



COLLAGE!

“...because where would we be without death? Many people do not want to think about that question, but artists cannot afford that blind spot. Every time they pick up the brush, scissors, or hammer to start making something and hear their hearts racing with excitement, it flashes through them that one day that same heart will stop. It is that interweaving of mortality and vitality from which all good art arises and which many artists also expressly express.

Caren van Herwaarden, for example, does this in a very poignant way in her collage *Walking, Willing & Waiting*, a title that can already be read as a short summary of life. But now the image itself. We see a group of horses walking around a mare with an open belly, a cage of ribs in which a cowering foal lies. In front and behind her are two obvious stallions, probably the foal's two fathers. The whole work is made of paper, only the little horse is wrapped in real cloths which give it an intriguing ambivalence. Sometimes it looks like an expertly baked newborn, sometimes a mummified dead baby. Until you look longer and they begin to coincide, and you realize that the two extremes in this image express one and the same thing. Yes, this is a true work of art, the result of a creative process that knows about death, making it all the more full and exuberant before your very eyes.”

Cornel Bierens at the opening of the exhibition *Collage!* at the Moving Gallery Utrecht, October 1, 2022