



*Be pulled in by the idleness of life, get lost in its playful beauty and perfection just to discover decay is taking over and death is slowly approaching.*

The installation 'Der Tod' by Heidi de Gier is about just that, the balance between life and death, the idle boasting of beautiful and tasty imagery and the rotting process that slowly creates death; colourless and shapeless, without extravagance but at the same time incredibly beautiful and seductive as well.

'Der Tod' was originally made for 'Der Tod und vier Mädchen', a music tour in the Netherlands with the theme death by the Syrène Saxophone Quartet, for which they rewrote Schubert's 'Der Tod und das Mädchen', originally written for strings, to be played by saxophones. Schubert wrote his final quartets whilst he suffered from syphilis; death was knocking on his door, which you hear through the intensity of the music.

The video installation is made out of 90.000 photographs taken over a time of two months. Based on vanitas paintings made by Schubert's contemporaries in the 19th century. Flowers and fruit are used as symbols to point out that life is short lived and pleasure is futile.

For this setting De Gier shortened the video, which continuously plays from beginning to end and from end to beginning. Thus the narrative changes and death makes place for life and new beginnings, a beautiful and comforting thought when we are confronted with death. Schubert's 'Der Tod und das Mädchen' is a 40-minute piece, as the shortened video is only 27 minutes the timing of the image and music becomes random. This is something De Gier finds really appealing because it leaves space for chance and different interpretations.