

SlaveCity, 2005-Ongoing

“Conceived and built for a brave new world, SlaveCity is a fictional city state populated by workers whose every function is calculated to maximize profits and minimize waste. Inspired by our increasingly technocratic society designed by bureaucrats with malevolent accounting software, Van Lieshout has proffered this sardonic ultimate solution for neoliberal states and corporations looking to colonize our eco-future.”

Natalie Kovacs, Curator

Work/Sleep Unit , 2006

SlaveCity’s ‘inhabitants’ work for seven hours daily in call-center office jobs and seven hours in the fields or workshops, then allowed three hours of relaxation before sleeping for seven hours. They are employed and housed in the Work/Sleep units, minimising their commute time by integrating workplace and dwelling.

Shower Unit, 2006

On strictly set time schedule the shower unit has to be used. All wastewater is reused in agriculture or industry.

Sanitary Unit, 2006

On strictly set time schedule the toilets have to be used.
All excrement is reused in the biogas plant to generate electricity.

Mini Modular Brothel on Stand, 2006

The ‘participants’ of SlaveCity are not paid for their work. Instead of payment they receive privileges, such as visits to a brothel – both for male and female slaves. The brothels for the higher-class slaves are far more luxurious than those for the lower class slaves.

Model Female Brothel, 2006 White

Model Female Brothel, 2006 Black

For the women slaves there is a luxury brothel in the shape of a giant sperm. It’s very much about the survival of the fittest. The men enter at the tail; they have to struggle and fight their way to the front. The cleverest, meanest or strongest guys arrive in the arena to the cheers of

the women. The final battle takes place and then the women take the survivor into a cubicle to have sex. A parallel to social Darwinism.

Model Female Brothel on Pedestal, 2006

The Model Female Brothel on pedestal shows a different take on the luxury brothel for female slaves in a detailed, large-scale architectural model of this pleasure palace.

Woman on Bed, 2006

Generator and Turbine on Pedestal, 2007

Electricity is generated with biogas that produces steam for the turbine.
All energy in SlaveCity is Renewable.

Infrastructure Coffee Table with CallCentre Units on top, 2007

The Infrastructure coffee table presents the urban layout and infrastructural underground connections of SlaveCity.
For this occasion the CallCentre Unit (2007) has landed on the table. The CallCentre is the place where all slaves live and work.

Gas Circuit on Pedestal, 2007

The power plant in SlaveCity is powered by biogas produced by waste and excrement of the slaves. SlaveCity is the first 'zero energy' town, a green place where everything is recycled - not squandering precious resources. To make this possible, the urban plan comprises a fully functional, self-sufficient energy network including power plants, generators and gas circuits, aimed at generating and distributing the renewable energy created by recycling unsuitable participants.

Headquarters Coffee Table, 2007

This is a scale model of the Headquarters of SlaveCity which in reality has a surface of 50.000 m2. Its shape is derived from a womb and penis in state of intercourse. In every part of the organs, is a different department of the headquarters.

Hospital Coffee Table, 2007

In the hospital, the participants selected for organ transplants are operated on, donating their organs for the general good before their remains are reused.

Body Sofa, 2009

In Body Sofa, bodies have piled with pillows to create a sculpture that functions incidentally as a sofa. Its use is a by-product of its design. Sculpted with a simple interference, it is morphed into a piece of furniture.

Swing, 2011

The sculpture conveys life: its beginning and its end. A child swings from one side of the tree's branches, a man hangs to death from the other. The tree itself symbolises the cycle of death and renewal upon which existence is based. Life is finite and we, as sentient beings are aware of this, continually.

Thin Man, 2010

Thin Man reflects upon our advanced and complex society in which over-consumption and limited raw materials play a crucial role. Once supplies are exhausted society will see a harshening of relations between people and increased survival instinct which raises the question whether such radical changes, which are coupled with violence but which may also lead to a new improved society, are good or bad.

Arschmänner, 2004

Arschmänner represents human figures as a particle of a larger system, a closed circuit of food, alcohol, excrement and energy. Humans are the biological cogwheels that generate raw material to produce valuable biogas used for cooking food and alcohol to keep the human cogwheels functioning.

Bad Furniture Coffee Table, 2004

The work of AVL is full of paradoxes and ambiguity. On the one hand, it may seem simple and straightforward in terms of design, but, on the other hand, it mixes surrealistic aspects with minimalism, utopia with dark sexual extremities, and decorative craftsmanship with awkwardness.

Unlimited, 2012

One of the millions of sperm is the lucky one.

Fertility, 2009

Tree Table Lamp, 2009

A tree converted to a lamp with man like figures – growing from the tree, again playing with illumination and the cycle of life, the duality of nature between life and death- sculpture and function.

Helpers, 2014

The Helpers symbolize an ever-present human dilemma: the choice between the known and the unknown, between security and insecurity, between tradition and progress.

The sculptures represent the different human attitudes to a situation of crisis: heroism, fear, charity, love.

Der Kuss, 2009

Der Kuss symbolize an ever-present human dilemma: the choice between the known and the unknown, between security and insecurity, between tradition and progress. The sculptures represent the different human attitudes to a situation of crisis: heroism, fear, charity, love.

Atelier Van Lieshout / Joep Van Lieshout

Sculptor/ inventor/ architect/ designer/ painter and visionary...

Van Lieshout was accepted to the Rotterdam Academy of the Arts at sixteen years old. After graduating, he rose to fame quickly with projects that travelled between the traditionally non-functional area of art and the world of easy and clean designs, creating sculpture and installations, buildings and furniture, utopias and dystopias.

In 1995, Van Lieshout founded his studio, Atelier Van Lieshout, and has been working solely under the studio's name ever since. The studio moniker exists in Van Lieshout's practice as a methodology toward undermining the myth of the artistic genius. Over the past three decades, Van Lieshout has established a multidisciplinary practice that produces works on the borders between art, design, and architecture. By investigating the thin line between manufacturing art and mass-producing functional objects, he seeks to find the boundaries between fantasy and function, between fertility and destruction.

Van Lieshout dissects systems, be it society as a whole or the human body; he experiments, looks for alternatives, takes exhibitions as experiments for recycling, and has even declared an independent state in the port of Rotterdam *AVL-Ville*(2001). All of these activities are conducted within Van Lieshout's signature style of provocation—be it political or material. Van Lieshout combines an imaginative aesthetic and ethic with a spirit of entrepreneurship; his work has motivated movements in the fields of architecture and ecology, and has been internationally celebrated, exhibited, and published. His works share a number of recurring themes, motives, and obsessions: systems, power, autarky, life, sex, and death—each of these trace the human individual in the face of a greater whole.