

Graduation proposal 7-12-2011

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What

My final outcome is not clear to me yet. After a long time struggling with screenplay writing I have been going back at picking up the camera. I have been making a lot of photographs, which is something I enjoy and something I am good in. My plan is to find my obsession in my own photographs, to analyse my own photo's with my academic background and thus to find out what I want to make most. This knowledge hopefully will give an insight in my obsessions as a filmmaker, which I then might translate into a short film.

How

With my camera, Canon 5D, I will shoot as much photos as possible. From these photos I try to make a selection of my favourite images. From this selection I hope to gain a better understanding of my passion for making these images, by analysing them on an academic basis. When I have found a clear perspective of my obsession I hope to transform this into moving images. This will probably lead to a short film, but it could end up in an installation. Later in this document I made a selection of my ten favourite images based on the criterion if they move me. Making these lists and analysing why I choose these images will bring me closer to understanding my own work.

Why

There are multiple whys: First of all, is why I want to make art. I want to touch people, deep inside. I want to give them comfort when they see my work, I want to make them cry and cherish these beautiful images I create. I want them to believe in themselves, to pursue their dreams (again), to give them a boost so they feel better after seeing my work than when they came inside.

Everyday my eyes are filled with beautiful images. It seems to me that people who I share public space with are unaware of the beauty of these images. By using the right medium to capture these beautiful images I hope I can convey the beauty I see on a daily basis to the eyes of the audience.

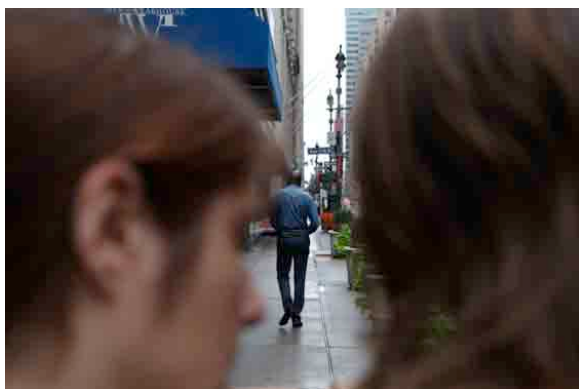
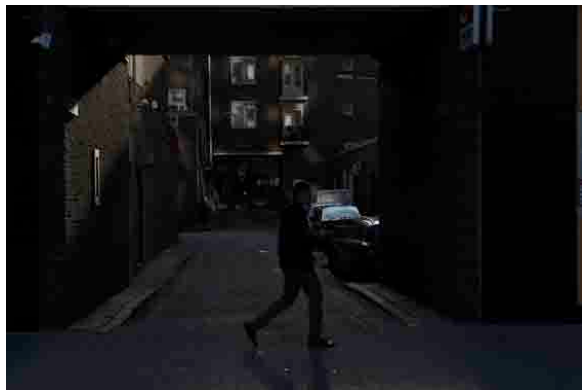
Why did I then write, this summer, a story with such a negative undertone? Is this not in deep contrast with my previous two paragraphs? This story dealt with the transmission to adulthood and its disillusion, the search of an adolescent to find a substitute for parental love but failing, loneliness in a unfamiliar city and Rotterdam as a distant, ambiguous city. The adolescent fails to find a substitute for parental love, because he is not yet ready to open up for a new life. He wants to remain in his safe cocoon, thus outside this cocoon he keeps distancing everything (people, city) that comes close to a new sort of cocoon.

I know somewhere that this relates to my photography and to my film ideas, which are usually about passive protagonist who live goalless and have problems to connect with the outside world. But I am not quite sure how this relates to the urge to comfort people or to pursue their dreams, I do know there is a connection, but I am not able to formulate this eloquently. This will be one of aims of the next month to understand my photographs better.

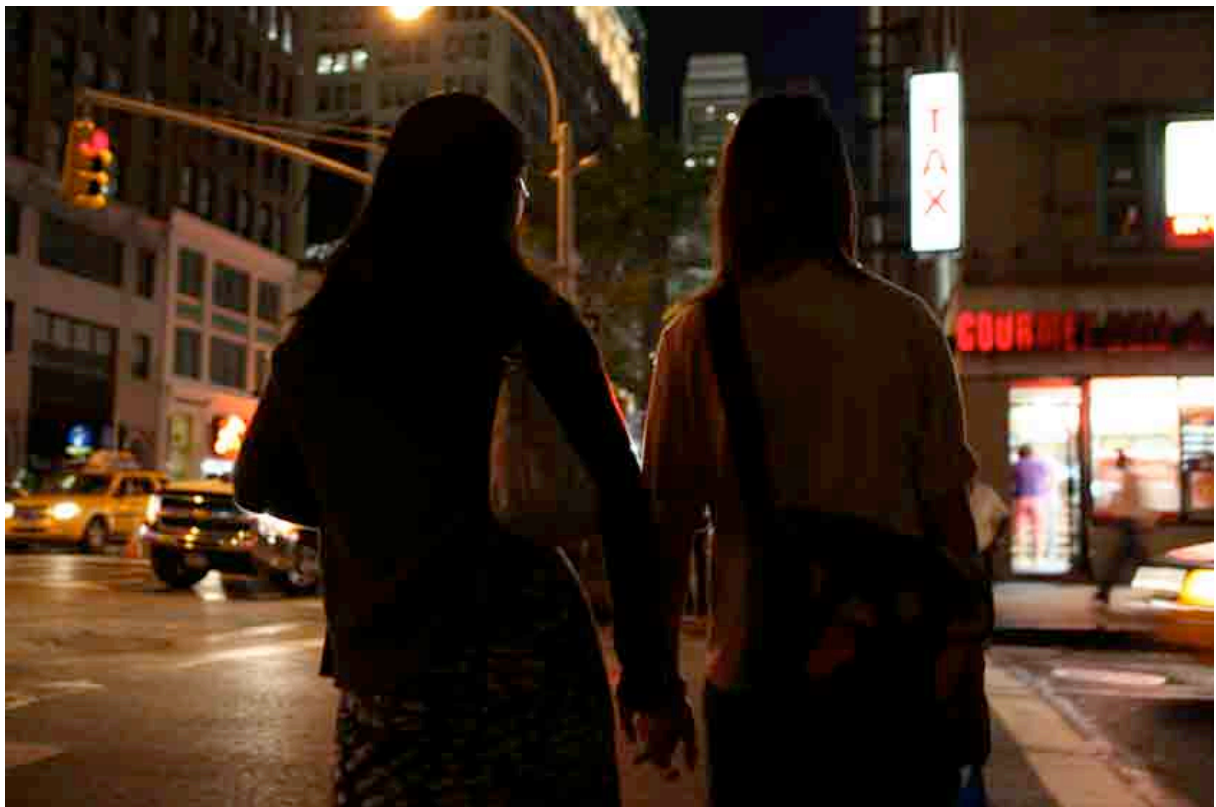
Photography

In a tutorial Liz and I spoke about my theme and she selected eight photos out of thousands. Her assignment to me: Make three prints of each photograph, in 3 different sizes, hang them in your bedroom, your bathroom, keep one in your wallet etc. and live with them for two weeks. This process should enable me to perceive my work as a viewer instead of as a photographer. After two weeks watching them in different sizes I should have a better understanding of what it is in these photographs that makes the themes loneliness and alienation visible or what it is that doesn't.

Liz her selection

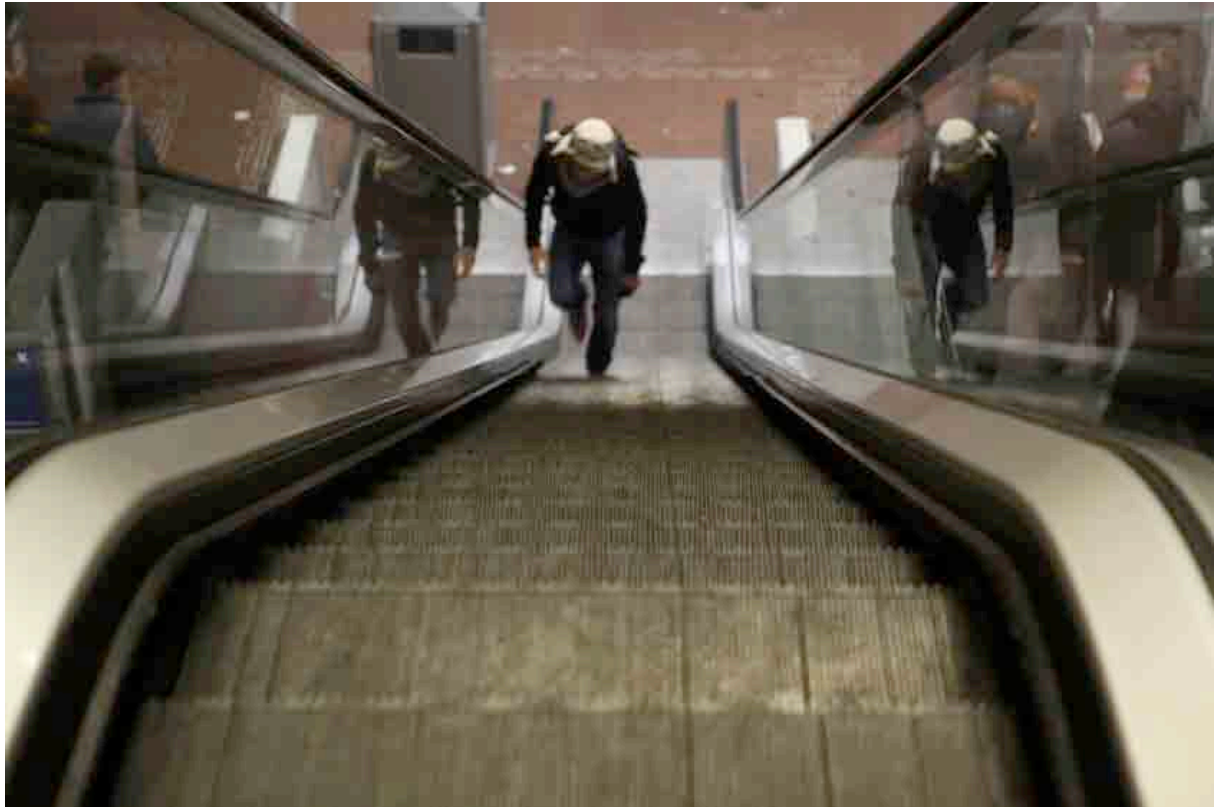


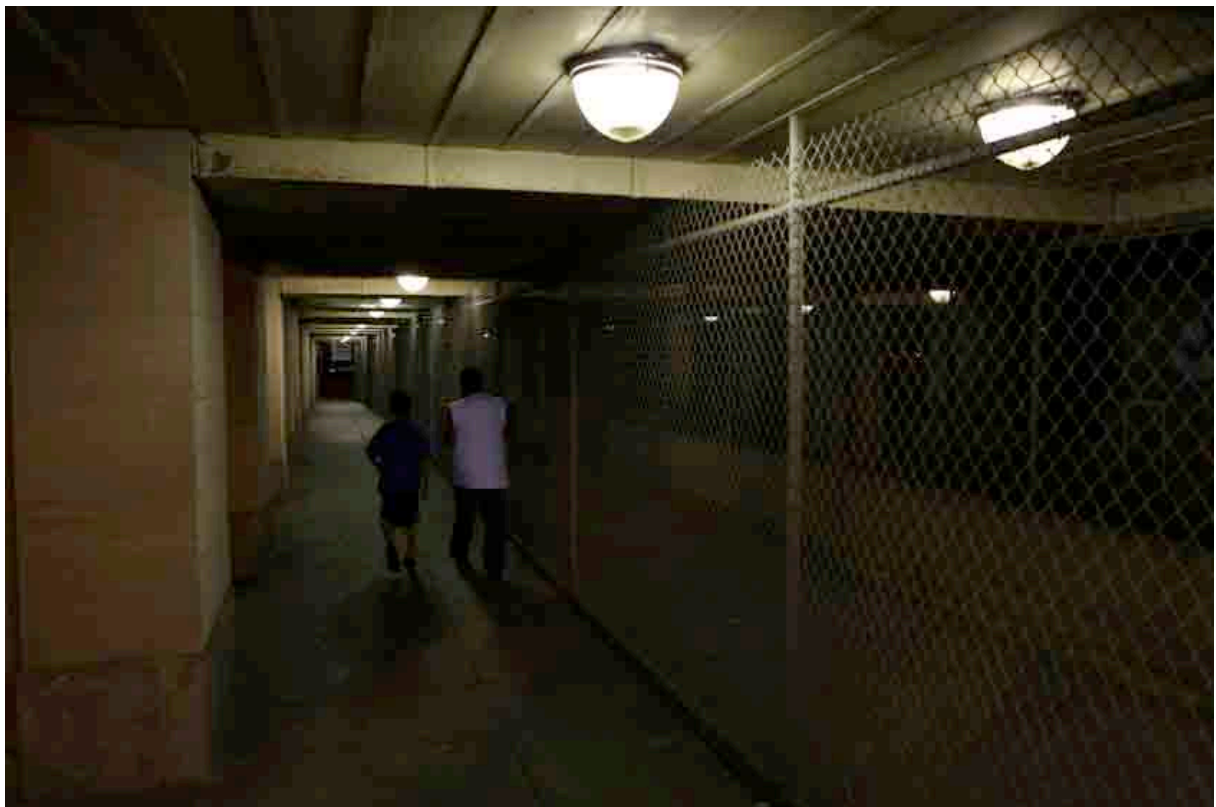
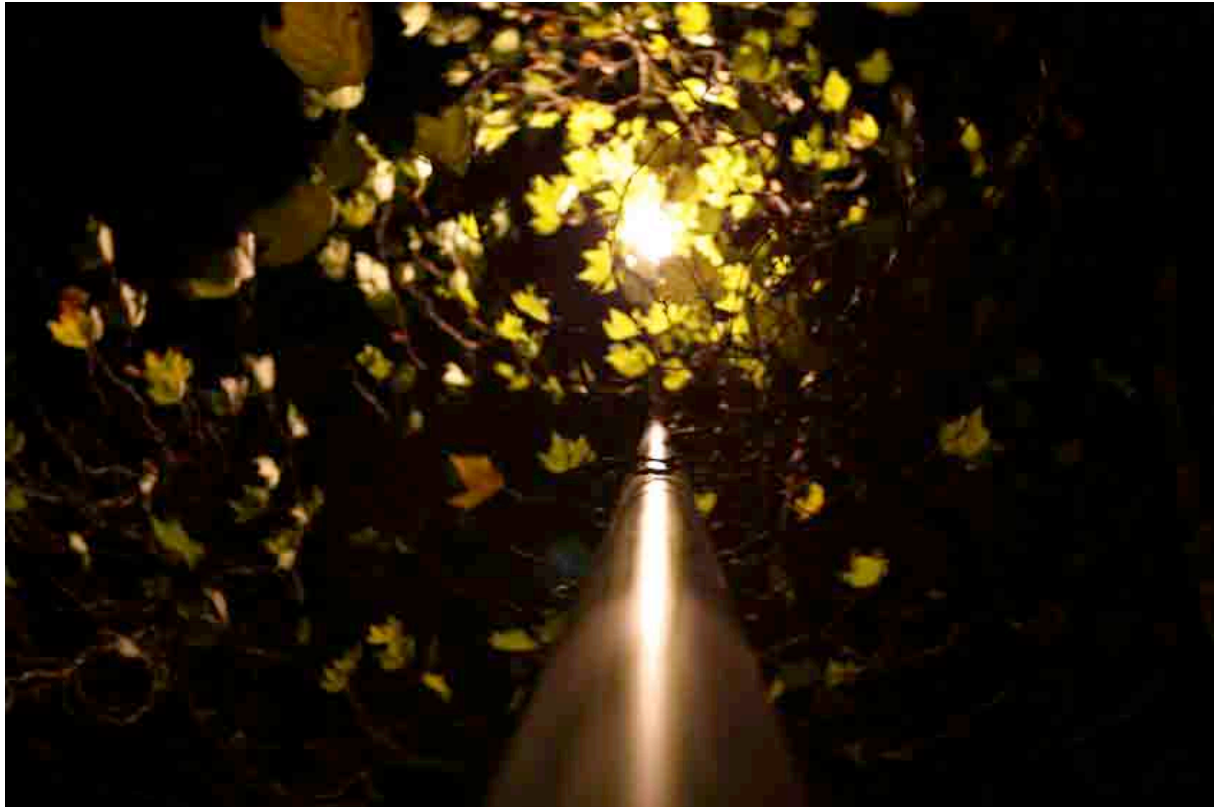
To become closer to my obsession first I made a list of ten photos, which I would take with me to a deserted island. This list is based on personal feelings and not if they are well made photos, my criterion was that they had to move me. Beneath the ten photos I write basic emotions that I feel when watching them:











1. My balloons protect me
2. We against the world
3. Strangely aroused by today, I know I will get there
4. What is out there? The world is in front of my feet
5. Don't worry son, everything will be all right
6. The frailty of life
7. I'm so tired, so many people to please
8. I'm alone, why can't somebody to hold me
9. The whirlpool in my head
10. I love you so much son, but you have to listen to me

I realise when writing these 10 sentences above based on the ten photos attracts me a lot and makes me happy. There might come a final project out of this format of making images (photo or video) and connection my own narrative to support these images. Which could be a voice-over in a clip or a small text next to a photograph.

Previous practice



Will you play with me?

The film consists of three different shots. All three shots are made by me walking with the camera around a football cage. In the first two shots the football cage is empty, all we see is a football lying still in the middle. The difference between the shots is that one was shot when it snowed, thus the shot has a cold blue character and the other one is shot without snow, which has a warm character because the floor of the cage is red gravel. The third shot is of kids playing in the football cage, who kick the ball around. Because it is shot with an extreme low shutter speed and this is the only shot when the sun shined it has a dreamy atmosphere. The film opens with the first shot, which is alternated with the second. First they both run ten seconds then they gradually become shorter which lifts up the pace of the film, this is supported by electronic music that builds up to a climax. When the shots are alternated so fast we end up by only seeing one frame of the second shot alternated with a black frame. When the music reaches its peak the third shot begins. The film ends with a fade out to black.

On the first day of the course I was overwhelmed by the works other students presented. To envision this overwhelming feeling I wanted to film from the centre of a roundabout several 360 shots (panning a 360 angle) and edit in this

panorama shot, short images from the pieces of my classmates, as if they were fired at me. When I visited Boijmans my direction of my project changed. I saw a round football cage, which is an artwork itself. I loved the fact that it is a round cage made of columns standing next to each other, but between every column there is an opening as big as a column. Which means that when people play football inside the cage, viewers from outside see a fragmented version of what happens inside. What I find interesting about the film is that it is unclear what is inside and outside and the space is unclear to the audience. Yet the space is clear to me in the sense that it is a restricted space, because although the artwork is on a square my framing makes it a closed space.

All around us

The film consists of six shots that capture different spaces with none, one or a few people in it. All the shots somehow deal with transport. The audio consists of train and train station noises. Every shot is shown 30 seconds or longer and the camera remains on the same point. It captures the atmosphere of the space shot.



The project is based on my experiences using public transport in Holland. I encounter beautiful images to which the people around me hardly pay attention. I think nobody else realises that it is around them. I am interested in the way light reflects inside a train and how the lights outside the train make their way into the train and play a role in the reflection of light inside the train. From reflections I moved to spaces inside train stations. I love the symmetrical spaces and when framed in the right way I feel I create a perfect designed image. I find these spaces particularly attractive when there are none or just a few people in a way that the audience can absorb the space itself better.

De Krokodil & De Uil

I call this film a narrative film, because it is based on a scenario I wrote and it is with actors instead of non-fictionalised persons. The film opens with a surrealist dream scene of the main character, Koen. Koen lives according to a strict scheme, he hardly goes outside and has no contact with the outside world. After doing 25 push ups Koen takes a shower in his tub when the messenger of the story, Mous, appears in his tub. Mous is adventurous, enterprising and has to persuade Koen to take him on an episodic adventure. Mous tells about his childhood and how his mother told him to act as a crocodile and convinces Koen to join him to another world.

Mous pushes Koen under water in the tub and they wake up in a new world, which is an empty beach. Mous quickly leaves Koen behind so that Koen can find his answers. Koen walks around on the beach and bumps into Lowie. Lowie is there to guide Koen, to portray him how his life will evolve if he remains to life like this or to present him the option to jump off the proverbial cliff. Lowie tells him about owls and their behaviour, that they are somehow lethargic. Lowie walks from the shore into the sea, to point out to Koen that it is not a normal sea but actually it is a swamp (where crocodiles Mous referred to, live). Koen follows Lowie's advice and jumps into the swamp to awake in his bathtub again, now on the side where Mous sat.

I wrote the scenario based on an image that popped in my head of a man doing push ups. The next image that appeared in my head was of another man running up the stairs in a hurry to reach the man doing push ups and take him to another world. The story jumps from one space to another, because I enjoy surprising the audience and let them absorb a whole new space. Their conversations are quiet absurd, because I wanted to present the viewer a different experience than in most films where dialogue is according to how one should react when someone for instance enters their bathtub or when someone is taken to another world. I guess I wanted to make a narrative film where space and speech are not limited by rationalities.

Connecting previous practice with the present

I think the first two projects definitely connect with the idea of conveying beautiful images to the audience. Only I think they are cold, in a sense that there is not a clear personal emotion connected to them, which makes the audience only engaging with a new view on public space, but not emotionally connecting to the artwork. My third 'narrative' project was an attempt to become more personal, to give my audience the possibility to feel moved by my work. Except the problems in the screenplay are too big to connect on a personal level with the work. With my photos I feel I am heading in the right direction. I hope I am able to create a new view on public space, a view the audience would not have seen by themselves and then to move the audience with a narrative supporting these images.

Bibliography

Literature

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- Salinger, J.D. *The Catcher in the Rye*, 1951.

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- Bordwell, D; K. Thompson. *Film Art. An introduction*, 1979.
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- *Somewhere* (Sofia Coppola, 2010).
- *Control* (Anton Corbijn, 2007).
- *La Jetée* (Chris Marker, 1962).
- *Elephant* (Gus van Sant, 2003).
- *Schultze Gets the Blues* (Michael Schorr, 2003).
- *Taxi Driver* (Martin Scorsese, 1976).

To see:

- *3 Women* (Robert Altman, 1977).
- *Sans Soleil* (Chris Marker, 1983).
- *Safe* (Todd Haynes, 1995).
- *Woyzeck* (Werner Herzog, 1979).
- *Drive* (Nicolas Refn, 2011)
- *After Hours* (Martin Scorsese, 1985)
- *Parade* (Jacques Tati, 1974).