

# Wilson Saplana Gallery

## Inuuteq Storch *What If You Were My Sabine?*

The photo series **What If You Were My Sabine?** by Inuit artist Inuuteq Storch is a love story about a country and a woman that invites us into an intimate narrative about belonging and connection. To each other, to nature, history, and to a country.

Looking through the series we experience a shift in perspective between closeness and distance, and past and present times, as the photographs weave together signs and images of modern everyday life in Kalaallit Nunaat (Greenland) and of the traditional Inuit culture and colonial history.

The photographs are a deliberate mix of genres: landscape, portrait, reportage, and everyday snapshots, where Inuuteq Storch connects the artistic and social realms by showing us contemporary Kalaallit Nunaat — such as run-down apartment blocks from the 1970s (a welfare project from Denmark), industrialized landscapes, and numerous cultural codes referencing symbolic signs of colonialism, love, and a yearning for the traditional culture of Kalaallit Nunaat.

The series **What If You Were My Sabine** is complex and can be interpreted on many levels. As the title already suggests, a question is posed: *What if You Were My Sabine?* But who is Sabine? Is she the girl in the photograph giving us the finger, the girl eating at the romantic dinner, the one drawing, or the girl lying in bed with bare breasts? The moods shift between a caring and lonely sentiment, and as viewers we become uncertain — perhaps like the artist himself — whether Sabine belongs to us. One might say that Sabine is a concept of the unattainable, and that the series is a search, both for love, for safety, for knowing oneself and for a sense of belonging.

One of the photographs from the series is of a typical Inuit neck tattoo, proudly displayed. This work is a story about recognition, community, and identity; a chance encounter in a bar where two men (one being the artist himself) meet and, without a word, mirror each other. They both reveal their neck tattoos, nod to one another, and go their separate ways. This wordless communication about shared values becomes a powerful identity marker.

Inuuteq Storch has a sharp eye for the symbolic signs of everyday life. The series display discarded pieces of furniture, abandoned toys, numbered apartment blocks with laundry hanging outside, and industrial areas without workers. Everywhere we see signs and traces from the people and the community that exist now, but also homages to those who came before. Signs and marks are left on rock formations, footprints appear in the snow, and the artist's own shadow stretches across the land toward an iceberg. The sun rises above the bay.

With a unique sense for visual storytelling and photography, Storch portrays the strong sense of collectivism, spirituality, longing, and love within his local Inuit community, where traces of colonialism, climate change, and social struggles form an ever-present reality.