



## World #33, from the Elton John AIDS Foundation Photography Portfolio I

Accession Number: 2009:284.10

Artist: van Empel, Ruud

Date: 2008

Medium: Silver dye bleach print

Dimensions: image/paper: 24 in x 20 in

Credit Line: Museum purchase

### Tags:

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## ABOUT THE PHOTOGRAPHER

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### van Empel, Ruud

Dutch, b. 1958

Ruud van Empel creates rich and idyllic digital montages stitched from his own photographs. In his World series (2005) he combines imagery of people and nature to make portraits of children that are slightly fantastical--the backgrounds are overgrown and the physical features are slightly out of proportion. Van Empel poses his models in vintage clothing and stately postures, purposefully resembling paintings of children in the 17th century, which also commonly feature oversized heads and eyes to portray innocence. Countering the often negative representation of black youth in the media, Van Empel works to elevate the appearance of his subjects—who for this series all have dark skin--as pure and virtuous.

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