

Lecture Academy Tianjin, september 2010 by Thé van Bergen

Mr. Lu Yang, thank you very much for the opportunity you gave me to speak about my work and my ideas about painting.

dear students,

As the other artists represented in the exposition "Transition" I am an older artist. You are students, young artists. The question arises now: what could be the difference between a young and an older artist. We can also look after similarities.

A coming artist needs a certain talent (talent is difficult to describe in contemporary art). He should do research, he needs courage, intuition and he must have conviction in the things he does. He must have at his disposal enough ideas, notions or concepts.

An older artist has built up experience and customs. Working with these abilities he can produce work, but the results can only really be interesting and important if he will be able to work with the attitude as just mentioned with relation to the young artist. This means that he sometimes must have the courage to renounce at least partly of his customs and experience to be free for new research and other concepts and possibilities. In those conditions the older artist can continually evaluate.

Next I shall try to say something about painting.

I think a good painting should somehow be a construction. Each aspect of the painting has to be connected with the whole complexity of the image. To obtain such a result you should discover and develop a personal and logical system, initially in your mind and then concreted in the materialisation of the painting. Of course this materialisation is the most important part of the work, where courage, experience, research, concept and intuition work together to conduct you to your result, your image, the painting. I am convinced that a painting, made in those circumstances will add something important to an artist's evolution.

To continue I should like to show you a series of pictures to inform you about my evolution without comment. After that I choose some of them to tell you something about my fascinations.

- 1 survey of small paintings (two of them are in the exposition). Evolution from rhythms, signs to elementary figuration.
- 2 "four strips", 115x100cm, 1973, oil on canvas. First painting without any figuration. The start of a more analysing, formal research.
- 3 3x(90x75), without title, 1973, acrylic on canvas. Personal logical system, fundamental research of the properties of acrylic paint, primary colours and layered surface.
- 4 "black on white", 200x160 cm, 1979, a.o.c. After this work I restarted with oil paint in a more physical way of working.
- 5 "yellow, black, white" 120x120cm, 1980, o.o.c. The image is the result of the liquidation of the previous phase.
- 6 w.t., 110x130 cm, 1986, o.o.c. Application of the paint with my right hand, the result can be seen as a figuration; a leaf or the back of a head with brown hair.
- 7 w.t., 2x(130x110)cm, 1986, o.o.c. Unusual combination of two parts.
- 8 "the table", 160x200cm, 1979+1982+1989, o.o.c. A process of years to accept perspective (illusion of the third dimension)
- 9 "the big score", 160x140cm, 1997+1999, o.o.c. Deconstruction-construction. Without dots compare with 5.

- 10 w.t.(sitting person),90x110cm,1990,o.o.c. Background is liquidation of the previous phase.The legs suggest a relaxed sitting person (no amputated legs).
- 11 "the scene",140x190cm,1986+1992,o.o.c. The dog covers a previous image.The form of the dog began with the perspective of a table.
- 12 "the framework",160x140cm,1996,o.o.c. In the image the framework has been reversed. Within the framework I filled up the surface and unintentional I became the impression of a landscape .
- 13 "the bather",90x80cm,2003,o.o.c.The motive of the bath with its shadow I integrated afterwards.
- 14 "the bent person",160x200cm,2004,o.o.c. Combination of three motives, person, grid and broken trees.
- 15 "the passers-by",180x200cm,2005,o.o. Suggestion of a story with the motives passers-by,legs(lying persons) and barrows.
- 16 "erbarme dich",180x200cm,2007,o.o.c.Title lent from the aria "erbarme dich",Mathew Passion of J.S. Bach.Here again the suggestion of a story, now with abstract elements, trees and two falling persons.
- 17 "the waiting person",50x50cm,2007,o.o.c. A figuration in a very abstract form.
- 18 "the acrobats",213x153cm,2007,o.o.c. Once more an unusual combination , here of three parts. The motive now is figurative.

As you have seen I developed through the years quite a series of motives. With a combination of motives I can give the suggestion of a story, like in a dream , obvious, but yet confusing,you see the clear forms and elements, but you cannot reach them, there will always be a certain distance....

Thank you very much for your attention.

If you have any questions or remarks , please let me know.