

Wilma Hurskainen - Statement

Growth is a project in which I am reconstructing and re-photographing pictures that my dad took of me and my three little sisters when we were children. I am trying to make the new photograph look as similar as possible to the old one: the place and the composition are the same, and so are our positions and facial expressions. The series consists of about 30 pictures.

I have always been very attracted by the photograph's ability to cross time and create these kinds of comparisons. It is said that time has been accepted as a common means of measuring life because people are not able nor willing to see the change in themselves. In the pictures it seems as if we were trying to go back to our childhood by accepting the same position towards each other and the photographer's/spectator's gaze but we unavoidably fail. We have to fail – there is no return in time.

In the parallels time takes a strange form – it feels as if there was a dialogue between the past and the present moment, like there is in our minds as concerns our own memories. A memory is never static, permanent, but changes as we change. By repeating a distant moment something weird is revealed about us as objects of the photograph in the first pictures: the way we play our artificial roles for the photograph. We might not be more than 5 years old, but we already know exactly how to be in/for a photograph.

In 2008 the series Growth was published as a book by the Finnish publishing house Musta Taide.

In my new series No name I go further with the themes of childhood and memory. This time childhood and adulthood, like layers, are present in the same photograph. I re-create my memories (also false and invented ones) and continue the visual representation of these memories by loosely attaching texts to the pictures. By doing this I try to find out and question the means a text and a photograph use to mediate a story/memory. A text seems a lot more straightforward in its narration; and yet it is the photograph that has an indexical relation to the past. The reader/spectator takes a different position towards the text than the photograph. I hope that looking at the series could resemble the actual, complex process of remembering and the constant re-writing of a memory. At the same time, the texts comment on the photographic representations and the possibilities of posing for a photograph.

The series No name was first shown as a solo exhibition in the autumn of 2008 in Helsinki.