It takes three to tango
Vicente Baeza, Chaim van Luit, Dieuwke Spaans
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The tango is not a dance, but a feeling. Some say that, if you ask any Argentine tango dancer about the origins of this sensual dance, you will be told that the tango existed before there was music. Although the most diverse stories about the tango's genesis can be heard, in all of them the tango seems to be the expression of a desire to embrace the other. The tango is a social dance, a 'partner' dance.

In the exhibition *It takes three to tango* the works of three artists – Vicente Baeza (1992, CL), Chaim van Luit (1985, NL) and Dieuwke Spaans (1973, NL) – are shown alongside each other: despite the differences, the works are bound together by the idea of space that they evoke. The chemistry among the individual works runs via the sometimes literal stratification of the material, the rhythm of the image, the combination of lightness and heaviness, and the magnetic power of the feeling. In *It takes three to tango* the imagination is the driving force of the endeavor.

Vicente Baeza decided, after finishing his studies in Santiago, that he no longer wanted to be a distant observer but rather an involved maker. During that time he created objects from his own clothing, departing from the idea that the clothing was a second skin. He carried out performances with objects of found material, made installations and organized exhibitions: all of this as an attempt, in fact, not to anticipate the outcome of his experiments. The guiding principle was the activity itself. Between 2020 and 2022 he was a resident at De Ateliers. There he began to collect material: anything that could be rolled, such as rolls of wallpaper or thin cardboard. He glued the material together, began to use color, walked across the rolls of paper, rolled them out again and then up again; and after rolling them out once again, he would glue things to them and continue to work on them. He lived with his objects, carried them around town in a knapsack “feeling excited, happy, free”, as he himself put it. Baeza speaks about his works as paintings, but he does not consider them two-dimensional objects to hang on the wall: instead of creating an image, he wants them to evoke space, in a broad sense, both physically and mentally. The decision to become an involved maker has meant that Baeza prefers to designate his work as diaries rather than paintings, as an entity that can sprawl in all directions.

In the exhibition Chaim van Luit shows a neon work with brightly colored lines in the form of a hashtag: the term used online to search and be found, a modern symbol of the fact that everything is interconnected, right across time and space. Seeking and finding are the basis of his artistic practice: to bring to light what has been hidden – above or below ground, in history or in the present, via the digital or the analogue – in order to generate new trajectories and perspectives. Most of Van Luit's ideas for new work come about outside the studio, while taking walks in the countryside or in the city.

Observations of everyday reality provide inspiration for artistic interventions, usually via the materials that he finds along the way. Like an archeologist, he excavates layers of history and allows the present to fuse with the past: for *A Dime A Dozen* (2024) Van Luit mainly used coins from the Roman period. Tucked away in those handmade, unique coins are the stories of individuals. Scattered about on canvas made light-sensitive and exposed to daylight, the coins yield the image of a dark-blue cosmos with twinkling or perhaps extinct stars: a portrait about the other side of time that raises questions about life itself.

The Analysis - The Mother (2024/5) is the title of one Dieuwke Spaans's new works. Just like the work pictured above – *The Analysis – Death in A Row* (2024/25) - it is both a drawing and a collage, it has been built up layer by layer. On a background of unfolded sewing-pattern paper, Spaans has drawn the figure of a spider. Almost at the center of the image is its round body, and fanning out from it in pencil across the paper are the spider's long, thin legs. Partly due to the title of the work, there could be an association with the metaphorical spiders of Louise Bourgeois. Part of the spider's body and legs remains vague, because another layer of paper has been pasted on top of it. Looming forth here and there are other figures, such as an animal on the upper right which resembles a wild beast concentrating its energy for a leap. Or the round nipple-like forms of sea urchins that float throughout the work like eyes: these are the viewers of theatrical tales which reveal a slowly unfolding inner life, emerging and then fading away in waves. A layer of transparent paper lies across the entire image like a very thin layer of ice. With lines and areas of Tipp-ex on the top layer of paper, Spaans has concealed information from the underlying layers, and thereby actually imposed this on top of the image as an abstract pattern. All of the elements in the image are registered, brought together, held and released again: the recent works of Dieuwke Spaans are an ode to the sensing of time.