

Opening Sunday 16 February 2020 - from 17-23 February open daily from 14:00 – 18:00
Exhibition until 15 March 2020

Sunday 16 Feb., at 15:00 performance, at 16:00 conversation with Valentijn Goethals

Open: from 27 Feb. till 15 March open from Thu-Sun from 14-18 h and by appointment

Ilke Gers

Postscript

The New Zealand artist Ilke Gers (1981) with Irish and German roots describes her working method as “site-sensitive”. When site-specific suggests that the site shapes the work, Gers is more concerned with how a space feels. The attention goes to the more porous aspect of it. She brings her own ideas, interests, concerns and material into the space, but she is cautious not to overpower it.

So it can't be a coincidence that one of the least permanent materials is her favourite tool: chalk. A building material that without adding another element (air, water, ...) can't reach a state of hardness. In other words: a raw material par excellence to make temporal markings. Her fascination for signs and language in public space grew since 2011, while studying in the Netherlands. In Rotterdam, where she currently lives and works; traffic rules, public notices and laws, and road marks are abundant. Public space seems fully recorded, structured, defined and eventually controlled.

All Gers's visual work comes from writing.

Characters and parts of characters are minimal left-overs of a story once told, of information about a place or space, a visualisation of a subjective recollection.

The title “Postscript”, derived from Latin, implies that it is not the content of the letter which is important, but the short, informal, personal information, the addendum following the signature is the theme of this exhibition.

Gers investigates the history of the building; the previous inhabitants and businesses that were in the Paleisstraat, how the neighbourhood changed as time went by, and how the social fabric between local residents, small self-employed shopkeepers, the many schools and the different religions of more than 30.000 residents in the area “Brederode” developed the past decennia. It is fascinating that although the postscriptum does not belong to the real content of the letter, it is often read first, drawing most attention because it is set aside.

“PostScript” on the contrary is also a coding language to describe text and image, and this aspect probably comes quite closely to the core of what Ilke Gers is doing in her performances with her chalk work. Is writing without language drawing? If we transform the nouns ‘chalk’, ‘trace’, ‘line’, ‘stripe’ into verbs, we come close to what Ilke Gers does as an artist: she chalks, traces, lines, stripes, ... Gers connects a form of writing/(drawing) with a physical activity, she starts a line without knowing in advance where she/it will end.

Time and activity are intuitively intertwined and determine the residue, that then becomes an independent temporal visual artwork.

Stella Lohaus, February '20