The Materiality of Photographs

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that it is within the active networks and relationships between people, their skills and materials that artworks are being shaped - and reshaped over time.

The special exhibition *Forever Young? Impermanence in photography* illustrated the consequences of such processes. One example included the material history of Ger van Elk’s *C’est moi qui fait la musique* (1971) where the original but severely discolored airbrushed photo-collage lay in a vitrine as circumstantial evidence for the artist’s desire to have it remade, and the result hanging on the wall for comparison.

Symposium participants, including speakers Liz Wells and Pip Laurenson in the front, visiting the gallery with Ger van Elk’s *C’est moi qui fait la musique* (1973). *Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, 2018.* Photo: Maarten Nauw.

Caroline von Courten underlined the value of materiality of photographic artwork through her analysis of one of Van Elk’s painted photoworks, *Dutch Grey* (1984). Consisting of four photographs on foamboard partially painted and lacquered in its entirety, she linked the work’s formal features to the important concept of horizon in the work of the artist.

If photographic artworks are remade, it is because people decided to do so. These processes are rarely made transparent, but this symposium helped take a closer look at the consequences of such practices for photographic artworks. The significance of their material form was convincingly highlighted by all speakers, linking their physical features to historic-cultural values, artistic-aesthetic values and even conceptual values.