

Metropolis M

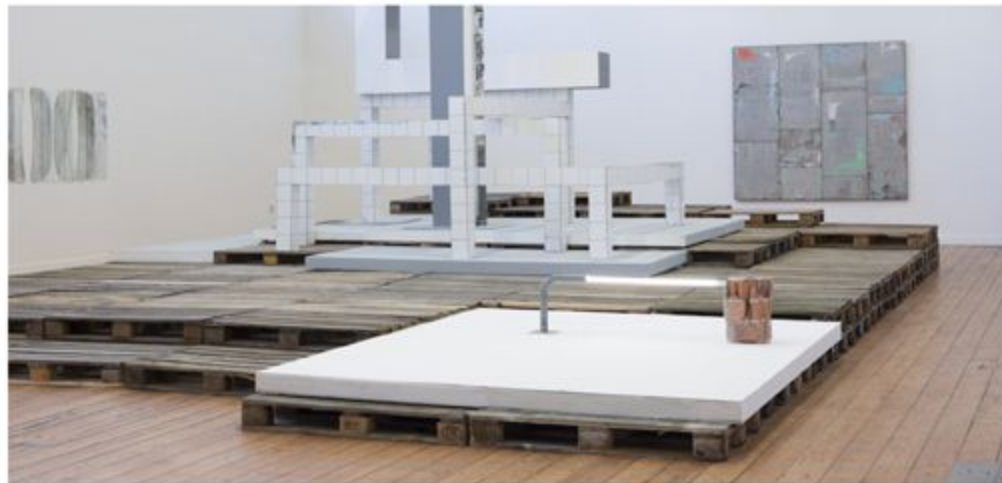
Crossing each other in a cycle – on the work of Braam and Eussen

21.12.2020 | FEATURE — Linda Kőke

Bram Braam en Anneke Eussen are from the same generation, both grew up in the Dutch region of southern Limburg, and moved to Berlin for some years. They produce architectural work about decay, revaluation of the old and used, and the cycle of materials. Linda Kőke talks to the artists about their work and their first cooperation in the exhibition CYCLE at PARK Tilburg.

Bram Braam: 'Our collaboration for this exhibition had somewhat of a risk in it, because our work and our practices have a strong connection with each other. Eventually it all worked out very well: our works compliment each other, while still being quite different and showing contrasts.' It is precisely this pleasant play between similarities and differences that make CYCLE a joy to visit.

CYCLE offers a reflection on the constant cycle of decay and rebuilding, and our use of and relationship with materials. Both the individual works and the exhibition as a whole show a juxtaposition of cleanliness and new materials versus rawness and repurposed materials. Our relationship with materials leaves a lot to be desired: too often we discard things that have a second life in them, whether it is an object, a material or a dilapidated building. Braam and Eussen comment on our relationship with the old and the used and offer a newfound respect for used materials through the works shown in PARK.



Exhibition overview CYCLE at PARK Tilburg

Metropolis M



Exhibition overview CYCLE at PARK Tilburg

In *CYCLE*, artist Anneke Eussen takes the possibility of transformation as her starting-point. 'Once broken materials often offer countless variations in its former shape', she says. Spread across an entire wall in PARK is her series *Nothing gets lost in time* (2020), consisting of broken antique glass that has been twisted in such a way that the fracture lines form the new perimeter. Each of the 24 panels originally had the same rectangular shape. Because each panel broke in a different way when removed from the frame, twenty-four new and unique shapes were created. The twenty-four panels refer to the twenty-four hours in a day. Eussen: 'I am fascinated by how people try to classify things in systems like time and by how these systems affect how we see and value things. Time is in western culture often taken as a linear movement, but I see it as it as a circular movement.' This circularity is reflected in the glass-series as well, where the destruction of one piece of glass serves as an immediate starting-point for many new ones.

The original details in the glass panels are still visible, like the glue traces where the panels were fixed into the framework. The materials are not manipulated, which demonstrates Eussen's great respect for her materials and their many possibilities. The delicate nature of the series stands out against Braam's large installation that lends its name to the show: *Cycle*. The clinical, white lines of Braam's sculpture offer a sharp yet interesting contrast against the fragility and intimacy of Eussen's *Nothing gets lost in time*, yet dealing with similar subjects.

'Once broken materials often offer countless variations in its former shape'

Metropolis M



Anneke Eussen, Nothing Gets Lost in Time (detail) (2020)



Anneke Eussen, Shifting Perception

Metropolis M

After studying in Maastricht and Antwerp and having lived in Brussels and Berlin, Eussen now lives and works in Vaals in southern Limburg. The town contrasts with the industrial character and fast pace of the Belgian and German capitals in many respects. Nevertheless, Eussen also experiences similarities. As a result of the depopulation and ageing population, industrial buildings in Vaals are also becoming vacant. When new materials, buildings or consumer articles deteriorate or break down, they are suddenly experienced as worthless. A building is renovated or even demolished and replaced.

This is where Eussen's shows connect with that of Bram Braam, whose works are exhibited in *CYCLE* as well. Like Eussen, Braam looks into the lifecycle of materials, and specifically in that of architecture: the placement of a building, its appropriation by usage, and perhaps even its complete disappearance, follow up on each other. After death - or after the decay of architecture - this cycle begins anew. By re-appropriating used materials such as old lampposts, rubbish bins and demolition waste, Braam questions whether we can still know what we are actually looking at? How do we interpret our daily reality, if we are not sure of anything, whether it is real or reconstructed?

Like an island in a sea, *Cycle* is the centre that dictates how the works around it can be seen, the playful architectural construction has openings that allow visitors to peek through and see the other works in relation to one another



Bram Braam, *The Flow of Present* (2020), 200x220 cm

Kúoke, Linda. "Crossing each other in a cycle — on the work of Braam and Eussen", Metropolis M, December 2020

Metropolis M

When walking through the exhibition, the architectural influences in the work of both artists are evident. The works of both Braam and Eussen not only have a monumental quality to them, they also directly refer to architectural elements such as building materials like glass or concrete, specific locations or entire buildings. The exhibition itself shares this architectural feel: the former chapel, now exhibition venue, places Braam's installation *Cycle* in the centre on a platform consisting of wooden pallets. Like an island in a sea, *Cycle* is the centre that dictates how the works around it can be seen. It shows an intriguing play of horizontal and vertical beams, creating a playful architectural construction with openings that allow visitors to peek through and see the other works in relation to one another - like windows allow one to look at what is outside, while still seeing the window frames.

In *Cycle*, Braam refers to artists from the minimalist movement of the sixties, such as Sol Lewitt, as sources for inspiration. In his work similar geometric shapes come to the fore, yet he combines them with more destructive forms of demolition, decay and vandalism. 'Mondrianesque references' are combined with 'the brutalist and modernist architecture of Le Corbusier and the work of Gordon Matta Clark'. The work *Cycle* in the exhibition is partly a direct reference to Sol Lewitt's sculpture *Structure (1994)*, which is located in Berlin's public space in a residential area in the Kreuzberg district. The sculpture has been appropriated by the local residents by plastering it with stickers or splattering it with graffiti. Sol Lewitt's sculpture is a meeting of opposites: geometric precision and arrangement stand in stark contrast with the work's surroundings. Over the course of time, the sculpture has been radically transformed; a transformation that has now been manipulated in PARK's exhibition-space as well.

ELEPHANT

5 Questions with Anneke Eussen

"Nothing in life is without value to me, if you look closely there is always an energy captured. I don't believe there are inferior materials." Anneke Eussen's works have a fineness and fragility to them, although they also often employ hardy materials--from natural marble to metal hinges. The Dutch artist is currently showing Vertical Horizon at Galerie Tatjana Pieters in Ghent. Words by Emily Steer

What can people expect from your upcoming show at Tatjana Pieters Gallery?

When I was thinking about the first new ideas for this show, I was in the middle of moving from one place to the other. I was leaving Berlin to make a new start in the Netherlands, closer to my family. Being in transit means letting go of the old before you can relate to the new. You enter in a state that I started calling "the space in between". Expectations and a vision of how things might turn out to be was the force that kept me going.

The space in between never stopped me from working, which has turned this moment into a reality. The works in my upcoming show appear silent; there is neither spectacle nor entertainment. The works whisper about how things connect, become one, find their place and are never incomplete. It's about trusting and peace with those elements in life we cannot control. It's about embracing them as a path that leads to the unexpected.

This is your sixth exhibition with the gallery. As you work from show to show do you tend to create new series with a clean slate or is your process a continuous development?

ELEPHANT

Our environment is in constant change. To grow means to live and to develop. I can't see my artistic actions in any other way.

Your works often consist of multiple materials—many pre-used. How do you work with these? Are you quite methodical in collecting, or are you very led by the pieces that you happen to find?

The pre-used objects relate to the question about how to value. To recycle materials means that they grow into something new. Nothing in life is without value to me, if you look closely there is always an energy captured. I don't believe there are inferior materials. To discard pre-used materials is a lack of imagination. I am led by the pieces that I happen to find. I like the unexpected part that comes to me. As an artist, my ideas and vision bring me to a certain point in creation, mostly it is the unplanned and unexpected that lifts it into its final state of existence.

What is it about marble that especially interests you?

Marble reminds me how brief human life is. Marble is ancient and always unique in its pattern. There is never a second copy.

There is a fragility in a lot of your works, sometimes the materials and connection points are very fine, and sometimes well-used. Can you tell me a bit about this?

The connection points symbolize my feelings about change and transit. If we find ourselves in a moment of change, it is a complex reality to deal with. The choices we have to make are the fine connections that lead us through this complexity. How materials connect in my work refers to how events in life occur. Sometimes with doubt and hesitation. Sometimes clear and simple.

'Vertical Horizon' runs until 30 April at Galerie Tatjana Pieters.
tatjanapieters.com

ELEPHANT



Seven years in Berlin, 2014, piece of plaster plate, needle, 0.50 Euro coin with Brandenburger Tor and one blank side, 20 x 10 x 17 cm, unique



Just another promise, 2015, residue Ikea cabinet, marble plate, black elastic wire, chain, white feather, 45 x 70 x 12 cm, unique, private collection

ELEPHANT



ELEPHANT



Shuffle, 2016 metal, elastic, paint, nails 110 x 300 x 1 cm unique



Equal in Some Ways, 2017 wooden sticks, metal fixation, beads, thread, paint, nails 170 x 26 x 6 cm unique

ELEPHANT



Unique Repetition, 2014, colored pencil on paper, 95 x 90 cm, framed, unique



ELEPHANT



It was never meant to be ... (constructive), 2015, wood piece glued and pinned together, 80 x 20 x 20 cm, unique

Share with

