ROE ETHRIDGE NEAREST NEIGHBOR

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Roe Ethridge applies a seductive, stylized commercial aesthetic to common subjects, such as Coke bottles, fashion models, and seashells, but reroutes expectations by inserting elements of humor, oddity, and revulsion. An Ethridge image will seem familiar yet somehow awkward, artificial, "off." In addition to producing compelling singular photographs, Ethridge is a wily editor and organizer of his own images. Intercepting our natural tendency to construct narratives from one or more photographs, Ethridge directs the process toward faintly absurd, vaguely dark and highly personal narratives. Each of the "rooms" in this exhibition tells a story—or stories—which visitors are invited to uncover.

"Nearest neighbor" is a photographic term for an image that has been resampled by changing the number of pixels. It is a new version of an original picture, which can either be an upgrade or a downgrade. This process alters the existing capture just as photography alters the visible world, modifying realism with a sense of the peculiar. "Nearest neighbor" also refers to the personal basis of Ethridge's work, which features objects or associations reflecting his own life. In his editorial assignments, family and friends appear as frequent subjects and become glamour-shot versions of their "real" selves, peeking out through a lacquered exterior. While photographers have commonly mined the autobiographical vein, Ethridge ignores distinctions between private and public spheres—family photos versus advertising—to suggest that our lives have become an uncomfortable admixture of individual and collective experiences and fantasies.

Curated by FotoFocus

Kevin Moore, Artistic Director and Curator

Roe Ethridge (American, b. 1969) has exhibited extensively at institutions around the world, including MOMA/PS1, New York (2000); The Barbican Center, London (2001); Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh (2002); The Whitney Biennial (2008); The Institute of Contemporary Art, Boston (2009); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles (2009); Museum of Modern Art, New York (2010); Les Rencontres d'Arles, France (2011); the Hammer Museum, Los Angeles (2015); and Foam, Amsterdam (2016). He has had solo exhibitions at the Garage, Moscow (2011) and le Consortium, Dijon, France (2013), as well as numerous gallery exhibitions at Andrew Kreps Gallery, New York; Gagosian, Los Angeles; Greengrassi, London; and Gladstone Gallery, Brussels. Ethridge is also the author of numerous photography monographs, such as Rockaway, NY (2008); Le Luxe (2011); Sacrifice Your Body (2014); and Shelter Island (2016).

Roe Ethridge: Nearest Neighbor is the artist's first solo museum exhibition in the United States and is accompanied by a new monograph titled Neighbors. The exhibition and catalogue are part of the Foto-Focus Biennial 2016, Photography, the Undocument. Additional support for this exhibition is generously provided by Rosemary & Mark Schlachter and Artswave Corporate Partner: Enquirer Media.

