

## **A new dimension**

### *About Jacob Juhl*

The art of Jacob Juhl is shaped by existential themes where the artist's own portrait is in focus. His photographic works are haunted by doppelgängers, often meeting in direct confrontation. This selfportrait puts a unique stamp on all of Juhl's artistic endeavours.

His art photography is often printed on coarse materials in contrast to what is usually expected. Some of his earlier works for instance are printed on wooden boards. This creates a certain haptic effect as the rough surface of the wood is in great contrast to the usually smooth surface of a photograph. In recent works he often uses handmade paper which retains this coarse surface in Juhl's artworks. As opposed to his earlier works Juhl is now deconstructing his photographs by cutting them, only to resurrect them through the transferring and overlapping of motifs.

These cuts and overlaps are seen in the work *Holy, holy, holy!* (2012). The title and the closed eyes of the portrayed person indicate that this individual is in a kind of holy trance where his gaze is turned inwards in spiritual insight. An insight which gives us a glimpse of a substance that lies underneath the photographic surface. The destruction of the portrait doesn't let anything go to waste however, as the cutouts are not discarded but placed onto a white surface. This way the cutouts break up the horror vacui of the void, a white void that can be seen as the spiritual condition of the portrayed person.

It is obvious that Juhl is moving away from previous methods in his most recent work. Thematically Juhl continues to explore existential motifs and take portraiture to new places. The photographic selfportrait of the artist is now deconstructed, the varnish is scratched off and a new awareness emerges. By cutting his works Juhl adds a new dimension to his art that shows a search for a deeper meaning. However, this hidden dimension often turns out to be a substance even more carnal and organic than what appeared on the surface.

*By Marie-Louise Lindstrøm, MA in Art History.*