



Everyday I record the same wide shot of a garage door. The video begins with the garage door closed; then the door opens as if the curtains of a stage open. A colorful Dutch landscape becomes visible. The duration of the shot ensures that each element in the frame is carefully given attention. A single leaf blows away; the trees move slowly in the wind; the treetops in the distance are covered with morning sunlight. Then after two minutes the door closes again. On one day we see it raining, another day it is dry but windy, sometimes a dog walks by.

There is a big inevitable contradiction between the nature landscape and the mechanical door that may result in questioning our time we live in with all its technical developments, but for me it is more about finding, literally, balance between technique and nature (read structure and intuition).

The work speaks the language of cinema, this is clearly visible in how it is framed; how it fades out to black -'the end'- by the closing of the door; a not edited, fixed long shot, captured with a steady camera, wide lens.

The technique is merely about how I choose to use the medium video and how to handle sound. It involves also how much I choose to implicate editing and postproduction in the work. Less is more and the more I can do in the camera, the less I need to manipulate things in postproduction. (mise en scene)

The Garagedoor-video promises you the world but after 2minutes when the door closes, you may feel disappointed as well because you are not getting the thing you hoped for. At the same time you feel almost relieved that not a single thing happened that could disturb the solitude of the piece.

I can say that I try to create a moment of isolation where a viewer has the time and space to be *solitary* in. Melancholy within this solitude is mostly present.

Within the last years I developed a working method in which I mostly performed in my black and white videos, here was a certain strength and purity found in the images and also my interest towards the complexity within our existence came already clearly forward through my simple, minimalist video-registrations.

I wanted to move beyond the recurring reference to performance art of the '60's and '70's (such as Bill Viola, Marina Abramovic, Hooykaas&Stansfield) which my video registrations have; a point that I couldn't seem to reach.

After my video piece recorded in 2010 called 'the Gravediggers' in which I stood naked in a farming field while four men, dressed as gravediggers, dig a circle around me (fig... Still), I decided to step out of my videos and start to work more with other characters.

I think 'the Gravediggers' piece especially raised a lot of questions about theatre, staging and symbolism on which I wanted to research further.

This was also the moment when I just had moved back to the island where I grew up and came to live in the middle of the Dutch polders, the influence of this flat, isolated landscape became ever more visible in my work.

Last year I made the video 'A man Digging' (2012) (fig...*Still) in which an overweighted, naked man digs a grave in a farming field.

Another project I worked on was a short film about a violin player, five hunters and a fisherman, all placed in their own isolation within a wide, panoramic landscape. Afterwards it turned out that the power of symbolism within Art-history seems inevitable as well. I tried to overwhelm the violin-piece with symbols in order to reach a moment where symbolism would become exhausted and completely loses meaning but this seemed impossible.

Symbolism and religion in Art-history is still recognized in my recent work, even though it makes no direct use of symbolism, it keeps referring to classical landscape painting and reminds of religious themes throughout Art history, for instance the Grandfather-photo(p...) apparently recalls the depiction of the "Pieta" (*Image... p...) a subject in Christian Art where Mary cradles the dead body of Jesus. A subject sculptured and painted by many Artists such as Botticelli(1495); Michelangelo(1498-1499) p... /fig...; Bellini (c.1505) p.../fig...; Titiaan(1575), Delacroix(1850) and van Gogh(1853-1890).

Even though the grandfather picture is certainly not a 'daily-life' depiction, it still seems to have a sense of everydayness or ordinariness in it which leaks through the alienation of the picture.

What is depicted here is life itself in its fullest sense, the suffering of an old man who knows his death is coming for him. ((Handing over life to the granddaughters generation.))

I try to depict this ungraspable feeling of the most intense sadness and beauty of living, this purity and this level of understanding of our being *within* the everyday.

This I also what I try to capture in the Garagedoorpieces, the depicted landscape isn't the most beautiful you have ever seen, it seems just a 'daily', 'ordinary' landscape. But if the light is right, the composition fits, the frame is precise enough, something else suddenly leaks through.

The 2.30 minute gives the landscape muteness, it gives the unnoticeable space to be what it is in its own essence.

Form and content are inextricably interwoven with each other and it is perhaps most urgent to find balance in the latter two. (All formal choices affect content and visa versa and thus are exchangeable)

Structuralism - -> *balance* <-- Intuition
Technique - -> *balance* <-- Nature
Form - -> *balance* <-- Content

We can only create parameters to give the sublime a space and a time.
We can control every element in order to let 'chance' take place; however we can never control the '*sublime*'.

A red line in my methodology is that I always choose a frame in which every element is deliberate but by this I also create a space where 'chance' can take place. Somehow the chance becomes in this way also a deliberate choice.
I always recognize a structuralist side of my methodology in the creation of parameters behind my work. Next to this formal side of my methodology there also is a very strong intuitive side, and this latter is maybe the most important side that I truly want to follow and is closest to my heart as an artist. Use my intuition to recognize the poetic, minimalistic portraits of the everyday and try to find a way to reveal the complexity of life within the living itself through a very simple manner. By diving deep in it with the greatest commitment.

So the minimalistic way of working in which I play literally with the staging of the everyday and also with endurance and repetition creates space for

*Minimalism –
What can we say about minimalism? That nothing is happening but at the same time everything is happening at one and the same moment.
Less is more.*

*)Visually describe some of the garagedoors here – the landscape((+Still



Bird Hides

My interest in bird hides started when I noticed the wooden cabin along the road that the bus passes when I travel to Rotterdam and back. Every time passing that cabin I wonder what this place is like and I promise myself more than a thousand times that I will visit this place someday.

I walk across the wooden bridge towards the bird-spotting house, not sure yet what it exactly is that I am looking for.

The reed at the sides of the bridge blows in the strong wind.

When I open the wooden door, I immediately understand my urgency to visit this place.

It appears there are five long, narrow windows inside the cabin.

They can be opened by lifting the wooden planks in front of them and overlook the beautiful, quiet nature reserve behind it. This cabin gives view on the 'Haringvliet'; this is the name of the water along the northern coastline of the island Goeree Overflakkee.

This was the starting point for a series of videos that consists of multiple bird-spotting houses on the island where I live. The camera is positioned towards the wooden windows on a tripod inside the house and captures the viewings outside with a wide lens. I capture the inside as well as the outside of the houses in which I try different angles of recording, looking for symmetry and precision. In this first 'Bird-house' it appeared that in one shot, the outside of the house takes in almost the same space as the 'Garagedoor' does in its frame, only the house refers more to the language of sculpture while the Garagedoor, in a certain way, becomes more a theatre and speaks the language of cinema. The house is very solid while the Garagedoor is transparent. I wonder what will happen if those two are projected opposite each other in the same space.

Plan:

From Wednesday 17th of April till Thursday 18th of April I will stay in isolation in a bird hide for two days. Here I want to write, read and shoot new video- and photography material as well as new sound recordings.

I will thus sleep in the cabin in a hammock for one night and during the day write about my experience in these two days period. Only my dog will company me.

Today I prepared a bit, bought already some provision and just checked how the cabin is like in the evening. The place lies quiet underneath the clear night sky.

Last couple of days the temperature increased so I do not expect heavy night frost.

List of things I will take with me:

Other important stuff:

- Pen and paper
- Book 'The Sight of Death' by T.J. Clark
- Knife
- Rope
- Ducktape
- Matches
- Flashlight
- candles
- Hammock+2 Blankets
- Toothbrush
- Warm clothes
- Bucket
- Toilet paper
- Tobacco
- Blanket for the dog
- First aid kit

Equipment:

- Camera(canon5D)+2 batteries
- Tripod
- Sound recording device(zoomH2)+batteries
- Laptop+harddrive (only to backup my footage)
- Card-reader
- Binocular

Provision:

- 5ltr Water
- Coffee
- Sugar
- Tea
- Bread
- Cheese
- Eggs
- Soup
- Fruit
- Cookies
- Vegetables
- Juice
- Wine
- Dog food

Cooking equipment:

- Gas cooker
- Cooking pan
- Percolator
- Spoon
- Fork
- Plate
- Cup

Log of my stay in Bird hide 'the Slechtvalk'

April 17th 2013 Wednesday 15.00 o'clock

I arrived at the hide about an hour ago. After carrying my camera bag, tripod, backpack and hammock inside, I examined the place a bit.

The dog is wandering around the cabin and finally took his place underneath the wooden floor.

I open the windows one by one, on the left and right are two times two windows that form one long panoramic view, in the middle is a single window.

I build up my tripod in front of the left window and carefully make my frame as precise as possible, the focal distance set between 17/20 mm. It is very difficult to water level this old, aluminum tripod.

I start a first recording and afterwards move the tripod to the right; the wooden floor is not equal so again it is a hassle to find the right frame. The door is still open and I see somebody approaching in the distance, I look through my binocular and see the person is coming my direction.

I call the dog in and hide two bags so only my camera bag and tripod are in sight.

After waiting a while, I look again. A second person walks by. It seems a path is across the hide.

Luckily nobody comes to the cabin itself. I remember the sign at the beginning of the path; 'forbidden for dogs' and a 'do not enter between sunset and sunrise' and another sign saying it is not allowed to cook on open fire.

It is a sunny day and therefore today a lot of people are biking and walking in the polder nature.

Also farmers are busy plugging the field, and planting potatoes. Also they fertilize the land, which causes an awful smell when the wind is towards the cabin.

The wind is quite hard and whizzes between the wooden boards of the cabins walls.

Also the door slammed constantly because of a defect iron hook on the floor. With a stone I hit the hook back in its original position so it is properly shut again.

If the door is closed I can only see the viewing side that is overlooking the water of the 'Haringvliet'.

With a black marker I draw signs on the floor and tripod so I can remember its position.

I now move it to the midst window to find a proper frame in which the window is perfectly straight, with as little lens distortion of the wide lens as possible.

With the 17-20mm wide lens I use everything is sized down and seems further away. With my binocular I see different kind of birds; barnacle geese, shelduck, but through the camera I hardly see them.

A boat sails by, blue one with a white sail. It takes really long before it has left the frame, whilst with the naked eye the experience is quite different. Maybe I will place the tripod further away and use a lens with a 50mm focal distance, closer to the human field of vision.

The sound of birds is peaceful and the longer I am here, the more comfortable I start to feel.

Later I will carry my cooking stuff from the car to the cabin.

The later it gets, the less likely it will be that other people will come here.



Fig.1

April 17th 2013 Wednesday 18.00 o'clock

The only sound is the strong wind on the door side and birds chattering loud at the viewing side. In the distance still the sound of a tractor plugging the land.

I draw three of the birds, difficult to catch their silhouette on paper whilst staring through the binocular. At 17.30 I walked to the car to get my gas cooker, jerry can water and an extra blanket. It is quite a walk to the car and back and though I don't have a lot with me, it is still heavy!

I played with the dog a bit, throw a ball and he is supposed to bring it back to me. He is distracted from the game by a lot of different smells so I decide to warm some soup with bread.

My hammock hangs in the middle of the hide, both sides tied with ropes to the wooden beams of the roof. The width of the cabins front wall is approximately six meters and two walls go to the back like a triangle:

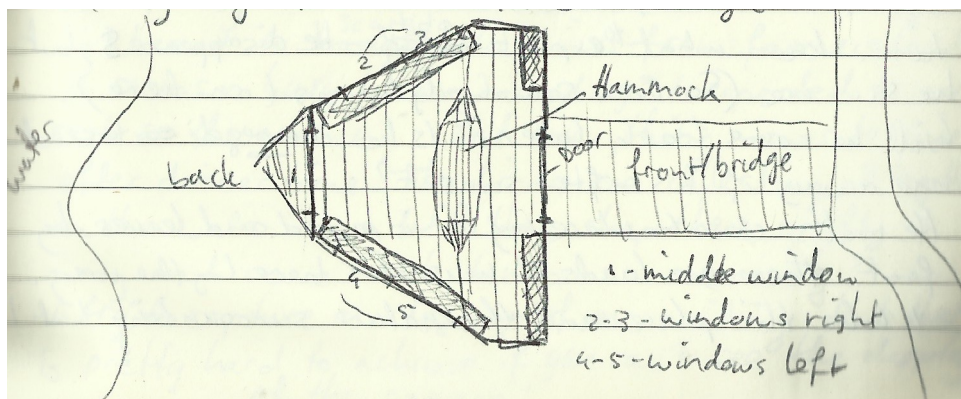


Fig.2

I feel a bit lost and stupid as well, what am I doing here if I can have the same kind of place at home and feel much better and more relaxed?

My house is also in the middle of nature and there I experience a lot more freedom...

Here I cannot even go for a long walk because I don't want to leave my camera and laptop behind in a cabin of which I cannot lock the door.

The barnacle geese have left when I walked to the car. I open a 'la Trappe' beer.

Soon it will get dark.

I look out of the window and see somebody walking in the nature reserve! I watch through the binocular, he wears a black jacket and trousers, brown boots. An older man, white hair, glasses. He suddenly lies down in the field. Is he a patrolman or something? He walks again; he must have seen the open window of the hide. He disappears out of sight, through the door I see him walking close to where my car is parked, it seems he leaves by foot. Shall he come back later and is he authorized to send me away?

There are loads of tiny flies here by the way; luckily they are no mosquitoes.

I love the natural surroundings of this place but I really miss the beautiful light I was hoping for, it is not that cold but the weather is grayish.

Wednesday 19.00 o'clock

A family just came by, a man, a woman in a wheelchair and a little girl on rollerblades.

They come here once a year they tell me. I tell them I am making a film and writing for my graduation at the Piet Zwart Institute. They apologize for disturbing and leave again.

The sun breaks through finally; I set up my camera again in front of the middle window and make multiple recordings, first with the 17-40 lens and then with a 28-135mm one.

Then I decide to film myself writing as well. Why not document my stay here.

I try to capture a close up of me writing but that is pretty hard to achieve because I cannot see the display of the camera at the same time.

The geese chatter loud, they came back again. They are collecting all together on the water now; will they sleep here or fly away and come back in the morning?

Once in a while I hear a big bang in the distance, I know this sound, it is to scare of the birds from the farmers land to avoid them eating the sown plants.

The dog lies quiet on the wooden floor, listening to the overwhelming sound of the geese as well.

Wednesday 21.40

I transferred my recordings till this far to the laptop and recorded the sunset.

Made myself a coffee, put all things I don't need for the night and next morning back into the car, my laptop as well so I have a little more freedom now. I walked with the dog.

Now it is dark, I closed the door with a piece of rope to be sure that I will wake up if somebody is checking here. I have two windows open and the birds are still out there. A candle in my cooking pan is giving enough light to write and read.

The dog found his comfort on my thick sweater.

Now it is time for a red wine and read the little Jheronimus Bosch book I found in a box last week. It belonged to my father.

Thursday 7.30

I woke up at 5, it had been a stormy night and I did not sleep much. Till 2 o'clock I was a bit scared. I left the middle window open and felt as if I lay in a cinema. Not sure if I was behind the screen or looking towards it.

Sometimes it really is like footsteps approach. I cannot listen close because of the loud noise of the hard wind. I have to pee so I go out in the night. It is not very dark. The light of the industrial area in the distance, across the water, is a bit reddish.

The dog is coughing a lot, is he becoming ill? He jumps with me in the hammock and crawls close to me. Time goes by really slow but I am not scared any longer. A lot of doom scenarios past my thoughts. Somebody standing in by the window suddenly, two drunk man breaking through the door, a farmer with a riffle... Finally I fall in a restless sleep.

The sky is red and it starts to get lighter. I step out of the hammock, make myself a coffee and place the tripod in position in front of the middle window. I shoot a clip with iso on 6400 but don't like the grainy image..

On the windows to the right the sun begins to rise, I replace the tripod and make a long recording. It is difficult to expose this phenomena similar as how my eyes capture it. Either the sky is overexposed or the landscape is underexposed...

I choose to expose correct on the sun. I replace the batteries of the sound recorder and capture sound of the strong wind blowing onto the cabin walls and roof.

I tidy up my hammock and role a second cigarette. My camera is already on low battery and the memory cards almost full again. I have cold feet. Time to walk to the car to copy data to my laptop and take the dog for a walk.

I don't know if I will stay another night, lets see what the day will bring.

For now I will put the cooker and blankets in the car. I only need my camera and book. It was busy with birds during the night but now I don't see many of them yet. The light on the upcoming water is better than yesterday.

Thursday 9.30

I sit in front of the cabin, or better said; I sit behind the cabin underneath the right viewing window. Here the sun is warmest and I can sit almost completely sheltered from the wind. Ten minutes ago a flock of black and white geese came back and landed in the nature reserve. I read T.J. Clarks 'Sight of Death'. At page 39 he writes; "Poussin is among other things the painter of the unnoticeable, and the ethics of this has to do with his precisely not using the unnoticeable in a place in the picture where mere illusion can stop and a demonstration of power or facility take over.....the hillside is insignificant, and *that's* what has to be painted"

The batteries of my camera are really empty now... I made some more shots of the viewings but am afraid that I cannot capture a lot more. So if the light that I look for will shine, I cannot film it. I consider going home to charge them but decide to concentrate on reading and observe the landscape and the birds in it.

A ship passes by, with the binocular I read 'YE-55' on the blue side of the boat. I think it is a fishing boat from the place 'Yerseke'. That's what I can make up from the first two letters.

The water is rough, I see crested waves and the water has a sinister deep greenish color. The sun highlights the white crests on top of the waves. More to the front of the landscape the water is calmer, birds are looking for food putting their beak underwater. They walk on the shoreline where the water meets the sandy coast.

On my left stands a building in the distance, I used to come there with my father when I was a child, it's called 'Dirkslandse sas'.

Across the water lies Hellevoetsluis. This morning it was a bit foggy but now I can clearly see the harbor over there and a big tower with its green roof.

Where does my fascination for the muteness of these wide landscapes come from?

The viewing windows emphasize the wideness of the landscape because of their panoramic frame, the same happens with the garage-door videos.

A strong reference to landscape painting is recognized in these works. Is my work really about my position within this landscape? I always look for something happening within the ordinariness of the landscape, looking for a certain moment that makes me feel amazed whilst nothing special did occur. This certainly has to do with light and composition and with time and movement. Time and light with in a landscape. The transiency of that moment.

This is a moment of some sort of recognition that makes me feel life does have meaning.

If I see such a beautiful, overwhelming moment and succeed to catch it with my camera, I feel so fragile but happy at the same time. It remembers my parents, my loneliness without them though at the same time I feel strong and proud.



Fig.3

Thursday 11.15

I made a drawing of my dog. It's a long time since I drew.

With the binocular I observe the landscape. It is still windy. Across the water I see a mill, a white lighthouse with a red roof stands next to it, a window in the middle overlooks the water.

*)Write the end of the camping((

*)Write about other birdhide with wild cows((

*Write about Light, Time and composition

*Put TJ Clark in + photographs?

Stills of viewing-windows hide on this page + landscape descriptions



Prototype for a landscape looking Box / Notes on a methodology of seeing

*))Write more about this landscape glasses!!((



Fig... 'Pieta' by Michelangelo(1498-1499)

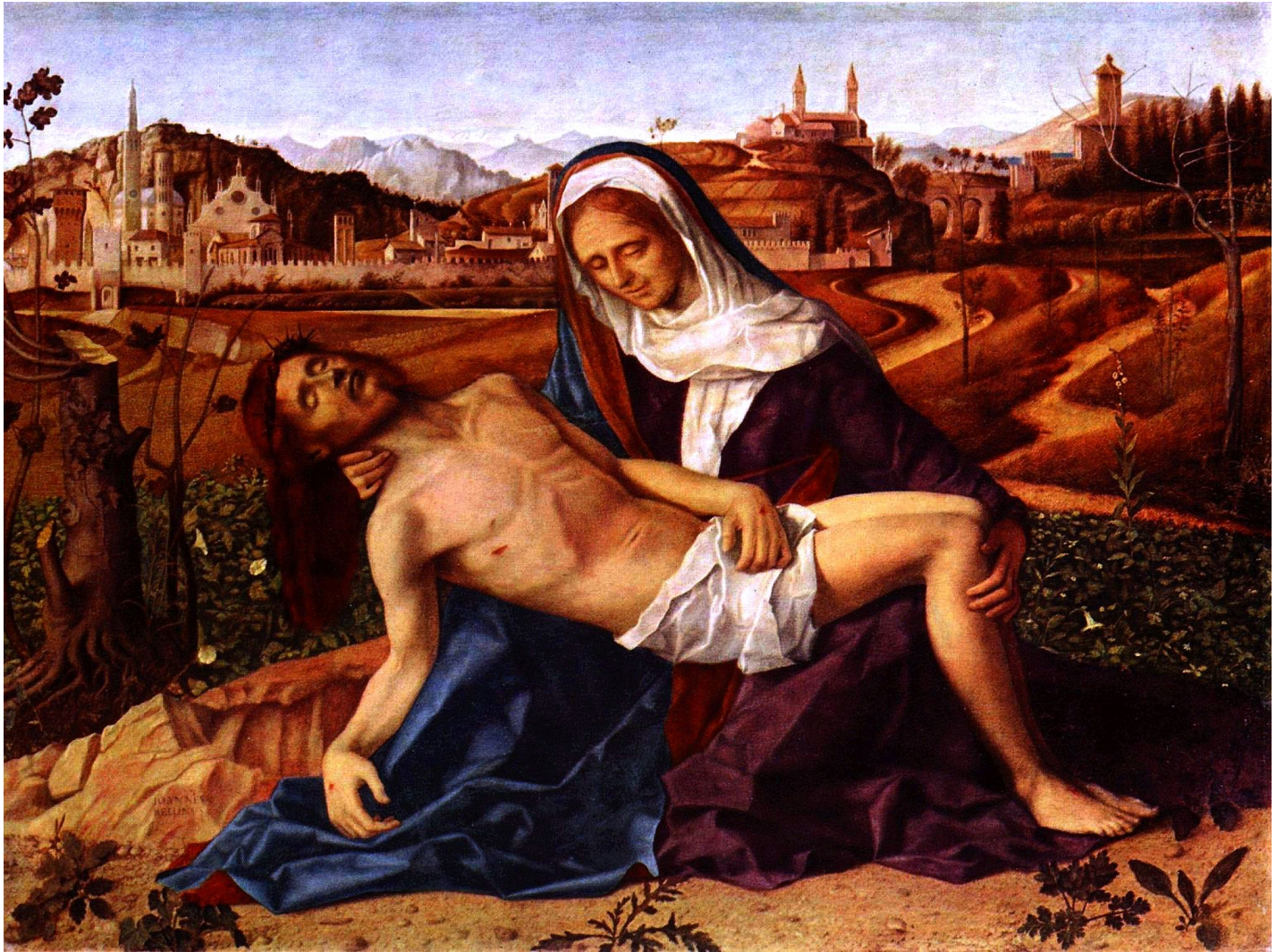


fig... 'Pietà' by Bellini (c.1505)

The aesthetics of dying - *in remembrance of my grandfathers broken eyes* -

A woman in her mid twenties is positioned in the centre of the frame. She stands firmly against a white wall; her feet solid placed on the red, somewhat brownish carpet.

She faces the camera with a quite indescribable expression however her gaze looks somewhat grievous. A necklace with a silver ring hangs around her neck.

She wears a sleeveless blue shirt and grey trousers. Standing there while holding the naked, old man in her arms like a baby.

His pale skin has the structure and fragility of old parchment. He wears a big white diaper and looks at the camera from the corner of his eye.

You cannot say if he is scared or just confident in the arms of this young woman.

He also wears a silver necklace with a ring around his neck.

There is some similarity visible between those two characters, something in the nose and mouth makes you question if they are relatives or not.

27/02/2013



