

Extra City

PRESS RELEASE

Lieven de Boeck

Dictionary of Space, Part II Public Space, I.e.t.t.e.r.s.

06/09 – 25/10/2009

Project Room Extra City

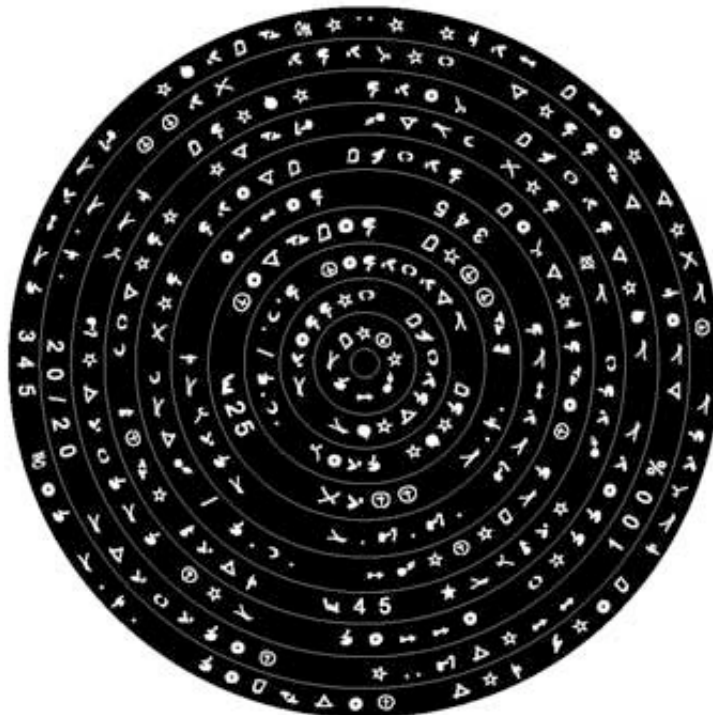


image from the artistbook *Lieven de Boeck, Public Space, I.e.t.t.e.r.s* (Onomatopee, Eindhoven, 2009)

Opening Saturday, 5 September at 19.00

Address: Extra City – Kunsthal Antwerpen -Tulpstraat 79 – BE 2060 Antwerp / tram 12, stop Gasstraat

opening hours: Wednesday – Sunday 14-19h / Thursday until 20h. Closed on public holidays.

information: www.extracity.org

press contact: Lotte De Voeght - lotte.de.voeght@extracity.org – T/F +32 3 677 16 55

Artist and architect **Lieven de Boeck** (BE, 1971) has been working on his *Dictionary of Space* since 2003. In this ongoing research he explores the borders of notions such as identity, territory, and private and public space. An important method in his research is the creation of typologies. By generalising, classifying, but at the same time also 'individualising' characteristics, he arrives at typologies of architecture and city planning and even ones of his own identity.

Dictionary of Space can be considered as an open archive and a continuous search for the different facets of the term 'space'. For the first part of this project, *Housing*, de Boeck drew on his experience of nomadic life; for five years the artist lived with friends at several different addresses. Here the artist questions the relation between space and identity, and asks to what extent identity is a product of the projection of the other and how the 'self' as a social construction can be linked to space.

Extra City

The presentation at Extra City shows a snapshot of the second part of the research, *Public Space*. An important element in this research is the work *l.e.t.t.e.r.s.*, consisting of 366 letters and drawings, one for each day of the year, by Lieven de Boeck that he addressed to himself. The letters are copies of found fragments of text and images. In de Boeck's research they play a fundamental role because by telling a story from one person to another, they break through the private environment allowing for a public inner space between writer and reader to arise. Through the medium of the letter de Boeck plays with the borders of this created space. By transposing certain fragments into his own alphabet, the text turns into an image which can only be read by the artist. In so doing the public space is at once privatised and erased.

Extra City will display all 366 letters and drawings by de Boeck as well as new projects from his recent research. These works show mirrors of identities; they are projections that suggest or a truth or a lie. In the artist's opinion, public space arises between two persons, but it is the third person, the spectator, who gets the most important role. He or she is the one who, by observing, turns the story or the 'anecdote' that is raised between two persons into reality.

In this project Lieven de Boeck has developed his method of understanding existing works or events by 'translating' them and transposing them into his own (visual) language. Specifically for this project de Boeck has remade works which are in themselves already an interpretation and which refer to identity or specific forms of public space. In the slide projection *pense-bête #1* (which means 'reminder' and is also the title of a work of Marcel Broodthaers from 1964) he shows a series of drawings of portraits – for example of Maria Martins, the muse of Marcel Duchamp – and characters such as *l'aigle* and *le corbeau*, both being references to Broodthaers. Furthermore the series of slides shows 'constructed' readymades, anonymous letters and signatures of artists that de Boeck has erased with Tipp-Ex. In the 16mm projection *ldb* he also wipes out his own signature, a reference to Broodthaers *Une seconde d'éternité*, in itself already inspired by Charles Baudelaire. By exclusively making copies of copies, Lieven de Boeck eventually disappears as the author – disappearing itself becomes his identity.

Lieven de Boeck is an artist and architect. He was researcher in Fine Arts at the Jan van Eyck Academy (2003/04), artist in residence at the ISCP New York (2006) and at the Künstlerhaus Büchsenhausen Innsbruck (2008/09). Major recent exhibitions include *Making things public* at Witte de With, Rotterdam (solo, 2004), *Making Traces* (together with Elena Herzog) at Lmak Projects, New York (2007), and *Mimétisme* at Extra City, Antwerp (group show, 2008). Major publications include *Housing* (2004) and *Texts#1* (2007).

The artist's book *Lieven de Boeck, Public Space, l.e.t.t.e.r.s.* is a co-production of Extra City and Künstlerhaus Büchsenhausen Innsbruck, published by Onomatopée (Eindhoven, 2009, ISBN-13: 978-90-78454-34-2).

Thinking Architecture: Letters Without Address

Artist's conversation

FRIDAY 2 October 2009 at 19:00 / location Extra City, Tulpstraat 79, 2060 Antwerpen

Anselm Franke in a conversation with Lieven de Boeck, in which they interrogate the artist's conceptual practice in relation to architecture and explores the particular notion of 'public space' which de Boeck has put forward in the past few years.

Supported by the Graham Foundation for Advanced Studies in the Fine Arts, Chicago.