

12 May 2026

Exhibition Ulrich Seidl – Über das Leben, die Liebe und den Tod



Still Im Keller (Ulrich Seidl, AT 2014)

Eye Filmmuseum presents *Ulrich Seidl – Über das Leben, die Liebe und den Tod*, the first exhibition in the Netherlands about the Austrian filmmaker, photographer and theatre-maker. Featuring a wealth of early, little-known and newly commissioned (film) works, the exhibition confronts visitors with the lives of a number of seemingly ordinary individuals, people who try to make something of life in a late-capitalist society in which meaning has been replaced by consumerism. Seidl does so in a way that holds up a mirror to us as modern Western individual. An exhibition about moral ambiguity and disorientation, but also about love.

Ulrich Seidl – Über das Leben, die Liebe und den Tod, from 18 September 2026, Eye Filmmuseum, IJpromenade 1 Amsterdam, eyefilm.nl/ulrichseidl

In the exhibition *Über das Leben, die Liebe und den Tod* (*On Life, Love and Death*), Seidl's ongoing exploration of the *condition humaine* takes centre stage. He has an interest in the everyday and those who fall specifically outside the bounds of daily order. He follows individuals who – in their search for love, happiness and affection – try to make something of their lives in a late-capitalist society in which meaning has been replaced by consumerism.

Seidl's work is often described as unsettling because it confronts viewers with their own preconceptions about how people live, what they think, how they furnish their homes, how they entertain themselves, and how they seek a sense of security, each in their own way. Seidl: 'What I try to do is to

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look behind the beautified surface and to go into a private space, and that's often uncomfortable and may look different than what people would like it to look like.'

Seidl presents the complexity of the world in all its moral ambiguity, resisting black-and-white thinking and refraining from passing judgement. By creating a sense of discomfort, he hopes that the visitor will question their own moral compass.

At the intersection of documentary and fiction

Another way in which Seidl achieves a degree of disorientation is by positioning his work at the intersection of documentary and fiction. Research into real people, places and situations forms the basis of his work, which he then interweaves with fictional elements and characters. Non-professional actors play themselves in their own environments, while professional actors are invited to enter this context and improvise.

Moreover, from his earliest works onwards, Seidl has employed so-called *tableaux*: tightly composed scenes in which characters gaze silently and motionless into the camera, further heightening a sense of unease. Staging and reality merge seamlessly in Seidl's work. What is real, and what is fiction?

Ulrich Seidl – Über das Leben, die Liebe und den Tod is the farewell exhibition of Jaap Guldemond, who, as Director of Exhibitions, shaped the artistic direction of Eye's exhibition programme from the opening of its building in Amsterdam-Noord (2012 – 2024). Guldemond curated a total of 40 exhibitions for Eye.

Films, Talks & Events

As usual, the exhibition is accompanied by an extensive film programme. A number of Seidl's works will be screened in the cinemas, including several titles on 35mm from the Eye collection. Ulrich Seidl will visit Eye during the exhibition period to discuss his work in an artist talk. In a number of Eye on Art specials, themes from Seidl's work will be explored in greater depth, along with the ways in which his work resonates with other contemporary filmmakers and artists.

About Ulrich Seidl

Ulrich Seidl (Vienna, 1952) has a background in painting and photography and has directed around twenty feature-length and short films. In the 1990s he won awards for his documentaries *Good News* (1990), *Losses to Be Expected* (*Mit Verlust ist zu rechnen*, 1992), *Animal Love* (*Tierische Liebe*, 1995) and *Models* (1998). In 2001, his first 'fiction film', *Dog Days* (*Hundstage*), received an award at the Venice Film Festival. Almost all of his subsequent films premiered at major film festivals including *Import Export* (2007) and *Paradise: Love* (*Paradies: Liebe*, 2012) in Cannes. His most recent work, the two-part *Wicked Games – Rimini Sparta* (*Böse Spiele – Rimini Sparta*, 2023), was screened at the International Film Festival Rotterdam. Seidl has also directed theatre productions such as *Vater Unser* (2004, Volksbühne Berlin) and *Böse Buben / Fiese Männer* (2011, Wiener Festwochen) and regularly presents his photographic work.

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Note for the press, not for publication

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