

Brilliant Punitive Raids

by Juul Hondius

AKINCI is proud to present *Brilliant Punitive Raids* by Dutch artist Juul Hondius (1970). *Brilliant Punitive Raids* is a film composed of photographic images, that tell the story of a brutal yet hitherto little-known event in the complex history of the Israeli – Palestinian conflict.

The work *Brilliant Punitive Raids* springs from the artist's fascination with the as equally adored as detested PLO leader Khalil-al-Wazir, better known as Abu Jihad, and his assassination in 1988 in Tunis. The attack on his life instantly made Abu Jihad into a martyr and hero, however, as Hondius discovered, images of Abu Jihad are relatively hard to find. Nor was there much public information on the assassination, until last year, when the Israeli government revealed more details after 25 years of secrecy. The military ploy to kill the PLO leader reads like a film script: strategically brilliant and spectacular, yet controversial.

The absence of media images of both Abu Jihad and the attack sparked Hondius' imagination and inspired him to create these images himself. In his characteristically filmic and highly stylised imagery – and with a degree of freedom and imagination – the artist reconstructed and staged the event leading up to the assassination, frame by frame. However, *Brilliant Punitive Raids* is not intended as a historically correct reconstruction of events. Rather, the sequence of still photos zooms in on the personal experience of the Israeli soldiers involved, even evoking sympathy, and the unsettling contradiction between their make-believe play of two people in love and the cold-blooded killing of a man.

In his photographic work, Hondius' focusses on the status and impact of media images and the ways in which they enter and determine our collective memory. Hondius deconstructs the plethora of images that reach through media us on a daily basis, critically analysing the different visual strategies and styles of image-making that frame the subject. In earlier works Hondius staged realities, creating an archetypical image, condensing as it were a variety of similar stories, into one image, often with urgent political subject matter. In *Brilliant Punitive Raids* the artist worked the other way round: presenting different sides and different perspectives to one story starting from an absent image.

Selected shows: Museum Schiedam, 'Brilliant Punitive Raids', Schiedam (2014); 'Brilliant Punitive Raids', AKINCI, Amsterdam; Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, 'Works in the collection', Rotterdam (2013); Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, 'Raumproduktion', Düsseldorf; Joan Miro Foundation, 'You Are Not Alone', Barcelona (2011); Museum de Fundatie, 'Louvre in Heino', Collection Reyn van der Lugt, Heino; Lagos Photo International, Eko Victoria Island, Lagos, Nigeria; Fotomuseum Den Haag (2010); Kunsthalle Mannheim, 'Images Recalled', Mannheim (2009); Platform Garanti, 'The Photographers', curator Vasif Kortun, Istanbul; Centraal Museum, 'The Suspended Moment', H+F Collection, Utrecht, Open Eye Gallery, 'Bound', Liverpool; Crac Alsace, 'So close/So far away', H+F Collection, curated by Hilde Teerlinck & Han Nefkens, Altkirch, F (2007); Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, IDFA: Paradocs II, 'The Reality in Scenes'; Maison Européenne de la Photographie, 'L' Ecole du Nord', Paris; Freud Museum, 'Paranoia', London (2006); The Chicago Art Institute, 'In Sight', Chicago; Photo-London, 'New Photography', curator Mario Testino, London (2005); Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, 'Delay', curator Wilma Sütö, Rotterdam; Busan Biennale, 'Chasm', curated by M. Park/T.M. Choi, South-Korea; De Appel, 'Potrc, Hondius/Bekirovic, Castro/Olafsson', Amsterdam (2004); 'Juul Hondius, Huis Marseille, Amsterdam (2003); Musee des Beaux-Arts Nantes, Fonds National d'Art Contemporain, Nantes; Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, 'Life in a Glass House', Amsterdam (2002).