

Goton www.gotogoton.com mail@gotogoton.com

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BERNADETTE VAN-HUY

Turn the Mirror Upside Down

c/o Keur
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Bernadette Van-Huy is born in New York City in 1970. She is a founding member of the artist group Bernadette Corporation and has recently begun a solo practice;

In 2018, her exhibition "Game" at Goton featured a series of drawings and photographs, and launched her artist book *In Person* (pub. Westreich-Wagner, N.Y.)

Other solo shows include: Schwartzescafé Luma Westbau, Zürich (2018), Svetlana, NY (2019), After the butcher, Berlin, (2021), The Maria Leuff Foundation, Columbia County, N.Y. (2022.)

Bernadette Corporation's work has been exhibited at The Stedelijk Museum (Amsterdam), Kunsthalle Zurich Parallel (Switzerland), The Whitney Museum of American Art (New York), Artists Space (New York), The Hessel Museum of Art (New York), ICA (London), Julia Stoschek Collection (Berlin), Hamburg Kunstverein (Germany), and The Centre Pompidou, (Paris).

Turn the Mirror Upside Down

(After today's lust for space travel)

Take One part, an outlaw, (on trial), a pronouncement of guilt

Take Two part, Spinoza: Practical PHILosophy, (the book).

Take Three part, sending the mind's eye into space (like the Hubble telescope).

Take Four part, an Asian.

Take Five part, the Ogilvie home perm.

1. Erection of barriers. Ritual of fencing, barbed wires. A fortress where reason cannot penetrate. Like the Catskill Mountains – about which Washington Irving said, you don't need to be born there, as soon as you enter the region, you also fall prey, into the hole, of deeply out-of-tune, inbred thinking.

2. Society is first of all obedience. The best city is one that exempts thought from the obligation to obey. Otherwise all is culpable.

With The Ethics, Spinoza wanted to provide the tools to correct all the false paradigms (that mire people in sad passions – sadness, hatred, remorse, anger..., and block their full power of acting).

3. 87,600,000,000,000 evolutions of the minute hand on a clock. for the gravity of dust and gases to forge greater and greater. to collapse into itself, to begin swirling, spinning. in the vortex will be our sun. balls and balls. spinning, revolving balls. accumulations. coiling through space, round and round. Freaky amounts of time for the balls to

4. Floating on a futon. giving vast amounts of space and time to each phrase, letting gravity pull the different senses of every sentence, into the growing formation of matter.

5. A hair salon from 100,000 miles away resembles a star litter.

A curling rod from across the room is a supernova.

Sun, we circle you. Sometimes at this angle, sometimes at that angle. $E=mc^2$



Bernadette Van-Huy
Perm (#1), 2021
Pencil and inkjet print on paper
24 X 32,6 cm, framed



Bernadette Van-Huy
Perm (#2), 2021
Pencil and inkjet print on paper
24 X 32,6 cm, framed



Bernadette Van-Huy
Perm (#3), 2021
Pencil and inkjet print on paper
24 X 32,6 cm, framed



Bernadette Van-Huy
Perm (#4), 2021
Pencil and inkjet print on paper
24 X 32,6 cm, framed



Bernadette Van-Huy
Perm (#5), 2021
Pencil and inkjet print on paper
24 X 32,6 cm, framed



Bernadette Van-Huy
Perm (#6), 2021
Pencil and inkjet print on paper
24 X 32,6 cm, framed



Bernadette Van-Huy
Perm (#7), 2021
Pencil and inkjet print on paper
24 X 32,6 cm, framed



Bernadette Van-Huy
Perm (#8), 2021
Pencil and inkjet print on paper
24 X 32,6 cm, framed



Bernadette Van-Huy
Perm (#9), 2021
Pencil and inkjet print on paper
24 X 32,6 cm, framed



Bernadette Van-Huy
Perm (#10), 2021
Pencil and inkjet print on paper
24 X 32,6 cm, framed



Bernadette Van-Huy
Perm (#11), 2021
Pencil and inkjet print on paper
24 X 32,6 cm, framed



Bernadette Van-Huy
Perm (#12), 2021
Pencil and inkjet print on paper
24 X 32,6 cm, framed

Getting rid of the sad passions
Space travel in the age of infinite paranoia

His appearance is still as bombastic as his sounds were back in the day. With that huge blonde afro wig, and the gem like buttons on his shirt, he still represents something of himself as a pop star, just that his gaze seems thoroughly disturbed. We are in the year 2005, and the photo shows the man at his trial, which will end only years later with him sentenced for murder. To know him in this way certainly does not mean to love him; and to identify with him as a public character implies to identify with someone who says about himself, that he has always been his own worst enemy. Is there still some empathy possible or at least a different look than the monstrously mediatized scandal?

What does this image and the way it is presented to ourselves within Bernadette Van-Huy's artwork tell us about the logics of the star-system in pop and fashion industries, of jurisdiction and media representations, and finally of the politics of the self? And what about the possibilities for an artistic self-assertion in the face of these logics? Neither a purely outside position nor a merely inside one seems possible in order to be able to address the representational codes and the corresponding overlaps between the personal, the social, the cultural or the structural spheres. Difference is decisive here. If the way out into the infinite, unlimited world of pure possibilities seems largely blocked today, to work upon the "fences and barriers" - in Bernadette's words - seems crucial in order to address the defensive mechanisms or the "sad passions" of each sphere.

What we see here in this work are several representational layers. Firstly, there is the representational mode of fashion, which works by mimesis, identification, and voyeurism, and secondly, there is the representational mode of art, which can be acknowledged as performance, photography, drawing, and conceptualism. In trying to imitate that "parade of wigs" the man showed at his trial, Bernadette performs, documents and reworks graphically her own identity as a fashion, fandom, and media victim. The drawings not only imitate and deviate from the curly wigs, in gesturely overwriting the photographs they also bear testimony to the act of identification itself. In so doing a third representational mode is popping up, that of social identity. With the blonde afro the white man explicitly expresses his reverence for black people, and there is Bernadette adopting that gesture as the "Asian" (see "Take Four part") using a home perm. Two non-identities collapse into one, an identity, which is not the same.

And there is another layer. It's the referential mode of representation itself. It shows up in the mirrored wall text. In its unreadability it mirrors our fantasies and desires, not ourselves. Such distortions are not corrected here into an outwardly right image or a canonical text; the staged image of a mirrored text just indicates the insistence of the problem, that there is no identity without desire, and no desire without identifying moments. Desire, here, seems neither conceived as a non-representational or multidirectional flux nor as a constitutive illusionary and misrepresented force; as a twisted moment it is rather located in the core of representation itself.

Thus, representation depends on such reflexive moments as well as on referential horizons to which it can direct its inherent desire to overcome itself. These referential horizons span the enormous distances between the stars of pop culture to the stars of the universe, between the cozy world of a hair salon and the lofty galaxies constantly produced by the Hubble telescopes' space imagery. To traverse these spaces means to connect private fantasy and public spectacle, the imaginative space explosions and the mediatized implosion of any meaning, or, an overwhelming joy, the joy of transcendence, with that abysmal sadness concerning the inherent contradictions in immanent beings.

Hence, empathy concerns the monster within ourselves.

Helmut Draxler
2022