

# Features

## #29

Roe  
Ethridge

# March 2024



**Fondazione Imago Mundi**  
magazine

*Dive into the world of American artist Roe Ethridge at his debut Italian exhibition, “Happy Birthday Louise Parker,” hosted at 10 Corso Como. Curated by Alessandro Rabottini, Ethridge’s distinct blend of art and commercial photography breaks boundaries, sparking dialogue between fashion and personal narratives. Featuring a mix of iconic pieces and unreleased works spanning 15 years, the show offers a glimpse into Ethridge’s diverse subjects—from vibrant still lifes to intimate portraits—all approached with meticulous formal rigor. Experience the captivating interplay of style and concept that characterizes his groundbreaking approach to visual storytelling.*

**10 Corso Como has recently unveiled its completely redesigned gallery space, featuring your exhibition during Milano Fashion Week. How do you feel about having your first solo show in Italy within this iconic setting?**

So many brilliant people involved in the realization of the new space. I’m extremely grateful.

**The title “Happy Birthday Louise Parker” seems to carry multiple layers of meaning. Could you elaborate on this?**

As the final edit of the show was coming together, I began compiling a list of its main motifs. ‘Louise Parker’ and ‘Birthday’ were the first two things I wrote down, and almost instinctively, they turned into “Happy Birthday Louise Parker.” The phrase has a kind of SE Hinton, YA fiction sound that resonated well with the essence of the show.

I like that it seemed to allude to the endurance of things, of time, and the ceremonial significance a birthday holds in marking that passage of time and persistence.

**Well, you are good friends with Louise, and over the years, you’ve had the chance to portray her both within and beyond the fashion industry.**

**What is your idea of friendship?**

Hmmm. That’s too hard! It’s more than one idea. That much I’m sure of.

**How did you collaborate with curator Alessandro Rabottini for this project? Could you share some insights into your process of selecting the diverse images?**

The first thing we did was figure out how to organize the show. I had an idea before our first meeting, and so did Ale. Fortunately, Alessandro's idea was perfect! It came together very quickly at first, and then, after many, many revisions later, we arrived at the final edit. I have been operating in this sequencing of diverse images and juxtapositions that it's really normal for me. It's just the way I play and make sense of the world. I sent Ale at least a dozen different versions of the selections.

**I particularly like how you incorporated elements from your personal biography into the narrative. There are portraits of your children and glimpses into your own life. What do these personal touches reveal about your artistic vision?**

Hmm, my artistic vision... Perhaps something about how my compositional tendencies and formal strategies don't conform strictly to the personal or the commercial. That said, I tend to think of exhibitions, book sequences, and editorial spreads as musical compositions. I like to believe that as an artist, I possess multiple voices, but it's probably more accurate to say I have a singular voice with multiple accents or intonations. I can recall times when we visited family in the mountains, and my mom would adopt a bit of an Appalachian accent. My sister and I would cringe, but I think in some ways that's what I do—modify the sounds of my voice depending on where I am. Hopefully, it's not too cringey LOL.

**If you were to select just one photograph from your exhibition that holds a special place in your heart, which one would it be, and what makes it so significant to you?**

My immediate response to this question is the pictures of my kids. I particularly love the one of Auggie sitting on the table. It was originally a sort of outtake from the "Shelter Island" book, and I had always cherished it. It seemed perfect for 10 Corso Como, with the still life elements mirroring the displays in the store.

Installation view: Roe Ethridge, *Happy Birthday Louise Parker*  
2024

Courtesy of 10 Corso Como, Milan

Photo: Alessandro Saletta - DSL Studio



Roe Ethridge

*Tokyo 2*

2009

C-print

157,5 x 106,7 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York





Roe Ethridge

*Durango in the Canal, Belle Glade, FL*

2011

C-print

131,8 x 195,3 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York



Installation view: Roe Ethridge, *Happy Birthday Louise Parker*  
2024  
Courtesy of 10 Corso Como, Milan  
Photo: Alessandro Saletta - DSL Studio





Roe Ethridge

*Backyard, Rockaway Beach, April 12*

2013

C-print

125,7 x 83,8 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York





Roe Ethridge

*Pic 'n Clip 3*

2017

Dye sublimation print on dibond

182,9 x 121,9 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York



Installation view: Roe Ethridge, *Happy Birthday Louise Parker*  
2024  
Courtesy of 10 Corso Como, Milan  
Photo: Alessandro Saletta - DSL Studio





Roe Ethridge

*Auggie with Raccoon Tail*

2015

Dye sublimation print on aluminum

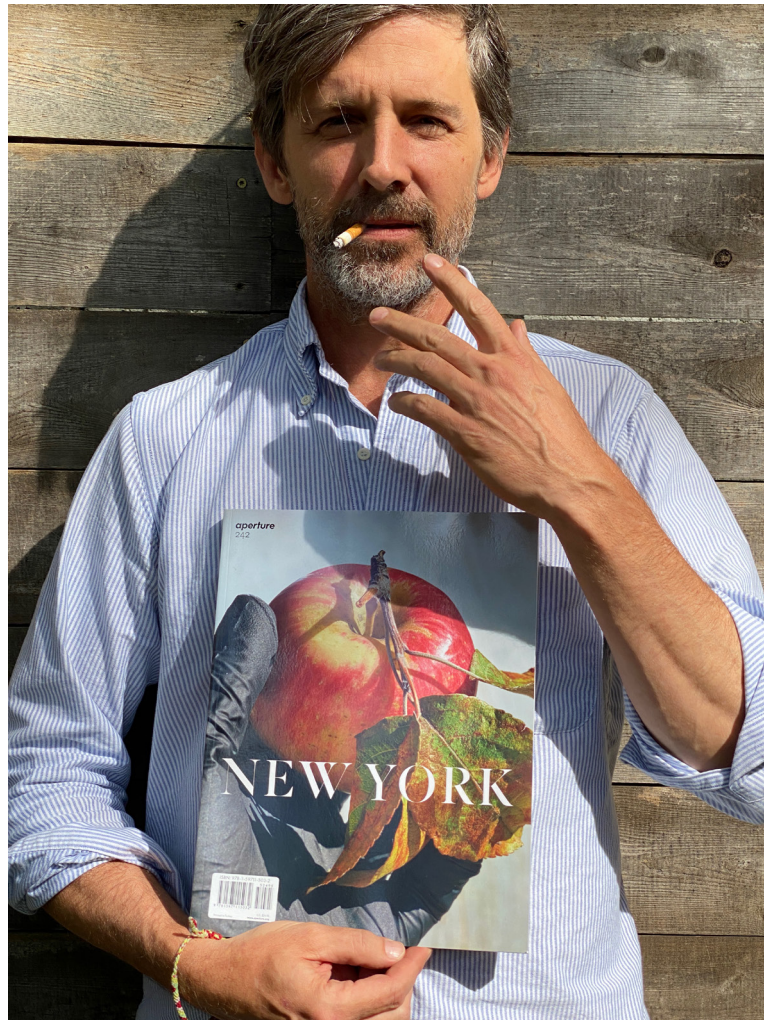
127 x 101,6 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York



## Roe Ethridge

In his photographs, Roe Ethridge uses the real to suggest—or disrupt—the ideal. Through commercial images of fashion models, products, and advertisements, as well as intimate moments from his own daily life, he reveals the fine line between the generic and the personal, merging art-historical genres such as the still life or portrait with the increasingly pervasive image culture of the present. Solo exhibitions include Andrew Kreps Gallery, Gagosian, FOAM, Gladstone Gallery, and Museum Leuven. His work is held in the permanent collections of the Art Institute of Chicago, Tate Modern, and the Whitney Museum of American Art, among others.



Roe Ethridge



Features is an interview series that explores inspiring artistic and research stories in contemporary culture. Invited artists and practitioners from all over the world — acting within a multitude of initiatives, spaces and contexts — share their creative processes with curator Nicolas Vamvouklis.

*The opinions expressed in the interviews are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the position of the Foundation.*

Nicolas Vamvouklis

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