

Projects 2012

www.hildegoesasger.org

is part of a year-long curatorial research in which the writings of Danish artist and thinker Asger Jorn (1914-1973) built the starting point for exploring contemporary issues – to be distilled throughout the research. Jorn's attempt to develop an all-encompassing theory on art and life from the perspective of the artist is characterized by an interdisciplinary, even holistic approach, at the basis of which lies strong political/ethical engagement. His methodological approach to writing transgresses established modes of thinking, and could be described as an entangled web of reflections, footnotes, styles and detours.

The blog www.hildegoesasger.org, designed by Niessen&DeVries, contains news about my travels, interviews with people I meet on the way, and other postings. Last but not least the blog will also contain contributions by an international group of 'critical respondents' consisting of contemporary artists, designers, architects and thinkers.



In the course of 2012 various public presentations/meetings with special guests will take place, including at venues such as Casco, Utrecht, NL and General Public, Berlin.

Archiving Crisis (work title)

Throughout 2012 I will continue my co-editorship on a publication by artist/filmmaker Stefanos Tsivopoulos, in collaboration with our third editor Alfredo Cramerotti. The book is a visual essay based on a series of previously unpublished images from Greek (media) archives collected by Tsivopoulos over the past six years. The photographs, micro fiches, newspaper images, documents and TV stills are related to the recent political history of Greece and are arranged in three 'acts': The Truman Doctrine, The Junta, and the 17 November group. The publication aims to explore the mechanisms of visual culture in a mediatized democracy, and their effect on the production of collective memory. Textual essays from authors provide academic reflection and will link these historical images to a broader contemporary context.



Stefanos Tsivopoulos, 'Lost Monument', film still, 2009.

The Emperor's New Cloths – Overlapping Biennial, 5th Biennial for Young Artists, Bucharest, 2012

The organizers of the Biennial took reflexiveness on the format of the biennial as a starting point by organizing a set up with 10 different curators, each to provide their own particular curatorial perspective. 'Overlapping Biennial' will be mostly a virtual event. Visitors can gain access to the art works by matrix barcodes (Quick Response codes). Each code will represent an artwork, which will be accessed individually through a hyperlink. These codes will be placed in different physical locations in Bucharest, both indoor (bookshops, libraries, cultural centres, museums, galleries etc.) and in the Bucharest urban environment.

My contribution is named after a short tale dating from 1837 by Hans Christian Andersen. Andersen's 'The Emperor's New Clothes' has acquired an iconic status globally as it migrates across various cultures reshaping itself with each retelling. The phrase "Emperor's new clothes" has become a standard metaphor for anything that smacks of pretentiousness, social hypocrisy, or collective denial. However, the value of the tale lies as much in the creation of the wonderful fabric in the reader's imagination, as in the closing message of challenging authority. I have proposed to publish the QR codes in a newspaper/cultural magazine. In the context of the newspaper, the title refers to the idea of news and the new, for collective memory and denial, for speaking truth to power, for satire, the power of the imagination, and last but not least the notion of truth and the personal. Media stories and images have a tremendous impact on the make-up of the fabric of collective memory, our sense of collectiveness, and our decision making processes. Taking this remark into account, 'The

Emperor's New Cloths' inserts itself right in the heart of one of the main elements that shape our current reality, and the way we perceive ourselves as 'acting' and empowered individuals.

Contributors include Apparatus 22, Ulrike Kubatta, Pinar&Viola, Antonis Pittas, Stefanos Tsivopoulos.



Antonis Pittas, 'Untitled (this is a historic opportunity for us)', during installation at Het Oog, Van Abbemuseum, 2010. Photo: Peter Cox.

Recent projects at the Cobra Museum of Modern Art

Esmé Valk - The Importance of the Composed Domain, 2012

This installation includes artworks from the collection, works on loan, the text 'A Dwelling of Possibility' and a performance. 'The Importance of the Composed Domain' takes as its starting point a series of photographs of Cobra artist Eugène Brands made by ethnography specialist and photographer Frits Lemaire just after WWII. Brands is seen wearing outrageous self-made masks against the backdrop of his own interior, using twigs and a sisal carpet as props. The installation is a reinterpretation of the methods of staging as employed by Brands in his home, this time using the furniture and artworks of the museum as elements to create a stage-like setting.

It includes works by Brands such as drawings he had made of his home depicting three assemblages shown as a slide projection and photographs he had taken of three of his early paintings. Displayed inside a grouping of plexiglass boxes are five sculptures; an ancestral figurine and a mystical sculpture from New Guinea, a beaded mask that belonged to the private collection of Eugène Brands, one of his self-made masks and 'Standing Figure' by Karel Appel that is based on African fetish sculptures. In the corner of the space Anton Rooskens' painting 'Les Gens du Soleil' is placed in a similar manner to how Brands had positioned his paintings when he documented them; with one edge of the work leaning against the wall while the other is standing free.

The text 'A Dwelling of Possibility', that is part of this work, describes a personal take on Brands' relation with his interior and the role it played in an occupied Netherlands.



Esmé Valk, 'The importance of the Composed Domain', installation views, Cobra Museum of Modern Art, 2012.
Photos: Esmé Valk.



Nathaniel Mellors – The Nest

The exhibition took place in the framework of the Cobra Art Prize 2011. Mellors created a new installation including a new entry in his film series 'Ourhouse', using already existing material from 'Ourhouse', and, in close dialogue with me, art works from the collection of the Cobra Museum.



Mellors chose works by artists who, much like himself, were interested in and greatly influenced by the 'primitive' and the margins of rationality – specifically the relation between sculpture and language. In recent years, Mellors has produced a distinctive body of work that combines video, sculpture and writing. The complex relationship between language and power is a recurring theme in his multifaceted work, typically manifesting itself in absurdist, humorous narratives which reveal a penchant for satire and the grotesque. 'Ourhouse' is set in a manor house in the English countryside. The series portrays the Maddox-Wilson family, an eccentric grouping whose roles and relationships begin to shift after the arrival of 'The Object' (an imposing male figure that the family fail to identify as a human being) arrives in the house and begins to consume and excrete their books. In doing so, The Object takes control of language within the house. The themes that are played out in the ensuing episodes are the product of the ingested, half-digested texts.



'Nathaniel Mellors – The Nest', exhibition overview, Cobra Museum of Modern Art, 2011. Photos: Niels Vis.

Pinar&Viola - Digital wall painting

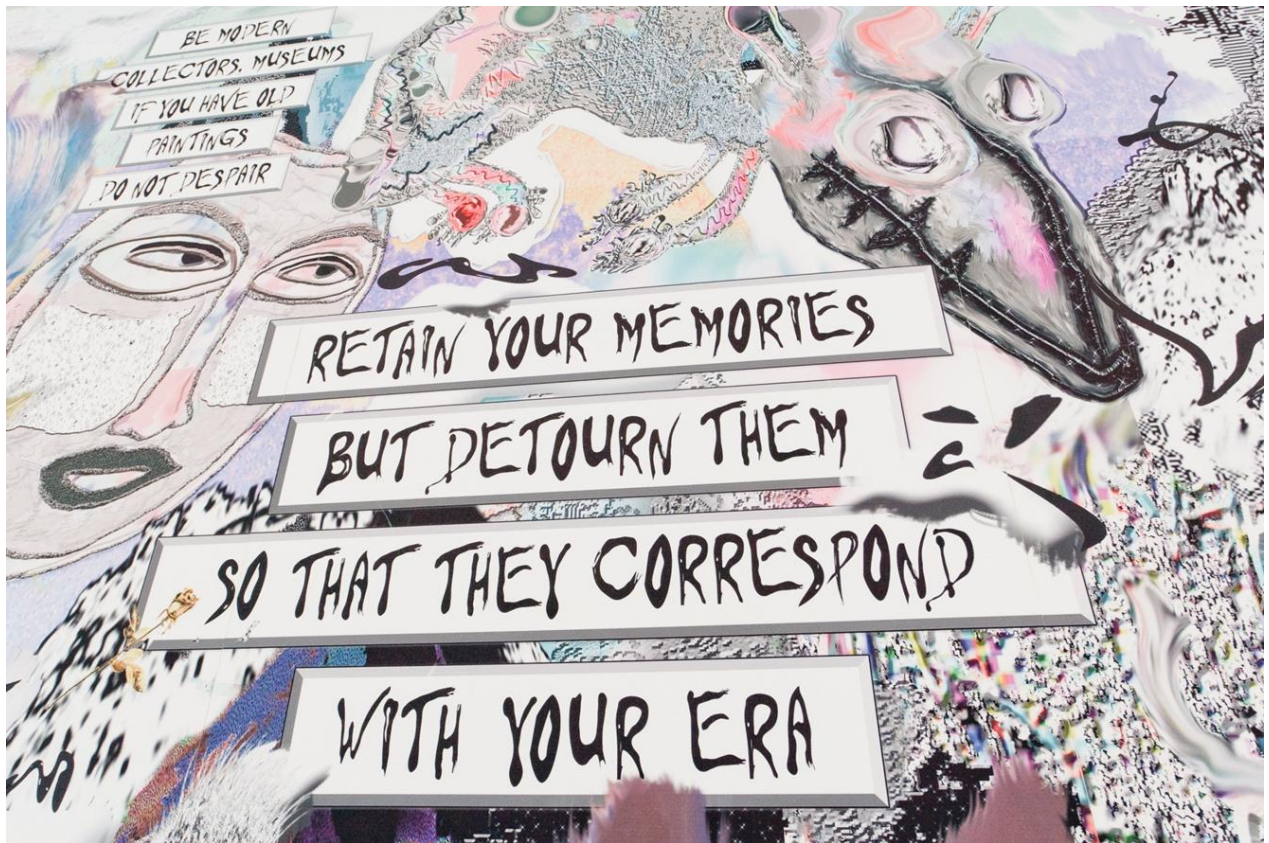
Graphic designers duo Pinar&Viola were commissioned to create a semi-informative semi-autonomous contribution to the group exhibition 'Sowing and weeding – folk culture in contemporary art', which was an adaptation of a project by guest curator Nicole Fritz. I invited additional participants with commissioned and recent works: graphic designer duo Pinar&Viola; bureau for cultural planning Bureau Venhuizen and visual artists Hadassah Emmerich, Nadine Hottenrott; Rory Pilgrim, Lisl Ponger and Derk Thijs.

Pinar&Viola create hyper detailed surfaces by 'scanning' the contemporary visual culture, and 'printing' ecstatic surfaces in return. Colossal visual gestures, hyper intricate detail and excessive embellishment fill our collaged designs to the brim. By transposing, fusing and altering its elements, they aim to subvert conventional compositions. These notions all collapse into a lively and sparkling surface of contemporary and informational intensity. That's why they started using the term 'Ecstatic Surface Design' to frame our graphic design practice.

For 'Sowing and Weeding ...' Pinar&Viola created an enormous digital wall painting consisting of specially designed wall paper integrating morphed animal and other shapes based on Cobra art works, contemporary digital folk art found on the internet, and quotations by Cobra artists on folk art and culture.



Pinar&Viola, digital wall painting (detail), Cobra Museum of Modern Art, 2011. Photo: Vincent Carmiggelt.



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Pinar&Viola, digital wall painting, Cobra Museum of Modern Art, 2011.