Nosbaum Reding
Luxembourg | Bruxelles

02.13.2025 - 04.12.2025

Artist
Liliane Vertessen



Exhibition View
Nosbaum Reding, Luxembourg, 2025

Gallery Nosbaum Reding
2 + 4, rue Wiltheim L-2733 Luxembourg / T (+352) 28 11 25 1 / contact@nosbaumreding.com

02.13.2025 - 04.12.2025

Opening: Thursday 13th February 2025 at 18:00
in the presence of the artist

Liliane Vertessen (born in 1952, Leopoldsburg, Belgium) is a pioneering Belgian contemporary artist renowned for her provocative self-portraits, which gained significant attention in the late 1970s.

In the intimacy of her studio, Vertessen stages self-portraits as private performances, embodying fictional characters: the vamp, Lolita, diva, dominatrix, femme fatale, the innocent girl, etc., convoking a stereotyped eroticism. These analogue photographs serve as the starting point for multimedia installations, where they are enhanced with colors and combined with various objects—mirrors, neon lights, feathers, plush toys—drawing on the aesthetics of peep shows.

Transcending mere self-representation, her photos talk about the concept of identity and how difficult it is to be grasped. Imbued with ambiguity, they reveal and conceal in equal measure. Despite exposing herself through numerous self-portraits, Vertessen's true identity remains multifaceted and elusive, hidden behind the almost-constant presence of sunglasses. Her work aligns within the feminist movement of sexual positivism and challenges the hypocrisy of prudish Catholic society prevalent in the 1980s. It also takes place at a moment when the art world was still predominantly masculine, if not overtly misogynist. The persistent recurrence of sexual positivism as a theme among female contemporary artists suggests that it is far from universally accepted and remains relevant today.

Liliane Vertessen was immersed in alternative culture and performed as a singer in the free jazz band The Tweeters, before leaving in 1975 to fully pursue visual arts. She graduated from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp and studied directing at RITCS, a dual background that continues to shape her artistic approach. From free jazz to metal sculptor, Vertessen has had a fascinating career: she certainly did not want to be pushed into a role pattern. As a photographer, she serves as her own director: determining the subject –herself–, and how she shows and how far she goes. That is her way of conquering her freedom, both as an artist and as woman.

Vertessen's work was shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions, among others at MUHKA in Antwerp for From Broodthaers to Braeckman [...] (2016), at Musée de la Photographie in Charleroi for A Love Supreme (2018), at Studio Propaganda in Antwerp for David Bowie and Me (1999), at PMMK in Ostend for Seven Crimes One Case (1992), at NAK in Aachen (1991), at Museum Fridericianum in Kassel for Gedachtengangen (1989), at SMAK in Ghent for Liliane Vertessen and Wim Delvoye (1989), at PCBK Hasselt in a double exhibition with Cindy Sherman (1987), at De Brakke Grond in Amsterdam (1986), and at Museum D'Hondt-Dhaenens in Deurle (1983). Her work is part of renowned public collections such as the MUHKA in Antwerp, the S.M.A.K. in Ghent, the Musée de la Photographie in Charleroi and the PMMK in Ostend. She also received several laureate titles to her name and won in 1996 the Culture Prize of the Flemish Community. Her monumental sculpture Heaven and Earth has been a permanent feature near Brussels North Station since 1997.

Exhibition views: © Photos : Audrey Jonchères

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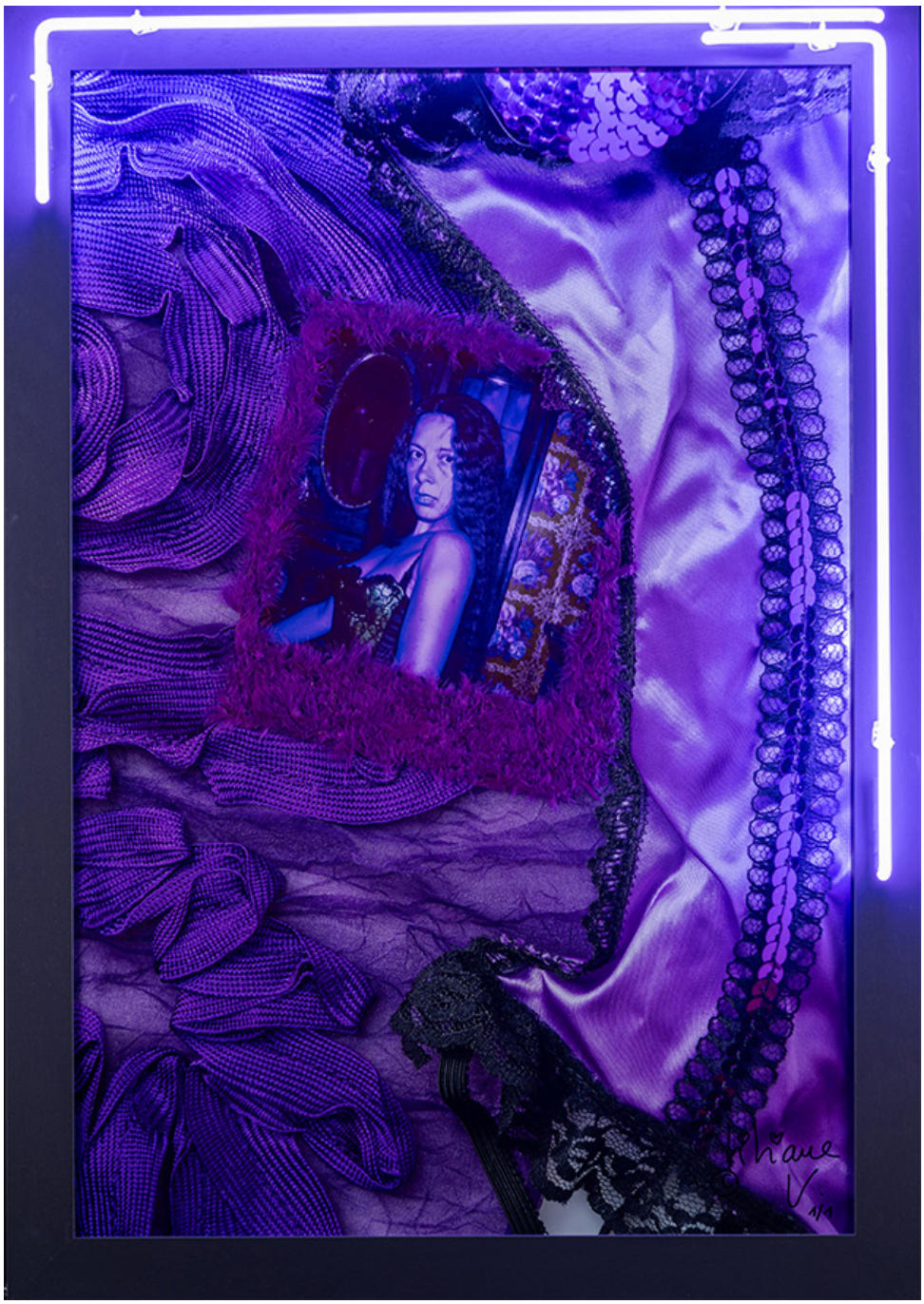
Stars in my eyes, 1981
black and white photo, red feathers, neon, wooden frame, perspex cap
33.07 x 25.2 x 4.72 in (84 x 64 x 12 cm)



SMOKING 5, 1980-2010
Photograph, wooden box, plexiglas, art deco vintage dress
51.97 x 36.22 x 3.94 in (132 x 92 x 10 cm)



PURPLE HAZE, 1982
2 pieces
Edited photograph with feathers and glitters, glass, wooden frame
51.97 x 36.22 x 3.94 in (132 x 92,5 x 10 cm)



PURPLE LIPS, 1982
Photographie éditée avec plumes et paillettes, plexiglas, néon, transformateur, cadre en bois
51.97 x 36.22 x 3.94 in (132 x 92 x 10 cm)



Look, 1980
black and white photo, neon, wooden frame, perspex cap
40.16 x 39.37 x 4.72 in (102 x 100 x 12 cm)



Luck, 1980
black and white photo, neon, wooden frame, perspex cap
40.16 x 39.37 x 4.72 in (102 x 100 x 12 cm)



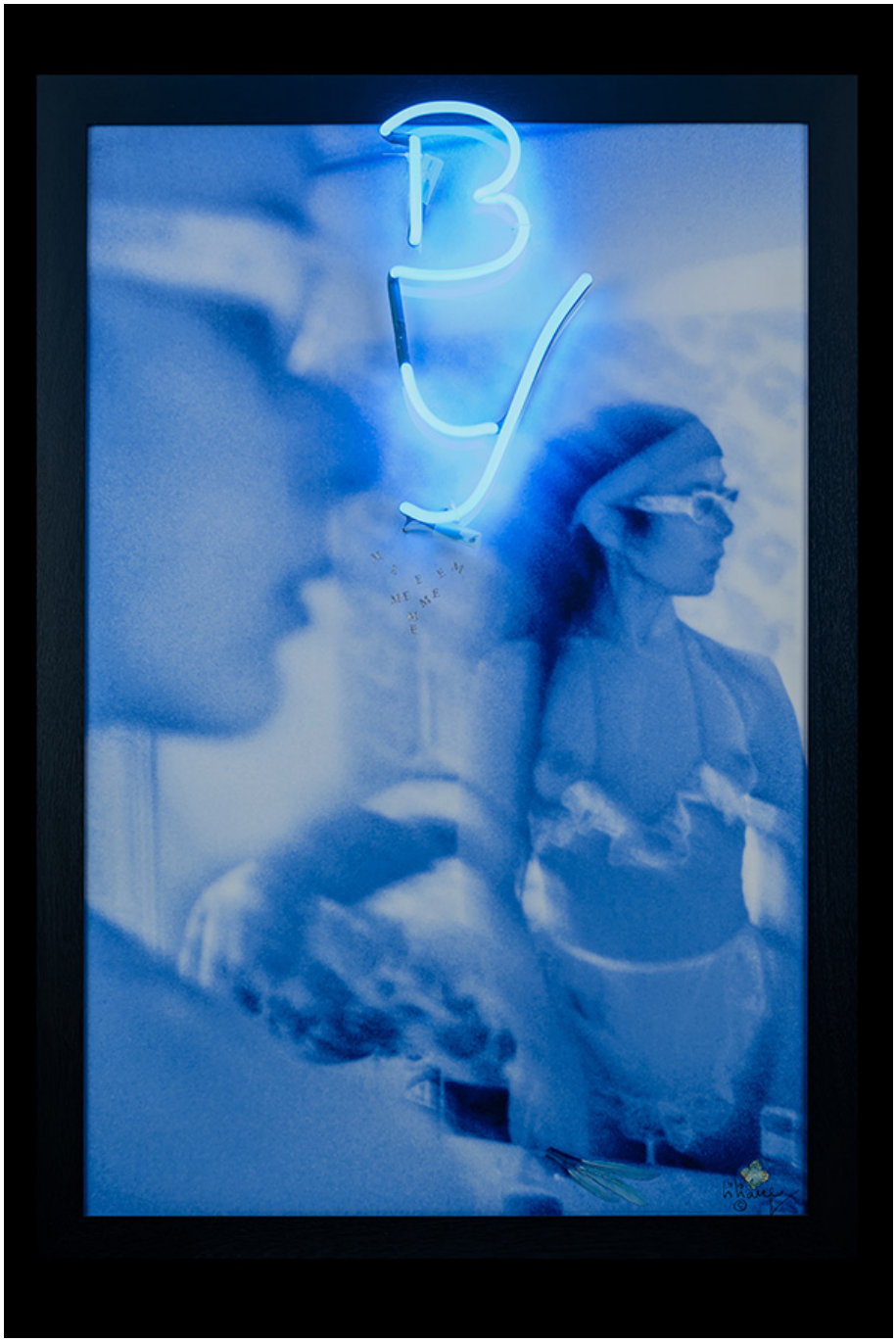
NY NY in LV, 2008
Photograph, antique frame
35.43 x 37.4 x 1.18 in (90 x 95 x 3 cm)



BLUE DRESS, 2012
Photograph, wooden box, plexiglas, art deco vintage dress
Image : 15.75 x 31.5 x 6.69 in (40 x 80 x 17 cm)



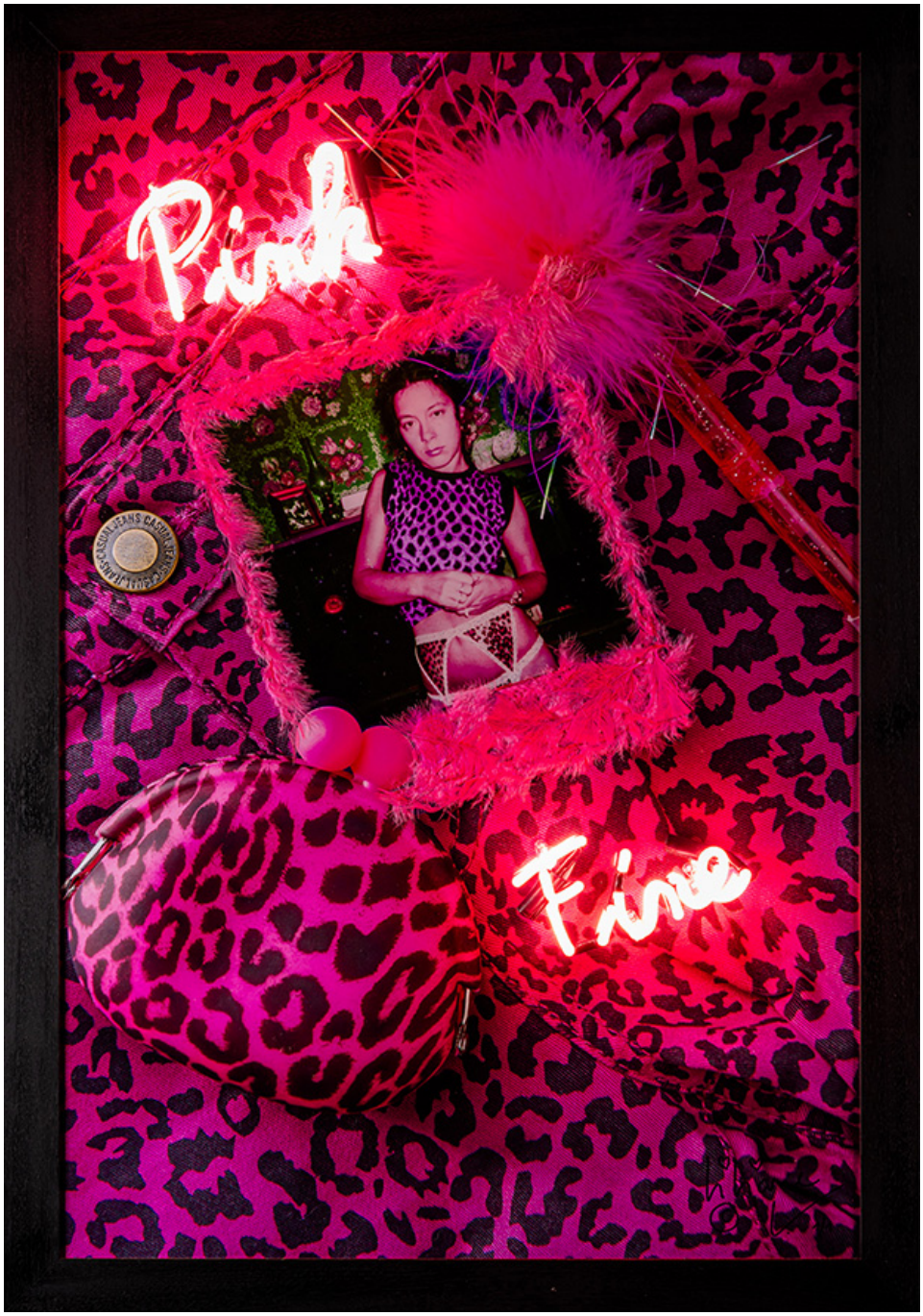
ART DECO, 2012
Photograph, wooden box, plexiglas, art deco vintage dress
62.99 x 38.19 x 6.69 in (160 x 97 x 17 cm)



BY(E), 1994
Blue photograph, plexiglas, neon, transformer, framed
60.63 x 41.73 x 3.94 in (154 x 106 x 10 cm)



PURPLE NIGHT, 1982
Edited photograph with feathers and glitters, plexiglas, neon, transformer, wooden frame
51.97 x 36.22 x 3.94 in (132 x 92 x 10 cm)



PINK FINE, 1982
Edited photograph with feathers and glitters, plexiglas, neon, transformer, wooden frame
51.97 x 36.22 x 3.94 in (132 x 92 x 10 cm)



PINK FEEL, 1982
Edited photograph with feathers and glitters, plexiglas, neon, transformer, wooden frame
51.97 x 36.22 x 3.94 in (132 x 92 x 10 cm)