

PETER BLEUMORTIER

Mikhel Proulx



Tristan, 2011



Fergus, 2011

Photographer and video artist Peter Bleumortier was born in New Brunswick. An extension of journalistic practices, his photography bends and stretches documentary languages to include visual meditations and cues of his own subjectivity, behind-the-lens. Reportage of Maritime townships collapses into abstract pattern and form. A landscape may linger on microscopic textures of a stone's consistency, or, as is the case in his most recent project, seemingly objective images of bodies may reveal themselves as subjective reflections.

In his own home, Bleumortier prompts undressed models against the moulded whitewalls on his hardwood floor. His subjects (objects) stand facing the camera. A nearly vacant backdrop compels the viewer's gaze to focus on the foregrounded nude man. He is a Grecian *Kouros*, standing rigid as emblematic not of any masculine ideal, but of himself. Through the series a typology emerges from these topographies of depicted bodies. Theirs is a reproduction of the flesh serving as a deadpan, objective document. Their respective stances, though, produce cues of their subjectivity. These figures, stripped of almost any reference to the world outside of their bodies, begin to nod signals of *who* they are: a hand, an awkward posture, an oblong glance - reveals multitudes despite their stark nakedness. Here, both the comfort and anxiety of the model may reveal to us something of their selfhood. Exhibitionist arrogance and self-conscious posing alike may tell us something of their character. With the slipping-off of their clothing is a corollary shedding of constructed identity: left are intensified layers of selfhood. This sentience may live in the photograph itself - exerting a backwards force through the depicted subjects- apparently reading us as we do the picture. Their gaze may equally register Bleumortier himself; mirrored is the photographer's body through the camera lens by the naked bodies of his sitters. They are objectified nude men staring back to the (presumably) clothed one behind the lens.

