



ATELIER VAN LIESHOUT

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APRIL 22 - JUNE 10

ATELIER VAN LIESHOUT

Ravenstein, Netherlands, 1963.

OMR is delighted to present *Poly Pluto Pluri*, the first extensive exhibition of Atelier Van Lieshout in Mexico.

Artist Joep van Lieshout (Ravenstein, the Netherlands, 1963) founded the studio Atelier Van Lieshout in 1995. Based in the port of Rotterdam, he has been working under this name ever since to undermine the myth of artistic genius. *Poly Pluto Pluri* offers an overview of Van Lieshout's practice from the early 1990's until the present day: straddling sculpture and installation, utopia and dystopia. Works appear within a deserted domestic setting and are primarily grouped by series, reflecting changing concerns of utility and display. Roughly translated from Ancient Greek and Latin as 'more, more, more', *Poly Pluto Pluri* charts the development of new technologies congruent to the advancement of humanity, with all of its successes and more notably, its failures.

Joep van Lieshout dissects systems, be it society as a whole or the human body. In 2001 Atelier Van Lieshout declared an independent state in the port of Rotterdam, AVL-Ville, with all conveniences to function as a self-supporting community producing their own food, medicine, even alcohol. There was a power station, a water treatment plant and a mobile farm, but also an arms workshop, funded by their own currency and constitution. During the same period Women On Waves (WOW) commissioned Atelier Van Lieshout to produce a portable abortion clinic. The result was a shipping container that sailed to countries where abortion is illegal so women could receive safe treatment under Dutch law. Other previous work includes huge sculptures of human organs: brightly coloured genitals and digestive organs appear as interconnected organisms. In the case of *Bar Rectum* (2005) you could enter the structure and enjoy a drink. Confronting current socio-cultural issues – be they production or ecology – Atelier Van Lieshout offers real-life solutions via artistic production.

In *Poly Pluto Pluri*, the focus is technology as a means of survival. Highlighting a number of recurring motives and obsessions for Van Lieshout including power, life, sex and death; how these themes play into the ideal of self-sufficiency is key. Works have been selected from six significant series including *Soft Edge* from the 1990's: shelving units and tables exhibited as sculptures. Based on standard measurements, finished in polyester with equally standard colors, works were produced in unlimited editions and delivered to order as a means of highlighting their artificiality, whilst questioning the status of art. Works on display such as

Funnelman (2006) and *Minimal Steel Red Lights* (2006), from the series *Technocrat* (2003–2006) and *SlaveCity* (2005–2008) respectively, show humans as cogwheels in closed circuit systems, being used and reused as a source of labour, pleasure, bio-energy and food. Other works are from Atelier Van Lieshout's self-professed 'Gesamtkunstwerk' *New Tribal Labyrinth* (2010–2015). Pre-empting the emergence of an imaginary new tribal world with a primitive society in which production takes center stage, here Van Lieshout created a series of large-scale monuments, machines and tools, totem-like objects of worship. In *The Burghers* (2013) abstract figures huddled together in a box-like form symbolize the ever-present human dilemma: what identity does one assume in a time of crisis?

Poly Pluto Pluri presents a comprehensive survey of one the most significant and prolific contemporary artists inverting the fields of art, design and architecture. Fuelled by Van Lieshout's fascination with 'man and machine', present-day society appears at once advanced and undone, complex yet susceptible to basic primitive urges.

Atelier Van Lieshout's international solo exhibitions include La Friche le Belle de Mai, Marseille (2013); Mumok, Vienna (2010); Winzavod, Moscow (2009); Museum Folkwang, Essen (2008); Hayward Gallery, London (2007); Oficina para Proyectos de Arte (OPA), Guadalajara (2006); Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo (2005); MACRO, Rome (2005); Camden Arts Centre, London (2002); PS1, New York (2001); Museum of Contemporary Art, Miami (1999); USF Contemporary Art Museum, Tampa (1999); The Contemporary Arts Center, Cincinnati (1999); Walker Arts Center, Minneapolis (1998); Museum für Gegenwartskunst, Zürich (1995). His works have been included in the Gwangju, Venice and São Paulo biennials, and are part of the collections of the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Walker Art Center, Minneapolis and The Henry Moore Institute, Leeds UK. Additionally, Atelier Van Lieshout has worked on numerous commissions for both public spaces and private collections.



Concurrent to New Tribal Labyrinth, *The Burghers* symbolizes the ever-present human dilemma: the choice between the known and the unknown; between security and insecurity; between tradition and progress. Reflecting on the possible end of civilization, this sculpture draws from a universal and timeless theme: what does one do in a time of crisis? The figures, huddled together and intertwined represent the different roles that people play in a troubled time. When one is confronted, what will one do? Will one become a hero? A killer? A helper? A healer? A traitor? A saint or a sinner?

The Burghers, 2013

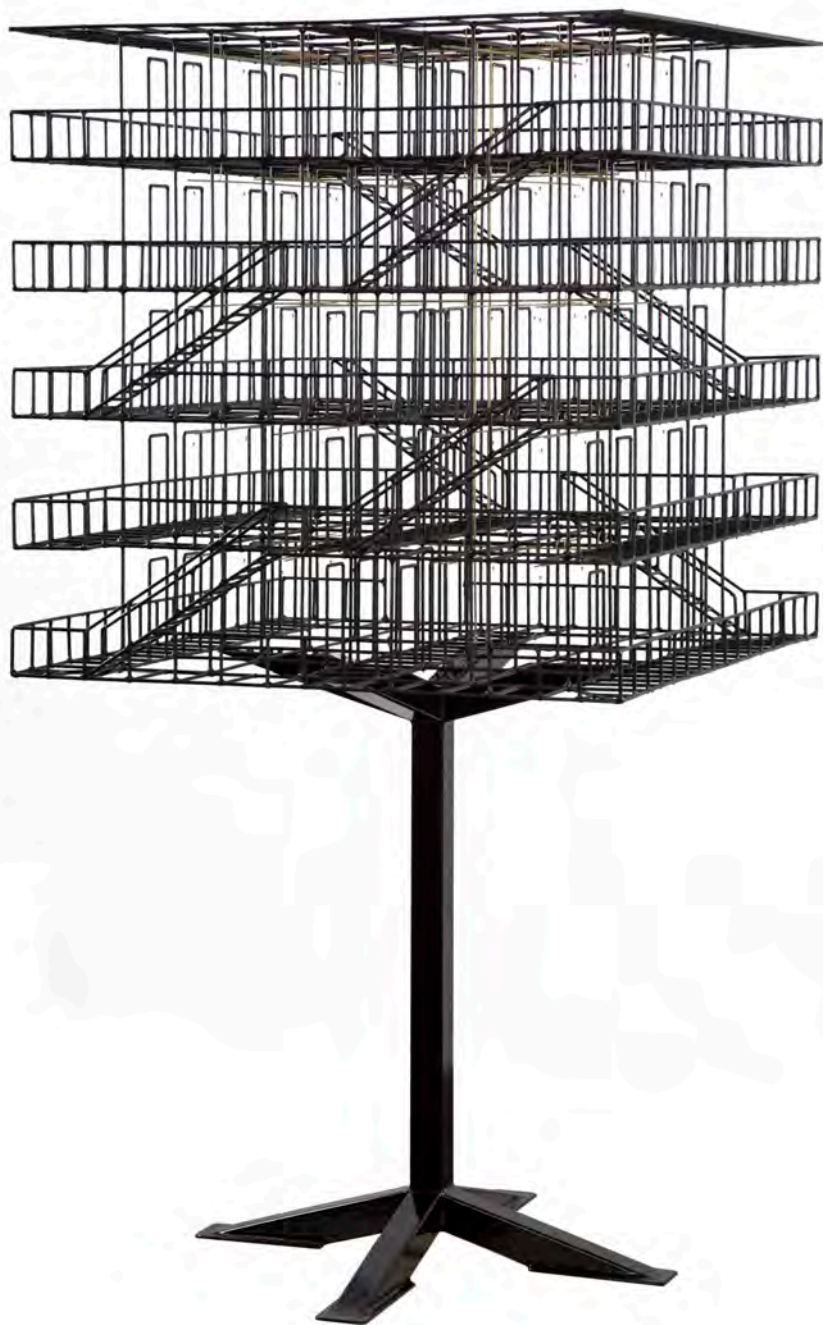
Fiberglass
285 x 188 x 195 cm

With New Tribal Labyrinth Van Lieshout wanted to reinterpret and revalue the factories and installations of the Industrial Revolution. As part of this revaluation, Atelier Van Lieshout created a series of monuments, machines and tools, large-scale artworks that pay homage to production, like totems, even objects of worship.

Screw, 2015

Acrylic
57 x 57 x 230 cm





A stylized architectural model of a brothel, *Minimal Steel with Red Lights* is part of *SlaveCity* (2005-2008), a fictional yet functional city-state populated by workers whose every function is calculated to maximize profits and minimize waste. These workers – slaves – do not receive wages but privileges instead, such as a visit to a brothel - both for male and female slaves.

Minimal Steel with Red Lights, 2006

Steel
107 x 107 x 205 cm

Molecules and atoms are one of Van Lieshout's recent obsessions, part of the ongoing series CryptoFuturism. He is currently researching the origin of matter, material and form, while he is working on a vision of a new, ecological, high-tech society. The artworks, however, are not a literal reference, but offer a sculptural interpretation of molecules, a contemporary version of abstracted scientific structures.

Happy Molecule, 2016

Acrylic, resin
112 x 95 x 225 cm





A multifunctional social sculpture that encourages all types of entertainment and exchange, Party Island is part of Les Brutalist series: a body of cubist, functional sculptures in a style Van Lieshout refers to as “nouveau brutalism”. With its abstract, geometrical shapes, Les Brutalist bears a clear reference to the utopian modernist movements of the early 20th century. At the same time, however, the installation addresses our most primeval needs, coupling the pursuit of progress with a longing for the past.

Party Island, 2015

Fiberglass
240 x 180 x 100 cm

Buffel is a tribal totem, representing Modern Man, sculpted from one block. Man and cage become one; the inanimate becomes animate; the human possesses the object, which in turn possesses the human. The work can be seen as a Möbius strip: a surface with only one side and one boundary. Entangled and indecipherable, the question then remains, who controls it?

Buffel, 2011

Fiberglass
100 x 90 x 222 cm



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