Content:

‘ONE WAS KILLED FOR BEAUTY, THE OTHER ONE WAS SHOT, THE TWO OTHERS DIED NATURALLY’ (pgs 2-4)
Soundpiece: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oK5YArCSEfA

‘THE RABBIT AND THE TEASEL’ (pgs 5-9)
trailer: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=04unKiUjtL4
http://therabbitandtheteasel.com

‘THE BLACK LAMB’ (pgs 11-13)
www.theblacklamb.org

‘A WALK WITH ACM’ (pgs 13-14)
https://vimeo.com/61335044
As long as the blackbird sings, 13’35
https://vimeo.com/61286604

‘THE RETURN OF THE SWALLOWS’ (pgs 15-17)

‘DRAWINGS’ (pgs 18-21)

‘SCULPTURES/SKULL’ (pgs 22-26)
“ONE WAS KILLED FOR BEAUTY, THE OTHER ONE WAS SHOT, THE TWO OTHERS DIED NATURALLY”
SOLO-EXPOSITION IN ARGOS, CENTRE FOR ART AND MEDIA, BRUSSELS. MAY 3rd-JUNE 29th 2014

CURATED BY ROLF QUAGHEBUE, DIRECTOR OF ARGOS.
PRODUCED BY: ARGOS, KAAITHEATRE, KUNSTENFESTIVALDESARTS, CERA, IMAGINE(EUROPE)
http://theblacklamb.org

“The videos, drawings, and writings of Els Dietvorst explore anti-utopian themes such as social conflict and survival in the margins. A few years ago, this self-proclaimed ‘urban artist’ moved to the Irish village of Duncormick, where she has since lived and worked to the rhythm of the elements and the seasons. In 2014, at the Kunstenfestivaldesarts, Dietvorst presents a series of works on migration and altered living conditions. With Art-Coeur-Merci, the artist bids farewell to the city in which she lived and worked for years. In the film The Rabbit and the Teasel, integrally shot in the Irish countryside, fiction and autobiographical elements are interwoven into a lyrical tale that drags the viewer into a world of beauty, death, and decay. Following its premiere at the Kaaitheater, the film can be seen at Argos, in parallel with an exhibition of new work. The performance, film, and exhibition together form a pathway between city and countryside, between centre and periphery.” (see publication Kunstenfestivaldesarts)
THE RABBIT AND THE TEASEL

FILM, 53",DVD-HD.

BELGIAN PREMIERE IN KUNSTENFESTIVALDESARTS, BRUSSELS. MAY 15TH 2014
INTERNATIONAL PREMIERE, VISIONS DU REEL, NYON, SWITZERLAND, APRIL 17TH 2015

Selected in festivals:
2016 5th Ecofalante Environmental Film Festival, Sao Paulo, Brasil.
2015 Festival Planète Honnète, France.
        Festival Filmer a tout prix, (Panorame Belge), Belgium.
        Festival dei popoli, Italy.
        Kilmore Quay documentary festival, Ireland.
        Wexford Art center, Ireland.
        Blackstairs rural film festival, Ireland.

PRESS:
“The film matches beautiful cinematography with a dark narrative about a time in TJ.’s young life when he grew up on a farm in Ireland.” (Damien O Reilly-Countrywide-18/04/2015)

“In a timeless setting on the Irish countryside, a contemporary parable unfolds, as enchanting as it is confronting. Life, death and miracles of an Irish farmer family. A real autobiography transforms into fiction and comes back to an even deeper notion of reality. Some may possibly argue about the excess of fiction, but artifice has rarely been more natural and appropriate. Dealing with memory, the film acknowledges that our perception of the world mixes real facts with constructed emotional impressions. A masterful narrative, an extremely accurate work on the texts and the powerful aesthetics of timeless rural landscape, perfectly combine with the slow and relentless pace of remembrance and the melancholy of a lost innocence. “(Paolo Moretti, Catalogue Visions du Reel, Nyon, April 2015.)

“…a masterpiece”, Dirk Braeckman in national Belgian newspaper De Morgen(May 2014).

“…a contemporary parable!” Sam Steverlinck in Art magazine Kunsthart.(May 2014)

“In a world where petty opinions, hysteria, commotion and emotion have become the norm and neo-liberal humanity is rapidly losing sight of the path to happiness, The Rabbit And The Teasel is a breath of fresh air. Fiction and autobiographical elements mingle in a lyrical tale that drags the viewer into a universe of beauty, death, and decay. Author and director Els Dietvorst zooms in on the raw reality of a rainy year that drives the farmer to despair. In a timeless setting on the Irish countryside, a contemporary parable unfolds, as enchanting as it is confronting.”(Kathleen Weyts, ED2, May 2014)

Production: Tondo Films(B), Co-production: Kunstenfestivaldesarts, Kaaitheatre, Argos, Brussels.
With support from: FLANDERS AUDIOVISUAL FUND
http://therabbitandtheteasel.com
IMAGES OF THE RABBIT AND THE TEASEL.
THE BLACK LAMB.
(WEXFORD, IRELAND 2012-2014)
www.theblacklamb.org

PREMIERED IN BURNING ICE # 5 KAAITHEATRE, BRUSSELS, MAY 2012
SECOND UPDATE IN BURNING ICE # 6 KAAITHEATRE, BRUSSELS, MARCH 2013
LAST UPDATE IN EXPO “One was killed...”, ARGOS, BRUSSELS, MAY 2014

“The documentary-maker and visual artist Els Dietvorst recently moved from Brussels to Ireland. From a sheep farm in Duncormick she is working on a film project and you can keep up with how it’s going on her webdoc. The project further explores the often anti-utopian themes of her early film work: social-civil conflict and the everyday fight for survival. Once again, she starts from a fascination with outsiders – people who make a radical change in their life and end up somewhere on the margins of society. For The Black Lamb Dietvorst shadows several of her neighbours in their daily work and lives (and survival). She sketches a picture of the current human condition in Ireland, but also of people and nature in the 21st century.
The Black Lamb unfolded over a three-year period with seasonal updates.”

Credits
Written, filmed and directed by Els Dietvorst. Edited by Simon Arazi. Sound design by Gilles Laurent. Web Design by Frederique Lagast/Voiceover by Liam Heffernan. Content Editing by Sorcha Hyland
Produced by Arielle Sleutel

With support from: FLANDERS AUDIOVISUAL FUND
Co-production: Kunstenaal/De Kaaitheater, Argos, Brussels. CERA, Imagine(Europe).
SCREENSHOTS THE BLACK LAMB.
THE BLACK LAMB

EDI
I always had a pony and I always had shoes on.

FRANK
The white sheep had a black lamb.

GRLA
At Last, The Shepherd Has Arrived.

DENNIS
As long as you can walk in a day.

BARBARA
You have to live it all.

MATT
I am a Solitude Soul but I love people.

VINNI
So it is.

MICK
I am the King shepherd, I know my sheep, and they know me.

ELS'S IMPRESSIONS
Drawing is a constant correcting of errors.
ACM/THE WHOLE STORY.
(BRUSSELS, BELGIUM 2009-2014)

‘A WALK WITH ACM’: PREMIEREED IN KUNSTENFESTIVALDESARTS, BRUSSELS MAY 2009.

‘AS LONG AS THE BLACKBIRD SINGS’, KUNSTENFESTIVALDESARTS, ARGOS, BRUSSELS, VIENNA. MAY 2009

ART-COEUR –MERCI’, SOLO-EXPOSITION IN MUSEUM GUISLAIN, GHENT, NOVEMBER 2011

‘ART-COEUR –MERCI’, PERFORMANCE&VIDEO, KAAITHEATRE, KUNSTENFESTIVALDESARTS, BRUSSELS, MAY 2014

‘ART-COEUR –MERCI’, PERFORMANCE&VIDEO, THEATRE FRASCATI, AMSTERDAM, JANUARY 2014

‘I’M GOING TO MY CHICKENS, MONOLOGUE FOR DIRK ROOFTHOOF, PLANNED IN KAAITHEATRE AND DUBLIN THEATREFESTIVAL, 2018

ACM is a raggpicker, a poet, a walker, philosopher, architect, sculptor, scavenger. He consumed whatever we throw away. ACM stands for Art-Coeur-Merci. Art-Heart-Thank you. ACM was born in Cameroon and ended up in Belgium for several reasons. The moment I met him, he lived, in an abandoned industrial housingstate near the canal Brussel-Charleroi, on the edge of the city. The moment I wanted to make a film about him, he disappeared. His shed was burned down and i had recuperated works, drawings and belongings. The film ‘As long as the blackbird sings’(1) is a film based of what I could experience of ACM’s life, mixed with experiences and stories out of Walden(Henry David Thoreau).

I followed him through all this different periods of his life and portretted him in 3 different films. Never did I experience art, living and surviving so closely entwined. This shared experience is turned into the monologue ‘I’M GOING TO SEE TO MY CHICKENS’. The monologue will be performed in May 2018 by the famous Belgian actor Dirk Roofthooft.

Credits
Camera, written& directed by Els Dietvorst
Camera&editing by Simon Arazi
Produced by Firefly, supported by Kaaitheatre, Kunstenfestivaldesarts Brussels, Arthouse, Vienna.
SCREENSHOTS A WALK WITH ACM.
(BRUSSELS, BELGIUM, 2000-2008)

The project ‘The return of the swallows’ (1999-2005) was considered as a process built on an evolution from individual to collective creation. Therefore, the project focused on communication between individuals, as a ‘group to become’; communication in a ‘socially deprived’ neighbourhood (Anneessens, Brussel), between individuals as members of collective built on diversity (the ‘Swallows’). Each individual life-story became a lever for multimedia creation.

The social relations are the nourishing source, the foundation of creativity in this project while the artistic is a poetic and vital force that feeds into a diversity of dynamics, as a catalyst that urges individuals from diverse cultures and origin to be creative. Semi-documentary processes had to stimulate communication and imaginary power of the participants. The breeding ground for this project is the Anneessens quarter in Brussels. The title of the project ‘The return of the swallows’ has a symbolic value and refers to the many migration flows and the wealth of personal histories that came through this neighbourhood for many decades. Till today Anneessens must contend with ‘metropolitan’ problems: unemployment, the need for higher quality housing and public service provision and a significant presence of young migrants frustrated by idleness and tempted by petty crime.

Via personal auditions and collective rehearsals a group of twenty-two people (‘Swallows’) started to work with me for five years. Their roots lie within a kaleidoscope of countries: Morocco or Italy, Reunion, Columbia, Togo, Congo, Egypt, Russia, Iran and Belgium; most of them recently landed in Brussels. These twenty-two protagonists are the co-creators of this project. They all lead their own life, with their stories, dreams and desires. Fragments from these stories and emotions serve as the basis for the work we produced. Themes are migration, identity and metamorphosis, collective as well as individual.

After five years of collective work and personal sharing the ‘Swallows’ had become a closely-knit collective and the socio-artistic processes were materialised into video-movies, performances, documentaries and published magazines.

‘We enjoy being the ‘Swallows’, because it keeps us together, it makes express our desires, it enables us to dream. Because it shows us there exists togetherness across the diversity of people and goes against human prejudices: it shows a Human as a Human, and not as an opinion or a judgment, in full respect of diversity.’ (Rachid Ajerrar-swallows participant)
IMAGES FROM 'CHURCHTAPES'
IMAGES FROM ‘MAGAZINE NR. 2 ‘THE RETURN OF THE SWALLOWS.'
DRAWINGS (2000-2014)
DRAWINGS IN COLLECTION OF THE CERA-FOUNDATION AND PRIVATE COLLECTIONS.
DRAWINGS IN BOOK ‘ED’, ‘ED2’
DRAWINGS SHOWN IN DE MORGEN, NATIONAL NEWSPAPER

Drawing is an important part of my art practice, in my drawings I can create a whole surreal world. Mostly they are the base for all my visual work. I draw since 2000 with pen and ink. The ink, red-blood color, I make myself. The format and paper are nearly always the same. My drawings are in private collections and are shown in different expositions. I was also asked to make bookcovers and was invited by De Morgen (between 2003-2006) to make drawings for this National newspaper.

DRAWINGS SHOWN IN MUSEUM M, DRAWINGS FROM THE CERA COLLECTION, LOUVAIN, BELGIUM. JUNE 2014.
NEW DRAWINGS 2014, SHOWN IN EXHIBITION ‘ONE WAS SHOT ...’, ARGOS.MAY 2104.
SCULPTURE-INSTALLATION

SKULL(2003-2015)

Sculpture is beside drawing, writing and video an important medium in my artpractice.
I started the Skull-series out of disbelieve and anger on the black pages of human history. The Skull-sculptures became a metaphor for useless violence and a symbol for human respect, gathering and transcendance.
The first sculpture(SKULL1-1999) was a huge skull, made of wood and loam, build in my studio in Brasschaat(Antwerp)which was on that time in the middle of a military base.
The next Skull(SKULL2-2008) was made on the roof of the MUHKA, Museum of modern art in Antwerp and was a reaction on the War on terror.
The third Skull(SKULL3-2014) was made during the ten days of the Moscow Biennal of contemporary art and was a metaphor for immigration, respect and human transcendence.

The form of every skull is based on the Skull of a Neanderthal. The Neanderthaler is often pictured in history as a brute but was peacefull and shared peacefull rituals. They vanished when modern humans arrived in Europe. The teeth in all of the Skull-series are human beings refering to ‘us’ the people.
Mostly I use natural materials as wood, loam and clay to give the sculptures a fragile skin. The Skull sculptures also serve as a refuge, you can hide, shelter, meet in it. I see the Skull series as a strong symbol that links us and that belongs to us all, humans. I see it also as a fragile and at the same time strong metaphor against violence.

“In 2009, on the roof of MuHKA in Antwerp, she exhibited the gigantic work Skull, a figure in a cage, fashioned from mud and wood. This powerfully visual work is Dietvorst’s way of reacting to the numerous images of war that the media floods us with. This specific work alludes to Guantanamo; to solitary confinement in cages. Dietvorst made a life-sized model of one of them, inhabited by a gigantic skull. On the roof of the museum, the head appears to be imprisoned in a dovecote, which can be viewed from a nearby bench. After a while, two pigeons built their nest in the cage and hatched out their eggs there – thus a piece about murder facilitates the creation of new life at a totally different level...”(Eva Wittocx, ED2)
SKULL 2: MUSEUM OF CONTEMPORARY ART IN ANTWERP, 2008.