

PRESS RELEASE

... Stands for Attitude

Locuslux Gallery in Brussels is pleased to announce its new collaboration with artist-philosopher Loek Grootjans, curator of the group show "...Stands for Attitude"

April 25 – June 21, 2009

Opening Reception Saturday April 25, 2009 2:00 – 7:00pm

...Stands for Attitude

ATTITUDE deliberately written in capitals because not everything is still possible. No one can still view the world with eyes that have seen nothing, or approach the world with a brain that knows nothing about it. 'The innocent eye' ceased to exist a long time ago. The 'no-nothing brain' - which supposedly knows nothing - is presumptuous. Knowing nothing is the same as being nothing, or wanting to be nothing, which in itself is an impossibility. This means that if you want to participate, you must be well informed and, of necessity, also be able to draw your own conclusions. Art is the formulating of questions: this assumes knowledge.

Not everything is still possible because your predecessors have frequently trod this path before. In a variety of ways but with results that show the world in a different light.

Many years ago, Rudi Fuchs said that, following Modernism, its successors and imitators, the wall had become so high that it was virtually impossible to scale. He got it wrong. It's difficult and the wall is indeed high, but nothing is impossible.

In its new programme, Locuslux Gallery will be showing artists who have the courage and insight to add to the crowded treasure house of art. Artists who have the insight and ability to climb over that high wall. First of all this requires an attitude. Attitude means insight. Insight means daring and the accompanying quest for kindred spirits. Locuslux Gallery has asked the artist/philosopher Loek Grootjans to be its curator for the next year, and to organise exhibitions around this theme. With, as the first result, ... *Stands For Attitude*.

Divided into three pieces:

Parallel Movement
Causal Connection
Finding Ways

1. Parallel Movement – Opening on Saturday 25 April 2009 from 2 until 7pm

Artists, who know that not everything is still possible, are searching for methods to imbue their ideas and actions with form in a world that demands nothing. They seek and find kindred spirits, who are aiming for the same objective. Nothing prevents them from finding possibilities and ways of having their work measured against the past and what is known. Their abilities enable them to anticipate events. In a form that is inevitably focused. They bombard the world with works that compel attention and are well worth viewing.

- Wolfgang Ellenrieder (Germany)
- Veronika Veit (Germany)
- Maria Roosen (the Netherlands)

2. Causal Connection – Opening on Thursday 14 May 2009 from 6 until 9pm

Artists, who know and feel that not everything is still possible, will sooner or later find each other. That's how it is and that's how it has always been. They're probably seeking the same ways or - more specifically - the cause of their actions. And those who seek and find the cause of their actions have taken yet another step forward. What follows is the effect. In other words: cause and effect. The cause is generated by the inner needs of artists who know where they stand. The effect is the artwork, which is relevant to the arts and can measure itself against their highest achievements.

- Christoph Kern (Germany)
- Wolfgang Ellenrieder (Germany)
- Maria Roosen (the Netherlands)
- Florette Dijkstra (the Netherlands)
- Veronika Veit (Germany)

3. Finding Ways – Opening on Thursday 4 June 2009 from 6 until 9pm

Artists, who know, feel and experience that not everything is still possible, are seeking ways and methods. Nothing is more difficult than not understanding. Not understanding means exclusion, not belonging. Nothing is worse than that. That's why history and knowledge of your own era are essential. Only then can new ways be trod. Academics, poets, philosophers and artists have acted and still act on this. Their results - well considered or otherwise - are the finest of all existence. Hence, it gives Locuslux Gallery the greatest of pleasure to share this beauty with you with works by:

- Florette Dijkstra (the Netherlands)
- Jonathan DeWinter (Belgium)
- Christoph Kern (Germany)

Loek Grootjans (1955)

studied photography, painting from 1973 to 1978 and (subsequently) philosophy. He initially became known as a painter of monochrome canvases. However, in recent years, he has increasingly focused on the context in which his work is presented. Here, he investigates the artwork's relation with its space, the maker, society *and* the public. Grootjans' work assumes a constantly changing form that includes installations, performances (often with actors, extras and artists), murals, drawings, texts and publications. These works are presented as the 'departments' of a foundation: the 'Foundation for the Benefit of the Aspiration and the Understanding of Context (Formerly Known as the Institute for Immediate Knowledge, Real Perception and Logic Features According to the Most Contemporary Monochrome Paintings)'. Grootjans is seeking more intensive contact with the public, and wishes to initiate the discussion about art in general and his work in particular. His approach is philosophical and poetic but always includes a humorous radicalism that borders on the absurd. Loek Grootjans has exhibited in many places both at home and abroad including Barcelona, Madrid, Munich and Paris. He has also had solo exhibitions at Tilburg's Museum De Pont and Museum Bommel Van Dam in Venlo. In 2009, his work will be shown alongside a number of pieces by Marcel Broodthaers in the IKOB, *Museum für Zeitgenössische Kunst*, in Eupen. The following year, 2010, S.M.A.K. (*Stedelijk Museum voor Actuele Kunst*) in Ghent will devote an exhibition to his work. Loek Grootjans is also a curator.

Florette Dijkstra

In her work, Florette Dijkstra is in search of 'empty spaces' in art history. For her, art history is a fictive story that is told again and again. She tries to 'reanimate' those who have been neglected or forgotten in this story. To do so, she travels for long periods in the footprints of her personages. In drawings, paintings and texts, she gives an account of these researches. Following up these projects, Dijkstra develops a series of drawings on men and works of art in their context. It seems that these men are unable to observe their surroundings, but go into it. Men and works of art appear and disappear in the drawing. These works deal with reflection, meditation, introspection: the moments that precede and follow the creation of a work of art.

Maria Roosen

Within the visual arts, Maria Roosen (Oisterwijk, Netherlands, 1957) has found glass to be her most important material, pink her most important color and human forms her most important subject. Breasts, eyes, tongues, the body is captured by Maria Roosen in its most sensual form and its parts are made into admirable luxury objects. Made out of glass, they remind of what once was warm, soft en fragrant. The brightly coloured shapes that she has manufactured by glassblowers are lyrically and mischievously natural. Roosen is used to making objects peculiar through the use of material or scale. She has designed slippers for giants and created a gigantic rosarium for a medieval statue.

Frequently she smuggles her sculptures into everyday life by combining them with existing objects. Sometimes her sculptures look like the surviving remnants of a vaguely familiar ritual. Roosen's work should delight and confuse the senses; surreptitiously and jovially she juggles opposites such as hard and soft, square and round, strong and weak.

With her evocations and provocations of steadfast ideas on masculinity and femininity she follows in the footsteps of artists such as Eva Hesse and Louise Bourgeois. From the Rumanian sculptor Brancusi she has borrowed the notion that a good sculpture must heal. With her uncommon materials and her wealth of sensual forms she is building a oeuvre that is a welcome addition to reality.

Wolfgang Ellenrieder

Wolfgang Ellenrieder thinks of pictures in the plural from the start. They are preoccupied with what happens in a series, how pictures interact, how a wall covered with pictures is more, or different, than the sum of the individual pictures. In order to free oneself from the picture in the singular, one must renounce the pathos of masterpiece, of permanence and conciseness. Rather, it is just such pictures that can be individually forgotten that are necessary.

Thanks to painters such as Wolfgang Ellenrieder, who enlarge stock photographs and combine them in a plurality, the character of these pictures so typical of the current world can be better understood. Their indeterminacy, if painted to cover a whole wall, can be felt much more strongly – more corporeally – than if seen reproduced in a magazine, small and glossy. There, as an illustration of a text, they are also subject to being blended and are often used as a visual appetizer but without laying claim to an intrinsic value. If they are then only media, conveying a contact between text and recipient, so their flexible fleeting essence is one of Wolfgang Ellenrieder's own themes; their ontological particularity becomes the mutual subject of these plural pictures. The all-and-nothing is a poetry of emptiness – to be experienced sometimes rather eerily as a lack of meaning, and then at other times more mysteriously as a promise of even more meaning. Ellenrieder's paintings can therefore also be interpreted as an artistic and critical commentary on the debate over an intensification of the concept of moral rights.

Christoph Kern

Cubic Worlds

Committed to spatial illusion. Christoph Kern uses old master knowledge of the material of painting with almost scientific obsessiveness to 'breed cubes'. In his investigations he follows various tracks: cubes imploding in space, gyrating in science - fiction – like structures that evoke connotations like Star Wars or Kubrick's 2001. Or monolithic cubes that seem to all but eliminate pictorial space in their attempt to push towards and flow over the edges. And, most recently, a focus on futuristic landscapes that appear to have been generated by the cubes themselves, yet in which the cubes tend more towards dissolution. Kern's paintings are an accumulated history of their own making. They are built up of many layers, beginning with the initial scenario under investigation, setting the scene. With each progressive layer, the cubes' evolutions, their growth, colour, position and movement in space as well as their relationship towards each other is traced, the positions at which they arrive are tested and pushed towards a point at which the image can rest. This stage is documented before the painting process continues. Pentimenti and animated films show the different stages of one painting's transformation and are a way for the viewer to share in its evolution.

Christoph Kern confidently asserts the idea of the painting as a window to the world, the notion modernism worked hard to dispense with. When the cubes infiltrate the baroque stage-like landscapes, as representatives of the abstract and rational, the controversy over space is sustained and mediated by Kern during the painting process, thereby pitting the modernist tenet against a knowledge of the long history of painting that has gone before. For him the main challenge is not to 'people space with cubes, but to push the painting towards a point when the cubes will have created their own environment' and these two divergent ideas that were deemed to be incompatible will have undergone a transformation that has made for a world that as a painting is a believable, convincing entity.

Veronika Veit

As a new form of folk art, one could imagine Veronika Veit's figures installed in many different places – certainly not only in museums and "white cubes". Could we not imagine them in city squares and in institutions, in shops and even in natural surroundings? That they could act as role models, reflections and counter-images that play a similar role to the dwarves, "good folk" or other helpful creatures who only appear in fairytales? If this seems too absurd, remember that ancient Greek cities were populated with an almost unimaginable number of sculptures. Each city had thousands of them, and one can assume that various groups in the cities set up their own figures in order – with a mixture of mascot and testimonial – to promote their own interests. These figures, therefore, served for the shaping of public opinion and as a social exchange. They also helped to integrate the individual citizens more closely into the community and to facilitate contact. And thus, they were a political as well as a traditional folk element in the public space. And is this not something that every society needs?

Veronika Veit has become a sociologist. Her theme might be one of the most ancient in sculpture, that of the human figure, but she is well able to imbue the subject with something new. In contrast to many other variants of contemporary objective sculpture, the viewer is spared those stiff, alienated and surreal figures that originate from a lack of artistic ability; rather, the impression is of an encounter with real personalities complete with character and life-story, in a word, living contemporaries – neighbours, colleagues, fellow citizens.

Jonathan De Winter (1986)

Jonathan De Winter creates spaces mostly out of recycled materials, at least according to the principles of economy of means but never of energy. These spaces (platforms, cabins, walls, boxes...) are combined and piled up in order to create a prolific architecture which is an invitation to encounter : musicians will invest it, the public has to practice it to give it a sense. For Jonathan De Winter, it is a question of *incorporation*, a concept given as a title to several previous exhibitions of the artist. *To incorporate* consists in adding a substance to another to modify its content. The invested object is changing status : from sculpture, it becomes a working space in which propositions are crossing, where an inventive dynamic which is constantly transforming the spirit of the place circulates.

Location of the exhibition

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For images and book information, go to www.locuslux.com or contact us. On request, the press release is available as Word document in English and French.

Members of the press are welcome on the opening on Saturday April 25, 2009 (2-7pm), during the closing reception on Sunday June 21st, 2009 and during our opening hours or by appointment.

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Opening hours: Wed – Fri 2-7pm, Sat 12am-6pm, or by appointment