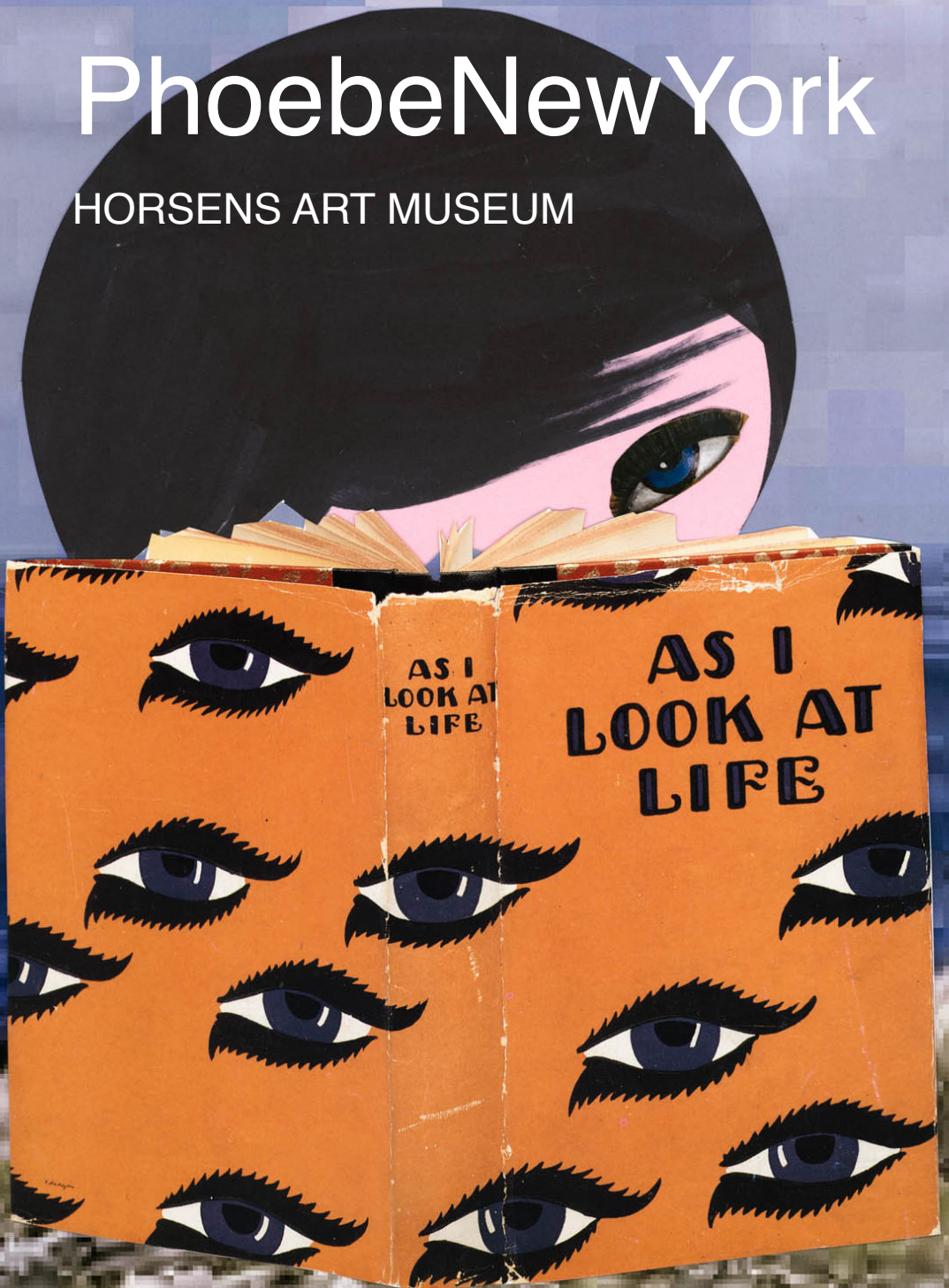


PhoebeNewYork

HORSENS ART MUSEUM



MY PAPER WORLD

'Being a rebel is walking further into the fear and not looking back'

- Libby Schoettle

After curator Julie Horne Møllers three-month-long residency stay in New York, we at Horsens Art Museum decided to invite Elizabeth Schoettle, who is the artist behind PhoebeNewYork, to do a solo exhibition at the museum. A presentation of Schoettle's work with street art and her overall journey over the last 19 years of working with art; a journey that has led her from being an introvert and seeking artistic existence to the birth of Phoebe, her extroverted alter ego, who actively uses her voice to speak up in the urban space and point out some of the injustices in the world.

The artworks for the exhibition at Horsens Art Museum range from Schoettle's early photographs to drawings, collages on paper, vintage book covers and street art pieces.

The artworks were created in the period 2001-2021, and the street art pieces were all replicated from the original collages, and printed in varying sizes and then finally put up in the city using a paste-up technique. Horsens Art Museum's intention with the exhibition is to share the story of Schoettle's artistic journey from the phase just before she 'found' Phoebe to present-day PhoebeNewYork.

All of Schoettle's artworks are made on paper, which makes them extremely fragile; a fragility that has a huge impact on the part of her practice that is street art based since the lifespan of these works in the public space is considerably more limited than that of artworks created with paint.

The artworks in the cityscape are experienced by all kinds of people and often in places where we do not necessarily expect to find Phoebe. We may meet her together with the phrase 'Stay single' after a stupid Tinder date, and immediately the words fit our state of mind. Or we encounter her on the way to an important business meeting where she shouts 'Cool' or 'Stay positive', immediately invoking a pertinent attitude.



PHOTOGRAPHS

In the period 2001-2003, after 9/11 in New York, she staged and photographed a number of 'bodies', all with different heads, in a search of the person who would later manifest as Phoebe / PhoebeNewYork. The photographs are taken both within the narrow and claustrophobic hallways of her apartment building as well as the stairwell overlooking the city, and in the larger setting of the building's rooftop or the nearby park. The common denominator of these photographs is that the subject's heads are made from various objects such as balloons, a TV, a vacuum cleaner, or a pair of boxing gloves – and not from Phoebe's distinctive face, as we have since come to know it. In a broader perspective, Schoettle is at this point already working along the same lines and adopting the same process that she uses in the creation of her collages, where she stages the body and tells stories through staging.



BOOK COVERS AND COLLAGES

At the exhibition it is possible to experience a large number of collages created on old book covers. The covers selected for the exhibition come in two sizes; in the format of the original book and in a much smaller format the size of a regular Danish stamp. The selection gives a representative picture of the idiom that Schoettle worked with during the period 2003-2004. The chosen covers give you a clear sense of the great work and intensive search for 'something' that Schoettle has carried out with this body of work. The book covers also prove Schoettle's penchant for working with versatile sizes and her ability to produce a large number of artworks over a short period of time. This prolificacy is a characteristic feature of her overall production of an extensive body of work, all of it created within the last 19-20 years.

In the exhibition at Horsens Art Museum it is possible to experience a large number of collages created during the period 2004-2021. Since 2004, Schoettle has worked on the several thousand collages. The collages are created on paper from all over the world; current and older fashion magazines such as Vogue, old book covers and small pieces of fabric and paper which most people would regard as garbage and waste. For Schoettle, these types of paper have great value and significant artistic potential. All the collages also have another thing in common, namely the fact that Phoebe is present in all of them – in one way or another. We see her from the front, back and side. We follow her on the streets, at home, when she is happy or sad, full of confidence and when she is insecure. She speaks loudly, and she whispers softly. She points out the injustices of life, and she reminds us to be grateful and to face life with our heads held high.

The collages have been chosen to reflect the wide span of Schoettle's artistic idiom. Where some of the artworks show us a brief moment in life, such as *Ready* and *Impact* from 2019, as a symbol of what is happening here and now in life, others point to a deeper state of mind, such as *What do you care what other people think?* or *Addict*, which might refer to her own self-perception and addiction to mobile phones and social media.

The collages present us with the different states of mind that Phoebe has experienced over the years, and in their purest form they reveal the artistic language that the Phoebe character embodies for the artist behind her. Phoebe is brave and not afraid to use her voice, not even when discussing topics that can be difficult to deal with. This can be experienced in collages such as *This is it* and *Love* from that point to heavier topics such as unhappiness, love and death.



PHOEBE OCCUPIES THE URBAN SPACE

"No artist can predict how their art will be received, and it certainly never crossed my mind that my art would be seen by people walking past it on their city walks, finding it on poles, doors and walls. My start in street art was very unexpected. I did not know anything about street art or graffiti until I began this journey, a journey that has happily changed my entire direction as a woman and as an artist. And yet you cannot question what feels right; from the first time I put Phoebe on the street, I never looked back."

This is Schoettle's reply to Jeune Magazine in October 2019 to the question of how she ended up Phoebe a street art phenomenon, explaining how no one would have predicted that Phoebe's presence in the streets would reach such a broad audience of followers and fans. Although many people visit the world's art museums and galleries, the institution is primarily aimed at those who already have an interest in art, whereas the encounter with Phoebe on a lamppost or a wall in the East Village doesn't necessarily have to be a meeting or a moment between an art lover and Phoebe. It can just as well create a moment and through that a dialogue between Phoebe and someone who has not previously had an interest in art.

When you meet Phoebe, you do not just meet a street art character who pops up all over Manhattan, you also meet a BIG and authentic art project that moves and changes you. Schoettle's artistic starting point is her own lived life with her pure and undiluted feelings, which allow us to feel her pain and her struggles but also to be a part of her success through her victories and happy spirit. The meeting with Phoebe in the city's streets usually takes no more than a moment – a moment which will subsequently take on separate meaning for each individual viewer. For the exhibition *MY PAPER WORLD*, we have installed a large New York-inspired room, that showcases the city's ingrained atmosphere in the dark green Post No Bills walls and the city's vibrant nightlife, with cars passing by in a hurry, illuminated by the streetlights. PhoebeNewYork's street art is displayed side by side with works by 15 other street art artists who have been invited to exhibit with PhoebeNewYork. The artists, @Ethanarmenart, @Thomasallen_nyc, @Zimad_art, @d7606, @acool55, @chrisrwk, @sacsix, @kafkaisfamous, @megzany, @wrdsmtH, @voxxromana, @frank_ape, @consumerart, @c_3 and @goodluckdrycleaners are some of the artists that PhoebeNewYork has met along her journey and is happy to introduce to Horsens. This room is the result of an collaboration among Horsens Art Museum, Canobie Films: the film company documenting the artist, and Elizabeth Schoettle. **A very special thanks to @sacsix and @kafkaisfamous for adding their invaluable perspective to the Post No Bills walls and pasting them alongside PhoebeNewYork. Thanks to LISA Project NYC.**

Wall photography by Nicholas Blair

Film by Kevin Van Witt

Music by Marisa Ferdenzi

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