



The museum as a time machine

Play Van Abbe - Part 2: Time Machines

10/04 – September 2010

The museum 'plays' with time. It is, as it were, a huge machine for arranging our past, present and future. On 10 April, under the title *Time Machines*, the second part of *Play Van Abbe* opens with three remarkable exhibitions. *In-Between Minimalisms* features work from the museum collection chosen by the Danish artists' collective SUPERFLEX. Then there is a retrospective of Polish, post-war painter Andrzej Wróblewski's work, while *Museum Modules* looks at four historic museum displays in an unconventional manner. All three exhibitions, which vary in form and content, are part of the *Play Van Abbe* programme and run until mid-September. During this period a programme of talks, films and other events is also planned. To mark the opening on Saturday, 10 April at 4pm, Rob van Gijzel, the mayor of Eindhoven, will open the exhibition and the day ends with a performance by British artist Spartacus Chetwynd. In-between special guides will give visitors tours of the new exhibitions.

In-between Minimalisms

The Van Abbemuseum invited the Danish artists' collective SUPERFLEX to curate one exhibition with works from its collection. SUPERFLEX engages in themes which are on the borderline between art and economics, like making information accessible to all and the restrictions placed on this via the system of rights. The collective chose works linked to topics like seriality, mass production, distribution, copyright and the art work as concept. *In-Between Minimalisms* features work by, among others, Carl Andre, Daniel Buren, Dan Flavin, Donald Judd, Bruce Nauman and Sol LeWitt. Picking up on artistic thinking from the nineteen sixties about art work as purely a concept, SUPERFLEX have created an installation especially for this exhibition that challenges the notion of ownership, distribution of and access to information.

Wróblewski

To the Margin and Back – Andrzej Wróblewski is the first major retrospective of Andrzej Wróblewski (1927-1957) to be held outside Poland. His work reveals that experimental art in post-war Poland had the same intensity as its counterpart in the West. With this exhibition, the Van Abbemuseum aims to place the concept of modern art within a broader geographical context. The

show throws the familiar frameworks for the mainly western story of art into disarray, while reflecting on the side about how museums have helped give rise to this well-known history.

Museum Modules

The exhibition *Museum Modules* comprises four modern interpretations of the way art was presented in the twentieth century. The outwardly diverse appearance of these historic models, drawn to our attention by invited artists, designers and researchers, provides an intriguing insight into the history of the museum. Art historian and researcher Kai-Uwe Hemken and designer Jakob Gebert have realised – posthumously – the design for *Raum der Gegenwart* (Room of Today) by artist László Moholy-Nagy and museum director Alexander Dorner from 1930. The Museum of American Art Berlin gives a playful yet disturbing view of the early origins of the Museum of Modern Art (MoMA), New York. The film maker Florian Schneider along with Kim de Groot explores André Malraux's vision of a *Musée Imaginaire* and looks at the influence of photography on the development of the museum. Finally, artist Wendelien van Oldenborgh has recreated the exhibition concept of the Italian architect Lina Bo Bardi from 1968. These contemporary re-workings

of historic exhibition models expose the familiar image of the modern museum and suggest a possibly entirely different one for the future.

Programme opening

16.00 – 16.30 Speech opening in the auditorium by the Rob van Gijzel, mayor of Eindhoven and Charles Esche, director Van Abbemuseum

16.45 – 19.30 Tours by special guest guides

18.30 – 19.00 Performance by Spartacus Chetwynd

Time Machines

The three aforementioned exhibitions together form the second part of the multifaceted, eighteen-month running programme *Play Van Abbe* in which the role of the contemporary art museum in the 21st century is explored. Each part of the programme looks at the functioning of the museum in the past, present and future. In Part 2 the concept of time has a pivotal role. *Time Machines* is about how art history is written and addresses the issue of the influence of the traditional perspective on the museum. This part breaks firmly away from the idea that the museum is neutral and objective. On the contrary, it is suggested that the museum is a time machine which uses subjective devices in order to arrange time and to collect and present its art.

From a meta perspective the three exhibitions may also be regarded as museum experiments. In *In-Between Minimalisms* SUPERFLEX tests crucial issues raised by artists in the nineteen sixties and seventies. The collective also exposes the tension between the exchange of information and the restriction of this through economic interests protected by copyright. A tension felt everywhere in our society on an almost daily basis. The time factor is approached entirely differently in *To the Margin and Back – Andrzej Wróblewski*. This Wróblewski retrospective shows one of the most traditional exhibition types: all the more reason the emphasis here is on the rewriting history by putting the spotlight on a Polish painter relatively unknown in the West. Probably *Museum Modules* offers the most direct perspective on museum practice by juxtaposing historic exhibition models with contemporary conventions.

Curators

In-between Minimalisms: SUPERFLEX, Daniel McClean and Christiane Berndes

To the Margin and Back: Andrzej Wróblewski: Magdalena Ziółkowska

Museum Modules: Diana Franssen and Steven ten Thije

Sponsors

Play Van Abbe is made possible by contributions from The Mondriaan Stichting, BankGiro Loterij, Provincie Noord-Brabant, VSBfonds and SNS REAAL Fonds.



Bruce Nauman, *Lyp Sync*, 1969. Foto Peter Cox



Andrzej Wróblewski, *The blue chauffeur*, 1949. Private collection

Press release
March 2010



Raum der Gegenwart, 1930, designed by Alexander Dörner and László Moholy-Nagy, realised by Kai-Uwe Hemken and Jakob Gebert. Installation view Van Abbemuseum, 2010. Photo Peter Cox

The Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven is one of the first public museums for contemporary art to be established in Europe. The museum's collection of around 2700 works of art includes key works and archives by Lissitzky, Picasso, Kokoschka, Chagall, Beuys, McCarthy, Daniëls and Körmeling. The museum has an experimental approach towards art's role in society. Openness, hospitality and knowledge exchange are important. We challenge ourselves and our visitors to think about art and its place in the world, covering a range of subjects, including the role of the collection as a cultural 'memory' and the museum as a public site. International collaboration and exchange have made the Van Abbemuseum a place for creative cross-fertilisation and a source of surprise, inspiration and imagination for its visitors and participants.

Van Abbemuseum

Bilderdijklaan 10
Eindhoven, The Netherlands
For more information, please visit www.vanabbemuseum.nl

Opening hours

Tuesday to Sunday 11:00 – 17:00
Thursday 11:00 - 21:00
On Thursdays, entrance to the museum is free from 17:00

Entrance

Adults: € 9,00
Groups of 15 persons or more, senior citizens: € 6,50
Students; holders of the Dutch young people's cultural pass (CJP): € 4
Thursdays from 17:00 - 21:00: free entrance (until 31/12/2010)

For more information please look at our website www.vanabbemuseum.nl

For the editors

Press opening

Friday 9 April, 11 am – 2 pm.

More information and images can be downloaded from:
www.vanabbemuseum.nl/pers.

Or contact:

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