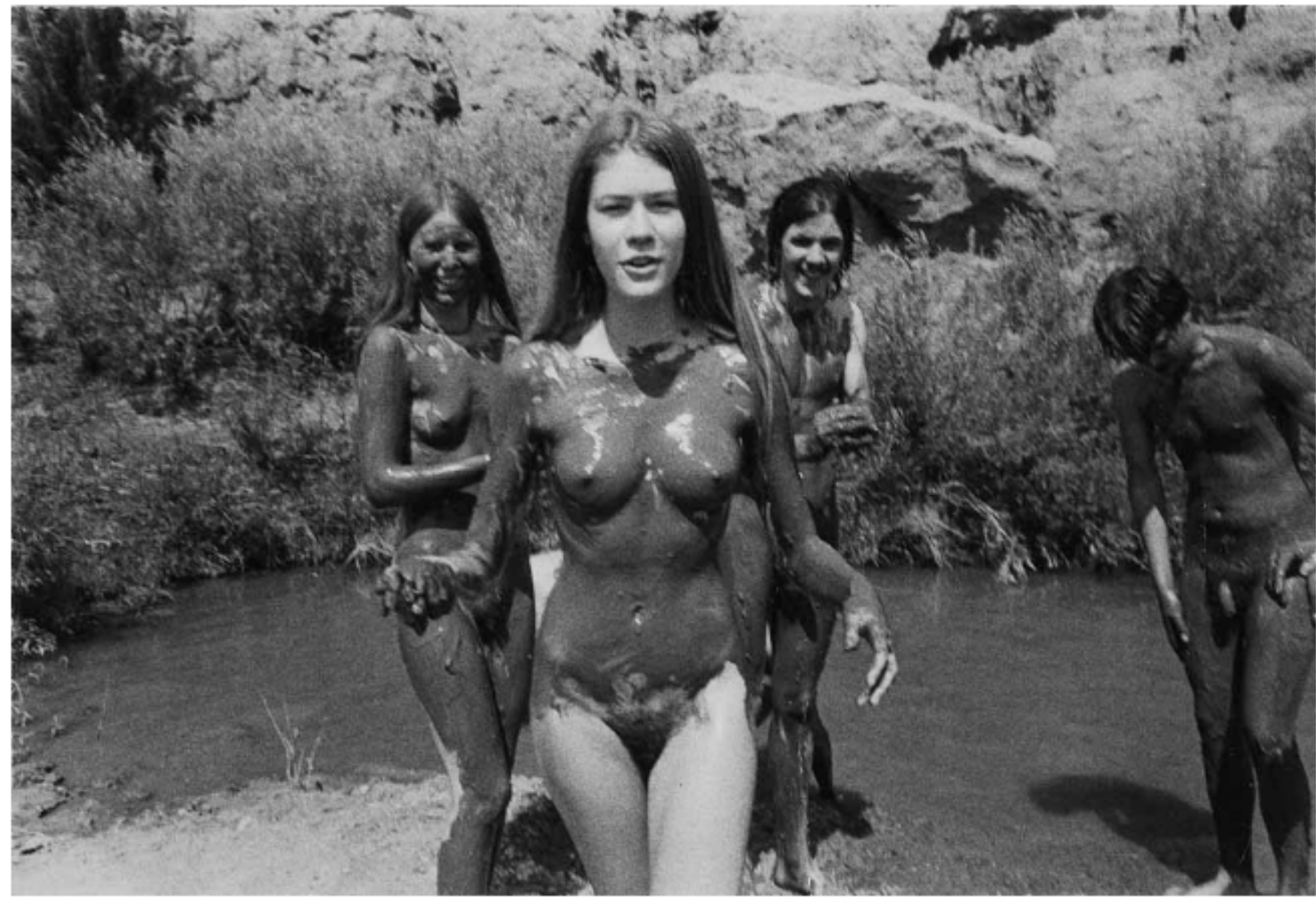


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LARRY CLARK AT FOAM: TULSA & TEENAGE LUST



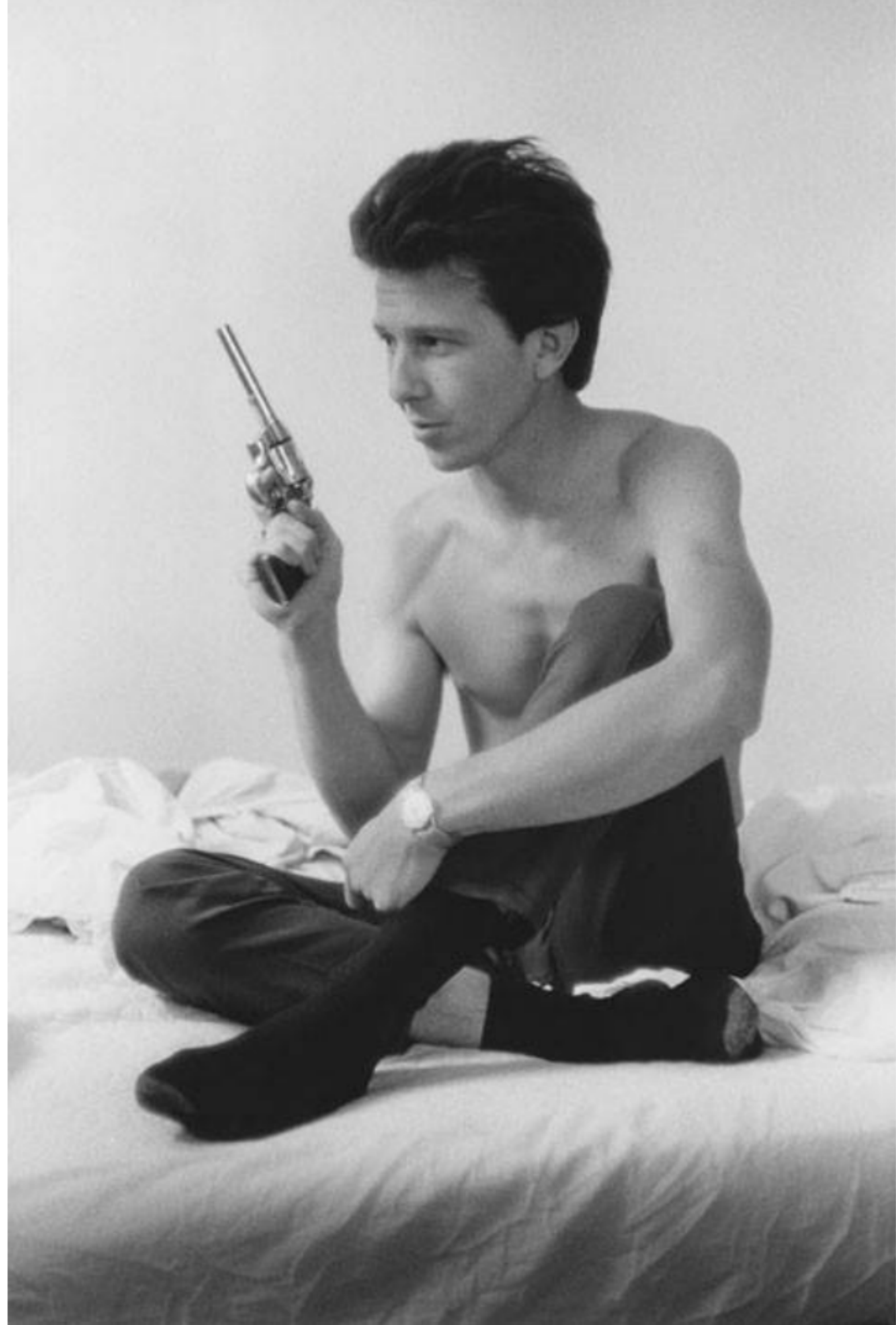
Tulsa (1971) & Teenage Lust (1983) are two controversial and separate collections from American photographer and film maker Larry Clark that are currently being presented at FOAM Amsterdam from the 13th of June until the 12th of September. Taken as a whole piece, together the images display an inherent vision of youth and beauty in his work. It is obvious that Clark finds beauty in the chaos and improvidence of youth, with a symbolic juxtaposition of guns, cigarettes and heroin needles, it becomes obvious that something like this could only be shot from the inside.



Untitled, 1970 © Larry Clark / Courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York

Tulsa

His Tulsa collection is saturated in self destruction, drug abuse, promiscuous sex, nudity and violence taken at the most intimate and dangerous moments. When these images were first released in their day, this youth culture was relatively unknown to the general public, making them highly controversial and provocative, especially in a town such as Tulsa that is represented as a town of 'young love and family values'. They are as striking today as they were back when they were first released. They are still images that inspire a longer look, like looking at a train wreck, and though it's desperately horrific you can't look away.



Dead 1970, 1968 © Larry Clark / Courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York

The photos are shot in a graphic black and white showing autobiographical images of his youth in Tulsa. Most of the subjects in his pictures are friends, outsiders on the edge of society, with whom he partakes in drug use on a regular basis. Clark captures the troubled and ruptured lives of his friends portraying their disillusionment with the world, not as a voyeur but as a participant. Pictures of young people taking part in casual sex and giving each other needle injections are at the forefront of this collection. Pictures of pregnant woman with a needle in her arm, a grieving mother and a baby in a coffin bring these pictures together into a story that is meant to be shocking and evocative and surely will leave an intense impression on the viewer.

Teenage Lust

He received a grant to work on his next project Teenage Lust, though it was postponed for almost a decade due to Clark's heroin addiction and stint in Oklahoma's McAlester Penitentiary. The collection is shown using a mix of family portraits of himself at young ages, family photos, portraits of teenage boy hustlers in New York City, New Mexican hippie commune teens and as in the series Tulsa, drug use and sex are again major themes, though sexual obsession seems to be the emphasis in Teenage Lust.



New York City, 1968, Speedy & Barb, 1968 © Larry Clark / Courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York

One other feature of the exhibition is a showing of his 16 mm film 'Tulsa' to go alongside the images. Shot by Clark in 1968, the film was lost for many years until it was found in 2010. His other films are also saturated in the same themes as his photography, notably his film 'Kids' from 1995.

What you are left with is an unashamed and unadulterated documentation of the most guttural elements of humanity, ones we wish to sweep under the rug and not think about. Sex, drugs, fear, violence. Young people in love, with themselves, with each other, with amphetamine and heroin and youths disenchantment with the 'American Dream'.

If you wish to see the exhibit tickets can be purchased online at www.foam.org and is highly recommended for anyone with an appreciation for controversial and autobiographical photography.

Featured Image: Untitled, 1963 © Larry Clark / Courtesy of the artist and Luhring Augustine, New York



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