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On april 30th 2015, I presented together with my 2nd year fellow students of the Master Fine Art at AKV | St. Joost the outcomes of the theoretical research of our studies. This occasion was used to experimentally test which forms "theory" can take in our work. How is theory related to art-production, how can this relationship be made productive?

This is my presentation:

My art practice deals with the shared potential within the creating, selecting and showing of a visual language that is related to the art of painting and installation art.

For my theoretical research I formulated the following main question:

Which forms of communication are or aren't possible by means of a work of art, that uses painting or shapes or styles of painting as a starting point?

My research consists of two chapters:

For each chapter I have chosen one art-theoretical text or lecture I relate to -and through which I explain myself. Afterwards, in chapter 1, I have chosen a work of my own and I have researched how this work relates to the text "A gift to the living dead. About the artwork as public secret" (2003) by Frank vande Veire.

In chapter 2 I have chosen a lecture of Jan Verwoert that was given at the Glasgow School of the Arts in 2007. In this lecture he talks about preliminary thoughts of an essay in progress; invoking or convoking of communities by means of a ceremony of staged appropriated objects.

Because my time is limited for my presentation, I have chosen to only briefly say something about the text by Frank van de Veire: "A gift to the living dead". His conclusion is that art is not a direct means of communication and that 'life' itself also appears as something autonomous, which does not communicate. His best argument, I think, is that he describes that the experience of modern man is not in his context of life and therefor not integrated in himself. The "life" of modern man is a spooky constellation of abstracted elements taking out of their contexts like: tv, telephone, video, film, internet, the whole culture of image and information-media.

The overall conclusion by Frank vande Veire is: „The Marriage between art and life is a phantasm". Despite Vande Veires' nice oration and beautiful analysis I would like to renounce his statement and look for other, new possibilities.

I agree with Vande Veire concerning the fact that art isn't a direct means of communication and that art maybe cannot be in the middle of a society, but I believe that an artwork can offer an open moment with a shared potential.

Let me try to explain this by analyzing the next painting, a work of mine.

The work is called: The Saturdays nr 551. This work has been made during a collaborative day of working with Willem van Kempen en Dirk Bours

These are the 3 aspects that I would like to talk about:

1) *Provisional painting* 2) *Adjacency* 3) *Rhythmicity*



The Saturdays nr 551, 2014

Lacquer, primer, image magazine on Linen

80.5 x 60 cm

In collaboration with Willem van Kempen and Dirk Bours

1) *Provisional painting* is a term invented by Raphael Rubinstein. In his text he describes a tradition of artists that have made works for a long time that are: random, swift, cautious, hesitant, unfinished, abstraction as a gesture, as a marker or resemble as self-cancelling. In different ways they all deliberately turn away from "powerful" painting. And they choose a way of art in which continuous inconsistencies, failures or collapses are being risked and put their names on a painting that from some points of view look like a total failure. According to my idea Provisional painting has to do with the possibility of an image. It's not about making good jokes about the tradition of the heroic act of Modernism, in which endgame scripts are used. But it concerns more about accepting the total challenge with Modernism, when we talk about: depth and surface, but in the mode of its continuity and not its end. As an example, an artist like Michael Krebber, who deals with the borders of the art of painting, is according to me, not aiming for a final act. I think these ways of working demands more of the audience, it's more open.

Some ways of specific artists can also be linked to the term "Open work" as used by Umberto Eco, where he points out that the open work:

1) *is an artwork in motion and is recognizable by its invitation to the public to work together with the author.*

2) the works are organically finished, but they are open for interpretation to a new generation of internal connections, which the addressee must discover.

2) **Adjacency** is described by Jan Verwoert in his text: Why are conceptual artists painting again? Because they think it's a good idea.

Verwoert formulates adjacency in this context as "The color being beside the color." He quotes Helen Frankenthaler, both refer to the idea of a lateral movement, to proximity. The experience of painting is always next to something: next to music, pop, or where the disco is adjacent, next to fashion, next to a candy store, next to the visual culture, poetry, or next to the city. Painting as a passage to the body, next to the ballet stage, or maybe the salon next door, the social space.

Verwoert also refers to Baudelaire's essay: "the painter of modern life". Where he writes about makeup and fashion. Exactly there, Verwoert states: "lies the ephemeral nature of the moment of truth". He points out that painting is something that has a lot of neighbours. I for instance am attracted by the design of the **Bar-le-duc** bottle (Lemon flavor).

3) **Rhythmicity** is another term used by Verwoert in the same text: Why are conceptual artist painting again? Because they think it's a good idea.

Jan Verwoert offers rhythmicity like a fundamental dimension in which a canvas is structured in abstract art. With this, he means that in a modern tradition we longer longer speak of composition, in terms of putting some red here and some blue there, but about finding a rhythm or finding a texture that comes to life. Not a dead texture, but a rhythmic texture that essentially brings the whole to a different life of experience. The one thing that connects abstraction to the living world is rhythm Rhythm can be associated with dancing, which is a collective form of enjoyment. It's about finding the good groove. The order is no longer essential, but rather something that comes into existence during the development of the process. The structure is exposed when the dots are connected. He compares this with playing dominos, where the playground appears when the dominos are falling.

According to Verwoert, this can be translated as "social logic", it's about how weight is being distributed in a community. It is a way to shift the weight that is used in a social dialogue.

Related to my own painting, the paint and the image play their own game. There is a rhythm between the paint and the image of the snake, between the shape and the material. This painting is literally also a social deed, because during the session my artist friends responded on my acts, we supported one another with our attention and attentiveness. Through reacting to the others painterly gestures, looking at the potentials of allowing a social logic and structure. This performative way of working rejects the authoritarian logic of an imposed order.

So far part 1, and now I would like start with the second, shorter, part of my presentation where I will explain my most recent project working with the concept of the kitchen.

In contradiction to Frank van de Veire, Jan Verwoert tries to look for possibilities for creating

communities through art. I will use his lecture to explain the potential of the kitchen. Since the end of 2014, I'm using 'The kitchen' as an archetype to research possibilities within my art practice.

Verwoert explains that the idea of an undefined potential also relates to consumption. This is where cities always thrive, the idea of a 24/7 consumer city. Everyone is welcome and can consume, eat, drink, shop, have fun as they want. The weird idea of the urban livinghood. The promise of the city as something undetermined, everything that is new and which we can consume is present. Free from the promise of the screen. We find these gestures everywhere, that address us as a collective of individual buyers. It's a paradox that these screens address us as a collective.

The gesture of invoking individuals continues to exist in a special architectural language.

It addresses the urban public through means of the language of the screen, which addresses us as a collective of individuals. This potential mirrors the cinematic format.

The screen promises that the joy of consuming will come, but furthermore there is always a hidden agenda linked to that promise, a promise with a "package deal". Take for instance Times Square: a jungle of visual information. But it is exactly there that Verwoert sees an organized structure. We are addressed by gender, for example women are addressed with: "Do you want to be happy? Then be pretty, get married and rent an apartment".

At first glance, the kitchen may not seem to have the same appeal as the lit screen.

You can say it is an Anachronism, something from another time. But to me, a simple kitchen cabinet has a more sustainable quality. The kitchen holds a pure promise, it has an inviting potential. The kitchen restrains from formulating a package deal. I would like to re-use the quote by Helen Frankenthaler: "The color being beside the color."

* The kitchen with its practical design, it expands my idea of what a painting can be. The kitchen can be the creative and spiritual heart of the home. I also see the kitchen as an * archive, an experimental laboratory, and a place for sensory work. It activates the painting and visa versa.

* In my opinion the kitchen has become one of the last spaces where the forms and aesthetics of functionality, modernism and minimalism are articulated so clearly. What I mean, is, that a kitchen is built from a rhythm of monochrome rectangles or cubes.

* It is not only a place for the professional, but also for the amateur where it concerns the installation of for instance waterpipes, gas, tiles, etc.

* The kitchen is an archetype, a social place that plays an important role in gathering people. It restrains itself from making a gender division.

* The kitchen is a meal machine, a beverage/ liquor storage for basic needs or for parties

* A place where we don't continuously have to achieve, perform and where we can share a feeling of exhaustion, a place where we can recuperate.

* And lastly the kitchen is a democratic place for consultations, meetings and negotiations.

My provisional conclusion is that art is not direct means of communication. Being human we can never effectively interpret the presence of the things in our environment. The contexts interacts with the autonomous, just like your own feelings, rules and environment. Art mediates and questions, but never gives a direct answer.. Art mediates and questions, but provides no direct answers.

Nevertheless, I believe that a work of art, that uses painting shapes, or ways of painting can offer an open moment with shared possibilities.

As I have described with the following terms:

* *Provisional painting*: the works are organically finished, but they are open to interpretation to a next generation of internal connections, which the addressee must reveal.

* *Adjacency*: It never stands on its own but has a lot of neighbors

* *Rhythmicity*: It's about finding and feeling the right groove, not accepting the things just the way they are, but feeling and experiencing another vibration.

Finally, the kitchen is an archetype that I select as an artist and use as an experimental laboratory for its visual qualities and for its inviting potential where people come together.