

## INBOX

**Gijs Milius - Poppen**

29.04 – 29.05.2022

Curator: Hans Theys

*- One of these dolls was first shown in September and October 2016 at the Brussels artist space Établissements d'en Face during your solo exhibition 'OF/OF OFWEL EN/OF OU ET/OU'. You made a few of them for the solo exhibition 'Gezelligheidsvereniging De Bovenkamer' in Galerie Mieke van Schaijk ('s Hertogenbosch, NL) that ran from January to March 2018. And one of them was also on display during the group exhibition 'Présent' at the Museum Van Buuren in 2018. In 2019, they were brought together for the group exhibition 'Vrijheid Vandaag' in Aardenburg. I remember the splendid exhibition in Établissements d'en Face: on the ground floor there was a classically hung series of drawings: brightly coloured evocations of a somewhat alienated world. In the middle of the room, there was a kind of fence that enclosed about a cubic metre of empty space and whose shape was derived from the handrail of one of the two staircases that led the spectator to the basement. Downstairs, this staircase was closed off with an identical gate that had been created by extending the banister. The visitor was unable to advance beyond that point.*

Gijs Milius (b.1985): Downstairs, I wanted to make a sculpture garden in which you would encounter figures that you had come across in the drawings upstairs, as if the world of the drawings had popped out or popped in, depending on your position. Whoever went down the other staircase walked through the sculpture garden and became part of it for the spectators behind the fence, who found themselves on a kind of observation platform.

*- Hence the title of this exhibition?*

Milius: I do like the word 'poppen'. The first title was 'De Gezelligheidsvereniging in temporary storage at the M HKA', but that did not sound very nice.

*- You told me that the artist Nicolas Bourthoumieux did not like that first doll for Établissements d'en Face, which he saw as kowtowing to the prevailing figurative vulgarity. Your figuration, however, seems to be no more than a disguise for strange sorts of lumps or growths that impose themselves on us uninvited.*

Milius: He did not think the first doll was bad, but the later ones. Still, he later changed his mind. He even included one in a group exhibition. It is normal that at first, we do not really know what we see. To me, something is only exciting or captivating if you feel the right amount of shame when you exhibit it. You have become excited about it, but it is not really clear yet what you are doing. It is only later that you can see what you have brought upon yourself or others. I would not call it a 'risk', because obviously it is only an exhibition. Still, there is shame.

Hans Theys, Montagne de Miel, 7 March 2022

## EXHIBITED WORKS

1. "Soliman", 2017  
210 x 70 x 80 cm
2. "Amazoniaan", 2016  
160 x 70 x 180 cm
3. "Bob", 2017  
160 x 170 x 50 cm
4. "Daantje the Elder", 2017  
175 x 60 x 100 cm

polystyrene, polyurethane, acrylic resin (Jesmonite), acrylic paint, metal  
chair: wood, screws, wood glue, polyester

