

## Plug In. Re-Imagining the Collection

### New episode

Saturday 20 June 2009 a new episode of *Plug In. Re-Imagining the Collection* opens in the Van Abbemuseum. This exhibition project was launched by the Van Abbemuseum in 2006 as an experimental presentation of the permanent collection. For 'Plug In #52 Lily van der Stokker and guest: Jim Isermann' the artist Lily van der Stokker has invited for the fifth time a guest to take on the artistic dialogue with her coloured and chequered wallpaper. The current guest, Jim Isermann, has placed four sets of orange and silver coloured 'vacuum form' panels on the wall that reveal only a part of the green and orange plaid wallpaper.

Following the purchase of the wallpaper, the Van Abbemuseum invited Van der Stokker to develop a programme of exhibitions in this room.

For this Plug In # 52 Lily van der Stokker asked Isermann to react towards her diagonal-grid wallpaper design. Isermann suggested to place four sets of 'vacuum form' panels in the centre of each wall in the space. The surfaces of the silver and orange coloured panels are arranged in open star-shaped intersections, which reveal a peek-a-boo glimpse onto the green and orange plaid wallpaper of van der Stokker. Isermann's work utilizes commercial production methods, such as vacuum forming. Similarly Lily's wallpaper design and production emphasizes a relationship with industrial design.

Jim Isermann is well known for liberating formal and conceptual parameters around art and design. His artwork explores the relationship between abstraction and design. For his work Isermann uses, for example, ordinary household materials like plywood, fabric, nylon, paint, cotton, glass, hand crafts, furniture, rugs, weavings, quilts, but also wallpaper design, and stained glass incorporating vibrant patterns and tactile materials. Working in the field of art and design for the last 25 years, he has a lot of experience in the exchange of visual information between high art and post-war industrial design.

Lily van der Stokker and Jim Isermann first met at Feature Gallery in New York in 1992. At that time both had solo exhibitions at the gallery shared a long wall space side by side. Isermann describes their first encounter as follows: "One of Lily's wall paintings crept into my half of that wall. I was exhibiting a set of stained glass panels and a long cast coloured shadow fell across Lily's wall work. It was a beautiful serendipitous occurrence that now seems prescient of our Plug In." Lily van der Stokker recalls the meeting as follows: "The work from Jim I most remember is a red and blue geometric painting and weaving (2-3m) in combination with a large round sitting element tufted in the same geometric pattern in front of the painting. That the image devaluates when used as a sitting device shows a love for the decorative and deconstructing the ways we are looking at art I share with Jim."



Room view Plug In #52. Photo Peter Cox

#### Artworks in dialogue

In Plug In #52 there is an interaction between the works, they are sympathetic. Jim Isermann: "Both works are dominant and yet I think the exhibition makes clear our basic disparities and similarities. I think Lily's work is fundamentally passive-aggressive. The viewer is lulled into something seemingly familiar, but the work's more subversive side, that deals with cultural taste and aspiration, sneaks up on you. I think my work is aggressively optimistic and deceptively simple but with a very pragmatic logic and a melancholy aftertaste. Neither is what you might think at first blush."

Lily van der Stokker plays with coding systems, structures and hierarchies in her work. She contextualizes the relationship between art and decoration similarly to Isermann and feels that decoration is often seen as second-rate. "But in that respect it is also supportive. Decoration aims to frame, to encircle, as well as being flattening, filling and extravagant. And decoration can also defile the dominance of the white exhibition spaces", says van der Stokker. "The holiness of art is definitely deconstructed if you are going to sit on it! A large white space with a small artwork in it suggests the production of truth. Decoration is supposedly lacking in

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*content. So I do think our wallpaper room project is challenging various rules of behaviour of our looking at art."*

### Plug In concept

'Plug In. Re-Imagining the Collection' is an exhibition project that the Van Abbemuseum launched in 2006 as a new, experimental presentation of the permanent collection. It takes the form of a continually changing series of exhibitions. In collaboration with guest curators from the Netherlands and abroad, the museum has until now produced 52 different presentations in over 15 rooms. Each room contains an independent show, with its own theme and exhibition duration, and gives specific insights in the unique collection the museum has accumulated since its foundation in 1936. This results in an ongoing succession of distinct narratives and histories which disclose surprising connections and contrasts.

### Curators

Concept Plug In: Christiane Berndes, Charles Esche  
Content Plug In #52: Kerstin Niemann, Lily van der Stokker

### New episode

#52 Lily van der Stokker and guest: Jim Isermann

### Still on view

#18 Viewing Depot  
#26 Maria Eichhorn *Aktiengesellschaft*  
#28 Bik Van der Pol *Pay Attention*  
#33 Igloo Nero  
#34 Starting with Kandinsky  
#39 Wendelien van Oldenborgh *Maurits Script*  
#41 Storing  
#42 Een op Een Ger van Elk *Push Nose Balance Sculpture*  
#43 René Daniëls *Shutters*  
#46 Acts of Non-Aggression  
#48 Douglas Gordon & Philippe Parreno *Zidane, A 21st Century Portrait*  
#49 Wim en Caya van Nuenen *Expositie: Interieur*  
#50 Collectie Henri van Abbe  
#51 Chto Delat *Activist Club*



Plug In has been realised in part by a contribution by the Mondriaan Foundation.

Van Abbemuseum  
Bilderdijklaan 10  
Eindhoven

### Opening hours

Tuesday - Sunday 11.00 - 17.00  
Thursday 11.00 - 21.00

### Admission

adults € 8,50  
groups -15, visitors 65+ € 6  
students / CJP card holders € 4  
Thursday night 17.00 - 21.00 free admission

For more details visit  
[www.vanabbemuseum.nl](http://www.vanabbemuseum.nl)

### Note for Editors

More information and images can be downloaded directly at:  
[www.vanabbemuseum.nl/en/press](http://www.vanabbemuseum.nl/en/press)

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