

# PERSPECTIVES ON LANDSCAPE

## Salon

SALON

KAAISTUDIO'S ∫ penthouse

EN ∫ 150' ∫ free

29/06 ∫ 15:00

*“the landscape not moving but being always in relation, the trees to the hills the hills to the fields the trees to each other any piece of it to any sky and then any detail to any other detail, the story is only of importance if you like to tell or hear a story but the relation is there anyway” – Gertrude Stein*

A landscape is intrinsically related to a perspective. It is created by the individual view on nature, a selection of elements – by a spectator or artist – taken out of what nature provides. On the other hand, prompted by a common knowledge of what a certain landscape looks like, we read and select these elements through a culturally and socially determined filter. A landscape lies in between individual view and common knowledge.

This salon invites festival artists whose practice revolves around the concept of landscape to share their perspectives. Seeking to find connections between these different point of views, Kosi Hidama's interior landscape *Garden of solid subtleness* will provide the setting for a collective thinking process on the notion of landscape in contemporary art dramaturgy.

**Niko Hafkenschied** (BE, 1977) and **Valentina Stepanova** (RU, 1985) work together as an artistic duo and focus on new forms of documentary. They are fascinated by the twilight zone where fiction and reality meet. In their recent work they investigate contemporary rural Russian countryside and its transformation between forgotten traditions and post-war trauma.

**Elias Heuninck** (BE, 1986) studied media art at the School of Arts in Ghent. He became interested in the use of the landscape image for various experiments with digital means. His works involve different media, but they always touch on the material of film and the notion of cinema.

**Emi Kodama** (CA, 1980), originally from Vancouver, has been based in Ghent since 2008 when she started the HISK. Through writing, performance and installation, Emi layers elements of daily life with dreams and memories to create stories that people can explore and expand.

**Kosi Hidama** (JP, 1968) lives in Brussels and works as potter, photographer, installation artist and performer. In 2013 he started to study traditional Japanese ceramics and the culture of tea ceremonies. In his current research he investigates new ways to share this ancient tradition in a contemporary urban context.

**Wouter Krokaert** (BE, 1974) studied graphic design at Sint-Lukas in Brussels. During his studies he discovered dance, as a way to respond to his urge to draw. Gradually different media and disciplines have started to reinforce each other and enrich that drawing. The last several years, he has been teaching at the faculty of architecture of the KU Leuven.

**Gosie Vervloessem** (BE, 1973) lives and works in Brussels. In 2010 Vervloessem began working under the name Domestic Science Club, putting together lectures, performances, workshops, recipes and installations. Currently she focuses on we-they opposition in regard to nature and its surroundings.

With **Niko Hafkenschied**, **Elias Heuninck**, **Kosi Hidama**, **Wouter Krokaert**, **Valentina Stepanova**, **Gosie Vervloessem**, **Andreas Fleck**

working title festival

*“In front of the viewer, not here but there, appears the landscape, an independent world that is no longer an ‘environment!’”<sup>1</sup>*

Landscape. A term almost as vast, distant and vague as its main elements. Multi-layered, as well, and simply not graspable. In respect to this comprehensive concept we decided to pause for a moment, take some time and let our thoughts wander to find our perspective(s) on landscape.

“The longing for landscape and the longing for silence evoke each other.”<sup>2</sup> What a contradictory starting point for a discussion format. And a complex one as well: four artistic perspectives presented to stimulate our individual but also our collective perspective on the concept of landscape, which includes by itself a perspective on an environment. Where to begin this journey through this wide range of relations?

As gardens have been a great contribution to the discovery of the landscape because they made it “possible to practice the physical and psychological interaction with landscape”<sup>3</sup> the calm surrounding of a garden seemed to be the best environment to start this thinking process. For those who need a certain philosophical stimulation to find their perspective, they can think of a garden as one of the oldest heterotopias as Michel Foucault describes them in *Of Other Spaces*.<sup>4</sup> For those who need quietness and the right atmosphere, they can see it as a “place of peacefulness or meditative calmness where people like to spend time in” as Kosi Hidama describes his *Garden of solid subtleness* that serves as the setting for this salon.<sup>5</sup>

*“As whole human beings we stand in front of the landscape, and the act that creates it for us, is at the same time a product of seeing and of feeling, split into these peculiarities only in the reflection afterwards.”<sup>6</sup>*

But as these whole human beings, we are also individuals with our own situatedness in what we would call *the world*. With our own history, our own knowledge and non-knowledge we see, feel and finally reflect on our environment. In return this environment is offering us a huge variety of information, of socio-political, geographical and historical contexts. Something we could call a collective knowledge. Together with the atmosphere (*Stimmung*) that nature

provides, all these elements create a certain image. If we find the right calmness (*Ruhe*) and distance (*Fernsicht*), we can see and feel these elements and frame them to a landscape.<sup>7</sup> That also means that the same environment perceived from another perspective – from another point of view or another human being – can create different framings, different combinations of elements and therefore different landscapes. This production of a landscape is a creative act, similar to artistic processes and therefore related to something that Kant calls *das Kunstschöne*.<sup>8</sup>

*“The landscape arises from the abstract perception of colours and forms, which influence each other in a non-objective way and change the visual impression, but also give the viewer certain creative possibilities by allowing him to concentrate his gaze on different aspects.”<sup>9</sup>*

This salon is an invitation to initiate a creative act of thinking. The four artistic perspectives on landscape presented at this salon are propositions to open our views to different aspects of what we perceive as landscape. And the right starting point to this collective production of knowledge on landscape is most likely our very own perspective.

Text by **Andreas Fleck**

1 Verschaffel, Bart: De wereld van het landschap, p. I. The text incorporates a series of lectures given to the UIA during the academic year 2000-2001. Translation by the author.

2 Verschaffel, p. 3. Translation by the author.

3 Dinnebier, Antonia: Der Blick auf die Schöne Landschaft. Naturaneignung oder Schöpfungsakt? In: Fischer, Ludwig [Hg.]: Zum Zusammenhang von Naturbildern und gesellschaftlichen Verhältnissen. Hamburg: University Press Hamburg, 2004. P. 63. Translation by the author.

4 Foucault, Michel: Of Other Spaces: Utopias and Heterotopias. In: Architecture/ Mouvement/Continuité. October 1984.

5 Hidama, Kosi: Interview with Kosi Hidama. Brussels: workspacebrussels, 2019.

6 Simmel, Georg: Philosophie der Landschaft. In: Aufsätze und Abhandlungen 1909 – 1918 Band I. Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 2001. P. 482. Translation by the author.

7 Verschaffel, p. 7 et seqq.

8 Dinnebier, p. 70 et seq.

9 Dinnebier, p. 70. Translation by the author.