

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Anja Niemi: She Could Have Been A Cowboy

Exhibition: March 1st – April 14th, 2018

Opening Reception: March 1st, 2018, 6 – 8 PM

*Suppose I were to tell you
about this cowboy
who's not really a cowboy,
not in the regular sense of the term,
not in the sense that she drives cattle,
or rides horses,
or wears cowboy hats,
not yet anyway.*

*This cowboy is imaginary
but she exists,
like a sculpture trapped
inside a block of marble
waiting for her line of flight,
waiting for the sculptor
to start chiseling away at the stone.*
by Lena Niemi



Steven Kasher Gallery is proud to present the first US solo exhibition of Norwegian photographer Anja Niemi. In her latest series, *She Could Have Been A Cowboy*, Niemi continues her investigations of the self. This time she turns the lens to a life lived under the constraints of conformity. Every day her fictional character finds herself trapped in the same pink dress, but what she really wants is to be a cowboy, dressed in fringe and leather, riding horses in the Wild West. Through this series of photographs with multiple layers and possible interpretations, Niemi delivers her most political work to date. Niemi says, "The story is not really about being a cowboy. It's about wanting to be another." The exhibition is accompanied by a new monograph of the same name, published by Jane & Jeremy.

In order to visualize the imaginary world of her character Niemi had to experience it for herself. Alone in a rental car, dressed as a cowboy, Niemi visited and photographed all the places on her character's annotated maps. She hiked up and down the mountains of America's national parks and rode a horse on the same field John Wayne filmed one of his famous horse battles. Always trying to be what her character would have wanted, unafraid and unaffected by others. Niemi works alone, photographing, staging and acting out the characters in all of her images.

Anja Niemi (b. 1976, Oslo, Norway) studied at the London College of Printing and Parsons School of Design in Paris and New York and has exhibited in galleries worldwide. Three previous monographs of her work have been published, *Photographing in Costume* (Little Black Gallery, 2015), *Short Stories* (Jane & Jeremy, 2016), *The Woman Who Never Existed* (Jane & Jeremy, 2017). The poem by Lena Niemi is an

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excerpt from a longer text in the new monograph accompanying the exhibition titled *She Could Have Been A Cowboy* (Jane & Jeremy, 2018). Her work has been published in *Firecrackers: Female Photographers Now* (Thames & Hudson, 2017), and her image *The Garden Hose* was selected for the volume *1001 Photographs You Must See Before You Die* (Cassell, 2017).

Anja Niemi: She Could Have Been A Cowboy will be on view March 1st – April 14th, 2018 at Steven Kasher Gallery, located at 515 W. 26th St., New York, NY 10001. Gallery hours are Tuesday through Saturday, 10 AM to 6 PM. For more information about the exhibition and all other general inquiries, please contact Cassandra Johnson, 212 966 3978, cassandra@stevenkasher.com.