

“In opposition to the arbitrary, which is the origin of every written and spoken language, I have placed the unspoken, the mystic. From despair to ecstasy, that is what the mystic is about now. This is the all-devouring lust for life and love. Unification, not feeling separated from the rest. No ego, no boundaries. Creation becomes one with its creator. I call it the analogue. The analogue versus the arbitrary. The analogue is ritual, evil, mystery, desire, yearning, lust, while the digital is control, technology, sublimation, dependence, cleanliness, transparency. The analogue plus the digital is what humans are about: perspective.”

Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven, *Some Sort of Manifesto*, 2016–17

Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven (also known as AMVK) is an artist of singular complexity. Born in 1951 in Antwerp, where she still lives and works, she has been active since the 1970s as a visual artist, graphic designer and performer. She has always been a pioneer. She should, first and foremost, be considered an artist for the future.

AMVK’s practice is truly interdisciplinary. Her first arena was drawing. She has collaborated with cutting-edge scientists for more than 40 years. In 1981, she and the artist Danny Devos founded the noise band Club Moral, which performed actively for ten years. It was revived in 2001. Under the same title, the pair organised numerous events in Antwerp until 1993. They have also published the magazine *Force Mental* since 1982.

Such collaborations aside, self-organisation and self-analysis are fundamental to AMVK’s work. Her creative commitment to artificial intelligence and other contemporary manifestations of mysticism cannot be disentangled from her social thought and political engagement. She always endeavours to articulate the self with merciless honesty and directness.

AMVK’s works are constellations of imagery and text. To make them she uses the materials, tools and tricks of commercial graphics: Plexiglas, computers, professional-grade printing.

AMVK has had significant international exposure in recent years. This survey is an extended version of her exhibition *What Would I Do in Orbit?*, shown at the Museum Abteiberg in Mönchengladbach and at Kunstverein Hannover in 2016–2017. The publication also serves as the catalogue for those two exhibitions, and it is co-published by the three institutions.

The exhibition offers generous glimpses into a vast oeuvre, its visual power and sophistication. It includes hundreds of works, from ink drawings to complex video installations. It wants to show AMVK as an innovator of forms and interpreter of moods – in the bloodstream of society at large.

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