

Risky Twisting

Risk Hazekamp

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Dutch artist Risk Hazekamp doesn't just like to bend gender boundaries, but also those between reality and fiction.

Art versus gender theory, and reality versus artifice, converge in Risk Hazekamp's staged portraits of personal identity. »I'm always looking for ways to create one big melting-pot of fake and real elements«, says Hazekamp. »This blurring of gender is just part of my own identity; it is not a choice, it has always been part of my feeling / thinking / living / doing.«

Striking a James Dean pose from the set of *Giant*, or dragging on a cigarette in front of a Texan-looking scene wearing androgenous clothes, Hazekamp distorts and toys with perceptions. Ever since attending art school in Rotterdam, she has used the nickname »Risk« to straddle the boundaries between male and female.

As well as shaking conventionality, Hazekamp requires viewers to inspect her images more closely. Is it really the rugged plains of the USA, or could it be Almeria in Spain where the spaghetti westerns were filmed, or the forests of Portugal that were ravaged by fire? Is it the natural, yellow light of a scorching summer's day, or the bright, artificial light of a studio? »I wanted everything in the picture to be just a reference to the original«, Hazekamp explains. »I wanted to twist and play with these recognisable images.«

After experimenting with the cowboy stereotype, Hazekamp's most recent series has focused on women with beards. Her work continues to be underlined by a quest to portray ambiguity rather than decrypt it.



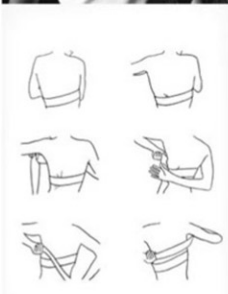
Risk Hazekamp, *Handshakers*, 2002. Black and white photograph, 60 x 45 cm.

Risky Twisting, Risk Hazekamp, Text by Anna Sansom

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Risk Hazekamp, *Dress Code 1, 2, 3*, 2004. Three ink drawings and three black and white photographs, 63 x 30 cm each.



Risk Hazekamp, *Mirai*, 2002. Colour photograph, 100 x 150 cm.

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Risk Hazekamp, *He Probably Didn't Want Her Anyway...* (detail), 2002. Colour photograph, 4 black and white photographs, 40 x 30 cm each.



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