

Based on a True Story**Daniëlle van Ark****November 27, 2015 - January 9, 2016**

At times, on days of perfect and exact light,
When things have all the reality they can,
I ask myself slowly
Why I even attribute Beauty to things.

(from: Fernando Pessoa/Alberto Caeiro, 'The Keeper of Flocks')*

A photograph of Mia Farrow, marked off with red lines by the photo editors of a newspaper: Daniëlle van Ark retrieved this early portrait of the movie star from archives, pasted the photograph to a dark background and added—in an irregular grid pattern—a series of silver-leaf squares to this. Combined with the glass that covers the work, the silver leaf produces a mirror-like effect. Image, viewer and context all fuse into a single entity, to such a degree that we wonder what we're looking at, who we are and what these things truly are.

'Based on a True Story', Daniëlle van Ark's first solo presentation at the gallery, revolves around the tension between 'things as they are' and our emotions, our longing for the metaphysical, that which is more vast, and our restless struggle to interpret things and to attribute other meanings to them rather than simply to acknowledge their existence. Through the poet Alberto Caeiro, a heteronym, Pessoa speaks about the world as it is and asks himself why it is so difficult to be oneself and to see only the visible. Daniëlle van Ark deals with a similar issue, as it relates to being an artist and to the fact that this involves creating a legacy of images. What exactly are things as they exist and what do we do with them? In her response to this, she continually switches perspectives. It is this very flexibility that characterizes her artistic stance.

Van Ark has the unusual ability to arrive at an image quickly. Whether she is photographing, producing installations, working with ceramics or in bronze, or creating with infinite patience a sand carpet on the floor: her butterfly-like conceptual thought seems to find an appropriate form immediately. She takes inspiration from the visual language of diverse cultures and atmospheres. This can be music, or the image bank of a news agency, but she can also be moved by fetish-like objects of historical value.

A recurrent theme in her work is the passing of time: mortality as the inescapable shadow of status, fame and glamour, but also as the catalyst of existing relationships. In 'Based on a True Story' Van Ark employs 'nostalgic' elements—the familiar form of a specific type of photo frame, the movie star, mirrors, images of hands intertwined—which she makes abstract and gives new life in surprising combinations. With Van Ark it's all about looking, feeling and making connections. The portraits of movie stars, for instance, were selected by her on the basis of their penetrating gazes, and the two bronze hands clasping each other are her own hand and that of her grandmother, an image of struggle as well as engagement. In her quest to fathom things as they are, Van Ark invites the viewer to follow her gaze and her hand.

Daniëlle van Ark (Schiedam, 1974) graduated from the Koninklijke Academie in The Haag in 2005 and was a resident at the Rijksacademie from 2011 to 2013. She has had exhibitions at, among other institutions, Museum Van Loon (Amsterdam, NL, solo), Kunstvereniging Diepenheim (Diepenheim, NL), Moins Un (Paris, FR), FOAM (Amsterdam, NL) De Nederlandsche Bank (Amsterdam, NL), Nest (Den Haag, NL), Huis Marseille (Amsterdam, NL), GEM (Den Haag, NL) and Foster Gallery (University of Wisconsin, US). Her work can be found in public and private collections within the Netherlands and abroad.

* (Translation of the quote based on the critical edition by Teresa Sobral Cunha)

For further information please contact the gallery or visit our website:
www.tegenboschvanvreden.com

During Amsterdam Art Weekend (November 26-29) Daniëlle van Ark will carry out a performance in the gallery on Sunday afternoon November 29 between 1:30 and 2:30 pm.

