

ULLA JOKISALO

Persons  
Projects

Ulla Jokisalo has steadily focused on entering into her own personal dialogue that questions cultural juxtapositions based on gender, feminism, and notions of the uncanny and outlandish to challenge societal norms and associations. Her works are a combination of paper cut-outs, masks, embroidery, pins, needles, and thread. Jokisalo masterfully uses these materials as a means to bind together parts of reality; whether they be from her memories or her dreams, she creates her own surreal universe. Her images are poetic compositions that highlight her ability to interlace various ready-made and other found objects together to form an unconscious bridge between dreams and fantasy. Sometimes playful, other times scary, her works circle around fate, memory, and the notion of time. In her own surrealistic

exploration, Ulla Jokisalo peels away at the different layers of our subconscious and the innumerable possibilities of our imaginations. According to the artist, there is no reality that is free from the make-believe and fantasy, as the real palpable world perceives itself from these.

Ulla Jokisalo was born in 1955 in Kanus, Finland. She lives and works in Helsinki. Her work was presented in various solo and group exhibitions, including shows at The Brooklyn Museum (2024), Helsinki Taidehalli (Helsinki, 2021), Helsinki Art Museum (Helsinki, 2018), Fotografisk Center (Copenhagen, 2018), Gallery Taik Persons, now Persons Projects (Berlin, 2015), or the Finnish Museum of Photography (Helsinki, 2011).



# EXHIBITION VIEWS



*Imaginations of Freedom*, 2019, exhibition view at Helsinki Art Museum





*Imaginations of Freedom*, 2019, exhibition view at Helsinki Art Museum



*Imaginations of Freedom*, 2019, exhibition view at Helsinki Art Museum





*The Log Lady*, 2018, Fotografisk Center, Copenhagen



*The Log Lady*, 2018, Fotografisk Center, Copenhagen

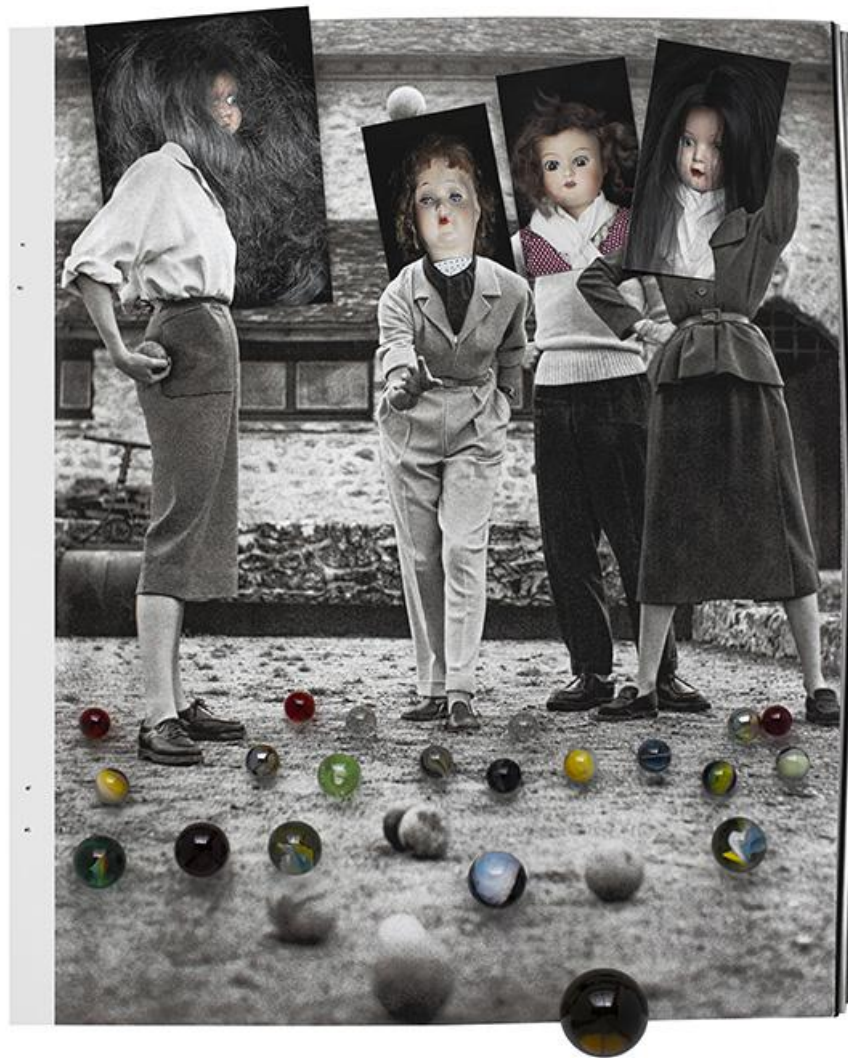




*The Story of my Art*, 2019, Exhibition view, Keravan taidemuseo in Finland



*New Perspectives Through Photography – 25 years of the Helsinki School, 2021, Exhibition view, Taidehalli Helsinki*



*Tableau*, 2021, archival pigment print, 127 x 100 cm





*The Artist's Kalevala*, 2009, exhibition view, Ateneum Art Museum, Helsinki

# COLLECTION OF HEADLESS WOMEN

Through surrealistic exploration, Jokisalo is interested in the different layers of the psychological idea of man, unconsciousness and the innumerable possibilities of our imagination. According to the artist there is no reality free from make-believe and fantasy and the real palpable world is perceived through these. In Jokisalo's surreal world, fairy-tale figures, antique fables, exotic creatures as well as fashion models of the 50s and 60s all face each other. Referring to the historical tradition of using animals and metamorphoses as symbols of identity, in Jokisalo's series *Collection of Headless women* the animals take over. The beholder doesn't meet the eye of the posing model, but instead under the cape of the Little Red Riding Hood glimmers the gaze of the beast. Nature takes hold of the situation and invites

the viewer to see humanity through the other, with distant outlines, with different appearances, with the gaze of the other. Sometimes playful, other times scary, her works circle around fate, memory, and the notion of time. In her own surrealistic exploration Jokisalo peels away at the different layers of our subconscious and the innumerable possibilities of our imaginations. Jokisalo refers back to the historical tradition of using animals and metamorphosis as symbols of identity. Metaphorical objects and signs define Jokisalo's expression, but above all they define time flowing through women, time that is contorted by gaps and repetition. Reverting to her own experiences and family ties between women constitutes the temporal structure of Jokisalo's works. Time stitches memory to the body.



*How to be Both*, 2015, Exhibition view, Gallery Taik Persons (Persons Projects) in Berlin





*Songbird, Laululintu*, 2015, Cutout pigment print and pins, 53 x 40 cm



*Madonna*, 2015, Cutout pigment print and pins, 58,5 x 42,5 cm



*Warrior*, 2015, Cutout pigment print and pins, 60 x 41 cm





*Wasteland*, 2015, Cutout pigment print and pins, 60 x 41 cm



*A Certain Toucan, Muuan Tukaani, 2014, Cutout pigment print and pins, 44,5 x 32,5 cm*



*L'INVITATION AU VOYAGE*, 2018, Cut-out archival pigment print, 59 x 46 cm



# FLÂNEURS FOREVER

Jokisalo's process in the making of these pieces is as equally important as the final result. Her method is slow and deliberate, carefully handcrafted and precise. Jokisalo's approach is similar to that of Louise Bourgeois in how she conceptualizes what it means for a woman to be the subject, as opposed to the object in art.

Jokisalo also uses her childhood photos as another vehicle of choice. She constructs these unique pieces by sewing her own memories into the selected images as a means to create her own world of understanding. These works blend and bend her fantasies in her own sense of storytelling, making for a compelling narrative that is arranged to unfold much like an accordion does. All

together, they form a lifelong commitment to an inner self-reflection that reinterprets gender and focuses on her unparalleled use of materials, to find and express her own voice.

"I am interested in the ways an individual sees the world. Personally, I would define my artistic production as a point of view that allows one to understand life as a fatal chain of reactions in which causes and effects follow one another. My work is imprinted with nostalgia and childhood memories associated with play and the imaginary.

Each photograph is a narrative in itself. Nonetheless, I also attempt to express my perception of reality and to develop my own imaginary language through

my work. That is why my photographs are often embroidered or cut out. I also integrate for example, threads and pins in my works. This approach has the advantage of being both concrete and conceptual, allowing me to reproduce my imaginary ideas in a more eclectic way."



*New Vistas*, 2018, Cut-out archival pigment print, 59 x 46 cm



*A Sense of Control*, 2018, Cut-out archival pigment print, 59 x 46 cm



*The Experience of Absurdity*, 2018, Cut-out archival pigment print, 59 x 46 cm





*Wanderer in These Parts*, 2018, Cut-out archival pigment print, 59 x 46 cm

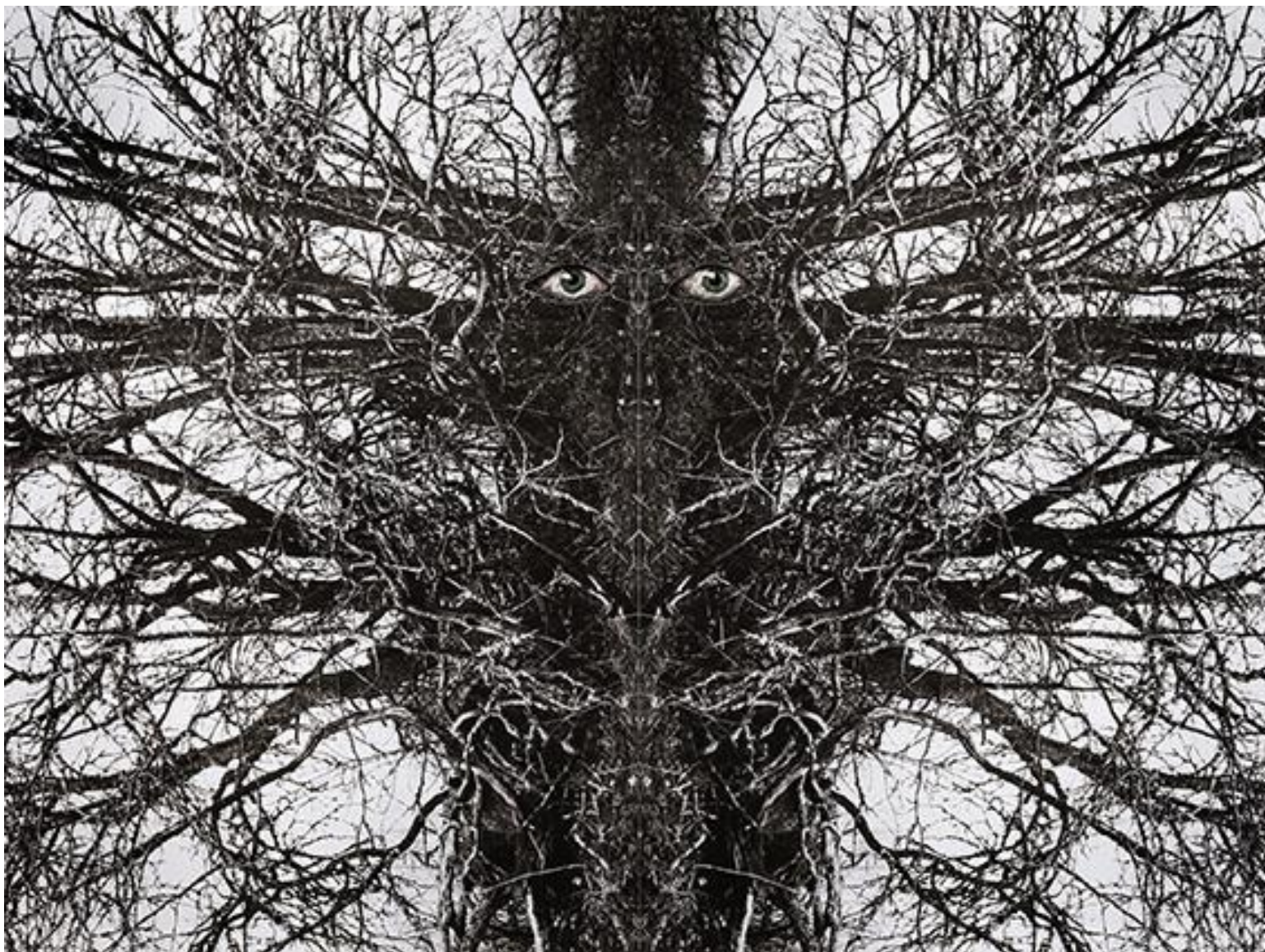


*Nature Calls*, 2018, Cut-out archival pigment print, 59 x 46 cm



*Imaginations of Freedom*, , Exhibition view at Helsinki Art Museum, 2019



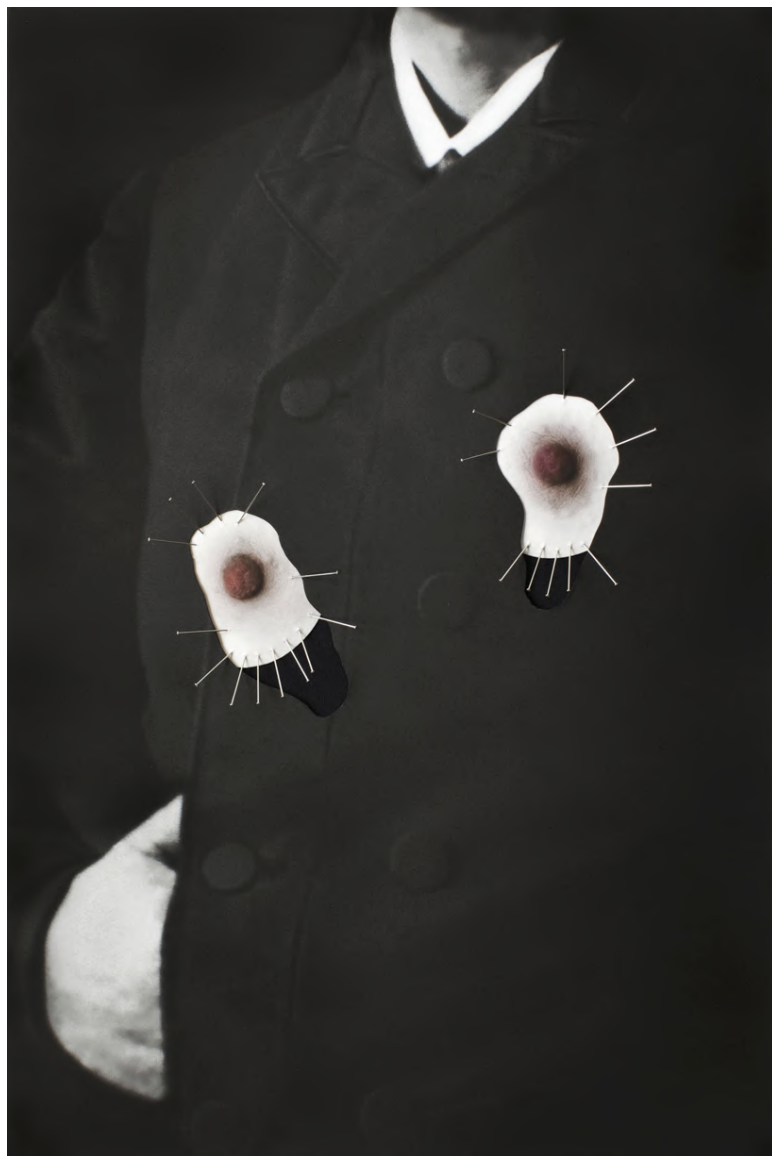


*New Works for the suite Album (1955-1963) #1*, 2018, Cut-out archival pigment print, embroidery on canvas, thread and pins, 83 x 99 cm





*New Works for the suite Album (1955-1963) #3*, 2018, Cut-out archival pigment print, embroidery on canvas, thread and needles, 68 x 55 cm



*Napoleon pose*, 2015, Cut-out pigment print and pins on fabric, framed, 53 x 40 cm

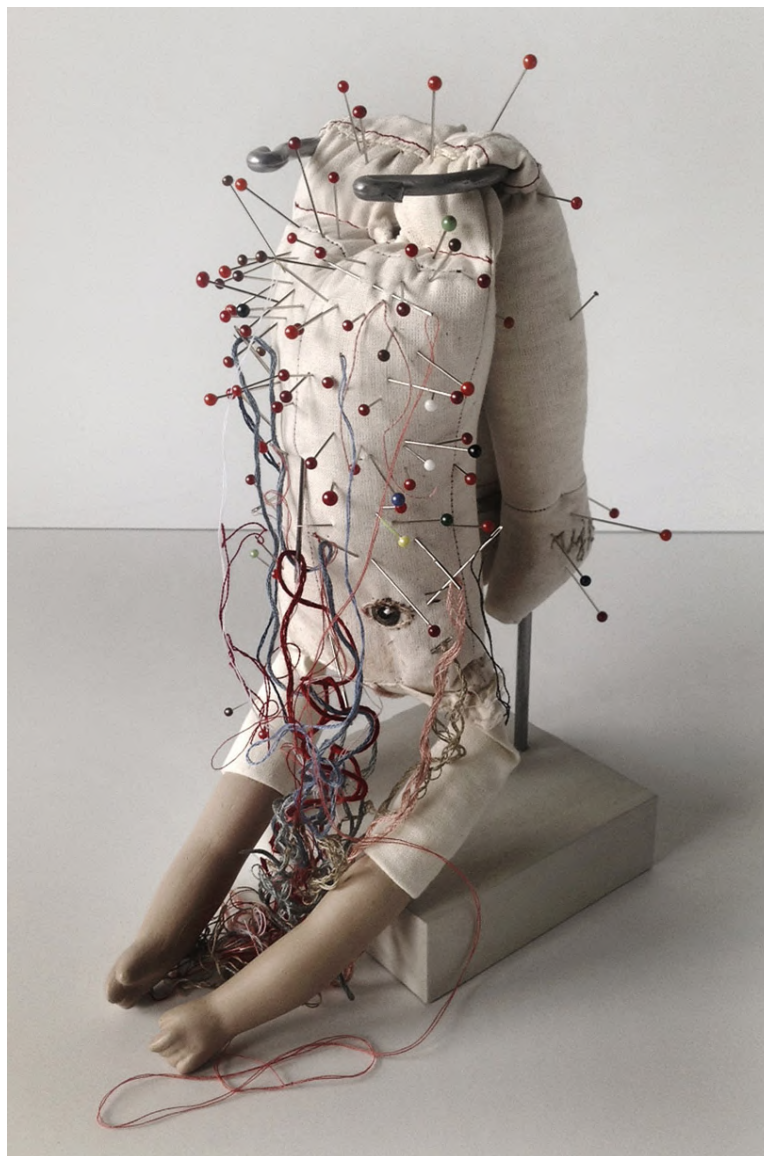


*art berlin 2019 with Persons Projects , 2019, Exhibition view*



*Self-Willed (Self-Portrait), Omapäinen (Omakuva), 2015, Cutout pigment print, embroidery, thread, pins and needles on fabric, 53 x 37 cm*





*Puppet 2 (Pins)*, 2015, Mixed media, 25 x 14 x 10 cm



*Landskrona Foto View: Finland, 2017, Exhibition view, Landskrona Museum*



*Voyager*, 2015, Assemblage, mixed media (aspen, pair of shoes, pair of socks, silk, fabric, thread and embroidery, nails), 180 x 18/15 cm



*Wander Stories #4 (Jean-Jacques Rousseau), 2018/2019, Object, Mixed media, 71 x 27 x 20 cm*





*Noema (Me and My Mother, This Year 2013)*, 2013, Cut-out pigment print and pins, 63 x 47 cm



*The Log Lady*, 2018, Fotografisk Center, Copenhagen

# WORKS

For Jokisalo, this experienced and personal aspect attaches itself to scissors, dresses and the heated pulse of blood. The rhythmic repetition of these core elements and their transition from one work to another create a grammar, the transformation of forms a rhetoric tensed between remembering, recollection and forgetting. Scissors gain their meaning in relation to the visual syntagm as a whole. A change in the details of a dress, the form, position or context of the scissors alters the charge of the work, making the pictures nostalgic, cruel, seductive, playful...

In a selection of her works, scissors have become a tool participating in everyday being and the process of becoming oneself. Scissors and pins are now

needed as the sewing progresses, in making a dress, one that marks the contours of a woman, or rather a girl. Where the scissors are the daughter's own alphabet, the sewing machine is markedly the attribute of the mother. These works are not a tale with a plot; but present a story that is to be found in the surfaces of objects and faces. "I resemble you and you resemble me. I see myself in you; you see yourself in me. You are already big, I am still small. But I came from you and here, before your eyes, I am another living you".



*Iconostasis*, 1995, exhibition view, Museum of Contemporary Art/ Ateneum/ Finnish National Gallery





*Autobiographical series 1 - 7, part 1, 1996, version 2, Cut-out silver gelatin print on plywood, 14,4 x 52,5 cm*



*Autobiographical series 1 - 7, part 3, 1996, version 2, Cut-out silver gelatin print on plywood, 14,4 x 52,5 cm*



*Ottaa kiinni, Catch up*, 1997, Embroidery on gelatin silver print, 33.5 x 25.5 cm





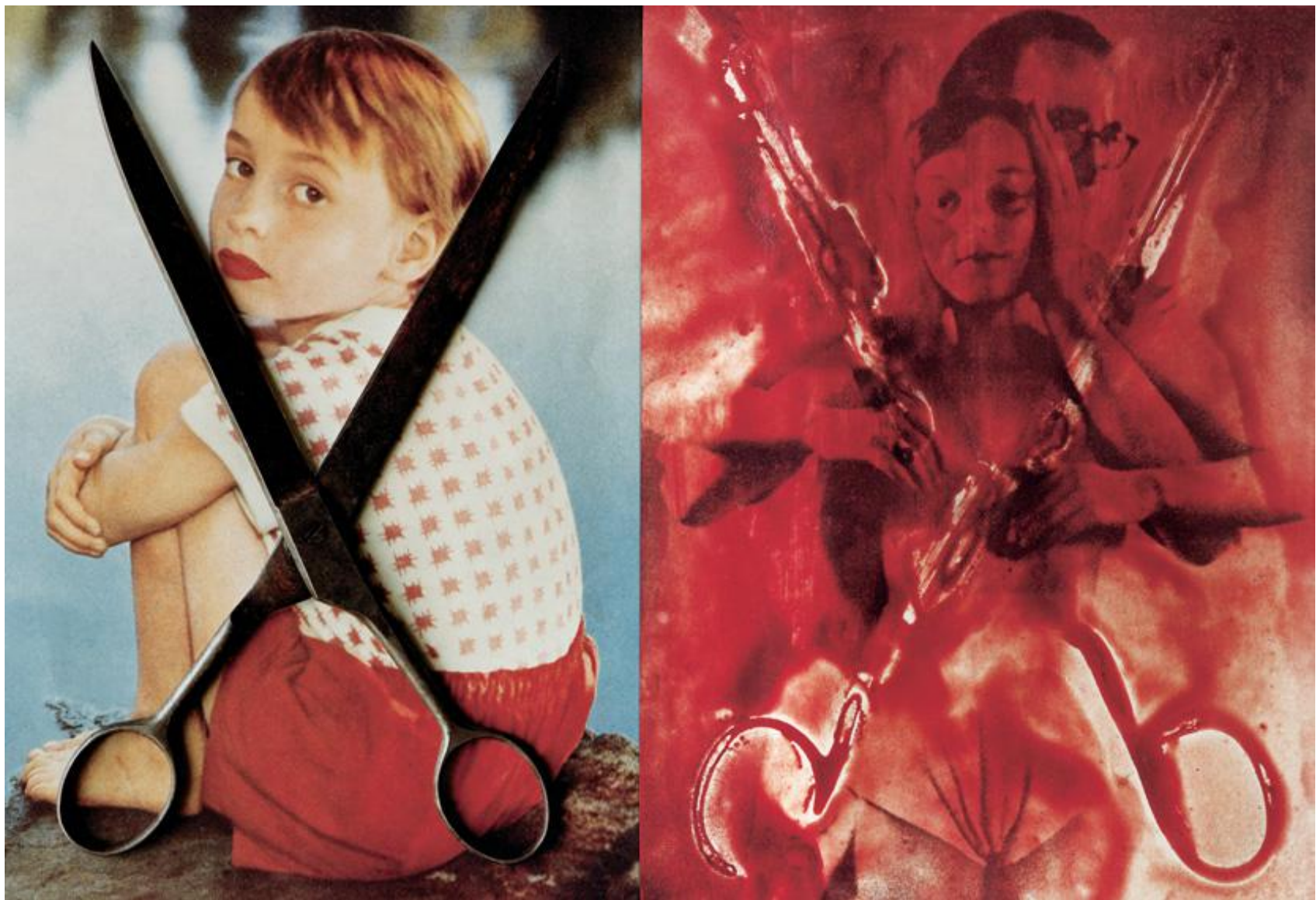
*From the Collection of 15000, 1999, pins on gelatin silver print (all together 21 pictures)*





*Desire I and Desire II, dyptych, 1992 / 1999, C-Print, 76 x 55 cm, each*





*Untitled* , 1990 / 1999, C-Print, framed, 56 x 76 cm



*Vis-à-vis*, 2013, Archival pigment print, framed, 46 x 31 cm



*My Eyes*, 2010, Cutout pigment print, embroidery, thread and needles on fabric, 45 x 32 cm





*Dance macabre*, 2015, Cut-out pigment print, synthetic hair and pins on fabric, framed, 45 x 33 cm

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