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4. INSTITUTIONAL AND OTHER PLATFORMS

TURNING POINT 1985

Television Piracy and Mass Media Intervention

The relationship with mass media is a recurring factor in the development of video and media art, in which the introduction of cable television in Amsterdam in the late 1970s is seen as a pivotal moment. From then on, television signals are no longer captured from the ether by means of an antenna, but are delivered to the viewer through a coaxial cable.⁵⁴ Up until 1995, the Amsterdamse Kabeltelevisie (KTA) (Amsterdam Cable Television) is owned by the municipality of Amsterdam. The introduction of the cable was not an urgent issue, because in the flat Netherlands good reception could be ensured almost everywhere via a minimal number of masts.⁵⁵ Yet cable television gains importance as it is able to broadcast programmes from neighbouring countries such as Belgium and Germany virtually for free.⁵⁶ This takes place in a period when a field of tension arises around the legality or illegality of the matter caused mainly by the government regulation of at that time still legal practices – a very ‘Dutch’ approach. It is a time of activism and protest; an attitude that finds its origins in the squatters’ movement that has been on the rise in Amsterdam since the 1960s. In the field of television, this results in activities such as the pirate station PKP TV (founded in 1981 by Peter Klashorst and the brothers Maarten and Rogier van der Ploeg) which later, in 1982, becomes *Rabotnik TV*.⁵⁷ These pirate stations are the critical and playful answer to the many commercial pirate stations of that time.⁵⁸ In this early phase, piracy is often used to broadcast porn movies and commercials. PKP TV also broadcasts advertisements, but with a twist. In the mid-1980s, the character of the squatters’ movement changes. In 1983, (former) squatters found the collective BILWET, an abbreviation for *Stichting tot Bevordering van Illegale Wetenschap*, also called ADILKNO in English, which stands for Foundation for the Advancement of Illegal Knowledge.⁵⁹ If until then it had been a creative environment where artists who were painters, band members and media artists lived, worked and exhibited on the basis of a do-it-together attitude as described by Amanda Wasielewski, after the death

54 Menno Grootveld, ‘De laatste vrije media van het Westen’, *De Groene Amsterdammer*, 1 March 2012.

55 Robert Briel, ‘Geschiedenis van de kabeltelevisie in Nederland’, nederland.broadbandtvnews.com, 15 December 2012, nederland.broadbandtvnews.com/2012/12/15/geschiedenis-van-de-kabeltelevisie-in-nederland.

56 The flexible copyright laws of that time play an important role in this. The secondary broadcast of a primary radio broadcast is copyright-free due to a Supreme Court ruling of 1981. Thanks to this legislation, foreign programmes can be imported and broadcasted virtually free. Since 1983, commercial channels are allowed on Dutch television.

of squatter Hans Kok in a police cell and other acts of violence, its image is changing.⁶⁰ BILWET advocates a do-it-yourself mentality and no longer believes in a social revolution. The collective also continues to advance the international position of the Dutch squatters’ movement and gives it a more intellectual and theoretical character.⁶¹

Other factors, such as the end of the BKR that gave artists the opportunity to sell their work to the state, and the increasing unemployment, force artists/squatters into making individual choices, move their beacons or focus on more financially successful sides of their profession. At the end of 1982, there also comes an end to the absolute freedom of the ‘ether dissident’ as Menno Grootveld, the initiator of *Rabotnik TV* writes.⁶² Since *Rabotnik TV*, according to Wasielewski, ‘gave voice to the political movement *De Reagering*’, it is viewed with some suspicion by the local authorities.⁶³ Together with the most important squatter station *De Vrije Keyser*, which becomes mobile at the end of 1980, the local government will soon ban it from cable. From 1987, *Rabotnik TV* is given the opportunity to broadcast again via the Amsterdam broadcaster *SALTO*, with Gerald van der Kaap as the new producer. Two years before, an attempt was made outside of the field of the squatters’ movement to reclaim the intervention of art and artists in the mass media, now in the form of a festival or manifestation that extends over the entire city of Amsterdam and in which a large number of established cultural institutions participate. One of the initiators, David Garcia, does not stop there and returns a few years later with the *Tactical Media* movement.

Talking Back to the Media

In November 1985, artists intervene for a month through a wide variety of media channels in Amsterdam. *Talking Back to the Media* (originally *Artists Talking Back to the Media*), initiated by artists David Garcia and Raúl Marroquín, is a playful and critical one-off festival; according to Garcia, it is an attempt to be ‘site specific within the media landscape’.⁶⁴ The event uses and responds to the Amsterdam cable network. It also includes street posters, radio broadcasts, film nights, debates, lectures and exhibitions in the medium and small-sized venues in Amsterdam. Aside from Marroquín and Garcia, the main organisers of the festival are Rob Perrée, Max Bruinsma, Ulises Carrión, Aart van Barneveld, Sabrina Kamstra and Sebastián López. The participating artists, including Hans Haacke, General Idea, Lydia Schouten, John Baldessari, Barbara Bloom and Servaas, give lectures and present commissioned work. There is a photo exhibition on view at *Aorta*, conversations take place in *De Appel*; film screenings in *Kriterion*; the play *Het Houten Zwaard* (The Wooden Sword) in the Shaffy Theater (later Felix Meritis); video programmes are hosted by *Time Based Arts* (then located on the Bloemgracht). VPRO Radio broadcasts sound art in programmes compiled by Ulises Carrión. Amsterdam Cable Television releases four-hour-long programmes of video works and interviews, something that would not have been possible via traditional television broadcasting. The last broadcast consists

57 The letters represent both the artists’ initials and Pop Kunst Piraten (Pop Art Pirates).

58 Grootveld 2012 (see note 54).

59 The theoretical collective consists of Arjen Mulder, Bas Jan van Stam, Lex Wouterloot, Patrice Riemens and Geert Lovink.

60 Wasielewski 2019 (see note 41). The history of the Dutch squatters’ movement was written by Virginie Mamadouh, *De stad in eigen hand: Provo’s, Kabouters en krakers al stedelijke sociale beweging* (Amsterdam: SUA, 1992); Eric Duivenvoorden, *Een voet tussen de deur: Geschiedenis van de kraakbeweging (1964–1999)* (Amsterdam: De Arbeiderspers, 2000); and

of a discussion broadcast, live from the Shaffy Theater, moderated by Saskia Bos, the then director of De Appel (see also the contribution by Angela M. Bartholomew in this volume). A magazine is published with contributions from artists, art historians and theoreticians especially written for the event, including the sharp essay 'Constructie De-constructie' (Construction De-construction) by Sebastián López, in which he places the activities of the event in an art historical and theoretical perspective. López shows how the truth principles of media function and how artists have played with these codes since the 1970s; a line of research that will be continued by Garcia. The manifestation makes clear that the social and technological transformations that lead to the decentralisation of mass media are already in full swing by the mid-1980s. The upcoming introduction and rise of the Internet will reinforce this decentralisation later on, at least for a certain period. *Talking Back to the Media* is exemplary for events that take place on a social, political and cultural level. It actualises the triangular relationship between television, art institute and video art, in which the latter rather manifests itself as a thorn in the side.

Video and Institutional Critique

In the interventions initiated by *Talking Back to the Media*, video is used as an art practice that is situated between mass media (cable television) and exhibition space. Sebastián López, editor of *Talking Back to the Media*, reflects in *The Magnetic Era* on this position: 'Outside this field, but including it, another rich history was to be developed.'⁶⁵ Indeed, the video works made by *Talking Back to the Media* are in many respects situated somewhere between television and exhibition space, yet by no means represent a new field. After all, they do not exist without the context of television or the context of the art institute. Already in the 1960s, there were Dutch television programmes, such as Signalement of the VARA network, that paid a lot of attention to the avant-garde of that time. In part because the presenters, Willem de Ridder and Wim T. Schippers, were artists who gave the programme a very unique interpretation and style, the programme or parts of it were immediately pigeonholed as 'art'. In 1971, the Nederlandse Omroep Stichting (NOS) (Dutch Broadcast Foundation) broadcasted a series of video works commissioned by Openbaar Kunstbezit.⁶⁶ The presented work by, among others, visual artists Marinus Boezem, Stanley Brouwn and Peter Struycken were regarded as Conceptual Art. As is evidenced by their inclusion in museum collections, they were considered works of art on television. Not many years later, Marroquin will not only parody the medium of television and specifically the format of the news broadcast and the commercial, but at the same time use video art as a stepping stone towards a place in the mass media, just as Michel Cardena and General Idea do in the videos produced by De Appel that are intended for broadcast via the traditional channels.⁶⁷ In 1991, Marroquin initiates De Hoeksteen Live!, a monthly television programme and 'event' in which art and politics are brought together in an anarchistic manner.⁶⁸ In 1993, in the run-up to the union,

Lynn Owens, *Cracking Under Pressure: Narrating the Decline of the Amsterdam Squatters' Movement* (Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2009); among others. The dating of the beginning differs according to various sources. The first signs would go back to the mid-1960s, and grow into a movement in 1975 (Duivenvoorden) or 1978 (Owens). Major tensions

already arise in 1975 around the Nieuwmarkt protests and a few years later, in 1979, around the Groote Keijser (a number of adjacent monumental buildings on the Keizersgracht) and Vondelstraat 72 in 1980. The first attempts to criminalise squatters date from that time.

⁶¹ Wasielewski 2019 (see note 41), 96.

MonteVideo and Time Based Arts set up Kanaal Zero, a monthly art programme on Amsterdam cable television that offers a platform for new work by young artists. These examples show that being part of the system is not seen as an obstacle to using or even critically approaching both television and that which it presents. Conversely, we can also note that television, but also the museum, normalise alternative practices or at least incorporate them into their structure. The series of videos by Conceptual Artists shows that art investigates the medium in an intrinsic manner and thus aligns itself in the then prevailing modernist discourse. Due to the predominant modernist preoccupations, a conceptual change in the perception of the work occurs. In the original viewing experience, the unsuspecting viewer is surprised by a work that plays with the codes of television. Once transferred to the museum space, the context changes and the museum visitor misses the home environment and how it originally determined the viewer's perception. The question is whether these works should really be seen as examples of institutional critique. This is however the case when, after the emergence of cable television, the playing field of the artist is expanded, and *Talking Back to the Media* – paradoxically – rebels against both the museum context and the hegemony of television. By moving beyond their confines, they manage to speak out more clearly about the role of the institutions. In line with López, the artists explore the area between the museum and television. Because of this position, they become removed from the museum institutions, which, as institutional critique showed in the 1960s, reintroduce their practices back into the field.⁶⁹ This is visible in the exhibition *The Arts for Television*, that the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam made together with The Los Angeles Museum of Contemporary Art (MOCA) in 1987, a comprehensive overview of video art for television, two years after *Talking Back to the Media*. Many specialised foreign institutions are involved in this exhibition compiled by guest curators Kathy Rae Huffman, Julie Lazar (MOCA) and Dorine Mignot. On this occasion, it is not video art, but rather art for television that is given a place within the museum walls (see also Angela M. Bartholomew's contribution in this volume).

THE SCOPE OF THE SPECIALIST INSTITUTE

In the 1980s, the video medium is increasingly seen as a mature medium, a fact that becomes visible in the further institutionalisation of the medium within 'traditional' art institutions. From 1981, videos can be seen every day in the Stedelijk Museum under the so-called 'video staircase'. But there is also another development that partly precedes this: the emergence and development of institutions especially dedicated to video and media art. This history starts as early as the 1960s, when the development of the portable video camera and other electronic devices broadens the field of the contemporary artist, while technical support in terms of the use of this new technology

⁶² Grootveld 2012 (see note 54).

⁶³ Wasielewski 2019 (see note 41), 13.

⁶⁴ Camie Karstanje, 'Talking Back to the Media Project Update: Interview with David Garcia', li-ma.nl, 22 April 2014.

See li-ma.nl/site/news/talking-back-media-project-update-1.

⁶⁵ Sebastián López, 'Video Exposures: Between Television and the Exhibition Space', in *The Magnetic Era* (see note 1), 113–130.

⁶⁶ Openbaar Kunstbezit (Public Art Property) is a foundation established in 1957, best known for the eponymous magazine and the programmes and courses that were broadcast on radio and television in the 1960s and 1970s.

is still required. The history of these institutions up to 1985 is outlined by Rob Perrée in *The Magnetic Era*, compiled by Jeroen Boomgaard and Bart Rutten, and published in 2003.⁷⁰ The major role of MonteVideo (Amsterdam 1978) becomes apparent. René Coelho, former television programme maker, founds a one-room gallery for the promotion and presentation of video art in an empty space in his house out of dissatisfaction with the television world, which according to him mainly focusses on entertainment. MonteVideo will develop into one of the leading institutes for video art. Also among the first institutions in this field are Lijnbaancentrum (Rotterdam 1970), *Meatball* (The Hague 1972), Het Kijkhuis (The Hague 1975), Video Heads (Amsterdam 1971) and In-Out Center (Amsterdam 1972). They all lend equipment to artists and offer support in the production, distribution and presentation of works. As mentioned earlier, Time Based Arts (Amsterdam 1983), is an initiative of De Appel and the Vereniging van Videokunstenaars (Association of Video Artists). De Appel, which was primarily geared towards performances and spatial installations, saw the need for a separate institution for the promotion and distribution of video art. V2_ (formerly V2) ('s-Hertogenbosch 1981) is an artists' initiative that initially operates in a squatters' environment. Alex Adriaansens and Joke Brouwer, who will lead the institute for decades, are part of this group. In 1986, the first 'Manifest voor de Instabiele Media' (Manifesto for the Unstable Media) (*de Volkskrant*, 31 December 1986), written by Adriaansens and Brouwer, is published, heralding the institute's increasing focus on the influence of technology on society. The fact that V2_ is established as an 'institute' for unstable media is not without irony. Much later it is turned into a 'lab'. In Test Labs and artist-in-residencies, artists now work closely together and focus on the relationship between technology and society, and more specifically man and machine, biology and technology, as a recurring topic. *Mediamatic* (Groningen 1983) also has a squatters' background and is established to support artists in the use of new technologies.⁷¹ Emerging from the squatters' scene and following the activist attitude of initiatives as *Talking Back to the Media*, both V2_ and *Mediamatic* will develop into seminal institutions in the field of media art and theory. There is, however, a shift from the field of video and television to the field of computers and computer networks.⁷² Debate centre *De Balie* (Amsterdam 1982) may not be an institution that turns its attention to video and media art, but worth mentioning too because of the programmes it organises on art, technology and society.

Studio for Electro-Instrumental Music (STEIM) (Amsterdam 1969), finally, is one of the oldest institutions in the field of sound art. Director Michel Waisvisz invites a constantly alternating group of artistic directors to accommodate various 'sounds'. The focus at STEIM lies on researching and developing electronic instruments in relation to the body. It provides musicians and artists with a place to experiment with time, space and sound in relation to technology (see also Dick Rijken's contribution in this volume). In addition to instruments and performances, artists also develop spatial and technological

installations – something that is often impossible within traditional institutions. This seems to anticipate the inception of the festivals for media art, which emerged in the 1980s. At these festivals, there is special attention for experimental music and sound art and an emphasis on spatial, immersive installations that allow the visitor to enter into a physical relationship with the work. There is in part a pragmatic background to this: due to its format, sound and the participatory attitude of the visitor, the works are not suitable for museum spaces (see Chapter 3: The Role of the Festival). Just like the festivals, media art institutions are concerned with work that is not easy to present because of the technological component or the time aspect. What distinguishes the institutions is the emphasis on a long-term relationship with the works and the artists. The institutions for media art are production sites, platforms and labs that provide both technical, practical and artistic support to the artists and promote reflection. In addition to development, they all support the distribution and conservation of the work to a greater or lesser extent. All undergo their own development, inspired by technological and artistic issues, their position in relation to the museum field and changes in cultural policy. An influential development in this respect is the assimilation of Time Based Arts and MonteVideo into the *Nederlands Instituut voor Mediakunst MonteVideo/Time Based Arts* (Netherlands Media Art Institute) in 1993. The institute establishes itself on Spuistraat and moves to its last home on Keizersgracht in 1997, where Heiner Holtappels will take over the baton from Coelho in 1998 and where it gets known under the abbreviation NIMk. In its last years, the institute has been led by *Today'sArt* director Olof van Winden. Over the course of its existence, the NIMk maintains a clear focus on media art in relation to mass media and telecommunication, in line with the way in which the relationship between video art and television was investigated in the early years. Distribution and preservation of video and media art, and research into methods and applications in these areas are also among the core tasks. The NIMk will develop into the national institute where video and media art is preserved; it not only takes care of its own collection, but also that of many national museums. As a knowledge centre, it researches new methods for preservation, often together with partner institutions from the art world or the government (see also Gaby Wijers' contribution in this volume). In 1994, Waag (1994 Amsterdam) joins the league of specialist institutes, housed in the historical weigh house on Nieuwmarkt in Amsterdam. The institution is founded as *Maatschappij voor Oude en Nieuwe Media* (Society for Old and New Media) by Marleen Stikker and Caroline Nevejan, who know each other from the nearby De Balie and Paradiso. As a programme maker of art happenings, Stikker was involved with De Balie; Nevejan organised events such as The Galactic Hacker Party at Paradiso. From 1996, the institution will continue under the name Waag Society and later as *Waag*, with the subtitle 'Technology & Society'.

67 Van Mechelen 2006 (see note 4), 284.

68 PARK4DTV is also founded in the same year by artists Maarten Ploeg, Maarten Sprenger, Dick Tuinder and Peter Mertens. Every day they broadcast a one-hour video artwork through the Amsterdam cable network (Wasielewski 2019 (see note 41)).

69 Hal Foster (1983) also regards this movement as characteristic of institutional art criticism. In connection with this, his concept of 'avant-garde' (aimed at the avant-gardes from the 1960s) in *The Anti-Aesthetic* of 1983 is based on the concept of 'fissures', the detection of gaps in the system to further widen them, even if the action is short-lived. His later avant-garde theory is based

on his exposition on Peter Bürger's *Theorie der Avantgarde* from 1974 and his criticism of Bürger's approach to the neo-avant-garde. See Hal Foster, *The Anti-Aesthetic: Essays on Postmodern Culture* (Port Townsend: Bay Press, 1983); and Hal Foster, *The Return of the Real* (Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 1996).

70 Rob Perrée, 'Van Agora tot MonteVideo', in *The Magnetic Era* (see note 1), 51–77.

71 *Mediamatic Archive*, mediamatic.net/en/page/10342/mediamatic-magazine.

72 Wasielewski 2019 (see note 41), 268.

Partly inspired by the technical specialism of the media art institutions, a split occurs within the institutional field. Modern and contemporary art museums often focus on the spatial application of video art, which can, for example, be found in the Netherlands in the work of artists such as Aernout Mik and Marijke van Warmerdam (see also Domeniek Ruyters' contribution in this volume); the specialist institutions and festivals for media art more closely follow the (media) artists whose work is guided by a reflection on technology on the one hand, and the political and social issues arising from new technological developments on the other. Because of their technical complexity and medium-specific properties, media art is, for production, conservation, distribution and presentation, to this day dependent on these institutions. The 'acceptance' of video art as a form of visual art also raises questions about the use of this medium-specific term and its treatment, which is what the institutions indeed do. Founded as an institution for the presentation and production of media art, Mediamatic retired from the field of video art in the 1980s. This is done openly in 1989 with the article 'In Memoriam Videokunst: Een leerzame tentoonstelling' (In Memoriam Video Art: An Educational Exhibition), a response from one of the founders, Willem Velthoven, to the *Videosculptur 1963–1989 Retrospektiv und Aktuell* exhibition in Cologne.⁷³ He states that the works in the dual exhibition, which provides an overview of video art (installations) up to that point, have nothing in common with each other, except for the fact that they use television sets. According to him, video art can no longer be used as a medium-specific term as soon as the video works do not use the specific qualities of the medium. Velthoven publishes his story in the *Mediamatic Magazine*, a magazine that appears as a paper edition between 1985 and 1999. It will be one of the last articles on video art in a magazine that until then was closely related to the developments of the medium.⁷⁴ With regard to subjects and artists, it mainly shows similarities with MonteVideo during that period. In the years 2000, the magazine is given a sequel in the form of *Mediamatic Offline*, publications with and about CD-ROMs and DVD projects (see Sandra Fauconnier's contribution in this volume). Mediamatic develops into an institution with a more social and educational position within the field of art, design and technology. This is partly prompted by the design agency that is established as a sister organisation, and that adds a binding signature to the institution. After a few wanderings in Amsterdam, Mediamatic – still under the leadership of Velthoven – settles in a former municipal yard in 2014 and is renamed as breeding ground Mediamatic Biotop Dijkspark, which reveals the increasing attention to living materials. Research into, and production with, food, waste and unconventional materials such as bacteria and fungi become structural parts of the programme.

⁷³ Kletter 2016 (see note 3), 31; and Jorinde Seijdel, 'AVE 93: Retrospective on Dutch Video Art: No Way Back', in *AVE: International Audiovisual Experimental Festival 1993* (Arnhem: Stichting AVE, 1993), 10–14.

⁷⁴ Mediamatic will also publish the catalogue of the exhibition *Imago: Fin de siècle in Dutch Contemporary Art* (1990–1993), a travelling exhibition on Dutch video art, as a special edition of the magazine.

BEYOND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS

Internet and Hacktivism

The *World Wide Web* introduced in 1991 (following its development in 1989 by Tim Berners-Lee, a software developer at CERN, Switzerland) is a new mass medium whose influence on the field of media art cannot be underestimated. It makes access to the Internet easier and marks the start of the consumer Internet. It also reinforces the artistic practices already present. Its influence is comparable to that of cable television on video art. The Netherlands is one of the leaders in the field of Internet and Internet art thanks to the early and rapid introduction of the consumer Internet (see Josephine Bosma's contribution in this volume). The art world and the hacker scene respond to the various aspects that the rise of the Internet and Internet cultures bring with them: from social changes and technical possibilities to the individual technical components. The first hackers' movement in the 1980s in the Netherlands, Hippiers from Hell, uses the Internet as its most important social platform to critically examine the influence of technology on society. This group of hackers, technicians, artists, writers and other creative people initiates the *Hack-Tic* magazine in 1989 and starts the first Dutch Internet provider XS4ALL in 1993. This opens the Internet to the general public, which is continued in 1994 with *De Digitale Stad* (DDS) (The Digital City), an Amsterdam initiative by De Balie and *Hack-Tic*. Waag founder Marleen Stikker has been closely involved in these events from the first moment. Through its network, a Freenet, *De Digitale Stad* provides Internet access to households in Amsterdam at a time when the Internet was still reserved to 'net-aristocrats'; in the year of its founding in Amsterdam, there are around three hundred private individuals with access to the Internet. *De Digitale Stad* is a *Bulletin Board System* (BBS) that provides an account with email, Internet access and space for a homepage. Access is open: anyone with a modem can dial in via an Amsterdam telephone number, or can use one of the public terminals in the city. The user then enters a text-based environment that functions as a metaphor for the city. In *De Digitale Stad* there are cafés, shops, a library, squares and a town hall. It is the first Internet initiative where Dutch is spoken and Dutch time is used: local use of a global network. For many, it is the first access to the Internet.

Tactical Media

The *World Wide Web* also gives a boost to the theoretical activist movement Tactical Media, co-initiated by *Talking Back to the Media* creator David Garcia, before the rise of the Internet in the early 1990s. Here again, the critical intervention in mass media is the central point of attention. The seed was planted when Garcia organised *The Underpass* in 1983 together with fellow artists Annie Wright, Lous America and Henk Wijnen. An abandoned pedestrian tunnel near Waterlooplein in Amsterdam is transformed into

an open studio for four Saturdays. The happenings consist of music and visual art performances, declamations and other (spontaneous) contributions from residents of the city, which are later broadcast on local television. It is a first step towards the democratisation of television and thus mass media. While, in the 1980s, the video artist made a move away from the institution (in the field of the mass media) and then returned to institutional frameworks, the media activists in the 1990s go one step further in their anti-institutional attitude. The far-reaching infiltration of mass media creates a situation where, in terms of content, Tactical Media was able to acquire strong political overtones and a politicised agenda. The name emerged during the *Next 5 Minutes* festival initiated by David Garcia and Geert Lovink, which has four editions between 1993 and 2003, and takes place in Rotterdam (V2_) and Amsterdam (De Balie). Tactical Media maintains an extensive website with documentation – the Tactical Media Files – where it is explicitly stated that during the *Next 5 Minutes* festival a name was given to a practice that already existed.⁷⁵ Tactical Media takes shape in a period in which ‘reality’ threatens to disappear through its construction via media images (representation); it argues for the removal of the separation between these two ‘truths’ because of the omnipresence of media (see also the contribution by David Garcia in this volume). The Tactical Media movement is characterised by a structure rooted in the configuration and functioning of new media: it takes on the forms of mass media almost chameleonicly, and subsequently criticises them. It therefore takes an even more direct approach to the political field of the mass media, which contributes to the blurring of the different realities it promotes. The Tactical Media initiatives activate and encourage artists, activists and consumers to explore the boundaries of mass media and to produce their own communication tools. This harks back to Situationist methods that aim to create behaviour. The emancipating and activating attitude of Tactical Media also anticipates the twenty-first century movement of the ‘prosumer’: the consumer as producer.⁷⁶ The fact that every user can assume the role of producer and create a new reality through a self-chosen medium, calls the existence of a prevailing truth into question. Images can be created to form a new external reality. This ultimately leads to the disappearance of the medium and the ‘post-media era’ as already announced by Félix Guattari in 1985, which also marks the end of the hegemony of mass media. It seems to make the connection with the institutional field rather strenuous. A handful of artists who operate within the movement are presented in a museum context. The media art institutions continue to show often ambiguous projects, yet these expressions seem to be reserved for specially organised festivals, such as the aforementioned *Next 5 Minutes*, held at V2_ and De Balie. MonteVideo and Time Based Arts do not participate in this festival, but do make their equipment available. The first edition of *Next 5 Minutes* takes place in 1993, during the emergence of the consumer Internet. The focus is still on video, but this will soon change from the second edition (1996) onwards: it will be replaced by the Internet

⁷⁵ Tactical Media Files, online archive, tacticalmediafiles.net.

⁷⁶ This term was coined in 1980 by Alvin Toffler.

and related topics. From 1997, a number of activities are organised under the heading Tactical Media Network. These are initiated by David Garcia, Geert Lovink and Menno Grootveld and take place at Waag.

Nettime

A clear sign of the role the Internet is going to play is the founding of the Internet mailing list *nettime* by Geert Lovink and Pit Schultz in 1995. *Nettime* is an independent discussion network set up by people active in the field of net criticism, media activism and net art. From 1999, the English-language list, *nett time-1*, is moderated and edited by Ted Byfield and Felix Stalder. This mailing list is still in use today. In 1996, the mailing list is made available in Dutch as *nettime-nl* (see Josephine Bosma’s contribution in this volume). Despite the independent format, the initiative is widely supported by national institutions including V2_, Waag, SCAN and De Balie. The number of registrations shows that there is much enthusiasm for the initiative: before the list is even set up, 120 people sign up. In addition to the English and Dutch editions, the list is made available in the same year in various other countries and languages. This multitude of lists supports the open attitude of the initiative: users are invited to participate in the discussions in their own language and at their own level. The support of De Digitale Stad to the net mailing list is obvious, and founder Marleen Stikker will also regularly contribute to *nettime*.⁷⁷ *Nettime* and De Digitale Stad share an activating and open attitude. Both initiatives provide broad access to initiatives and invite a critical and formative use of the Internet. In this way, the profile of the prosumer is further fleshed out: an Internet user is an active participant in a community or a network.

Net Art

The first generation of artists who use the Internet as subject and material for their work is often catalogued under net art, although given the diversity of their work it is difficult to speak of a trend or movement. The shortest definition refers to digital work that is based on, rooted in, or uses the Internet and Internet cultures. Although many artists make use of the unique properties of the World Wide Web (such as the rapid exchange of data, the possibility of worldwide collaboration and the real-time aspect), the Internet or a web page as such do not always directly form part of the work. The word ‘net’ in net art stands for a network of both technological and social references, and therefore encompasses more than the Internet as such.⁷⁸ The rise of the consumer Internet goes hand in hand with the rise of ‘networked’ thinking and acting; events and people are increasingly connected with each other in a non-linear way. This leaves its marks on both art and society. For the first generation of net artists, the Internet is essential on a conceptual or technological level, or both (see also Josephine Bosma’s contribution). However, a precisely demarcated description of net art is virtually impossible, since

⁷⁷ Caroline Nevejan and Alexander Badenoch, ‘How Amsterdam Invented the Internet: European Networks of Significance, 1980–1995’, in *Hacking Europe* (London: Springer, 2015), 189–217.

⁷⁸ Josephine Bosma, *Nettitudes: Let’s Talk Net Art* (Rotterdam: NAI Publishers, 2011), 24.

most artists of this first generation were already making work before the introduction of the Internet, and in many cases net art is incorrectly used as a medium-specific definition. Dismissing the Internet as a medium is not valid either, since it widens the gap between conceptual and 'material' art, while the new generation moves freely between these fields. In her publication *Nettitudes: Let's Talk Net Art*, published in 2011, Josephine Bosma emphasises the complexity of defining the work of artists who use and reflect on this phenomenon in their work in a non-exclusive manner. It is the first publication in the Netherlands on this subject. Bosma briefly discusses earlier publications, of which *New Materials Towards Net.art* (2001, originally published in German in 1999) by Tilman Baumgärtel is the most authoritative.⁷⁹ The influence of Andreas Broeckmann, who worked from 1995 to 2000 as a project leader at V2_, on the developments in the Netherlands should not be underestimated. In the years that followed, the German art historian left his mark on *transmediale* in Berlin, where, as artistic director (2000–2007), he brought about a change, modelled on the Dutch Electronic Art Festival (DEAF). In spite of the efforts of Broeckmann and others, net art, more so than video art, continues to operate for a long time within a closed circle of artists and activists, who often resist any form of definition. There is, however, the self-named net.art movement (with a full stop between 'net' and 'art'), which forms an important part of the development of net art, known from the Dutch-Belgian artist duo JODI and their artist-friends Vuk Ćosić, Alexei Shulgin, Olia Lialina and Heath Bunting. The name originates on one of the nettime mailing lists. Given the great reputation of these artists, the history of net.art is often confused with that of net art, while it is only part of it. Yet many of the events surrounding net.art are exemplary of the media activist, subversive and anti-institutional attitude of artists working with, and on, the Internet. JODI, the duo consisting of Joan Heemskerk and Dirk Paesmans, have created some of the most subversive Internet artworks. The two artists, with a background in video and photography, have turned their attention to the web since the 1990s. In line with video pioneers such as Nam June Paik and Steina and Woody Vasulka, they subject their medium to a critical analysis and dismantle its structures. Browser, software and games are modified. Those who visit the early web-based work, the website www.jodi.org (1995), will be immersed in well-choreographed chaos. JODI turns the computer inside out and present the result of their reflection on the Internet. Despite the anarchistic and parodical character of the work, they are in line with 'the artists-semioticians, who investigate either the conventions, procedures and signifying processes of the Internet or the intrinsic relationship of web art to the visual arts'.⁸⁰ The duo has played a pioneering role in the development of net art, both in the Netherlands and internationally; many artists who work with the Internet see JODI as the most important representatives, although the two artists have always explicitly opposed every form of labelling. While the duo mainly focusses on the browser and the web at the start of their career, the focus later shifts towards the computer

⁷⁹ His modernist-essentialist approach has been strongly criticised.

⁸⁰ Marga van Mechelen, 'Footsteps on the Screen: Net Art, Its Project, Its Orientation, Its Destination', in Winfried Nöth and Guido Ipsen, eds., *Körper – Verkörperung – Entkörperung / Body – Embodiment – Disembodiment*, Proceedings of the 10th Internationale Kongress Deutsche Gesellschaft für Semiotik

2002, University of Kassel, 240–247; here 240. Also published in *Visio* 8, nos.1–2 (2003): 399–403.

itself and (the aesthetics of) video games. It will take until 2005 before the duo is given a retrospective at the NIMk: *World Wide Wrong*. Significant for the paradoxical relationship of net art with the 'art' institute, are the events surrounding Documenta X in 1997, one of the first international exhibitions at which net art is presented, with work by Heath Bunting (*Visitors Guide to London*) and JODI (jodi.org).⁸¹ Although initially honoured by the invitation of curator Simon Lamunière, the works are presented, to the great displeasure of the artists, in a traditional art space and entirely offline. Although the presentation at Documenta X gives them recognition and status, the artists take issue with the limiting context, which is inconsistent with the openness of the Internet, where the work is available continually and changes in the browser may cause the end of the work. The response is not long in coming. When curator Lamunière announces that the Documenta X website, the only place where a good reproduction of the work is to be seen, will be taken offline, net.art artist Vuk Ćosić intervenes. He copies everything onto his own server – and brings the hacked website back online, in its original habitat, and titles his work *Documenta Done*.

Institutional Support

The anti-institutional attitude of net art is twofold, and shows similarities with the form of institutional critique created by video art over a decade before. Its arrows are aimed at traditional art institutions, but these limiting frameworks are also needed to emphasise the open nature of the Internet and the work based on Internet cultures. More than in the case of Tactical Media, the media art institutions offer support and thereby contribute to the development of net art. Initiatives such as De Digitale Stad and The Flying Desk (1994) make it possible to access and experiment with the Internet and provide technical support (see Josephine Bosma's contribution on this subject). One of the most important platforms in the Netherlands that has contributed to the introduction and embedding of digital and net-based art is DEAF, organised in Rotterdam by V2_ between 1994 and 2014. In the first editions, the possibility of browsing the World Wide Web is a pioneering affair. During these first few years, there is also a lot of attention for technological art, CD-ROMs and music. In symposia and lectures, the various editions of DEAF address current issues, topics that hone in on the influence of digital media on a political, socio-logical and economic level: nature and body, privacy, reality, territories and robotics are some of the topics that are addressed in the ten festivals (see also Chapter 3: The Role of the Festival). In Amsterdam Waag focusses on the influence of technology on society and operates with a broad perspective on the intersection of technology, art and electronic media. In 2007, it opens the first Fab Lab (abbreviation for Fabrication Laboratory) in the Netherlands, a creators' lab where artists, developers and inventors can set to work. In Rotterdam, V2_ establishes a lab in 1997 under the direction of Anne Nigten. From the very outset, there are collaborations with artists who experiment with robotics,

⁸¹ Bosma 2011 (see note 78), 151.

such as Edwin van der Heide, Marnix de Nijs and Martin Spanjaard (see also Anne Nigten's contribution in this volume). In the late 1990s, the NIMk devotes a great deal of attention to 'low culture', which, due to the increasing influence of digitisation, occupies a more hybrid position within the field of contemporary art. Many of the works presented are 'screen-based' works and installations, as opposed to the more exclusive focus on spatial and technological installations in other institutions. Various events and exhibitions deal with games and game culture, although it will take until 2010 before the first exhibition in this area is organised. In *Space Invaders: Art and the Video Game Environment*, the role of games in society and the blurring boundary between 'video game space and real space' is investigated in works by, among others, JODI, UBERMORGEN, Cao Fei and Walter Langenaar.⁸² In the same year, artists Dave Griffiths, Aymeric Mansoux and Marloes de Valk developed *Naked on Pluto*, an innovative 'Multiplayer Text Adventure Game on Facebook', during a shared residency at NIMk, Baltan Laboratories and Píksel.⁸³ The Gamefonds (Game Fund) (2008–2016) initiated by the Creative Industries Fund NL and Mediafonds (Media Fund) is committed during this period to 'the emancipation of the genre within the cultural field' by supporting the production of dozens of games.⁸⁴ However, the structural embedding of art games and game culture in the visual arts does not occur. In the 1990s, the NIMk also pays attention to the CD-ROM, both artistically and in terms of conservation. *Virtueel Platform*, established in 1996, is set up by various labs and development institutions, including Waag, STEIM and V2_, as the desired sector institute for e-culture (see also Chapter 2: Government Policy). E-culture is an attempt to strengthen the diversity of the discipline and crossovers between different disciplines. A few years later, the e-culture policy letter is published in 2002, followed, in 2009, by the publication *Mapping E-culture*, in which the various players in the field interpret e-culture and outline perspectives.⁸⁵ It also contains an inventory of the museums, labs, festivals and institutions in the field of e-culture in the Netherlands; in 2009 there are no less than 253. Despite its short existence, the Museum of the Image (MOTI) (Breda 2008), was of seminal importance in this area. Led by graphic designer Mieke Gerritzen (director until 2016), the institution focused on contemporary visual culture with a particular attention to visual arts, design, architecture, fashion and e-culture. In 2017, the institution's pioneering activities are brought to a halt when it merges with the Stedelijk Museum Breda. Just before that, in December 2016, the institution and the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam purchase seventeen artworks from influential digital artists, including Constant Dullaart, Rafaël Rozendaal, Floris Kaayk, Rosa Menkman, Geoffrey Lillemon and Jan Robert Leegte.

Surf Clubs

A statement by Rob Perrée in *The Magnetic Era* in which he explains the relationship between video and institution can simply be applied to digital and Internet art: 'Video

has become outdated and up to date. That is the paradox within which the story of the different video institutions is situated.'⁸⁶ There is virtually nothing in our society that does not contain a digital component. Because of the omnipresence of digital technology, specialist institutions must render account of their position and medium-specific policy increasingly more often, despite the fact that the need for these institutions always remains. Against the background of this far-reaching digitisation and the influence of digital media on society, a young generation of artists is adopting a new position in relation to both digital means and the institution. Under the heading post-Internet art, the influence of digital technology becomes an unmistakable part of artistic work that manifests itself both online and in the physical space. As such, a new vision on digital and Internet-based art and Internet cultures comes to the fore. Within the field, the history of the term is viewed with mixed feelings – a problem that is reminiscent of the discussions surrounding net art, and every other possible label for this generation of artists, a decade before. What started as an initiative of a few artists has grown into a globally used concept. On the one hand, this more or less delineated concept creates the possibility to mark a particular moment in history. Yet recognisability and clarity, on the other hand, go hand in hand with institutionalisation and reduction: a broad and diverse movement turns into a label with which not everyone can identify (see Melanie Bühler's interview with Karen Archey, Constant Dullaart, Jan Robert Leegte and Katja Novitskova in this volume). The term 'post-Internet' becomes known internationally through the eponymous blog, written between December 2009 and September 2010, by Gene McHugh. According to McHugh, the term was first coined by artist and curator Marisa Olson, somewhere between 2007 and 2009. The work *Post Internet Survival Guide* (2010) by artist Katja Novitskova has undeniably played an important role in increasing its attention and institutional (re)presentation in the Netherlands. This work consists of a book, an installation and a series of events and exhibitions. The new attitude and working method emerge in so-called surf clubs, online places for jointly creating and exhibiting digital work, of which Nasty Nets Internet Surfing Club is the first initiative to use this term. The online exhibition *Club Internet* (2008), initiated by artist Harm van den Dorpel, is the first surf club exhibition. Aside from the works of Van den Dorpel, the exhibition brings together work by more than twenty artists, including Constant Dullaart, JODI, Oliver Laric, Jan Robert Leegte, Rafaël Rozendaal and Anne de Vries. In retrospect, participating artist Leegte sees the exhibition as the transition from the network of the first generation (the 1990s, in which JODI sets the tone) to the group of the second generation.⁸⁷ A striking shift is that of the role of the artist, who not only generates content but also actively compiles and 'curates' material found online, as well as work by others. The development of the artist-as-curator is in line with developments on the web.

⁸² NIMk, 'Space Invader Artists and Works', 2010.

See nimk.nl/eng/space-invaders-artists-and-works.

⁸³ NIMk, 'Naked on Pluto', 2010. See nimk.nl/eng/naked-on-pluto.

⁸⁴ Creative Industries Fund, 'Laatste toekenningen TAX-

videoclipfonds en Gamefonds', stimuleringsfonds.nl,

16 December 2016. See stimuleringsfonds.nl/nl/actueel/nieuws/laatste-toekenningen-tax-videoclipfonds-en-gamefonds.

⁸⁵ Cathy Brickwood, ed., *Mapping E-culture* (Amsterdam: Virtueel Platform, 2009).

⁸⁶ Rob Perrée, 'Van Agora tot MonteVideo', in *The Magnetic Era* (see note 1), 51–77; here 52.

⁸⁷ See the conversation between Jan Robert Leegte and Melanie Bühler ('Lucky to Be Part of It'), in this volume.

The Social Web

The emergence of initiatives such as Nasty Nets and the *Club Internet* exhibition is closely related to the rise of the *Web 2.0*, also known as the participatory or social web. At the end of the twentieth century, developments on the web make interaction through the web, and thus with other web users, easier. It signifies the rise of social media and other networks. It is the period in which the Internet becomes a means of communication and when social media are introduced. The work *Mouchette.org* (1996) by Martine Neddham anticipates this new web environment. The website about the fictional thirteen-year-old girl Mouchette is a growing and participatory archive about the life and problems of a teenager. Neddham purposely criticises the closed structures of the early web, or at least marks the transition to the social web. With *Mouchette*, she makes possible the joint construction of a narrative, just as the surf clubs on the new web offer a place for joint creation. The search for material online, the surfing, is hereby turned into a performative act, which connects these surf clubs with the more politically oriented net art and also with *Tactical Media*, where appropriation of material and code is one of the most important tactics. It also includes various performance elements. The surf clubs turn both the process and the end result of their time spent on the Internet into their subject. The biggest difference with the earlier Internet art is that the surf clubs turn their attention on social and artistic aspects, rather than technological ones. The setting up of collective operations, networks and joint platforms is a further step towards the 'death of the author', introduced by the rise of reproductive media. The method quickly found its way to the institutions as well: in 2006, for example, when W139 invited artist Constant Dullaart to put together an exhibition. His exhibition *The €10.000 Show* aims to highlight 'possibilities of synergy between artists, and the essential importance this holds'.⁸⁸ Dullaart is given this place for a specific period upon the invitation of the Amsterdam artists' space. Various artists' works are added to the changing presentation over a period of four weeks. In addition to that of the aforementioned artists De Vries and Van den Dorpel, there is also work by artists who are more 'video-oriented', such as Melanie Bonajo and *PARK4DTV* (1991–2006), an initiative that concentrated on the production of art for television, and which included Dullaart.

The surf clubs and the exhibition put together by Dullaart manifest themselves in both the virtual and physical space, and share a connecting element in the way in which artists search for various forms of 'materialisation' and the representation of digital reality. The 'digital natives' are aware of the fact that almost everything has been influenced or realised using digital technology: they grew up with it. This omnipresence of the digital affects the realisation and reflection of the work that is created with it. It blurs the boundaries between 'virtual' and 'real' even further; technics and technology are no longer central. The Internet is introduced into the domain of contemporary art. The Internet is the new public space; a new infrastructure where different rules apply and new actors

⁸⁸ W139.nl, 2006, w139.nl/nl/article/12544/de-10000-euro-show.

are at play. Digital natives are used to these new codes. Their actions on the Internet enter into a direct relationship with society: through production and distribution; through the way in which the work engages with image-making, truth claims, validity and the relations of power surrounding it. The Internet has become the neo-liberal place par excellence, where making money fast is the credo and post-truth messages have become normal. For artists for whom the Internet is both the most important subject of reflection and simple working material, these functional structures of the Internet are a daily and inescapable reality. Yet the criticism of the new generation of artists is less activating, perhaps less activist. Despite the fact that they are transferring this practice to the Internet, a domain that is more political than the art world, the approach is at most indicative – precisely because they are so used to this environment. This aligns them even more closely with institutional critique, in which the signalling and magnification of power structures are key elements.

The Reaction of the Institutional Field

NIMk connects early on with the methodology used by the surf clubs with the exhibitions *Versions* (2009) and *The Greater Cloud* (2011). *Versions* depicts the mentality of this new generation, which turns its focus to the existence of multiple versions, realities and appropriations. *The Greater Cloud* highlights the aforementioned shift from the prosumer to the 'curator' by placing the selection and presentation of material from and by others central in the exhibition. For *The Greater Cloud*, curator Petra Heck enters into a collaboration with artists Aleksandra Domanović, Oliver Laric and Katja Novitskova. Every 'curator' put together their own space, with work using 'Internet-based material or processes or ideas connected with the Internet'.⁸⁹ Annet Dekker discusses this exhibition in her review 'post-Internet Art'.⁹⁰ In it, she explains the origin of the post-Internet movement. She attributes the movement to the 'digital natives' who create and present their work in a sort of 'automatic Internet state of mind'.⁹¹ She also describes the post-Internet artist as a guide who helps the Internet user surf the net. She does, however, question this materialisation of the Internet in the gallery space, wondering whether this is more than a mere commercial move.⁹² Post-Internet Art at least achieves more commercial success than net art. The relationship with the more institutionalised side of the Internet is also striking: Facebook, Instagram and Tumblr are regularly used as subjects and as tools. From about 2010, the Amsterdam Upstream Gallery increasingly turned its attention on selling the work of these artists, including Van den Dorpel, Dullaart, Leegte and Rozendaal. In many cases this resulted in a further physical materialisation of the work.

⁸⁹ NIMk, 'The Greater Cloud Intro, 2012, nimk.nl/nl/the-greater-cloud/the-greater-cloud-intro.

⁹⁰ Annet Dekker, 'Post Internet-Art', in *Metropolis M*, no. 6 (2011).

⁹¹ Ibid.

⁹² Ibid.

Digital Divide

In 2014, the American concept Lunch Bytes (founded by Melanie Bühler) comes to Europe. Through conversations and lectures, it investigates the influence of the increasing presence of digital technologies in the art world. Lunch Bytes approaches the role of the Internet in artistic practice from a broad perspective and through a variety of curators, researchers and artists. The series culminates in the extensive publication *No Internet, No Art: A Lunch Bytes Anthology* (2015). In Amsterdam, Katja Novitskova, Hito Steyerl, Geert Lovink, Amalia Ulman, Harm van den Dorpel, Jörg Heiser and Anne de Vries, among others, participate. The events of the Amsterdam edition of Lunch Bytes take place at Foam and the UNSEEN Festival. The choice of this place has probably much to do with the closing of NIMk the year before, yet it also points to something else. Despite the frequent use of technology, the relationship with it fades further into the background in the conversation about post-Internet art and the focus shifts more to developments in visual culture. The choice of a place for photography confirms the existence of the 'digital divide', the division of media art and artworld art in two camps. There are of course places – mainly galleries and presentation institutions – that do not focus exclusively on video and media art, yet that have played an important role over the years thanks to the systematic or at least regular presentation of both. For the galleries, an important initiative is Art Rotterdam Projections (since 2013), a section of the Art Rotterdam art fair where international galleries show videos and video installations. Dutch galleries that regularly contributed to Projections are: AKINCI, Ellen de Bruijne Projects, Annet Gelink Gallery, GRIMM, Ron Mandos, Gabriel Rolt, tegenboschvanvreden and Fons Welters. Furthermore there is, for instance, the presentation institution West Den Haag that focusses primarily on international greats – from the spatial installation of the work Julian Rosenfelt in the Grote Kerk in 2012 to an overview of the activities of the Raindance Foundation in 2018. Exceptionally, more technology-oriented media art is shown here, such as the exhibition with work by Gabey Tjon a Tham, Matthijs Munnik and Yolanda Uriz (all alumni of the master's programme in ArtScience at the Royal Academy of Arts (KABK) in The Hague) in 2012. It seems that the 'digital divide' is a separation that is confirmed, time and time again, by the more traditional institutional field, which has embraced technology and technological reflection only reluctantly. In the case of Lunch Bytes, the choice of an older 'new' medium, such as photography, as a platform seems to be explained by the fact that both media share a similar history in terms of acceptance due to the technical nature of the work, albeit for different reasons. History repeats itself. There is, paradoxically enough, a necessity for renewed attention to materiality to broaden the medium-oriented gaze (as is the case with net art, where the alleged technological complexity of the work sometimes inadvertently causes misunderstanding).

WHAT COMES AFTER THE TURBULENT TIMES OF THE MEDIA ART INSTITUTE

Partly prompted by the shift in focus towards e-culture, crossovers, interdisciplinarity and cross-sectoral cooperation, the new cultural policy implemented in 2012, that is, after Zijlstra's guillotine, does not sustain what are called 'supporting institutions'. After media art and media art institutions were included in the BIS under the heading of e-culture at the start of 2000, ten years later, in 2012, they were once again removed. NIMk and Virtueel Platform disappear; V2_ and Waag are both in dire straits. <> TAG (2003), a platform in The Hague that is known as a place where new media art, sound art and art and science come together and that, from 2010, has set itself the explicit goal of closing the gap between media art and visual art, does not survive the cuts either, and is forced to close its doors in 2012. These events leave deep traces in the field, yet its resilience remains intact. New institutions for media art are established, existing institutions step up their efforts.

Upon the initiative of former employees, the core tasks of the NIMk as of 2012 are carried over onto a new foundation: LIMA. Gaby Wijers (then Head of Conservation and Collection at NIMk) sets up the platform with the aim of safeguarding NIMk's core tasks. In its first few years, LIMA mainly focusses on the preservation, distribution and research of media and digital art and manages the extensive distribution collection of the NIMk, which the institution has built up since the 1970s. From its inception, it is also committed to further supplementing this collection with work by young talent established in the Netherlands and the work of often renowned (international) artists. Additionally, LIMA continues the tasks of the NIMk regarding the conservation and (digital) storage of the media art collections of museums and collectors and participates in (inter)national research networks and projects. From 2016, the institution more systematically organises small-scale presentations and exhibitions in the field of digital art.

Virtueel Platform merges with the Nederlands Architectuurinstituut (NAi) (Netherlands Architecture Institute) and Premisela is incorporated in the collection institution *Het Nieuwe Instituut*, which is housed in the building of the NAi in Rotterdam, the former architecture museum. The influence of government policy is quite present in this broadly oriented manifestation of e-culture. The institution does, however, maintain the division between the disciplines in their activities. In the field of digital culture, it seeks connection with existing institutions, such as the nearby V2_. The core tasks of V2_ have common ground with the programming of Waag, where creative technology and social innovation predominate in the lab and the art sometimes fades into the background. V2_ also provides space in the area of research and experiment on the intersection between academic and scientific research, but this is expressed much more often in spatial installations. Various projects are realised together with artists (during this period the institution often works together with artists Daan Roosegaarde and Maartje Dijkstra), as well as (technical)

institutes such as Leiden University and TU Delft. The institution maintains its core tasks through a funding mix from the municipality of Rotterdam and the Creative Industries Fund NL, the cultural fund for architecture, design, digital culture and crossovers that is established in 2012 as the successor of the Stimuleringsfonds voor Architectuur (The Netherlands Architecture Fund). It is the most important fund for media art institutions, although according to Michel van Dartel, director of V2_ since 2018, it faces a dilemma. 'The government has instilled the idea in the fund that art and culture can be drivers of economy. But the reality is that truly ground-breaking ideas and views come about when artists are given free space and are not supposed to be profitable.'⁹³ It must be said that the fund was set up as a non-profit organisation. The field's mixed feelings are partly inspired by the addition 'creative industry' – a term that has an unwanted economic connotation (see also Chapter 2: Government Policy). The changes in government policy seem to cause the least damage to the traditionally interdisciplinary festivals, where the focus is on producing and presenting (see also Chapter 3: The Role of the Festival). This points to an obstacle in the new government policy: output is rewarded more than research, while the institutions argue that research and experimentation are essential for the renewal and enrichment of the sector, which, incidentally, becomes visible to the public through new productions.

Finally, the increasing role of the Eye Filmmuseum in the field of media art cannot be left unmentioned. The institution ties in with earlier traditions of the *moving image* with a broad focus that dates back to the 1980s and 1990s. Here the technical, digital component has had, and has retained, a reverse, connecting effect: digitisation blurs the medium-specific separation between film and video. In 2012, on the eve of the art crisis, the Filmmuseum moves from the historic building in Amsterdam's Vondelpark to a large new home on the north bank of the IJ in Amsterdam. The museum's new accommodation, which has four cinemas and an exhibition hall, makes it possible to strengthen the museum's position. Jaap Guldemond, specialist when it comes to crossovers between film and visual arts, is appointed to head the exhibition programme in 2011. This fits in with the tradition of video and media art, certainly as it took shape in the Netherlands. Screen-based media and projection-based works find a welcome home in the Eye Filmmuseum, as evidenced by the overview exhibition *Close-Up: A New Generation of Film and Video Artists in the Netherlands* in 2016, where almost all multimedia installations have a screen or projection in the lead role. In the communication surrounding the exhibitions, Eye emphasises 'the obvious role that film/video plays in their work – whether it is a video on a single screen, on multiple screens or as part of a large-scale spatial installation'.⁹⁴ The media or video artworks exhibited in this and other exhibitions use cinematographic means such as a projection in a black box, and include experimental excursions into VR cinema as well. Digital art and technology and the societal and artistic research into it have not yet been systematically included in both

the policy and the programme. The need for research and development on a technological level and the archiving and conservation of this part of (national) cultural heritage will however never disappear. For the time being, these tasks remain safeguarded in the smaller specialised institutions such as V2_, LIMA, Waag and STEIM, and the festivals for media art.

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⁹³ Sabine Zwart, 'Nederlands e-cultuurbeleid niet langer toonaangevend: Interview met Marleen Stikker (Waag), Michel van Dartel (V2_) en Anne Nigten (The Patching Zone)', in *Boekman*, no.111 (2018): 9.

⁹⁴ Eye, *Close-Up: A New Generation of Film and Video Artists in the Netherlands*, 2016, eyefilm.nl/tentoonstelling/close-up.

And We Call It... Illustrations

▲ Top

P. Struycken NL, 1939
VARA
1989–1990/2013, 3 stand-alone computers

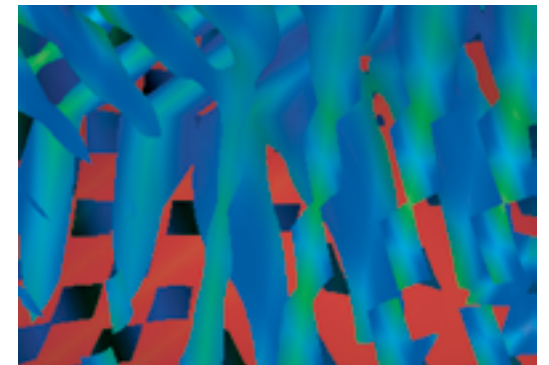
On three monitors, *VARA* (2013) presents 2D cross-sections with successive time points of a dynamic 3D colour space. It was designed for the hall of the VARA building in Hilversum (NL) as a single screen of 2x3 metres. The software was developed by P. Struycken and Floris van Manen. *VARA* is part of the collection of the Groninger Museum.



▼ Bottom

Peter Greenaway UK, 1942
The Tulse Luper
2006, VJ performance

On the occasion of STRP 2006, Greenaway mixed live images from his film project *The Tulse Luper Suitcases* on a large plasma touchscreen, which were then projected onto three large screens. DJ Serge Dodwell (aka Radar) provided the music, as he did for a previous performance at Club 11 Amsterdam.



Sebastian Diaz Morales AR/NL, 1975
Insight
2012, HD video, colour, sound, 12'00"

The work of Sebastian Diaz Morales revolves around suspension, displacement and re-construction. In *Insight*, a film-crew appears facing the viewer. Suddenly a mirror that has been reflecting them, slowly starts to explode into a thousand pieces. *Insight* is a reflection on the (de)construction of a cinematic reality.



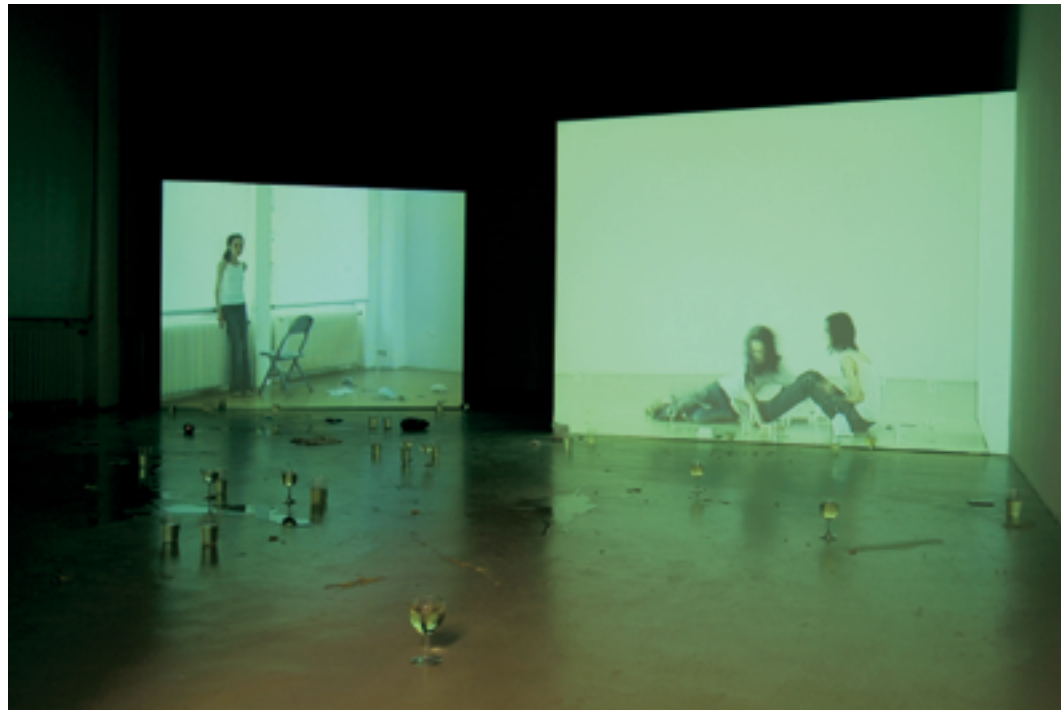
Sander Breure NL, 1985
Witte van Hulzen NL, 1984
Looking Back
2016, two-channel video installation,
colour, sound, 28'00"

Installation view during Rijksakademie-OPEN, Amsterdam 2016. The television screen on the left side is the source of the sound of timpani that fills the room.



L. A. Raeven NL, 1971
Wild Zone
2001, two-channel video installation,
glasses and fruit peel

Installation view of the exhibition *Wild Zone*, Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art Rotterdam, 2001. Main characters in this video are the artists, the twin sisters Liesbeth and Angelique Raeven, here sitting on the floor of the exhibition space while eating and drinking the same amount of food and liquids. The video shows a double tension: that of competition and mutual dependence.



Marina Abramović SR/NL/US, 1946
Balkan Erotic Epic
2005, HD digital video, colour,
sound, 15'33"

This video is part of the multi-channel installation *Balkan Erotic Epic*, based on Marina Abramović's research into Balkan folk culture and its use of the erotic. The work is produced by NIMk where it was also shown. In 2014, the installation was exhibited at Museum Hilversum.



Roy Villevoye NL, 1960
Jan Dietvorst NL, 1953
Owner of the Voyage
 2007, two-channel video installation,
 HD digital video, colour, sound, 15'54''

Installation view of *Detours*, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam 2008. From 1992 onwards, after a career as a painter, Roy Villevoye frequently travelled outside Europe, mostly to Papua, the former Dutch New Guinea. The Asmat people inspired him to create a variety of works – first paintings, gradually also photographs and video. Since 1998, he has made films in collaboration with Jan Dietvorst.



▼ Right page

Marijke van Warmerdam NL, 1959
Met losse handen (Hands free)
 2004, 35mm film loop, colour,
 no sound, 2'18''

Installation view of the solo exhibition *Dichtbij in de verte* (Close by in the Distance), Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, 2011, with *Met losse handen* (Hands Free) in the foreground.

► Page 92–93

Jeroen de Rijke NL, 1970–2006
Willem de Rooij NL, 1969
Mandarin Ducks
 2005, exhibition

The film installation *Mandarin Ducks* was on view in the Dutch Pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2005. The curator was Martijn van Nieuwenhuijzen, the then head of the Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam. Their work is characterised by critical research into the codes and conventions that govern the presentation and interpretation of images.





Esther Polak NL, 1962
Jeroen Kee NL, 1955
in collaboration with Waag
Amsterdam RealTime
2002, installation with live streamed
GPS tracks

For the exhibition Maps of Amsterdam 1866–2000, Esther Polak, Jeroen Kee and Waag were invited by the Amsterdam City Archive to produce a mental map of the city. During two months, 75 volunteers were tracked by GPS in their everyday movements. Amsterdam RealTime is one of the first art projects investigating GPS as a medium.



Driessens & Verstappen
Erwin Driessens NL, 1963
Maria Verstappen NL, 1973
Frankendael 2001
2003, video installation

Driessens and Verstappen investigate algorithms for the development of image generating processes and artificial universes. *Frankendael 2001* is a software-based installation for which nine locations in Amsterdam's Frankendael park were documented for one year. The work was shown in 2005 during the exhibition *About Land, Sea and Faces. Present-day Dutch Video Art* at Museum Het Valkhof Nijmegen.



▼ Left page

Daan Roosegaarde NL, 1979
Maartje Dijkstra NL, 1982
Intimacy White
2009, e-fashion making use of smart foils, wireless technologies, electronics, LEDs, copper and other media

First presentation of *Intimacy White* during *Test_Lab: Intimate Interfaces* at V2_, Rotterdam 2009. *Intimacy White* is an interactive fashion project about the relation between people and technology.



► Right page top

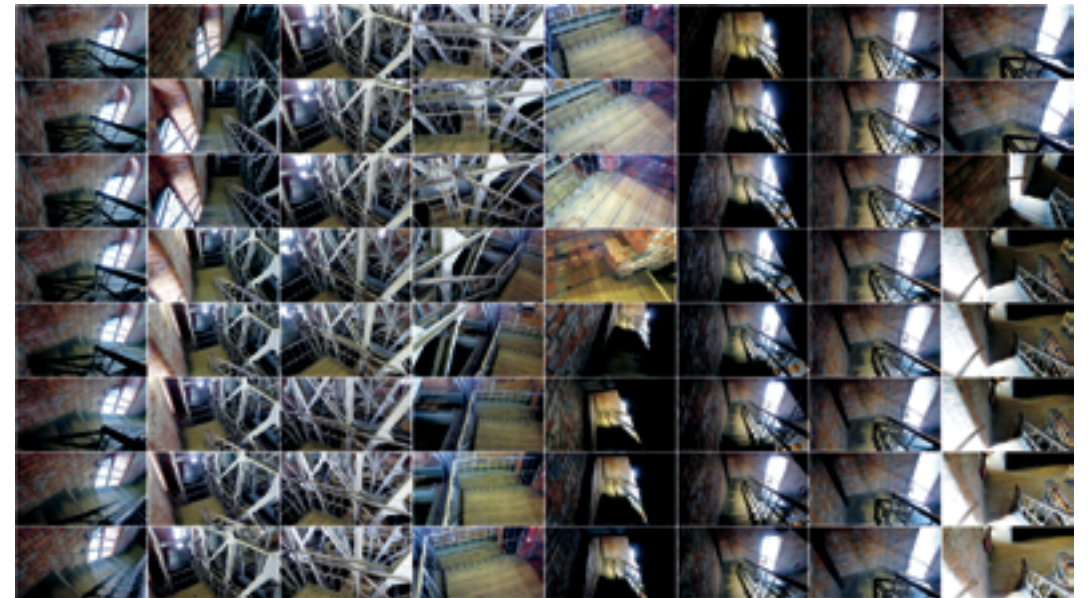
Metahaven
Daniel van der Velden NL, 1971
Vinca Kruk NL, 1980
Information Skies
2016, film still

Information Skies is a combination of three genres: live action, anime-like animation and digital abstract images. It was commissioned by the 11th Gwangju Biennale (2016) and presented in 2019 at the solo exhibition *Metahaven: Earth*, held at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam.

► Right page bottom

Thomas Mohr DE/NL, 1954
544/544 (up/down)
2011, video, colour, sound, 10' 09''

Systems and processes play a large role in the work of Thomas Mohr. He refers both to conceptual tendencies in modern art and to computer-generated processes. In video works, his personal photo archive (containing over 300,000 pictures taken since 1985) is reorganised in series and patterns. *444/544 (up/down)* reflects on the work and music of Conceptual Artist Hanne Darboven.



Giny Vos NL, 1959
Spacesaver
2003, light tube diameter 5.5 mm,
computer, total length approx. 1,000 metres;
dimensions of space 130x80x190 cm

A spatial installation modelled after
Microsoft's screensaver with changing
patterns and varying speeds. Its is
both a screensaver and an information
network, created for the canteen
of the Hogeschool Domstad, Utrecht.



Rafaël Rozendaal NL, 1980
Abstract Browsing
2016, multimedia project

Installation view *Complex Computational
Compositions*, Upstream Gallery
Amsterdam, 2016. Foreground: *Abstract
Browsing 160427* (Pinterest), 2016, wood,
mirrors, 400x180x20 cm. Background:
Abstract Browsing 160309 A/B/C (Waze),
2016, textile (acrylic wool), 175x144 cm (x3).



Mathilde ter Heijne NL/DU, 1969
No Depression in Heaven
2006, single screen HD video, 4'00"

The double role of 'the obedient poor' and 'the wicked rich' played by the artist relates to Hollywood's invention of the women's movie genre during the Great Depression, seducing women back into their traditional roles. The video uses the outdated special effect matte painting revealing the construction of filmic illusion. Shown in *Dealing with Reality*, MMKA Arnhem, in 2008.



▼ Right page

Tiong Ang NL, 1961
Models for (the) People
2008, production still

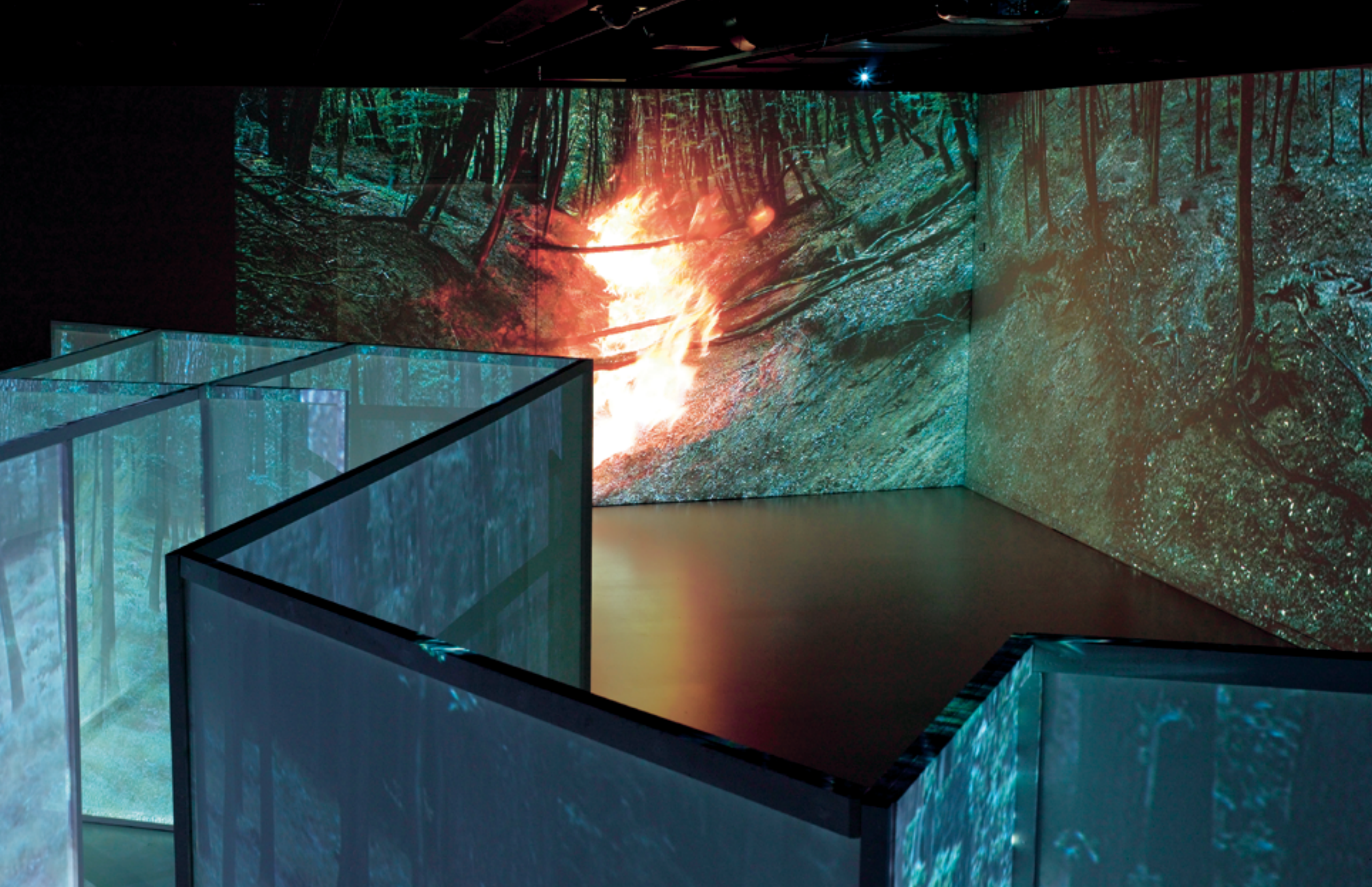
Installation with production stills, a video (of the same name), texts, paintings and several other objects. Featured during the Shanghai Biennale of 2008 in the Shanghai Art Museum (curators Zhang Qing, Henk Slager and Julian Heynen).

► Page 102–103

Jeroen Kooijmans NL, 1967
The Fish Pond Song Part 2: After the Battle
2006–2016, multimedia installation

Installation view at the Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch (2015–2016). *The Fish Pond Song* is a three-part video installation consisting of 24 video projections in an architectural installation. The soundtrack is composed of thirteen poems by Tommy Wieringa. *The Fish Pond Song* is inspired by the work of Hieronymus Bosch and the world after 9/11.





Gabriel Lester BE/NL, 1972
Aeon: The Trilogy (The eternal return)
2016, video installation

Installation view of *The Return of Lester Loops*, solo exhibition at Groninger Museum 2017. The main character is a driver who drives into The Wall of Death, a frightening fairground attraction. The circular movement of the car connotes the loop of the video and the projection on a white concave wall made of fragile Styrofoam.



Manon de Boer NL, 1966
Shift of Attention
1999, video

Installation view of *Shift of Attention* at De Boer's solo exhibition in SMBA, Amsterdam in 1999. The video concerns the construction of memory. The main character in the film, Annemiek, listens to her own stories narrated by someone else. In her face, we see her memory at work.



Wendelien van Oldenborgh NL, 1962
Supposing I Love You. And You also Love Me
 2011, architectural intervention with bench
 and projection, montage of still images
 with dialogue, colour, sound, 13'00''

This work brings the voice of the Swiss-
 Egyptian philosopher and theologian Tariq
 Ramadan into exchange with a group of
 young adults of multicultural origin from
 Belgium and the Netherlands. Filmed
 on location in Muziek Centrum van de
 Omroep, Hilversum and Royal College
 of Art, London.



▲ Top

Aymeric Mansoux NL, 1976
Marloes de Valk NL, 1976
Dave Griffiths UK, 1977
Naked on Pluto
 2010, online video game, installation,
 publication, workshop

Naked on Pluto is a multiplayer interactive
 fiction on Facebook about online privacy,
 data harvesting, and social networks.
 The work is developed during a shared
 residency at NIMk, Baltan Laboratories
 and Piksel in 2010. In the same year, it was
 part of the international touring exhibition
Funware, initiated by MU Eindhoven.

▼ Bottom

Jonas Lund SE, 1984
Cheerfully Hats Sander Selfish
 2013, coconut soap, video loop, 7'50''

Cheerfully Hats Sander Selfish was part
 of Lund's solo exhibition *The Fear of
 Missing Out* at MAMA, Rotterdam 2013.
 The works in this exhibition are the result
 of a computer algorithm written by the
 artist. By analysing and categorising a wide
 range of artworks, a set of instructions
 was generated explaining how to make
 the most successful works of art.





◀ Left page top

Mark IJzerman NL, 1988
CANTUS VISCOUS
 2017, live performance with four-track tape recorders, endless cassettes, a modular synth, home-made spring reverbs, a modified Space Echo and a homemade software video synthesizer

Performance at De Nieuwe Vide, Haarlem (2018). *CANTUS VISCOUS* is an AV performance exploring the concept of pareidolia, the tendency to interpret abstract forms as familiar patterns—like seeing shapes in clouds. An emergent video synthesiser is fed with material from the LIMA collection, while sounds from the collection are performed using tape-loops. Commissioned by LIMA.

◀ Left page bottom

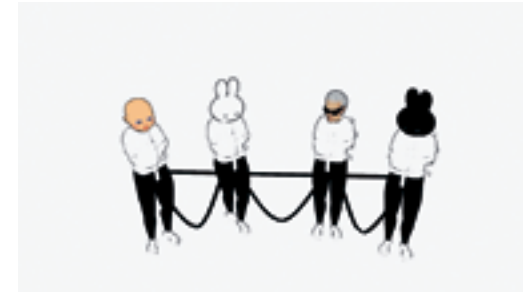
Floris Kaayk NL, 1982
The Modular Body
 2016, exhibition

Installation view of a 3D printed sculpture that represents OSCAR, a modular living being made of organ bricks that can be clicked together, and screens that display the online science fiction story of the creation of this modular living organism. Presented at TEC ART Rotterdam 2018.

▼ Right page

Han Hoogerbrugge NL, 1963
Sander van der Vegte NL, 1981
FLX
 2011, video game

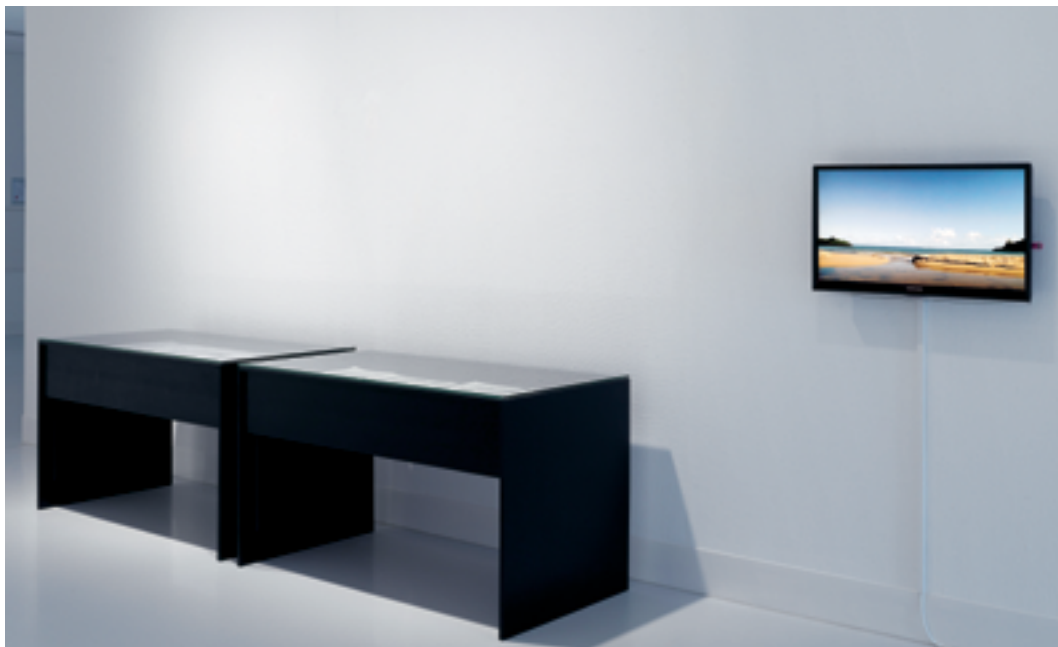
Launch of *FLX* at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam. *FLX* is a multiplayer racing game by Hoogerbrugge and Van der Vegte, produced by Submarine Channel. Each player controls one of the four characters who is physically connected to the others. The goal is to make it to the end of a track while overcoming the oddest of obstacles.





Femke Herregraven NL, 1982
Malleable Regress–North Sea
 2018, floor installation with eight cast polyurethane rubber tiles, pigment, acrylic tubes, magnets, 28.5x33.5x2.5 cm

Installation view (detail) during *The Dutch Savannah*, Museum De Domijnen, Sittard, 2018, curated by Barbara Cueto and Bas Hendrikx. The *Malleable Regress–North Sea Series*, consists of floor sculptures, a map, archival material and video. It points to the colonial roots of global trading and transatlantic communication.



Hans van Koolwijk NL, 1952
De Bellen (The Bells)
 2017, installation with fifty bells from different countries

Installation view of *Sense of Sound* at DordtYart, Dordrecht in 2017, an exhibition with sound sculptures, installations, performances and music. With works by Maria Barnas, Ad van Buuren, Elise 't Hart and Nils Davidse, Tamar Harpaz, Matthias König, Hans van Koolwijk, Robert Lambermont, Matthijs Munnik, Paul Panhuysen, Nico Parlevliet and Dick Raaijmakers.

Mariska de Groot NL, 1982
Dieter Vandoren BE, 1981
Shadow Puppet?
 2013, performance

Shadow Puppet? presents an interplay of embodied performance and analogue machinery that gives rise to an engulfing play of light, shadow and raw optical sound. In 2014, the performance was part of *Trails to Hear*, a performance programme organised by the artist-run platform iii at de Brakke Grond, Amsterdam.

