, water and atmosphere remain.

SERIES

Paradise

2013–2020

Paradise is where the work first found its own language. Made in the Philippines, French Polynesia and Israel, it explores the human body in nature. Published by Komma (2020) with a foreword by Erwin Olaf.



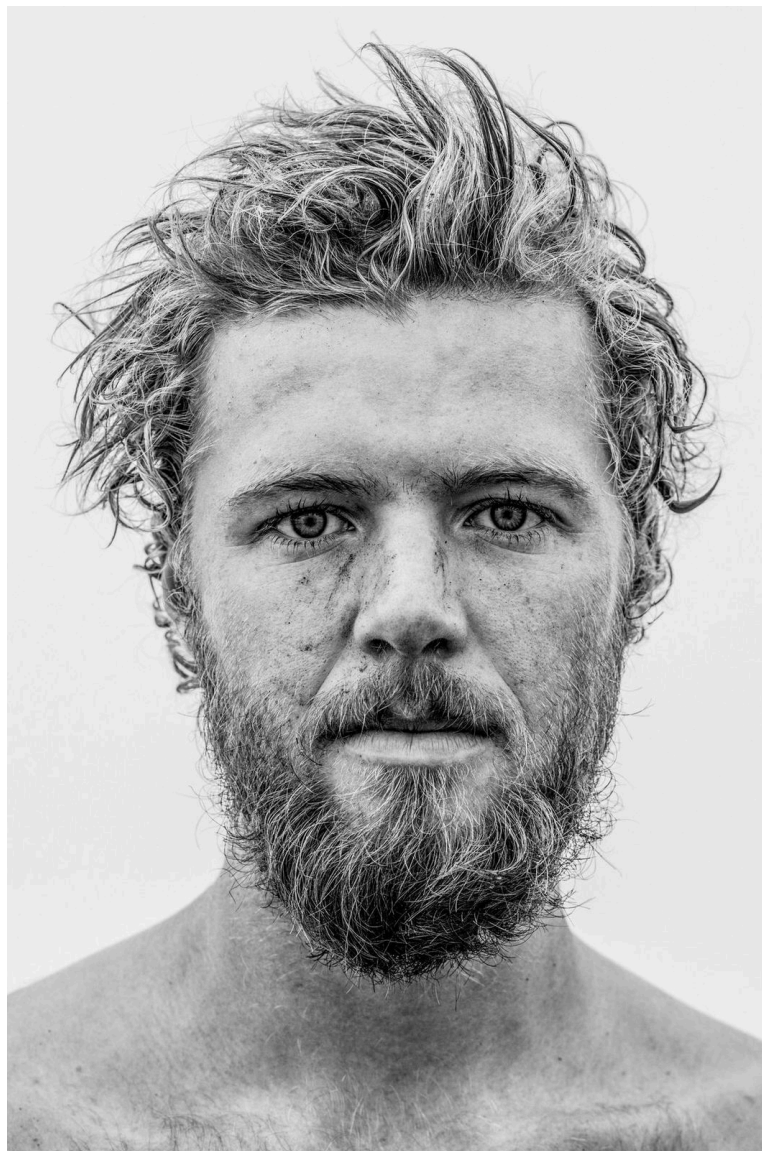
True Self, 2014
Archival pigment print



The Wind, 2016
Archival pigment print



Hiding, 2017
Archival pigment print



Face Forward, 2019
Archival pigment print



Calm Waters, 2019
Archival pigment print

MONOGRAPH

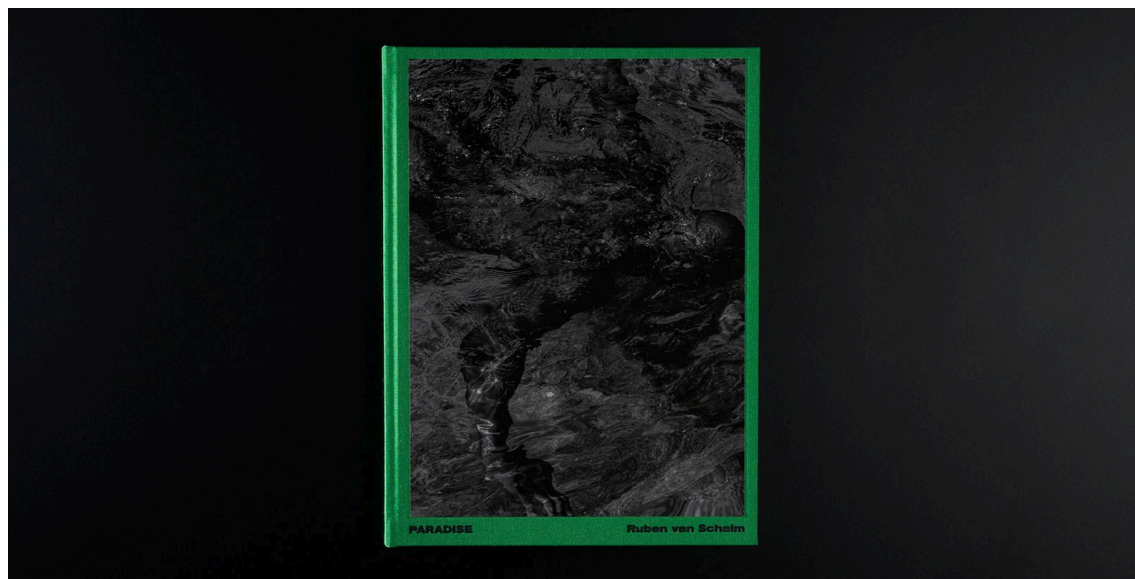
Paradise

Komma, Amsterdam, 2020

“The artist has not only succeeded in capturing the beauty of man, but also the fragility of our surroundings as soon as we are outside of our urban bubble.”

Erwin Olaf, from the foreword

Linen hardcover, 112 pages, 24.2 × 32.6 cm. Design Amir Avraham. Held in the research libraries of the Rijksmuseum, the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, the Getty Research Institute, the Library of Congress, the Tel Aviv Museum of Art and Museum Voorlinden, among others.



SERIES

Change

2024

Change is about life's constant state of movement: of bodies, of environments, and of what remains when something has passed.



The young male nude seated beside the sea #1, 2024
Archival pigment print



Water lilies blossom, 2024
Archival pigment print



Flying Fox, 2024
Archival pigment print

SERIES

Don't Stop Dreaming

2025

Made in the desert of Joshua Tree and Palm Springs, *Don't Stop Dreaming* lets the body become a resonance of the landscape around it. Light, heat and open space shape the figure as much as the figure shapes the image.



Into the Vast, 2025

Archival pigment print



Desert Reverie, 2025
Archival pigment print



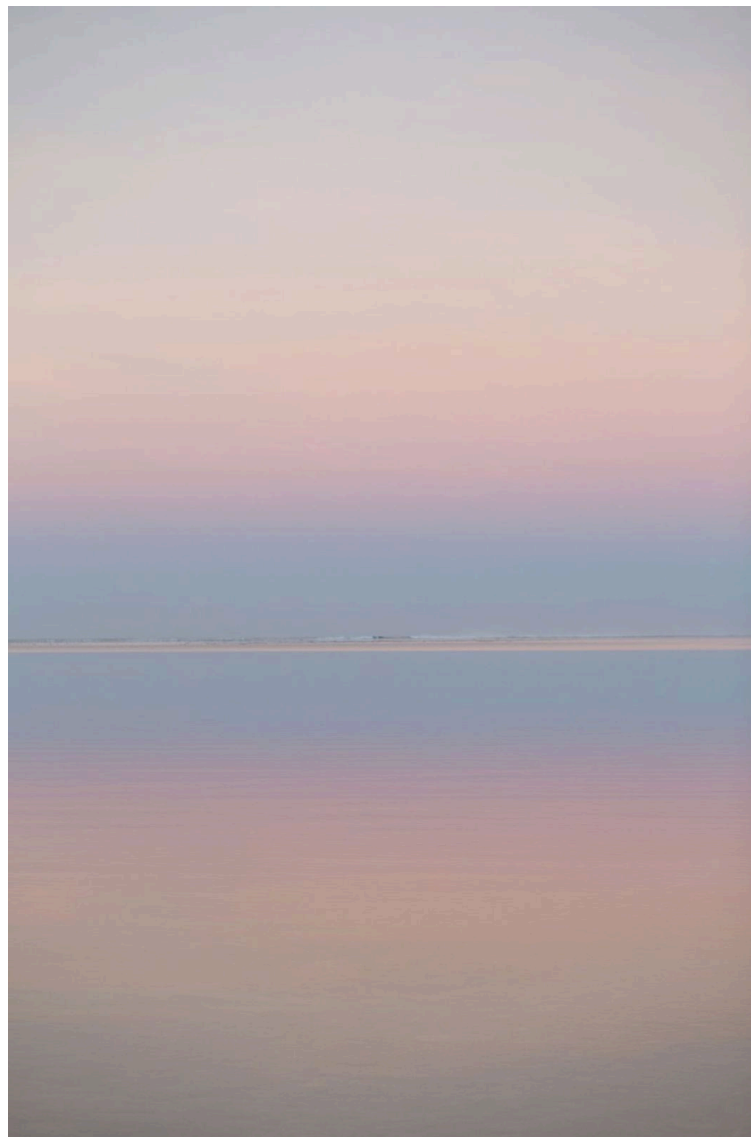
Parallel Dreams, 2025
Archival pigment print

SERIES

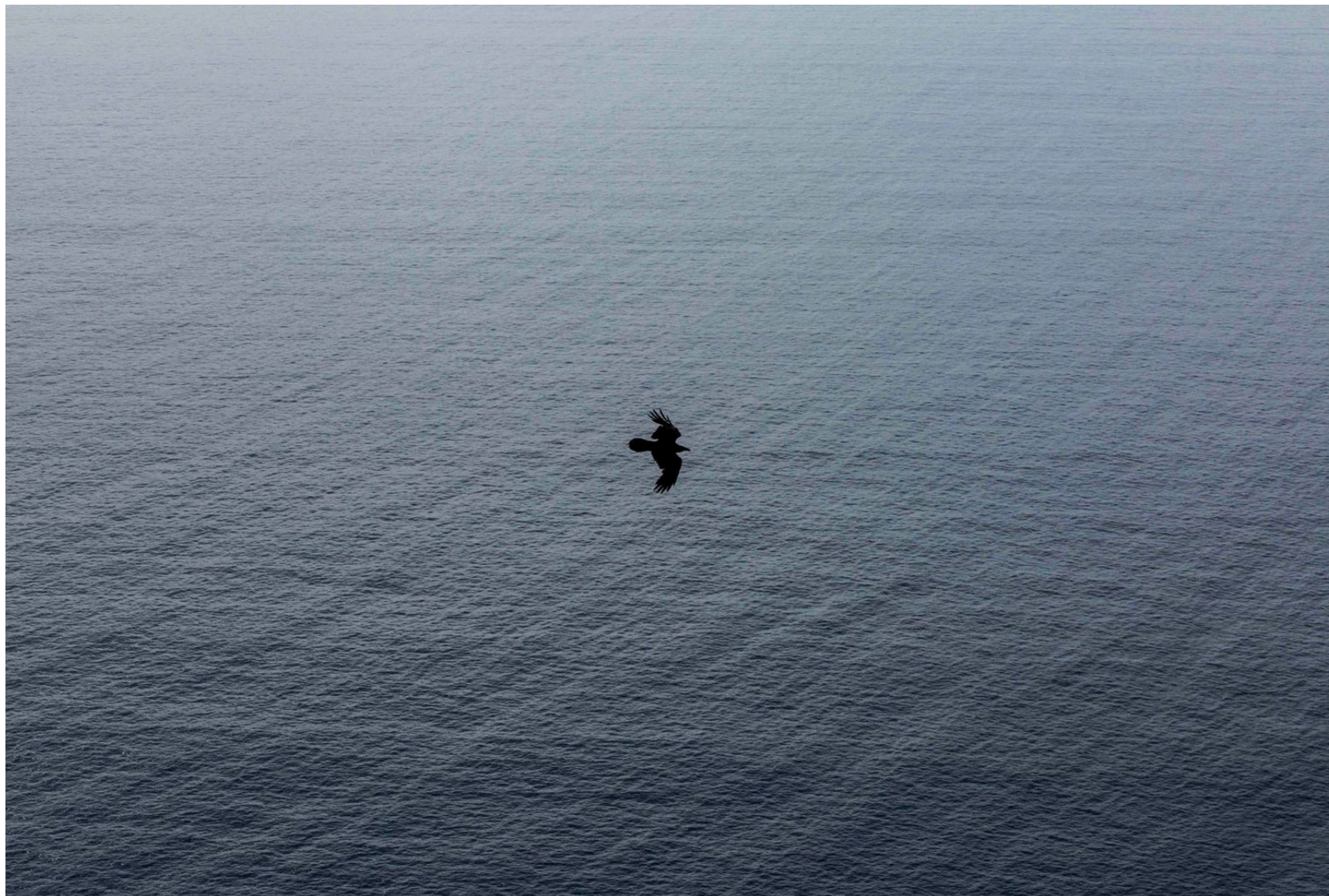
The Natural World

Ongoing

The Natural World is an ongoing series about colour, atmosphere and light. Sea, sky, sand, fern and cloud are photographed at the moments when their edges soften, at dawn, at dusk, in mist and in moving water. Horizons run through almost every image and give the series its calm, level rhythm.



Dawn, 2019
Archival pigment print



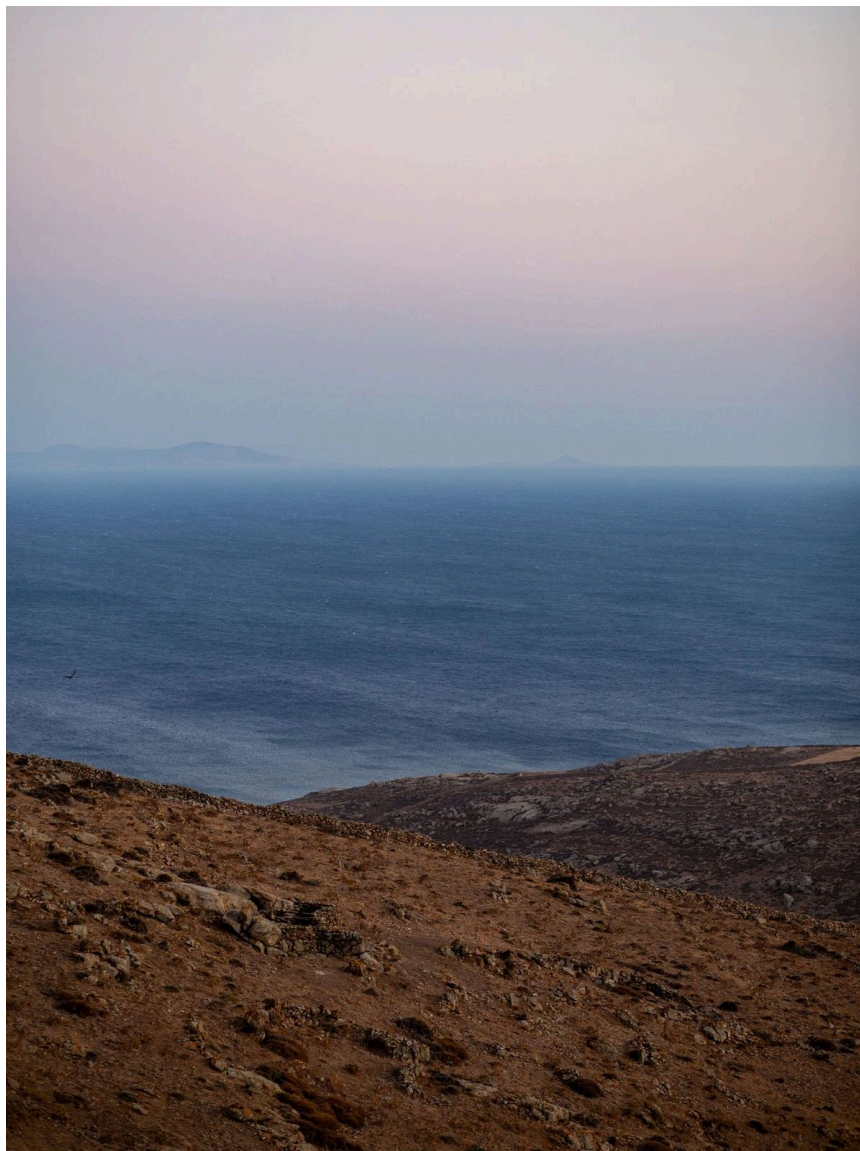
Freedom, 2019
Archival pigment print



Placid, 2019
Archival pigment print



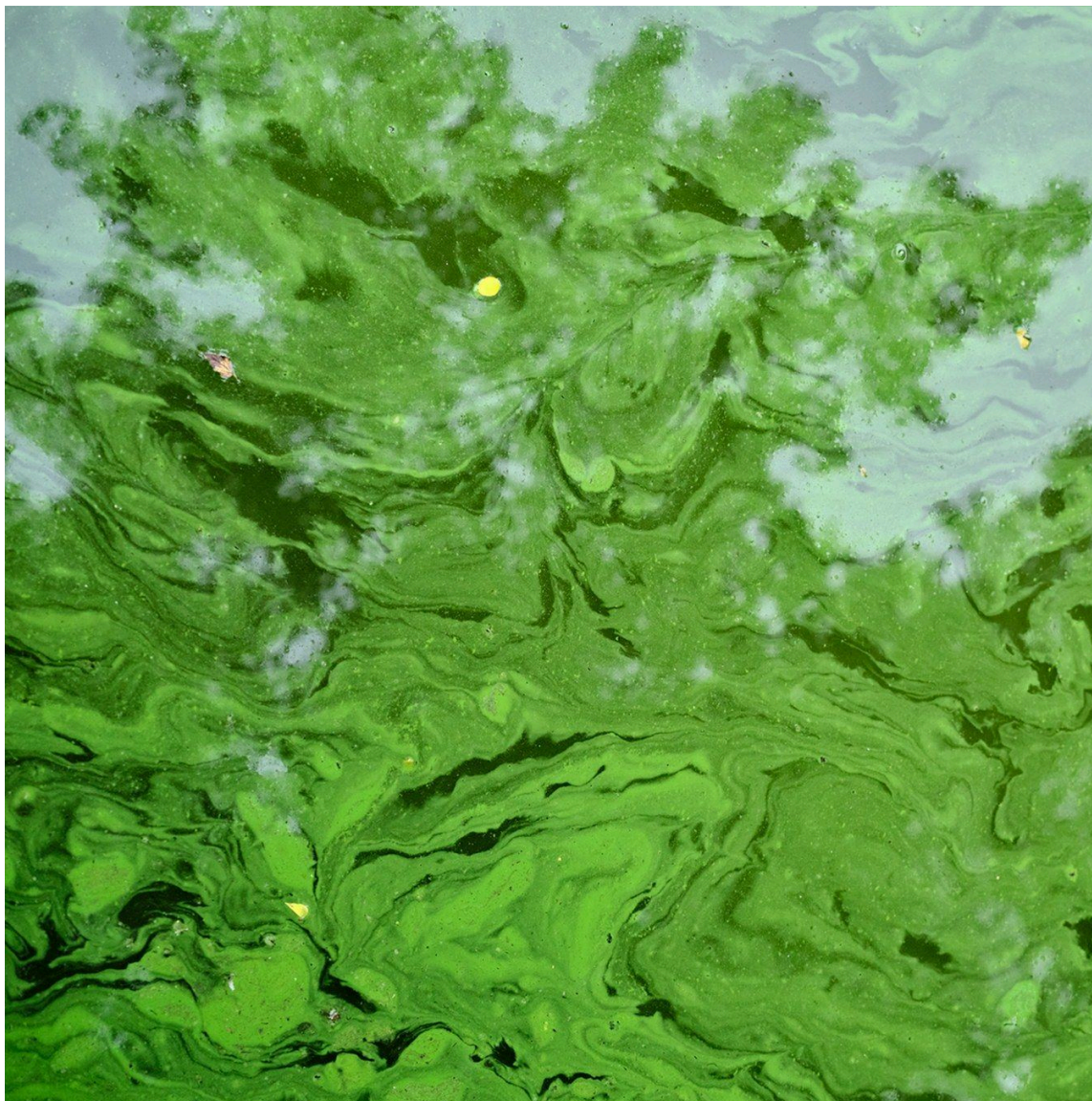
Gloom, 2019
Archival pigment print



Peace and Solace, 2024
Archival pigment print



Ocean Gaze, 2024
Archival pigment print



Bloom, 2026
Archival pigment print



Holding the Light, 2026
Archival pigment print

MONOGRAPH

2020 *Paradise*, Komma, Amsterdam. Foreword by Erwin Olaf

SELECTED EXHIBITIONS

2026 *Love*, Art Icon, Paris

2023 *Haute Photographie*, Rotterdam

2023 *KunstRAI*, Amsterdam

2023 *Collectibles Two*, Berlin

2022–23 *The Future Is Here*, Amsterdam

2022 *Haute Photographie*, Amsterdam

2022 *Haute Photographie*, Rotterdam

RECOGNITION

2025 Finalist, Lucie Foundation, Hidden Beauty Open Call

SELECTED PRESS

2025 Raed Bawayah, *Eyes on the World*, Kamira Institute, Paris

2025 Gwénaëlle Fliti, *Fisheye Magazine* #70

2024 Barbara Hein and Hannah Schuh, ART Magazine & Museum Brandhorst, Munich

2024 *Artdoc Magazine*

2022 Cornelia Ganitta, *Artbenelux*

2020 Terrence Phearse, *Musée Magazine*

2020 Roos Schouw, *Focus Magazine*

PARADISE IS HELD IN THE RESEARCH LIBRARIES OF

Rijksmuseum — Research Library · Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam — Research Library · The Getty Research Institute · Library of Congress · Tel Aviv Museum of Art — Art Library · Museum Voorlinden — Art Library · RKD Netherlands Institute for Art History · Royal Library of the Netherlands · Haas Arts Library, Yale University · Columbia University Libraries · Princeton University Library · Cornell University Library · The Art Institute of Chicago — Ryerson & Burnham Libraries · Leiden University — Special Collections

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