

ON DEMAND 4: Between Self and Other
curated by Ellis Kat
April 25 - June 5, 2021



"I forget how pungent the body odor of a stranger can smell. I forget how countless dancing heads in a crowd can merge into one solid mass. I forget how it is to compete for the narrow armrest of a seat at the movies. In the fourth ON DEMAND exhibition 'Between Self and Other' we can experience that again. The dividing line between the secure and the stifling is evidently paper-thin."

Speaking here is curator Ellis Kat, who conceived the concept of *ON DEMAND 4: Between Self and Other*. "When I was asked to compile a new edition of ON DEMAND, it occurred to me that during such times the exhibition had to be about the closeness of the other. The bubbles in which we are all forced to live these days do offer security, but they also make it easy to avoid confrontations with 'the other'. We're evidently becoming rather comfortable with the avoidance of encounters with strangers. That's dangerous."

"The closer you get to someone, the more you realize that you're dealing with an individual, a person who has his or her own life. In Joost Conijn's film *Siddieqa, Firdaus, Abdallah, Soelayman, Moestafa, Hawwa en Dzoel-kifi* (2004), in which the artist follows seven brothers and sisters growing up in the immense freedom of a squatted harbor lot, togetherness is portrayed from a close perspective. The title in which the name of each child is stated explicitly already tells us: every child has a distinct story. Once we zoom out, the individuals turn into a large crowd. Heads become tiny dots that move as a single organism, as they do in Marilou van Lierop's *Total Recall of Mundane Conversations* (2014)."

"The proximity of the other provides, to a certain extent, a sense of security, but it can also evoke a feeling of oppression. In the exhibition I want to seek that distinction, the point where the opposite takes place. De Staat's video clip *Witch Doctor* (2015) exemplifies a work which depicts that transition to suppression. We see a massive group of people responding with a stamping rhythm, like robots, to the 'medicine man' speaking in the midst of his followers."

"Now and then the presence of the other is needed in order to have a fresh look at oneself. Basir Mahmood demonstrates this incisively in his film *Thank you for coming* (2013). He asked a Pakistani family to come together and carry out rituals shared at family gatherings. The fact that a camera, the eye of that 'other', is now suddenly present in the same room puts everything into sharp relief. It seems as though the people, once in their own bubble again, give thought to who they are. It is sad that, in these times, we cannot experience the effect of such a confrontation."

"ON DEMAND focuses on video art, but the work of Ricardo van Eyk, Müge Yilmaz or Elise 't Hart, produced in other media, also revolves around the idea of physical proximity. In order to experience

that, you need to come and look. Happily, there's the added bonus of being able to slip through the corona nets with this exhibition: the gallery is, after all, a store and can be open by appointment; in that store we've set up a 'movie theater' where the video works can be watched. So you do still get to have that little 'out' moment."

Artists:

Jan Adriaans, De Staat, Dóra Benyó, Sander Breure & Witte van Hulzen, Joost Conijn, Cool 3D World, Ricardo van Eyk, Elise 't Hart, Zhana Ivanova, Jeroen Kooijmans, Marilou van Lierop, Basir Mahmood, Ana Navas, Fernando Sánchez Castillo, Müge Yilmaz, @clipps

Video art is central to the series of ON DEMAND exhibitions. Visitors can select 'on demand' a video work from those offered and watch it at a time of their own choosing. For the first edition we collaborated with a number of Dutch galleries in order to compile a program of international video works. With the second edition we expanded this collaboration to international galleries. The third ON DEMAND exhibition, curated by Carolyn H. Drake and Suzanne Wallinga, was a non-thematic survey of films arranged according to the Netflix principle. Every edition is accompanied by a fringe program.

For further information please contact the gallery.