

Daniëlle van Ark

*Memorabilia*

October 12 - November 9, 2019



Exactly seven years ago – on 12 October 2012 – the exhibition ‘Foam in Van Loon III’ opened at Museum van Loon in Amsterdam. It included the iconic photographs that Daniëlle van Ark took of the hands of well-to-do ladies showcasing their jewelry. One of the promotional posters that were scattered across the city is now part of her second solo exhibition at the gallery. But upon viewing *In hindsight* (2019), you will notice immediately that the poster has been transformed. The transparent image was framed with the reverse side facing the front, so that the text becomes a mirror image of itself. Visible pieces of colored tape indicate the spots where the image has been stuck onto the slightly discolored background. Just like in earlier work – for which Van Ark used photographs from a newspaper archive, including the painted cropping lines and other notes from the image editors on the press materials, to create autonomous works – she parachutes the past into the present with *In hindsight*.

Present, past and future form a *ménage à trois* in the work of Daniëlle van Ark. They are matched and juxtaposed in a continuous play of attraction and repulsion, thus constantly

shaping one another anew, as it were. Van Ark has a large collection of widely varied objects and images. That collection – of which she considers her own work to be part – is her archive. Elements from that archive are utilized time and again, in varying combinations, in a cyclical passage of time. In her work Van Ark constructs and deconstructs the present, as well as the past and the future, adhering to the notion of a permanent shift of meanings, and of time as a source of remarkable and uncanny coincidences. The question what constitutes the aura of an image plays a particular role in this. Rather than looking for a finished image, Van Ark employs the archive itself as a dynamic whole.

In his autobiography *Speak, Memory*, Vladimir Nabokov writes, ‘I confess I do not believe in time. I like to fold my magic carpet, after use, in such a way as to superimpose one part of the pattern upon another. Let visitors trip. And the highest enjoyment of timelessness—in a landscape selected at random—is when I stand among rare butterflies and their food plants.’ Just like Nabokov, Van Ark seduces and misleads the public with a mixture of fact and fiction. The exhibition is structured as an observatory on which the artist plays a clever game with time. It is also a refuge for the visitor’s imagination. Sketches and source materials merge with more solid forms, as if on their own accord, without any sense of hierarchy. A question then arises: What remains of an exhibition after its closing date? What exactly are the tangible recollections of it? *Memorabilia*. So let the visitor trip!