Personal Matters and Public Affairs

performance, ±20min, 2015
plasticine, wood

*Personal Matters and Public Affairs* examines the position and status of the independent thing and individual when they are removed from their private space. Represented as a portrait titled ‘I’, the individual/thing enters the public domain where it is confronted with ‘The Other’. ‘The Other’, in this case, takes the shape of a car in a 1 to 1 scale model made of plasticine (clay). During the exhibition different people took the role of performer, and modified ‘The Other’. The choice for the performers stemmed from encounters and/or confrontations through which ‘I’ was defined; the mother in law, the father, the gallery owner and the neighbor. Every performer was represented by a portrait made in plasticine which were stored in wooden transport boxes in the exhibition space. Documentation of the performances were shown on screens during the exhibition. Employees of de Appel arts centre have been offered a short modeling workshop prior to the exhibition in order to return the car to it’s original state on a daily basis during opening hours of the exhibition.
Imitator Being Made
performance, ±22min, 2015
plaster

‘...What I want to show and talk about for now doesn’t have so much to do with the appearance of this particular object as such, but rather focuses on those things an object is generally possessed by, the thoughts and meanings that are preserved inside an object. Not necessarily with a spiritual approach, although spiritual perspectives will not be excluded either, in case it feels right to mention them. My main focus point will be to gain more insight into that which underlies and determines an object, which is normally difficult to perceive clearly, but in the end does affect our relationship with objects and things, and the way we deal with them on a daily basis. I’m not claiming that these underlying ideas are impossible to observe – on the contrary – but sometimes it’s just much harder to locate and recognize them in the daily grind. Therefore this plaster object will serve as a tool that helps to illustrate my findings and make them become tangible during the rest of my talk...’
Excerpt from script.
The Collector and its Host
Installation activated by exhibition space that hosts the work, 2015
plaster, plasticne, wood

With The Collector and its Host I’ve introduced a new character in my work; the Collector. Presenting itself in the form of a modular shelves system, it exhibits a collection of models and copies of characters from previous works, such as the ‘Rietveld chair’, ‘the Good and the Bad Sculpture’, and ‘the Foot’. While I usually play all parts myself, this time I created the conditions to then hand over the work. The work was shown during my solo show at Galerie Fons Welters, Amsterdam. As for the course of the exhibition, the collection was activated by the gallery staff, daily re-installing and rearranging the elements and creating a direct interaction with the characters.
This performance is a continuation of the work *The Hand, the Eye and It* from 2013 in which a plasticine replica of my own hand takes on the role of the mediator in a collaboration between the performer, the creator’s eye, and the elusive ‘it’ – the thing that wants to be made, which is present as an amorphous flesh coloured plasticine object. Describing the complex relations at play, I foreground the way the various elements take on both literal and symbolic roles, the lines between subject and object, performer and creator, hand and eye. In this performance the Foot – a new character that is represented by a fashionable plasticine sneaker – adds a more conceptual viewpoint onto the conversation, which in the former lecture was left underexposed.

The performance took place at Galerie Fons Welters, Amsterdam.
About the Good and the Bad Sculpture 3
performance, ±15 min, 2014

About the Good and the Bad Sculpture 3 is a performance realized by Gabriel Säll, a student from the Royal Institute of Art in Stockholm. This work was realized by means of a series of instructions followed up by Gabriel. The first instruction was to produce two objects that represented his version of the concept ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’. After discussing his sculptural results and noticing the similarities between his ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’ and my version of them, I asked him to prepare a performance exploring his role as Imitator in relation to his ‘Good’ and ‘Bad’.
The Good, the Bad, the Happy, the Sad
handwritten and drawn script, 2014
paper, pencil
The Good, the Bad, the Happy, the Sad
performance, ±20 min, 2014
wood, handwoven carpet, plasticine

The Good, the Bad, the Happy, the Sad starts from ‘the Good and the Bad Sculpture’, which are two objects I made in 2008 and with which I’ve done several experiments up till now. In the course of six years the Good and Bad Sculpture have become representatives through which I investigate the concept of ‘good’ and ‘bad’. In the new sequel of the work I wanted to investigate into the moment where an object becomes independent, the moment where its maker gives it out of his hands and the work starts to have its own life. The performance-lecture is told from the perspective of the Good and Bad sculptures, in which the two sculpture have their own voice. The performance took place at de Oude Kerk in Amsterdam.
The Hand, the Eye and It
handwritten and drawn script, 2014
paper, (colour)pencil

daylight. Sometimes the form complex is confused with
the body, complicated, but they mean very different
things. Complex means that it is the opposite of
independence while complicated is the opposite of
complex. The performer can familiarize with these complexes
that include ideas, sensations, feelings, emotions and
expressions. She's an employee of the complex, one who
works in common and does what she is asked to
do. The performer is responsible for how the graphics
and expressions should be used for the creation. When
these ideas collide the light that are built here on the
basis. The light is assigned to the creation science at
this stage of the work. It only to play with and
avoids to happening with light right now.

But it's not so critical that above, that all
complexes simultaneously from hand to the eyes in
especially because it happens out of sight and make
itself when the performer creates something of the
process. Then, the eyes left the meaning of the
hand. They could not perceive the meaning of it. It
appeared as is found of them, but the eyes had
then what was going on and who gave the instructions
for creating. They didn't know if the instructions
were actually from the visual context, the
feelings, emotions, instincts, etc. of the creator's body.
The Hand, the Eye and It
performance, ±20 min, 2013
plasticine

In this talk a plasticine replica of my hand becomes the mediator in a collaboration between the performer, the creator’s eye, and the elusive ‘it’--the thing that wants to be made. The various elements take on both literal and symbolic roles that investigate the lines between subject and object, performer and creator, hand and eye.
During the course of the exhibition (1646, The Hague, The Netherlands) three guests were invited as guides to lead visitors through the show. With my work and practice as a starting point, each guide was free to talk and lead the audience in their own way. My father, Rob Houben, who is personally involved with my practice, but not active within the professional art field, gave the first tour. Rob Leijdekkers, a former teacher at the art academy in Breda (NL) who has continued to follow my work, gave the second tour. The third tour was led by Brenda Tempelaar, an artist who I met during her studies at the art academy in Breda where I was teaching at that time.
Five Possible Lectures on Six Possibilities for a Sculpture

performance, ± 25 min, 2012
plasticine

Five Possible Lectures on Six Possibilities for a Sculpture is a talk, which provides an overview of the 2009-2012 lecture series Six Possibilities for a Sculpture. The sculpture, the subject of the Six Possibilities series, with the aid of the performer, recounts the history of the series, jumping between present and past, to explore its identity and place within the present moment. The lecture took place at P///AKT, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.