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PRESS RELEASE

Observatory Crest exhibition to open at KIOSK.

A 'scenography-as-installation' by visual artist Jean Bernard Koeman (°1964) and the KIOSK exhibition space are set to engage in a fascinating interaction. The installation is a result of Koeman's collaboration as a scenographer with dancer/choreographer Koen Augustijnen (Les Ballets C de la B) and actress/director Abke Haring (Toneelhuis). Thematically, it is based on the notion of 'complicit architecture' and it contains associative references to Ho Chi Minh's stilt house, Apollo 13's ill-fated journey and the form language of Buckminster Fuller.

Observatory Crest, the show's title, refers to the concept of the exhibition as vantage point: a custom-built hiding place from where the world can be observed and studied. In his research and collaborations, Koeman always works towards proposals for a performative 'state' or a temporary 'situation'. The eventual performance is then directed by the space as a source of energy and as a measure, and apart from some details made in advance, the works are constructed on site.

The scenography at KIOSK combines a number of Koeman's existing installations with new in situ work. Sculptures in wood and metal mix with photographs, texts and drawings. On this ornamental level a whole series of storylines meet, making for discordant and complex intertextuality. An intuitive and associative path unwinds through the exhibition space on a non-linear time track. Koeman thus effectively transforms KIOSK into an experiential environment where time and space are experienced subjectively. In a subjective mental experience of architecture, the visitor is confronted with a human or rational structure that is capable of expressing and relating emotions and thoughts about façade, conflictive artistic relations, modernism, and the history of art and architecture.

Koeman sublimates socio-political phenomena from reality into abstract, immersive installations. In the margins of influential historical events we also find a series of personal, anecdotal stories in the exhibition. The staged scenes function as sculptural platforms that are occupied at specific moments by human actors, or that materialize from a constellation of tangible materials, architectural forms, and ideas from our cultural history. They are models for reflection that formulate questions about how sculpture can manifest itself, but they are also illustrations of the ways in which society and our gaze function. As such, Koeman explores the boundary between quotation and autonomous poetics in sculpture, and the point where a sculpture attains a state of scalelessness.

Jean Bernard Koeman is a visual artist and curator. Between 1998 and 2003 he was director of the Arts Centre W139 in Amsterdam, where he staged more than 40 exhibitions with young artists. As a visiting professor, he is affiliated with the Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam and MAPS in Sierre, Switzerland. As a scenographer he works for Les Ballets C de la B in Ghent and Toneelhuis in Antwerp.

Observatory Crest is realized with the support of Toneelhuis and the Mondriaan Fund.

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

JEAN BERNARD KOEMAN
OBSERVATORY CREST
In collaboration with Koen Augustijnen

08.12.2012 – 13.01.2013

Tuesday – Friday: 14.00 – 18.00
Saturday – Sunday: 11.00 – 18.00
Closed on Mondays

From 24.12.12 until 6.12.13 only open
from Thursday through Sunday

Opening:
Friday 7 December 2012

Public opening: 20.00
Press and professional preview
(by appointment): 14.00 – 20.00

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