

## Atelier Van Lieshout's *New Tribal Labyrinth* - Objects for imaginary tribes

For the near future, Atelier Van Lieshout foresees the emergence of a new tribal world, a primitive society where production takes centre stage. This world will see a return to farming and industry - which currently both have been banished from our society - and a re-establishment of our relationship with materials – which now has been lost. In this new world, ethics will be of little importance. Instead, rituals will be re-valued, and will offer the tribes of the future guidance.

Atelier Van Lieshout is taking an advance on this future, and is creating all necessary equipment for the imaginary tribes, ranging from items of worship and sacrifice to objects for daily use, dwellings and machines. All these artworks together make the huge Gesamtkunstwerk that is *New Tribal Labyrinth*

### Industry

With *New Tribal Labyrinth*, Atelier Van Lieshout wants to reinterpret and revalue the factories and installations of the Industrial Revolution. The atelier has created a series of large scale sculptural/technical installations, made in an improvised style with contemporary materials: blast furnaces and foundries, refineries and chemical installations textile mills and ceramics workshops. At first sight, it is not directly clear whether or not these installations are part of a post-apocalyptic survival strategy, or instead a representation of a new utopian way of honest, durable production. *Naphta Cracker* (2012) and *Blast Furnace* (2013) are highlights of these series.



*Naphta Cracker*, 2012 | *Blast Furnace*, 2013

Additionally, the atelier has created a series of Monuments to Machines, large scale artworks in brightly colored composite that pay homage to production, like totems, objects of worship even. These include *Power Hammer*, *Steam Hammer*, and *Vice* (all 2014), as well as a number of smaller sculptural pieces.



*Power Hammer*, 2014 | *Screw*, 2014

## Farming

*New Tribal Labyrinth* is a pledge for production, whether it is through the re-evaluation of industry or through farming. Atelier Van Lieshout is working on a series of idealistic, avant-garde farms for the future, but also for the present and the past. The final goal is to create a single larger than life pavilion comprising all the individual farms, which will be connected by tunnels, corridors, doors and hatches. By entering this farm, visitors will engage in labyrinth-like time-travel through the ages. As the first farms of the series, Atelier Van Lieshout has created *Hagioscoop* (2012), the farm for the Holy Family, *SawMill/CheeseMaker* (2013), a primitive industrial farm, and *Insect Farm* (2012), the farm of the future.



*Hagioscoop*, 2012 | *Insect Farm*, 2012

## Tribes

Additionally, *New Tribal Labyrinth* provides ritual objects, totem-like sculptures and dwellings for the tribes of the future. These include large scale projects like *The Original Dwelling* (2015) as well as smaller totems, icons and images of worship, like *The Farm* (2011), which was the starting point of the *New Tribal Labyrinth*.



*The Original Dwelling*, 2015 | *The Farm*, 2011

*New Tribal Labyrinth* reflects on our extremely advanced and complex society, on over-consumption and the limited nature of the raw materials on which this society is built. In Atelier Van Lieshout's opinion, this is a society which cannot survive. Once supplies are exhausted, we will see a harshening of relations between people, increased survival tactics, possibly even armed conflict – and the emergence of a tribal future. The question is whether these radical changes, which are coupled with violence but which may also lead to a new improved society, are good or bad.