

English summary

I am who I am; Piet-Jan Sep



Piet-Jan Sep, who is autistic, has a formidable memory. From the countless art and history books, this illustrator perfectly remembers an unimaginable amount of facts and dates. With coloured pencils, he draws fine lines and vistas that at first glance look more like a mishmash of whimsical shapes. On closer inspection, however, the viewer recognises masks, chickens and houses. Never people and always in even numbers. Sep constructs systematic and fragmentary compositions, yet never articulates on the content of his work, thus leaving us with nothing but conjecture. p.p. 8-11 www.artotheek.be

Endless desire; Ronald Noorman

Visual artist Ronald Noorman (1951) and his wife Rijkje 'are not fond of superficiality'. Their growing collection comprises primitive art, particularly from Oceania, and modern and contemporary art, including Outsider Art. Regarding the latter, the emphasis lies on works on paper, which is also Noorman's speciality. The collectors know everything about the background and the context of the objects among which they live. In their own words, they 'feed on' the silent yet powerful atmosphere radiated by the combs, jewellery, nose bones, skulls, sculptures and drawings. The key words are: 'authenticity, intimacy and psychological necessity'. And all that in an upstairs apartment in Amsterdam. p.p. 30-35 www.nouvellesimages.nl and www.galeriewernerklein.de



Fascinating encounters; Roger Cardinal

In 1972, retired Professor of Visual Arts Roger Cardinal coined the term 'Outsider Art'. Since then, he has been a much-sought-after speaker and guest curator the world over. We spoke about Outsider Art and literature, his field of expertise. Just like good poetry enables you to summon personal associations, the outsider artist uses their art to expose you to their imagination. Without verbal explanation and without being consciously aware of the desire to create art, you are nonetheless drawn into a dialogue with their work. According to Cardinal, it is a matter of time before outsiders become more well known. We are beginning to value their work more and more because they are able to share with us their uniqueness. p.p. 19-22

Obsession

How outsiders repeatedly rediscover 'what's inside... us'?

Anyone who is truly obsessed by something is possessed by it. As part of this obsession, artistic creation is a way of being in touch with things. Many artistic outsiders primarily use their art to repeat what has never occurred. For them, the essence is *creatio ex nihilo* - creation out of nothing. How a person goes about reflecting themselves in their work. Outsiders produce reflections of themselves. According to art psychologist Joannes Késenne, the positioning of the outsider world within the art world requires new illumination with the guiding theme being 'where on the inside is the outsider capable of reaching'. p.p. 4-7 www.artisit.be

Coherent and intense combinations; Pascal Tassini

Originally, Pascal Tassini was more interested in cleaning Créahm's Belgian studio than creating anything in it. But ever since he saw a reproduction of an African sculpture, this artist and comedian has been making fascinating objects from various materials. Everything is interconnected. Forms continue to grow and become a coherent and intense monumental unit. Tassini works in a self-constructed hut that acts a safe haven, a laboratory and a consulta-

tion room where he receives visitors. He wraps objects up and creates multi-armed monsters by tying jumbled textiles together, rolling them up and fusing them into limbs and tentacles. p.p. 12-14 www.madmusee.be and www.creaahm.be

"Manure doesn't exist". Everything is material to Markus Meurer



German-born Markus Meurer inherited his father's talent for seeing a living entity in every object. 'Manure doesn't exist. Neither does rubbish.' His sculptures, collages, jewellery and paintings using found objects are created by continually adding to the materials. Meurer believes that the revaluation of objects contributes to the moral edification and psychological healing of the people around him. He calls himself a 'sufferer' with salvation as his duty in life. With his missionary-like traits, he saves objects, himself and the world. Those around him think he is antisocial and a danger to public health. p.p. 24-27 www.outsiderart.nl

George Widener; Mathematical and artistic genius

The mental condition of American George Widener (1962) has been analysed as Asperger's Syndrome, a variant of autism, characterised by highly focused and intense intellectual activity. As a *savant*, his mind teems with symbols, inventories, calculations, calendars, charts and magic number squares. He translates this private world into eccentric diagrams and figurative drawings. Among his favorite topics are fantastical machines, the Titanic disaster, and the life of Queen Victoria. In his hands, the notion of a prolix spatial system as a Megapolis gives rise to an uncanny vision of a city of symmetrical streets and numberless tall buildings, with canals, bridges, and motor-cars. Is it perhaps a metaphor for his own proliferating mental constructions? p.p. 16-18

'The Stickman from Rotterdam'

Discovered during a competition for amateur artists, it was high time to pay a visit to Mr Verschoor, alias 'The Stickman'. With an unprecedented passion for and substantial experience with wood, this born storyteller carved the most beautiful wooden tableaux year after year. He incorporated his travel tales and his love of fairytales and music into furniture and a series of striking walking sticks, all of which hang neatly on a shelf by his bed, carefully covered in plastic and complete with labels on which the stories are explained. Because his current accommodation is too small for wood, he is currently concentrating on drawing. His inner urge to create is quite simply too powerful to stop. p.p. 36-39

Hans Hartman; "I have eternal life"

Hans Hartman is obsessed by great artists such as Van Gogh, Rembrandt and Michelangelo. He himself assumes that he will live forever. He paints like a man possessed. His production is prodigious. Paint splatters cover his furniture, his overalls and, most of all, himself. He greets visitors with unintelligible stories of the masters who preceded him. Anyone visiting his studio becomes irreversibly fascinated by this colourful artist who appears to be obsessed by his own monumental fame. p.p. 28-29 www.herenplaats.nl



"My diary in pictures"; Mariska Schilperoord

Conscious of her obsession, Mariska Schilperoord regularly complains 'I simply cannot stop drawing'. All her experiences of and interest in the European dynasties appear in her minute drawings, which she calls 'my diary in pictures'. Fact and fiction mix. Based on an absolute tendency to minimise, she reduces these mini-drawings still further by cutting them out. p. 23 www.artotheek.be