

Factsheet Rien ne va plus November 2009



Marcel Broodthaers, *Tapis de Sable*, 1974. Photo Peter Cox

exhibition title	Rien ne va plus
part of	Play Van Abbe, Part 1 – The Game and the Players
location	Nieuwbouw (New building), B2
duration	28/11/2009 – 28/02/2010
curators	Lily van der Stokker, Galit Eilat together with Chto Delat, Museum of American Art, Berlin together with Diana Franssen and Christiane Berndes (both curators of the Van Abbemuseum) and research curator Steven ten Thije

The exhibition *Rien ne va plus* displays a number of installations and projects from the museum's collection during the period 1966 up to the present, by artists who tackle social issues in an explicit dialogue with the museum context. The emphasis is on the story of the artists who involve the visitor in their 'game'. The title is taken from roulette. It is the signal for the players to indicate that the positions which have been taken can no longer change and that chance will determine who wins and who loses. However, the artists in *Rien ne va plus* are not playing for 'profit', but in order to put the rules up for discussion. The exhibition contains works by Marcel Broodthaers, Chto Delat, Tino Sehgal, Maria

Eichhorn, Lily van der Stokker, Franz Erhard Walther, the Museum of American Art, Berlin.

The artists in *Rien ne va plus* raise economic, historical, political and aesthetic regimes as subjects for discussion by reflecting on the structures of the museum in their own way. In this exhibition it is the artists who determine the rules of the game. Art is a game and the rules of this game become clear when the game is played. It is a free space which is used in a different way by every artist. In some works, the visitor is actively involved in the work, while other works attempt to provide new perspectives. Art asks the visitor to be observant and ask questions. In this way, these artists attract attention to codes and systems which are not only used in the museum, but also consciously or unconsciously, outside the museum. In

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many cases, these codes are so self-evident that we are no longer even aware of them. Is it possible to reveal them?

This exhibition opted for works which enter into an explicit dialogue with the context of the museum and address the gap between life and art. The artists in this exhibition want to inform the visitors of these positions.

The title *Rien ne va plus*, is taken from roulette. It is the signal for the gamblers that the positions they have taken can no longer be changed, and the ball will determine who wins and who loses. The players in the exhibition do not play to win, but in order to make the rules the subject of discussion and reinterpret the idea of what we can win. They follow the rules of the game to play in order to play against it. What the result will be is uncertain as long as the ball is rolling.

Important works

In *Rien ne va plus* several installations and projects from the collection of the museum are on display, from the period 1966 up to the present.

The exhibition series *Lily van der Stokker and guest...* ends with a presentation of minimalist works from the museum's collection, selected by Van de Stokker herself. She displays works of artists she admires and loves in the now famous space with the chequered wallpaper which she designed. Van der Stokker designed a number of murals especially for this presentation. Her 'decorations' add an unexpected context to the austere, minimal artworks. In a disarming but very focused way, she breaks through the sacred cows of art.

In the *Activist Club* (2007 (2009)) Chto Delat, a collective of artists, critics, philosophers and writers from St. Petersburg and Moskou, is concerned with topics in the field of tension between art, political theory and activism. They designed a small cinema with a study and discussion area and use the museum as a public place in order to initiate a discussion about the position of art in our society.

In December, a programme of videos and lectures starts with presentations by both local and international artists and activists. This programme is composed by the guest curator Galit Eilat in close collaboration with the artists of Chto Delat. New videos and/or lectures can be seen every month.

The Museum of American Art, Berlin explores the classification which museum directors have thought up for art and the way in which they reveal their views. The Museum of American Art in Berlin is a guest in the exhibition with an educational space around the *Kabinett der Abstrakten* (2009) of the Russian artist El Lissitzky dating from 1926.



Alexander Dörner & El Lissitzky, *Kabinett der Abstrakten*, Halle für Kunst Lüneburg 2009. Collection of the Museum of American Art, Berlin. Photo Julian Boy, Hamburg

Part of Play Van Abbe

Part 1 of *Play Van Abbe, The Game and the Players*, focuses on the players in the museum who determine the rules of the game. In *Rien ne va plus* the emphasis is on the artists who each explore the boundaries of the museum context in their own way. They confront the visitor with questions and challenge him to adopt a position. In this way, these works show how artists introduce new rules for the game and ask the museum to perform different functions than merely displaying a painting or sculpture. A performance or installation which is part of the collection, for example, requires a very different form of conservation and display from a painting or sculpture. An installation has to be set up again every time. Every space is different and provides different possibilities. Therefore the curator works with the various potential meanings of the artwork, sometimes with the artist and sometimes without.

Subsidisers

Play Van Abbe has been realised in part by contributions by the Mondriaan Foundation, BankGiro Loterij, Provincie Noord-Brabant and VSBfonds.



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