



FRANK KOOLEN - RECENT WORKS

My work can be described as an ongoing search for the ideal combination between the beauty of discovery and the happiness of recognition. A moment in which the everyday, the scientific and the magical seem to collide, creating unexpected logic. Maybe this logic is an equivalent to my notion of the absurd but at the same time I'm looking for possibilities to reactivate the meaning of an (sometimes generally known) image or idea by changing or rearranging its context.

Directness is an important characteristic for my work until now. By directness I mean looking for the fastest road from idea to result, but at the same time to be willing to improvise when needed. I think it's also a way to give an insight in how choices are made and what results or possibilities they can generate. By doing so I'm not only showing art 'as a timeless configuration waiting to dazzle the next human', but also present it as a dynamic experience in which there's place for great misunderstandings and failed good intensions. Directness makes that everything is brought back to this one moment of (un)expected victory or defeat. Whether I take a photo, make a sculpture, do a performance or make a video, I think in all cases this directness plays an important role.

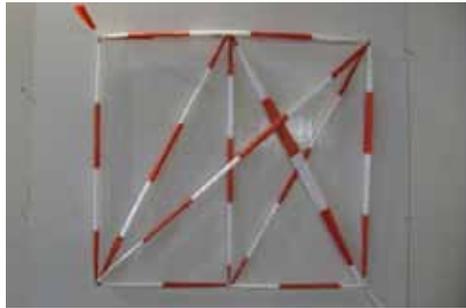
The choices I make during the process of making a work of art are generally affected by my interests in athropological, biological or historical themes or more specific: social interaction, intercultural differences and the possible meanings of symbols and cliches. It's not that I unconditionally believe in big subjects or in symbols as such, but by testing an idea over and over again, I try to create space for questions about, and reinterpretation of, that idea as well as the chosen visual language.

Because the place or situation where I show my work changes its meaning, or because a certain medium or idea asks for a different approach, the shape of my work changes constantly. Therefore, until now, it has not been characterised by a material or medium but by a dynamic process related attitude towards my actual surroundings, the context of the situation, art, science and every other bit of relevant information. Whether I make work or an exhibition.

PHOTOS

Selection 2000-2013

In the photos I've been taking since 2000 I'm looking for strange coincidences or sculptural combinations. Images that show that the everyday surroundings can be slightly out of the ordinary if you pay attention.



WHAT'S NEXT

94 Sculpture Ideas, 2013

Publication and photo series.

In an one hour performance, helped by processes related to alchemy and magic, I created 94 new sculpture ideas from a huge pile of possible objects and materials.



KAAP 2012 (Formerly known as The Children's Biennial)

Curator and organizer, Fort Ruigenhoek, Utrecht/Groenekan, 2012/2013

In 2011 I was one of the invited artists to KAAP, but in 2012 I was asked to curate this unique exhibition. For KAAP artists are asked to make a work specially for children in between 7 and 15 years old. For the edition of 2013 I chose the perspective of artists dealing with notions of science and scientific experiments in their work. In and around the bunkers of Fort Ruigenhoek, a 19th century fortress part of De Hollandse Waterlinie, 15 artists came up with their specific approaches and ideas related to these scientific ideas connected to the perception of children. Among the invited artists were: Wim T. Schippers, John Bock, Egill Saebjornsson, Zoro Feigl, Jaap Kroneman, Min Oh, Maze de Boer and Jos de Gruyter & Harald Thys.

I was also asked to curate the 2013 edition which dealt with the utopic world-view of Cobra artist Constant Nieuwenhuys. Invited artists: David Bade, Melanie Bonajo, Jonas Wijtenburg, Maria Pask & Saskia Janssen, Kaleb de Groot en Paul Zegers.



RAFTS

Selection of rafts 2008-2012

I made rafts for various exhibitions and occasions. They are references to literature or a sense of adventure but are at the same time paradoxical objects which, due to the lack of water are dysfunctional and isolated.

1. Next Level, New Raft, 2008, NICC, Antwerp, Belgium

400x300x250 cm, various materials

2. Who else is with me, 2009, RijksakademieOpen, Amsterdam, NL

(Final exhibition at De Rijksakademie. (A badly camouflaged raft filled with all the things from my studio). *400x200x200cm, various materials*

3. Tropical Raft, 2009, Stork Building, Amsterdam

4. A Smile of Fortune, 2010, Fons Welters Gallery, Amsterdam

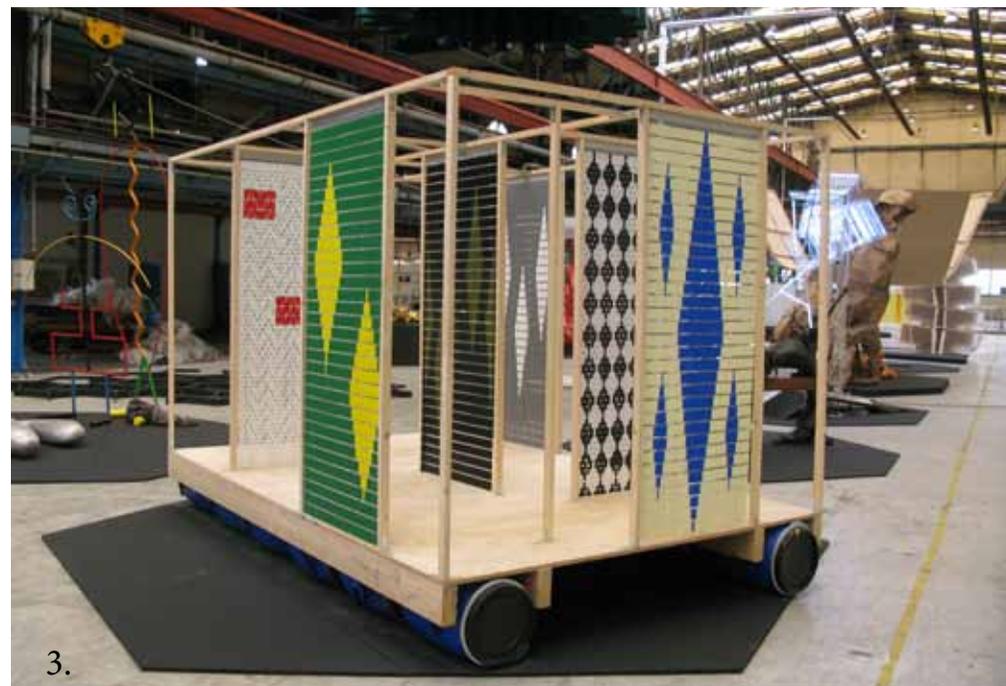
800x250x150 cm, wooden logs, copper, brass, aluminium, glass, rope



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2.



3.



MUSEE DES REGLES (PHENOMENON PLUS)

Group exhibition, Zeeuws Museum, Middelburg, NL, 2011

400x400x350 cm, various materials, video

For the exhibition 'Collected works-Section Folklorique' of the Zeeuws Museum in Middelburg (NL) I made a raft as a possibly useful module for a floating exhibition of phenomena. Although Middelburg is close to the sea this raft was located on the third floor of the museum, therefore become quite utopic. The onboard video shows an ongoing series of experiments creating 'phenomena' of different backgrounds: scientific, artistic or sometimes even slapstick. The total work is a reaction to the eclectic collection of the Museum and the work of Belgian artist Marcel Broodthaers who had a special relationship with the museum.

Next page: Stills from the video 'Phenomenon Plus.'







VARIOUS EXHIBITIONS

1. Phenomenon Plus (Momentum Version), Gemak, The Hague, NL, 2013
2. Day Well Spent, Van Bommel van Dam Prize, Venlo, NL, 2011
3. Future Archaeology, Kaap 2011, Utrecht, NL, 2011
(Hand made archaeological finding place for future relics)
4. Play Curacao, Unfair, Amsterdam, NL, 2014
5. Casino Royale, Rijksakademie, Amsterdam, NL, 2009
6. Almost Home, Willem Baars Gallery, Amsterdam, NL, 2011
7. Studiorama, Parkstad Limburg Prize, Heerlen, NL, 2013
(Remake of my studio in a huge transport box)
8. Terra Nova, 1646, The Hague, NL, 2010
9. De Oversteek, Bonnefantenmuseum on location, Rekem, B, 2010
10. Hour House, De Service Garage, Amsterdam, NL, 2011



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KARAOKE PAVILJON

Residency and installation, Vijfde Seizoen, Den Dolder, NL, 2012

500x500x600 cm, Wood, karaoke installation

In the summer of 2012 my family and me stayed for three months in Het Vijfde Seizoen (The Fifth Season). This residency for artists is located on the premises of a mental institution in the middle of a forest. Next to the possibility to live and work in a beautiful house and ditto surroundings the artists are asked to develop a project which includes patients of the institution. Instead of coming up with some safe workshop I decided to build a huge Karaoke Paviljon. Patients, visitors, employees or accidental passersby were invited to enter the paviljon and choose their favourite song to sing. Many songs were sung.



ESCAPING THE MAPLANDS

Group exhibition, Mapping the Landscape, Museum van Bommel van Dam, Venlo, NL, 2012

1000x500x200 cm, various materials, video

This exhibition was about the landscape in the region of Venlo, an area in the south of The Netherlands. I hired a hot air balloon and traveled over the city and bordering landscape. When I saw something interesting from above, I zoomed in and out and traveled on. Two weeks later I visited these places with 35 local volunteers I found through adverts in local newspapers. On every location the volunteers acted a certain scene they decided upon themselves, the only boundary being that they had to stand as still as possible. The result became an analogue version of Google Maps and Google Streetview in one.. I screened the result in a constructed and empty museumlike installation. In the oversized displays scarce relics from the movie were shown.

Next page: Stills from the video 'Escaping the Maplands'





TIME TRAVEL TOURS

Performance, Audiotour, Life in the Woods, Marres, Maastricht, NL, 2013

In an old industrial area, called Bosscherveld, just north of the centre of Maastricht nothing really happens any more. Some small bussiness are scattered around and in the utter corner you'll find an old dump. Interested in places where nothing really happens I used the invitation of Marres to investigate this area. As always with places where nothing really happens it turned out to be a place full of history and even an archaeological hotspot, the old dump being the location where the oldest Neanderthal bones of The Netherlands were found. A fact nobody in Maastricht really knows about. In an audiotour connected to an one hour walk a voice leads you past strange locations and adres-ses historical and fictious information about the region. Historical figures are numb, alienated extra's to this absurd and confusing tour which ends up on the top of the old dump. The climb to the top and finish on the hill does bring catharsis next to a healthy portion of comforting dissapointment.



THE GREAT ESCAPE

Curated Group exhibition, Willem Baars Projects, Amsterdam, 2013

Exhibition about works as escape artists featuring Guillaume Bijl, Koenraad Dedobbeleer, Kristof van Gestel, Lieven Hendriks, Vaast Colson and Gert Robijns.



CONCEPT STORE

Curated Group exhibition, Nest, The Hague, 2014 (with Marius Lut)

Exhibition as a concept store featuring Wjm Kok, Vaast Colson, Paul Elliman, Michael Krebber, Merlin Carpenter, Erika Hock, Ola Vasiljeva, Jeroen Jacobs, Ingmar Konig, Klaas Kloosterboer and John M Armleder.



PERFORMANCES

Selection 2003-2013

1. Future of Life, 2007
2. Where is Eldorado Anyway, 2007
3. Mr. Ping Pong Dance, 2003
4. Living Arrow, 2003
5. Interview with an Eagle, 2011
6. Generosity T.V. 2007
7. Generosity T.V. (Doves), 2007
8. Opening 'Tropical Years', 2009
9. 'Aguirre, the Remake', 2010
10. Mini Bar, 2003
11. Generosity T.V. 2007
12. Dancing Gulliman, 2002
13. Mr. Ping Pong Gallery, 2002



