

WOUTER VAN WESSEL

Orchestrating the sentimental core of my narratives

Originally from the Netherlands but shaped by my upbringing in Sweden, I, Wouter van Wessel, use documentary photography to construct visual records of rural and isolated communities. Interested in the slow transitional processes within them, I capture the tension between generations undergoing change and the traces felt through personal portraits and landscapes. I embrace the subjectivity inherent in the gaze. In my observative approach, I challenge the roles of history and culture in shaping individual as well as collective identities. By orchestrating the sentimental core of my narratives, I give access for the audience to encounter the matter in hand on an emotional ground. The themes prevalent in my work evoke a sense of melancholy, particularly in relation to isolation and rural life. Driven by these personal leitmotifs, I immerse myself amid of those settings and become part of the world I portray to authentically capture the essence of the surroundings. Ultimately this results in a photographic series aiming at giving a holistic view of a region and its people in its time.

WEBSITES

Personal Website

woutervanwessel.com/

Graduation Catalogue Kabk

graduation.kabk.nl/2024/wouter-van-wessel

SOCIAL MEDIA

www.instagram.com/woutervanwessel/

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MEMBER OF ARTISTS' INITIATIVE/COLLECTIVE/INCUBATOR

The Fool Collective

EDUCATION

2020 - Documentary Photography Den Haag,
2024 Koninklijke Academie van Beeldende
Kunsten diploma

EXHIBITIONS

2024 We Who Walked in The Mountains: Solo
Exhibition Wouter van Wessel Nora
Konsthall Nora, Sweden A project made
during the year of 2023/24 about the final
mineworkers in the Bergslagen region of
Sweden.

[Solo](#)

2024 We Who Walked In The Mountains Nora
Konsthall Nora, Sweden A chapter of the
project 'The Sky Is Hazy Shade Of Winter'
woutervanwessel.com/the-sky-is-a-hazy-shade-of-winter

[Solo](#)

2023 As Above So Below The Greyspace in the
Middle The Hague , Netherlands A group
exhibition from the Fool Collective, showing

- my project 'Gone When I Went'
Group
- 2023 As Above So Below The Grey Space In the Middle The Hague , Netherlands Collective exhibition showing own project: Gone When I Went (2022-23)
Group
- 2022 Fuelbox: Short Movie 'Switch' With Magali Speicher Fuelbox Luxemburg Stadtbredimus, Luxembourg Showing of short film 'Switch' made in collaboration with Magali Speicher.
Duo
- 2022 Fuelbox 2022 Fuelbox Luxemburg stadtbredimus, Luxembourg Project: Shortfilm Switch by Wouter van Wessel & Magali Speicher (2021)
Duo

PROJECTS

- 2024 The Sky Is A Hazy Shade Of Winter Bergslagen, Sweden, Sweden
woutervanwessel.com/the-sky-is-a-hazy-shade-of-winter In the heart of Sweden lies Bergslagen, a region steeped in history, particularly known for its once-thriving iron mining industry which closed their doors in the 1980s, changing the fabric of the community, culturally and economically. Today, there's a delicate balance between generations in the area. The elders, with their memories forged deep in the mines, share space with a younger crowd whose ties to the region aren't as rooted. Some among them find solace in wild nature and rural life, embracing the identity of Bergslagen's past, while others seek their fortunes in the bustling cities, chasing opportunities far away from their home. Yet, there are those caught in the middle, torn between preserving the traditions of their families and pursuing their aspirations elsewhere. In my work, 'The Sky is a Hazy Shade of Winter', I seek to capture the essence of this transformation weaving together personal narratives and the ever-changing landscapes of Bergslagen. Winters descend with a stark contrast,

PUBLICATIONS

- 2024 The Sky Is A Hazy Shade Of Winter Book Wouter van Wessel The Hague, Netherlands Photobook of project 'The Sky Is A Hazy Shade Of Winter'
- 2024 The Sky Is A Hazy Shade Of Winter Book Wouter van Wessel The Hague, Netherlands Photobook of the project The Sky Is A Hazy Shade Of Winter.

bringing long, dark days and a chilling cold that test the resilience of its inhabitants. It's a cyclical process, where the summers give way to the winters, shaping the rhythms of life in Bergslagen. I paint a picture of my home, a place where the past and present dance in a delicate balance.

2024 The Sky Is A Hazy Shade Of Winter
Bergslagen, Sweden
woutervanwessel.com/the-sky-is-a-hazy-shade-of-winter In the heart of Sweden lies Bergslagen, a region steeped in history, particularly known for its once-thriving iron mining industry. But as the last mines closed their doors in the 1980s, a ripple effect began, changing the fabric of the community, culturally and economically. Today, there is a delicate balance between generations in the area. The elders, with their memories forged deep in the mines, share space with a younger crowd whose ties to the region are not as rooted. Some among them find solace in wild nature and rural life, embracing the identity of Bergslagen's past, while others seek their fortunes in bustling cities, chasing opportunities far from their home. Yet, there are those caught in the middle, torn between preserving the traditions of their families and pursuing their aspirations elsewhere. However, this region's transformation is not solely a result of human decisions; it is also deeply intertwined with the harshness of its natural environment. Summers here are paradise-like, with lush forests painting a picture-perfect landscape. But as the seasons shift, so does the temperament of Bergslagen. Winters descend with a stark contrast, bringing long, dark days and a cold that tests the resilience of its inhabitants. It's a cyclical process, where the blissful summers give way to the unforgiving winters, shaping the rhythms of life in Bergslagen. In his work, 'The Sky is a Hazy Shade of Winter', Wouter van Wessel seeks to capture the essence of this transformation, weaving together personal narratives and the ever-changing landscapes of Bergslagen. He paints a picture of his home, a place

where the past and present dance in a delicate balance.

2023 Iron Boys Nora, Sweden, Sweden woutervanwessel.com/jern-boys 200 years ago 90% of the Swedish population lived on countryside. Today 85% of the population lives in the city, due to tough living conditions, lack of jobs and education possibilities many decide to move to the cities in search of an easier life. The sound of home is the wind rushing through infinite tree tops, splintering ice echoing through the cold, announcing the return of the inexhaustible darkness. The isolation seems suffocating but these boys have been born into this silence, there's a familiarity to it. Isolated groups of kids grow up in the forests all around Sweden. Having nothing but space, harsh winters, unending summers and each-other, a bond is forged. Like brothers they traverse the wild as if it were theirs to keep, depending on each other and their machines to keep them going. In the Swedish village Järnboås a group of boys now almost men deal with having to leave and go their separate ways. Leaving the brotherhood forged since young and the freedoms the forest provided.



Flooding River , 2024
Ink print on barytta paper, Lind float frame , 1m x 1m



Young boy during easter celebrations, 2024
Ink print on barytta paper, Lind float frame , 1m x1m



Linne and Lenart Eldsfors , 2024
Ink print on barytta paper, Lind float frame , 1m x 1m



The slow degradation of an Apple tree, 2024
Ink print on barytta paper, Oak float frame , 35cm x 35 cm



Merja Renz riding her Horse, 2024
Image shot on negative film with Rolleiflex



Easter Celebration, Nora, 2024
Image shot on negative film with Rolleiflex



Studsmatta, 2022
Digital Photograph taken with Leica m10

Karl-Axel Plays Ping-Pong, 2023
Image shot on negative color film with Rolleiflex



Pulling home , 2020
Digital Photograph taken with Fujifilm S5pro



Transportation through the forests , 2020
Digital Photograph taken with Fuji xh-1