

Mark Manders (1968) is representing the Netherlands at the 55th International Art Exhibition - la Biennale di Venezia. The Dutch pavilion showcases Room with Broken Sentence, curated by Lorenzo Benedetti (1972). The exhibition covers a 23 year span of Manders' activity, combining existing installations with a monumental 4 meter high monumental new work.

The larger installations developed specially for the Rietveld pavilion reveal significant new aspects of the artist's vocabulary. Turning his back on the frenetic consumerist dynamics of today's cultural system, Manders withdraws into sculptures that seem to have always been there. All works combine a certain mystery with tremendous visual appeal. Manders' use of materials, in which nothing is what it seems (epoxy looks like clay, clay becomes bronze and bronze seems to be wood), enhances this enigmatic visual impact. Leaving the shelter of the 'white cube', it infiltrates, blends into and seeks acknowledgement within a reality close to that of the general public. In an interview Manders stated:

"I don't often show my work in the public domain, rather in museums where people choose to go to see art. But since 1991 I always test a work that I've just finished in a supermarket. I just imagine a new work there and I check if it can survive where it doesn't have the label of an artwork. It is just a thing that someone placed in a supermarket. Now I am sure that all of my works can stand in that environment".

There is a satellite exhibition in a Venetian supermarket proving this aspect of his work.

2013 is a special year for the Netherlands at the Venice Biennale, as it celebrates both a 100th and a 60th anniversary. The Netherlands may have been present since the start of the Biennale, but only from 1913 onwards in their own exhibition space and since 1953 in the present pavilion designed by the great Dutch architect Gerrit Rietveld. The selection of Mark Manders places him in direct confrontation with Rietveld, whose Modernist pavilion is one of the architectural jewels of the Giardini of the Biennale. The result will be a dialogue between a Modernist architect and an artist who, a child of his time, sets out to decipher the enigmatic temporal dimension of our age and create a parallel, autonomous one of his own.

The Dutch entry at the 55th International Art Exhibition is a solo exhibition by one of the Netherlands' most representative contemporary artists. Mark Manders launched his career in 1986 with a work entitled Self-Portrait as a Building: a floor plan of a building realised with pencils, pens and other writing implements. From this point onwards his art has revolved around the exploration of this inner building.

The Mondriaan Fund has been responsible for the Dutch presence at the Venice Biennale since 1996. This year the entry was determined through a » juried open call; 82 proposals were submitted from which the Manders & Benedetti plan was selected.

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