

Taking as an encounter the social and physical structures that produce, maintain and present art, with my work I try to question how and if contemporary art can be critical. As a consequence, reflection on my role as an artist and producer is of continuous interest.

Six years ago I started to dig holes in the ground and to record the acts on video. Each new hole generates a new video and until today the series contains 15 video pieces. The work, which in the beginning was an intuitive need to interfere with nature and exhaust my body physically, has gained importance over the years. Recently this work became an enquiry in to actual physical sites and ideas of socially formed sites. The physical site for the digging of the hole will inevitably be brought in to relation with the site of the presentation of the video documentation, as such, it is important that the hole is dug as close as possible to the site where the video is planned to be shown. Yet the image in the documentation of the digging does not reveal any site specificities to the viewer. By letting a commissioner, for example a curator or art collector, dig the hole I am trying to comprehend and make visible parts of the complex structures of social relations constituting the site of the art environment. Social relations which I believe are an important part of the production and presentation of a work of art.

I also use works by other artists in order to define and refer to physical and socially structured sites. An example are the two A0 posters produced for the fence surrounding the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. One of the posters shows part of Henri Matisse's collage "La Perruche et la Siren" from 1952 and the other poster shows Daan van Golden's painting "Blauwe Studie naar Matisse" from 1982. Matisse's collage is part of the museum's collection and both posters are produced with images scanned from catalogues produced and distributed by the museum. At the actual site of presentation, the posters referred to an earlier site specific work by Daniel Buren which he had based on the colours in Matisse's collage.

In the production of these posters my decision not to print the parrots on the posters scale 1:1 with the original art works, nor scale 1:1 with the size of the catalogues, is in relation to my previous works a radical shift in decision making. Intrigued by Daan van Golden's decision to arbitrarily let the size of his painted parrot be determined by the maximum distance he could set out between his slide projector and his canvas, as opposed to paint Matisse's cutout scale 1:1 with the original work, I decided to arbitrarily scale my parrots to fit the formats of the A0 posters.

For the last year I have been working on the proposition that the critical function of an art work is more convincing when located in the art work itself, rather than in the context and environment it refers to. The above mentioned approach, to let the actual produced object, in this case the A0 posters, determine certain measurements and scales, indicates a mode of production drawn from the perception of the autonomy of art, as I have long considered to be lacking any credibility. Through my interpretation and understanding of the legacies of conceptual art, in relation to my own works, the next step to consider is a more radical encounter for the critical possibilities of a contemporary work of art by facing the challenge of the position of an absolute absence of critique.