

Emile Rubino  
*Springtime Challenge*

12.12.2024–04.01.2025

WIELS AFFILIATE

A few years ago, Joe could be purchased by anyone for €3.99. Joe stands in for an ordinary fellow—the personification of a typical representative of an occupation expressed metonymically as a mock surname—Joe Sixpack, Joe Lunchbucket, Joe Snuffy, Joe Blow, Joe Schmoe. On paper, Joe could be anyone, no older than early middle age, neither married nor unmarried, neither rich nor poor, neither Baptist nor Buddhist, nor a political activist, and possessing a modest skill set. Of course, anyone is not everyone. Here, Joe is a readymade, a garden gnome with two reusable Action bags that could belong to everyone. From Breda to Brussels, these bags are everywhere. Some use them to carry art, some use them as laundry bags, some use them as pillows. Joe and his bags were made to be photographed. A good readymade mostly makes for a good picture. As part of a consumer-based photo contest, customers could buy Joe, stage a picture with him, post the image online and tag the discount store. The winner received €100.

Last year, the French actress Léa Seydoux posed in front of Joan Mitchell's painting *La Grande Vallée XIV (For A Little While)* (1983) to advertise Louis Vuitton's *Capucines* handbags. A good painting often makes for a good backdrop. In 1917, Alfred Stieglitz used *The Warriors* (1913), one of Marsden Hartley's emblematic German military paintings as a backdrop to photograph Richard Mutt's fountain. Hartley claimed that his paintings had no hidden symbolism. Like so many artists, he wanted to preserve a sense of mystery about the subjects and the sources of his work.

Emile Rubino (b.1992) lives in Brussels. Recent solo exhibitions include *Illustration*, LambdaLambdaLambda, Prishtina (2024); *Baby I'm Yours*, KIOSK/rhizome, Kortrijk (2023); *Bon Public*, CC Strombeek, Grimbergen (2022); *LANDLINE*, Situations, New York, NY (2021). Recent group exhibitions include *Kinship*, KIN, Brussels (2024); *No more, not yet*, AM SCHWARZENBERGPLATZ, Vienna (2024); *PORTALS*, Soft Opening, London (2024); *à contretemps*, LambdaLambdaLambda, Prishtina (2023); *Destinées*, Air de Paris, Romainville (2023). Rubino co-edits and publishes *Le Chauffage*, an artist-run magazine based between Brussels and Vancouver. His writing has appeared in Frieze, Spike, Mousse, Texte zur Kunst, Provence and The Capilano Review.

*Joe 1*

2024

silver gelatin print, lacquered aluminum frame, mat board, glass

49 x 40 x 2 cm

unique

*Joe 2*

2024

silver gelatin print, lacquered aluminum frame, mat board, glass

49 x 40 x 2 cm

unique

*Joe 3*

2024

silver gelatin print, lacquered aluminum frame, mat board, glass

49 x 40 x 2 cm

unique

*Joe 4*

2024

silver gelatin print, lacquered aluminum frame, mat board, glass

49 x 40 x 2 cm

unique