

Spiritual Counselor Art Rotterdam 2020

All participants and visitors have a unique role in, and perspective on, the Art Rotterdam artfair. There are many divergent ways to understand the role of participants - like gallerists and artists, but also people working for the fair or otherwise involved - and visitors. There are instrumental ways of looking at these people: How do they make this fair 'work'? What is their particular 'job' that they have to do to make this an artfair? But there are also ways of looking at them as practitioners of art: What are their intentions as practitioners? Do they hold intrinsic values or strive for extrinsic values (Alisdair Macintyre)? And what is the balance between these values? This is an ethical viewpoint on participants. These different perspectives on the divergent roles also have social and even political dimensions. All these different perspectives come together in people who we name 'participants' of the artfair.

For the visitors similar perspectives can be elaborated. They also can be viewed from an instrumental point of view, from an ethical point and from social, political, economical and spiritual viewpoints. All perspectives come together in a person visiting or participating in Art Rotterdam 2020. These perspectives have an internal dimension and an external, relational dimension to it too. A person can *imagine* him- or herself in all these different roles, and he or she also *projects* his or her understanding of himself, in the way we behave and approach the fair, the art and each other.

Since Art Rotterdam is not just any fair, but an art fair in particular, art takes a more or less central place in all individual perspectives on what Art Rotterdam is about. The interesting thing about art is of course that there is a possible spectrum of understanding it, which isn't often spelled out when talked or thought about. Either to yourself or towards others. We can see art as a 'thing' of value, of beauty or of pleasure. We can see art as a practice of personal or sociological transference and renewal. We can see art as a domain of humanity's spiritual and intellectual activity and produce. And there are many other ways of understanding art as domain. Art can even be seen (still) as a craft. Often our understanding of art is an unspoken paradigm that people hold, from which they approach the fair, the art and the people involved. Often or not, it is also assumed that others share your understanding of art, and thus of what the fair is about. This can lead to babylonian confusion, to personal disappointments and to hurtful or troublesome experiences in the relational or personal sphere. But it doesn't have to - often we manage to work around our misunderstandings and manage to go home with experiences that are satisfying, reassuring or even deepening. The latter is what the performance 'Spiritual Counselor Art Rotterdam 2020' is after, on an individual level.

What is necessary for an experience of the Art Rotterdam artfair to make it not just a satisfying, but mostly a reassuring and ultimately a deepening experience? The Spiritual Counselor will meet the participant or the visitor as a person. The Counselor is an artist himself, and a participant of the fair. This meeting takes place in the understanding of counseling on a spiritual level. This is the level of understanding and experience: how does your understanding function in how you are 'in the world'. And as said here above: we can 'be in the world' in many different roles, which can be viewed from many different perspectives. All of which have social (even political and ethical) and personal implications. The meeting takes place on a personal and relational level, at the start of which someone is expected to be the counselor and the other is the one seeking counseling - someone who is perhaps even wondering: whatever is spiritual counseling? What can that be? (Hans-Georg Gadamer) The point of the session is for those involved, but mostly for the person seeking counseling (the client), to be made aware of his or her understanding of art, of the fair and those involved - mostly him or herself in relation to being in this world that concerns and involves 'art'. Funny being, that this understanding includes the understanding of 'Spiritual Counselor Art Rotterdam 2020' as a work of art: as a performance. The boundaries of the respective domains are ambiguous.

From a practical point of view this performance will most ideally take place on the exhibition floor: amidst the core of the artfair, where art is presented to be bought, sold and 'collected', where people come to see what is 'on' in art, at least partly viewed upon as an economical market section. This is where the performance is aimed at. But it can be outplaced (outsourced) as well.

Each session lasts 20, 40 or 60 minutes. People (participants and visitors) can plan their session in an (online) agenda, and pick the duration they'd like. For the performance I will ideally make a small 'office', that can function as a recognizable presentation and as meeting point. But there are also other ways of making people aware of the possibility to engage in the performance. The session can take place while walking over the exhibition floors. In no way this performance will intervene with the regular course of practical affairs of the artfair, except by possibly changing the way attendees of the performance understand and experience the fair, the art and themselves as visitors. Of course nothing that is said or done during the sessions will be made public, or passed onto thirds, ever. Each session is completely private.

I will make use of a tablet and of gallery viewer or artnet (whatever website Art Rotterdam uses) to view work that is exhibited in the fair during the performance. Especially if the performance needs to be outplaced and sessions can't take place while strolling across the exhibition floors.

The Spiritual Counselor Art Rotterdam 2020 performance enriches peoples experience of the artfair, and aims to deepen their understanding of themselves, the fair and of art. Instead of being a public happening, that stages a certain 'piece', this performance is private - almost to the point of being invisible. Also the content and the shape of each 'session' is different, so the performance has no set shape as 'piece', though there are inalienable properties where the performance can be recognized by as being 'itself'.

As a visual artist I studied autonomous art, and also critical studies and philosophical hermeneutics. I approach art as a practice of which theoretical reflection and research is an intrinsic part. This performance comes forth from my project 'the Faculty of In-humanities'.

Ton Kruse

From: Art Rotterdam
Sent: Sunday, September 29, 2019 4:37 PM:

“Thank you for your registration!
Your registration number is: TPS183

We hereby confirm your registration for Art Rotterdam THE PERFORMANCE SHOW 2020.”

From: Sabine Dunnewijk | Art Rotterdam
Sent: Thursday, November 07, 2019 3:49 PM:

“The curator (Zippora Elders) has decided, together with the pre-selection advisory committee, and after having carefully considered all aspects of your application, also within the overall programming, not to honor your request to participate in The Performance Show.”