



INTO LONGISH VAST ROCK.

A staying at age: taking the off-stage to the fore.

On the work of Joan van Barneveld

Text by Freek Lomme, curator and writer,
director of Onomatopee

Sehnsucht, part and parcel of alternative pop culture, experienced by many teenagers during the time their bodies are wriggling under their skins, but usually left behind when *coming of age*, is Joan's expressive theme.

Through collaboration, Onomatopee and Joan will develop new work and reflect on its territory. This becomes visible in a solo exhibition in the format of a studio space setting at Onomatopee, which will tour via Los Angeles gallery Paul Loya. At Onomatopee, events like talks and music sessions will rock the foundations and stimulate outcomes. A publication will be launched at the end of the working period, condensing it and taking it beyond the confines of the residency.

Joan van Barneveld plays the deep desires and visual processes of pop culture. His earlier work energises the visual poetics of grunge culture, the 90s revitalisation of punk's counterculture, into the present. In paintings made up in black, he projects iconic images of this culture, both on stage and elsewhere. His work started by processing images of the wide and desolate horizons of iconic grunge landscapes such as the deserted stage with guitar feedback still reverberating, or the iconic image of the country cottage where Cobain put a bullet through his head. They are like an extended horizon which hides our longing for an essential perspective behind shades of black. In these, people remain absent, but the feedback of the intensity of this cultural movement is 'condensed' behind a veil of black layers. By using this technique, the longing is placed behind an optical membrane, which does not suppress it as much as situates its introverted grandeur behind the curtain constituted by this dark skin.

Joan is not an incurable grunge fan or lo-fi adept. Whereas many, during their *coming of age*, lose track of the intensity they feel under their skin in the days of their youth and remove it from their bodies while they are growing up, Joan wants to drag it out into the reality of grown-up life, cherish its intensity and place it in full view, thereby re-actualising it. As an individual and as an artist he longs for the integrity of this culture and tries to locate its 'balls'. While pop culture provides a free outlet for young people in their search for identity,



this often disappears in their coming of age, when people start to behave calmer and more responsibly. Joan plays this issue of saturation between the solitude of deeper longing and shared iconic totems.

The depth with which we experience his images gets under our skin. The black membrane is mainly a mental veil shrouding the work in its landscape, but it also creates a filter for the spectator's psychological osmosis towards the horizon presented in the work: it is a lens enabling a deeper setting. The spectator's skin will become thinner from the inside out, and will make him vulnerable to the radical nature of the moment's horizon. It is an enlightening moment which mirrors the black-and-white contrasts of the image, which at the same time constitute an aesthetic catalyst within the work.

Bad moon rising: the L.A. show

This expressive challenge and technical ambition was deployed next in producing the first series of new works which radically set this *coming of age* against a more concrete horizon, with respect to the grunge intensity: it provides its poetry with a more concrete setting. In this work, the longing for an essential perspective is represented in a figurative way, articulating a horizon of an intense, expressive radical quality. The threadbare landscape is a kind of indicator for the lost soul moving around and seemingly dissolving in it. These works are shown in Los Angeles. The black veil remains, but the technique used is no longer pure painting, but rather photographic screen printing, producing works which do not act as single images or thematic series, but as diptychs or triptychs. Because of this, reality in these images causes a more extensive process of associations and wanderings within the spectator. In this game of images and associations the spectator's gaze is manoeuvred through the narrative contained in the poetry. The 'lost soul' is led into the figurations and behind the skin of the image, to where the absence presents itself in a radical way. It is a 'mental imprint' of absence which summons the sense of a 'lost generation' with the solitary spectator, revitalising it. At that moment the work's horizon reaches out horizontally towards the spectator, who enters the work.



Onomatopee 98
Cabinet project

Into longish vast rock:

the challenge at Onomatopee

In recent developments within his work, the energy shifts to a deeper, romantic longing for an essential horizon, narrated in a visually wider manner. He continues to work with blacks and depicts cultural spaces without humans, to process pictures from the public or private sphere releasing a similar charge as when they are 'condensed' by shading. Thus, the development of his oeuvre is also a figured and narrated coming of age, evolving the intensity of the original grunge energy he used. The work becomes more layered: as a spectator you can explore narrative links within series, diptychs or triptychs. This enables the evolvement of a temporal transfer of the intensity in his work over a longer period of time, becoming more layered and more powerful in the adult world where positions are more and more fixed and iconic totems possess less strength: the flatness of pop becomes a wide desolate opening into the rock which underlies it. Fuck pop, go poetry.

Freek Lomme,
director Onomatopee projects

www.onomatopee.net

Onomatopee is a presentation-space based in Eindhoven, The Netherlands. Their projects, consisting of exhibitions and publications, challenge the system by playing opportunities bottom-up. Infecting the guts of intellect and the intellect of our guts, Onomatopee mediates between experts in work and devotes to expertise of life. In this, they bring together various backgrounds and disciplines.

WORKING PERIOD at Onomatopee:

February 8th – March 30th
open Saturday and Sunday's 13:00-15:00
Joan will be working at Onomatopee, where you can join him in his temporary studio at irregular hours but for sure on Wednesday evenings 18:00 until 22:00.
TALK: to be announced
4-TRACK EVENING: Friday march 14th, 20:00
FINISSAGE: Friday March 28th, 20:00

Curator/editor Onomatopee: Freek Lomme
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