

HELP YOUNG WORLDS

02/09 – 09/10/2011

Preview: Friday 02/09 19:00

Solo show: Ad de Jong

Curated with Fleur van Muiswinkel

Dance performance on the opening night by Tress.

Part I

Ad de Jong has been a part of the Dutch art scene since the late 1970s. Upon graduating from the Rietveld Academy in 1979, he gathered some hands and formed W139, an exhibition space for contemporary art situated in the in bosom of Amsterdam. At the time, a rather shabbexotic setting. The W is still going strong. It occupies a special place in the gut of the Dutch art world. De Jong was the first director and left the position in 1992. Experimentation was highly appreciated.

He used to play sax in the punk band Gulf Pressure AIS, a practice interwoven with his performance activity. And pretty tough on the ears. He went back and forth between New York and India for a few years; explored the monistic idealism of Kashmir Shaivism, made work for techno parties, taught in art schools and organized a variety of exhibitions of international colleagues.

In the year 2000 De Jong began a series of sculptures using epoxy resin. He put his shoulder to the wheel and started producing large-scale installations, as well as wall-based works. This remains the heart of his practice today.

Four sculptures are presented in the show. The largest is produced especially for 1857: a six-meter long cylindrical model, composed of large intersecting cones and numerous colourful freckles. While one is crammed into the front space, a group of three hangs in the hall. They are highly elaborate formations of De Jong's self-defined doctrine and craft. In the grey gleam of the skylights. All hovering in torso height.

Plastic Ab-Ex for the space age – only wait, when was the space age again?

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Part II

Down south on the mainland, in a dockside warehouse, strips of fibreglass are carefully laid out on cardboard covered with plastic. Epoxy is poured and sheets bent into shape. Wisps of bitter fumes rise and curl. The prepolymer resin reacts with polyamine monomers. The cardboard is duct-taped to form rudimentary moulds. Warm brows are cooled. Before the composite is properly cured any excess must be

removed using knives and scissors, unavoidably leaving gazillions of razor sharp spikes of glass that cause delicate cuts in the fingers of able seamen as they meticulously haul the cargo aboard.

Pulled taut, fixed in place, screwed tight, secured with ropes and cords. Made sure it can take the blows of a solar storm. God forbid and save us!

Crossed the strait of Skagerrak hanging in a semi-trailer steered by a Czech driver, captained by a GPS and computer system, day and night under sail: 'LEEWARD, HO! HARD STARBOARD! KEEP COPENHAGEN ON PORT SIDE, LANDLUBBER'

About the artist:

Ad de Jong (born 1953, Breda, The Netherlands) has made performances, paintings, prints and sculptures for four decades. He was one of the co-founders of W139, an artist-run space that saw the light of day in squatted a theatre building in Amsterdam's Red Light District. He lives and works in Amsterdam.

Recent and upcoming solo shows include "FOSFOR", Walden Affairs, Den Haag (with Gijs Frieling), 2011; "OPENING OF TIME", De Nederlandse Cacaofabriek, Helmond, 2010; and "ORIGINAL DAY", Galerie Annette de Keyser, Antwerp, 2008. Group shows include "Happy End" at Basement Project Space, London, 2010; "Hands On Utopia" at Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, 2009; and "Uit de Tijd" at De Service Garage, Amsterdam, 2008. This is his first show in Scandinavia.