



#3.0 Low Fixed Media Show

Bart Stolle

22.09 – 19.11 2017

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For the opening exhibition of the second year Convent presents a solo project with Belgian artist Bart Stolle (°1974, Eeklo), who lives and works in Ghent. For the last several years he has been working on a coherent oeuvre under the title *low fixed media show*, which consists of sound pieces, sculptures and films, next to his drawings and paintings. Stolle is mostly known for his narrative animation films where the characters and objects, composed of simple geometrical forms, depict recognizable social situations in a two-dimensional setting. By drawing these films frame by frame, the artist deliberately chooses to slow things down in this current digital era of speed. The same strategy reappears in his paintings where the now static animation figures find themselves in a complex world that has been reduced to its bare essence. In addition, Stolle has created series of paintings, which are seemingly made out of numerous colorful particles that in their totality remind us of large-scale technical city maps or designs for computer hardware.

The starting point for the exhibition *low fixed media show* is a series of black and white *drawings* (2014–2015) that Bart Stolle has created a few years ago on a daily basis. Although drawing is a regular activity for Stolle, and it has proven to be a fundamental base for the rest of his oeuvre, he only recently made the decision to exhibit this particular aspect of his work. Similar to his animation films, these small-scale works on paper make use of a very limited visual language, in this case mostly reduced to variations of dots, small stripes and lines. To shape these fine structures, the artist mostly uses a pen with black ink, sometimes in combination with pencil, watercolor or a few subtle accents of color. Every single one of these works on

paper display a fascination with and an analysis of computer language, which is translated to repetitive geometric forms and rhythmical series of the binary numbers 0 and 1. Although such compositions can easily be made by a computer program these days, Stolle deliberately chooses to keep on working manually and extremely precise. This way he physically documents the passing of time and movement in his drawings and reacts to the abundance of digital image production in our current society. Also influences from the fields of science, music and architecture resonate throughout this graphical oeuvre. On the other hand these abstract drawings show obvious affinities with early 20th-century modernist art movements like Suprematism and De Stijl, with among others Kazimir Malevich and Piet Mondrian as important representatives. Even more, however, the drawings manifest a unique language, just like the Cuneiform script or the Egyptian hieroglyphs for example, since both comprehend a communicative value, next to their visual clarity. The series on display can be considered as a prequel to Stolle's ambitious project *Meditations*, by which he wants to spread a recent series of drawings as a book on night stands in hotel rooms all over the world, in analogy with the bible.

Especially for this exhibition the artist created a wall drawing in relation to the exhibited ensembles and the specific architecture of the space. The sound piece *Drosophila melanogaster* (2017) in the small room functions as a soundtrack for the drawings and is an increased recording that the artist made of hundreds of fruit flies, captured in glass jars, colliding with a stretched plastic wrap. Through alternately exposing the filled jars to light and darkness, Stolle has orchestrated as it were a random symphony of a feverish drumming sound.

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Pauline Scharmann.

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(Antwerp) and Duvel Moortgat.

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SAVE THE DATE

- × During the last weekend of September the large-scale drawing festival Drawing Days will again take place in Ghent. Convent will also participate in this three-day event. On Friday 29 September we will exceptionally be open between 6pm and 9pm. More information on www.drawingdays.be
- × On Sunday October 1 Convent will partake again in the city parcours Gent Matinees. All galleries and off-spaces in Ghent will be open from 11am to 6pm. More information on <http://gentmatinees.gentkunst.be/>
- × On Sunday November 5 Convent will host a talk between Bart Stolle and Martin Germann, senior curator at S.M.A.K.. Everybody is very welcome to join us for this conversation. More info to follow soon on www.conventartspace.be