

The English word “plot” means not only a conspiracy and a story, but also a piece of land, an ambiguity of meanings that is played upon in Mandla Reuter’s first solo exhibition in the Netherlands. “A Plot” (2011) is an installation made of dirt and a corner post that has been brought into the exhibition space of De Vleeshal. The materials are coming from a piece of land that the artist purchased in Los Angeles, a city whose image is particularly formed by the local movie industry. This synthesis of reality and fiction is the theme the German artist sets out to define. In many ways A Plot can be seen as a diptych, one part becoming an artefact and cultural object, which is transformed and contextualized by the different venues it is traveling to. The other part, as a section on the map by definition immovable, becomes a monument of its own and offering possibilities for things to come.

At De Vleeshal “A Plot” (2011) is accompanied by “Shuteye” (2011), a soda vending machine, which is sometimes on and sometimes off. Built into the space is “The Building” (2011), an I-beam superimposing the gothic architecture with an icon of contemporary construction and seemingly the starting point of a building within the building. A slab of marble, “Untitled” (2011) marks the end of the space. This is not Mandla Reuter’s first exhibition in De Vleeshal. In 2010 with the piece

“Fountain” (2010) he brought 5,000 litres of water from Rome’s Trevi Fountain into the exhibition space during the group exhibition Psychosculptures. This time, through the video “The Shell Home” (2011) the Trevi Fountain is presented via a different fictional element in collective culture: the replica of the fountain in Las Vegas. The reproduction contains elements that play on the reconstruction of reality via its fictional version. The screen is hanging high on the wall in front of gothic sculptures which become spectators.

The artist makes us think about the concept of originality, about what is real and what is false – about the extent to which something retains its essential features even if the original has been changed. The real soil from Los Angeles is brought onto a narrative plane. The artist seems to want to turn the illusion into reality. And thus visitors to the exhibition in Middelburg find themselves walking on a piece of land from Los Angeles, looking at a Trevi Fountain which in reality is the Las Vegas replica, elements that challenge the originality of the exhibition area.

Mandla Reuter (1975) lives in Basel and Berlin. Amongst others he has taken part in “Exhibition, Exhibition” at Turin’s Castello di Rivoli and in “Sculptures Die Too” at La Kunsthalle in Mulhouse. In 2009 he presented two major projects: “Souvenir” at Berlin’s Schinkel Pavillon, and “Now sun now cloud” at the Kunsthalle in Lingen, Germany. He has taken part in the 2008 Santa Fe Biennial

and the 2008 Gwangju Biennale in Korea. He is represented by Neue Alte Brücke, Frankfurt, Galerie Mezzanin, Vienna, Croy Nielsen, Berlin and Francesca Minini, Milan.

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