

**Ricardo van Eyk, Vera Gulikers, Christopher Mahon, Anna Ostoya,
Carole Vanderlinden, Evi Vingerling, Anouk van Zwieten**
THE PAINTING SHOW
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It is evidently intrinsic to painting that, to this day, almost anything can be said about it. And with a validity which is, above all, determined very individually. How valid, for instance, is the Afro-American painter Kerry James Marshall's assertion that a painting always remains superior to the digital image because it cannot crash and is moreover always connected to life and to the commitment of the maker, whose personal signature remains discernible on the canvas? How true is the claim that painting has refused, to this day, to be relegated to the past once and for all?

What we can, in any case, establish as fact is that artists are no longer simply painters, sculptors or makers of drawings. They are, first and foremost, visual artists; thus any medium can be used for the sake of the image. The artist has increasingly become a generalist who refuses to be limited to a specific medium and who may just as easily take the work beyond the studio. Today's artist has become a flex worker who travels from one residency, one project, one investigation to the next.

At the same time the studio is evidently still the breeding ground where the artwork takes shape, where the medium once again seems to be 'the message'. For many the studio is also the sanctuary where 'explanation and justification' no longer dominate. This leaves intact the idea that what matters is always: how to respond to the question 'what makes an artwork an artwork?'

What is being asserted nowadays in painting, and how is this being done? One artist might simply paint, while another paints and produces objects; still others paint, produce installations and refuse to see themselves as painters; and then we have the painters who paint and produce performances or videos along with this. Whatever the case may be, painters are painting again and, in doing so, are not contemplating their own navels: with curiosity they have opened the window to our society, to issues such as climate change, multiculturalism, inclusiveness and liberation movements.

Painting is, after all, constantly being challenged to redefine itself. With the work of seven artists in THE PAINTING SHOW, tegenboschvanvreden aims to present diverse attitudes, each of which sheds light on what painting can be in today's world. Ricardo van Eyk considers himself a painter. His spatial 'constructions' take inspiration from the city as a place which bears evidence of human presence. In a play of paint and color, both dulcet and bold, Vera Gulikers juxtaposes details from the work of 'forgotten' or lesser known women artists throughout history with the modernist - and male - concept of the grid. In his investigation of objects and their 'behavior' within varying (social) contexts, the practice of Christopher Mahon is versatile and performative: narratives and histories surge up. The work of Anna Ostoya expresses the urge to break away from classical portrayals of the human body. In order to depict the body in a state of being which is not determined by gender, race or age, she reconstructs the body in terms of color and movement. Carole Vanderlinden paints and draws and presents us with images that are not directly related to voices in today's society, but which sharpen our gaze and our thought by way of references to the history of art and culture. The eye of Evi Vingerling seeks the sensuality of light and color behind the forms through which the world makes itself known to us. In her work Anouk van Zwieten, on the other hand, explores the detail representing (as a *pars pro toto*) the greater whole. Personal memories and yearnings take on universal connotations in her expressive paintings.

Here, in THE PAINTING SHOW, we can see seven faces of contemporary painting.