

Paul — Nu eens heb ik het gevoel dat mijn praktijk van toevalligheden aan elkaar hangt: niet weten wat ik morgen ga doen of ga maken, geen idee. Dan weer wéét ik het, is er de noodzaak: zo moet het, onontkoombaar. Die spanning vind ik mooi, vooral wanneer ik gebieden opzoek die ik niet ken, waar ik bezoeker ben. Zien wat er gebeurt. Dat kan onbehaaglijk zijn, misschien is het wel onbehagen dat me trekt en me doet veranderen. Het is moeilijk te vatten, mijn eigen werk kan me irriteren, zo van daar gaat-ie weer, daar heb je hem weer. En precies daar zit het 'm in, alsof je in de spiegel kijkt en voor jezelf een vreemde bent of een nieuwe versie van jezelf, een andere mogelijkheid. Dat vind ik belangrijk, niet zozeer het werk dat eruit rolt - dat is eigenlijk bijzaak, residu. Wat ertoe doet is dat wij, en dan bedoel ik zeker niet alleen kunstenaars, met zijn allen andere beelden, verhalen en gedachtegangen proberen mogelijk te maken.

Sam

— In a strict choreography of repetitions - like in my work Constructions - happy accidents take place. In the act of moving changes occur in interaction with the other or with the surroundings. By taking those accidents along, the choreography also changes. A dialogue starts. That is what interests me. It is like a check with reality. Transformation can happen in the encounter between what you are supposed to do and what is happening at that moment. That the work becomes the work because of its relation to the context, the space, the objects, the audience. Like when a blacksmith after melting a piece of iron puts it in cold water, in order to solidify

it. And then what does it become?

— Hoe kijken wij terug op de kunst van 50 jaar geleden? En hoe kijken we over vijftig jaar terug op de kunst van nu? In Kafka's Die Verwandlung verandert Gregor Samsa in een ongedierte. Hij is onherkenbaar geworden voor zichzelf en voor de anderen. Waar blijven we dan, als we ons niet eens meer herkennen als degenen die we ooit waren? Bruno Latour stelt die vraag, het houdt me enorm bezig. In de kunst zie ik nu het momentane, het activistische en het immateriële. Daar zit intrigerend werk tussen, maar mij bekruipt het gevoel dat kunst die daar niet mee samenvalt niet meer als hedendaagse kunst herkend wordt. Hoe kunnen we dat veranderen? Het kunstwerk terugoveren? Toen de oorlog in Oekraïne uitbrak, vertelde ik dat mijn kinderen. Plotseling moest ik denken aan het moment dat mijn vader me vertelde dat Allende vermoord was; dat was 1973, vijftig jaar geleden. Mijn vader was toen compleet overstuur. Ik was nu zo rustig als wat. Als vader herkende ik me helemaal niet in de reactie van mijn vader toen. Ik dacht, wat is er veranderd?

— Hoe werken veranderingen door digitalisering en door het gebruik van sociale media? Daar zitten we middenin, het lijkt iets waar we nauwelijks nog greep hebben, met al die techniek ervan en de invloed van reusachtige techbedrijven. Maar het idealisme waarmee het begon trekt mij nog altijd: oprecht activisme, betrokkenheid, wil tot verbetering, behoefte aan duiding. Hoe kan je dat bevorderen, met welke middelen en met welke strategieën? Grote kwesties maar ze gelden voor mij net zo goed in het klein, ook in mijn werk voor Witte Rook en in het begeleiden van kunstenaars. Verandering kan je niet afdwingen. Het is een delicaat proces waarin je je probeert te verhouden tot verwachtingspatronen, zowel die van jezelf als die van anderen. Dan ga ik uit van kwaliteiten die er al zijn. Er hoeft geen radicale omslag plaats te vinden. Soms hoef je alleen maar iets aan te raken en dan komt een proces op gang, een denkproces, een handelingsproces. Dan kan er iets moois ontstaan dat niet samenvalt met wat je al had verwacht.

Esther

— Wat mij bezighoudt is hoe we veranderende krachten van kunst kunnen versterken, de potentie ervan zichtbaar maken, stimuleren. Die rol ligt mij. Kunst is een heel beweeglijk systeem in de marge; kunstenaars kunnen zich met veranderingen in de maatschappij verbinden, maar dat hoeft niet per se, ze kunnen zich er ook van afkeren. Hoe werkt dat? Je kan het niet sturen, wel er gelegenheid voor creëren. Stuwing is misschien een goede term, aansluiten bij de stroom van ontwikkelingen, in de kunst en in andere domeinen in de maatschappij. Maar juist ook met een faciliterende organisatie kan je besluiten om een andere kant op te gaan, zonder te weten waar het toe leidt, een nieuw gebied betreden waar nog geen beleid op is losgelaten of dat zich aan planning onttrekt. Juist dan, wanneer je je boterham smeert of in de trein stapt, krijg je nieuwe ideeën en zie je de dingen in een ander licht.

der

— Op een ochtend werd ik wakker van vogelgekletter; zo hard, ik kon het haast niet geloven. Ik ging naar buiten, stapte in het vogelgezang, voelde de wind langs mijn gezicht strijken en had de ervaring dat alles met elkaar in verbinding staat en in beweging is. Die ervaring, die verwondering inspireerde me om in die beweging te gaan maken. Daar sloot de academie naadloos op aan. Maar er werd bij mij zoveel in beweging gezet, er kwam zoveel los, ik werd zoveel kanten op gestuurd, dat ik in al die verandering niet meer wist waar ik het zoeken moest. Om daar mee om te gaan heeft onder meer Vipassana meditatie mij veel gebracht: verandering toelaten, als het ware door je heen laten spoelen. Zo probeer ik een antenne te ontwikkelen voor de dynamiek in mijn werk: verandering ondergaan, ermee naar buiten treden en het weer op me laten inwerken. Daar zit risico en plezier. Alsof je een radslag maakt, niet omdat je dat al zo goed kan, maar omdat het zo heerlijk is om te doen.

— Vulkanisme en erosie. Diepe aardlagen en diepe tijd. De geologie van het landschap. Dat past bij mijn werk. Veranderingsprocessen van de aarde. De natuurkracht ervan. De structuren ervan. De sporen daarvan in stenen. Dat kan je vergelijken met hoe bij ons in ons leven veranderingen optreden, van binnenuit en door invloeden van buitenaf. En hoe we ons daaraan moeten aanpassen. Dat speelt ook bij het maken van werk. Net als in de geologie is er in de kunst een verhouding tussen duur en verandering. In mijn tekeningen probeer ik de structuren van die verhouding te vinden en me die eigen te maken. Dat is een ontdekkingstocht. Herhalen, oefenen, experimenteren. Je probeert het net even anders te doen dan je gewend bent. Soms werkt dat. Soms niet, en dat is óók interessant: wanneer je probeert ook wat *niet* werkt een vorm te geven.

Gam

— Wat mij steeds weer aan het denken zet over verandering is het keramisch proces. Daar zit ik bij het EKWC met mijn neus bovenop. Eerst werk je met iets zachts en kneedbaars. Dan gaat het de oven in. Keihard wordt het. Je kan niet meer terug. Eigenlijk kan je het resultaat alleen nog maar veranderen door het kapot te maken. En weer helemaal opnieuw beginnen. Best frustrerend. Verslavend ook, want er zijn zoveel mogelijkheden. Hoe kan het weer anders? Hoe pakt het deze keer uit? Dat trage proces vergt tijd: dagen, weken, maanden. Dan is een omgeving nodig met zo min mogelijk spanning. Onderlinge competitie kan je het zicht ontnemen op de menselijke en artistieke kwaliteiten van je collega-kunstenaars. De kunstwereld is de hel, zeg ik soms, omdat ik weet hoe het er functioneert; je wordt er geen betere kunstenaar of beter mens van. Ambitie is niet slecht, zolang het een oefening is in wat het keramisch proces je kan bijbrengen: volharden in sensitiviteit.

Sanne

— Veranderen? Daar zet ik vraagtekens bij, vooral als me wordt gevraagd: wat is je volgende stap in het leven? Dat zet de boel zo onder druk. Niemand weet wat dat is, die volgende stap en of die goed zal zijn. Zelf spreek ik liever over aanpassen; aanpassen aan steeds weer nieuwe contexten. In 2012 werkte ik met kunstenaars uit Oekraïne, uit Charkov. De oorlog begon daar in 2014. Onontkoombaar. Verder gaan met wat ik deed, was voor mij geen optie. Zij waren daar bezig hun eigen omgeving beter te maken. Dat wilde ik ook, maar dan hier. Zo is Kont ontstaan, een tijdschrift als een gelegenheid, een platform. Dat is al heel wat. Want de dingen zijn niet zo maakbaar. Wel word ik geactiveerd, door mensen en gebeurtenissen. Ook lichamelijk. Dat voel ik sterk en daar ligt een keuze: waar wil ik fysiek aanwezig zijn en bij wie? Hoe kunnen we veilig bijeenkomen en bespreken wat ons ten diepste bezighoudt?

Urb

— For a while I have been occupied by disassembling hard structures through diversity. However, ignoring universality and emphasizing variety breaks down even the things where we lean on. This attitude eventually creates emptiness. Therefore, transformation for me might work by trying to put myself

between rigidity on the one hand and dismantling on the other. Between universality and variety, between rigidity and dismantling is a liquid space that is softer than solid but harder than vapor, softer than structure but harder than deconstruction. How to survive in that flowing liquidity? I try to be a fluid phenomenon through everyday props. So, please do not pay too much attention to the products I made; better to be curious for the phenomena that the products I make will cause.

— Van water in stoom veranderen, zo gaf een docent op de kunstacademie ooit aan hoe ik me ontwikkelde. En het klopt, zo werkte het, zo ben ik op stoom gekomen, als een stoomtrein, langzaam, maar eenmaal in beweging

— Met als motto verandering initieerde Erik Hagoort vier gesprekken met - in kleine groepen verdeeld - de deelnemers, mentoren en medewerkers van Inversie. Uit de gesprekken distilleerde hij per persoon ieders eigen benadering van verandering.

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Erik

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— As an artist I might be a shape shifter. Like the ever changing plasticity of an amoeba, this one cell organism that is in motion all the time. It adapts and takes different shapes, but it stays an amoeba. Trust, yes, trust that things will work out even though perhaps you are doing something different than you think you should, different than you decided to do before. This gives me peace of mind. It's difficult to explain, but I feel the employee

of my work; my work is my employer. I ask my work: what should I do? I ask my work: what do you want from me?

— In my work nothing is what it is supposed to be. In my studio my work consists of objects. In the exhibition space they transform into sculptures. Back in the studio, they turn into objects again. And in the process, I make mistakes. That is important. I don't erase

mistakes. I try to work with them. Mistakes trigger transformation. When I make my work I have confidence. I show my work and when I look at my work, it is me, it is Britte. But when I have to present myself, as Britte the artist, something changes, and that is not always positive. As if I have to become somebody else than I am, that I have to be smart, that I have to perform. It makes me nervous, this extra layer of transformation: does it really help, do I really need it? Who needs it? Maybe we do need it, this extra layer, in the arts, but mildly.

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Astrid

— What preoccupies me is how to amplify the changing forces of art, to make their potential more visible, to encourage them. That role suits me. Art is a very fluid system which operates in the margins. Artists can connect with societal change, but it's not a necessity. They can also turn away from it. How do artists make that decision? You cannot control that process, but you can create opportunities. 'Propulsion' might be a good term: to encourage artists to connect to the stream of developments in art and other social domains. But even a facilitating organisation can decide to go in a different direction without knowing where it will lead. To enter a new arena that has no established policy or that has eluded planning. It's precisely at those times, when you're making your sandwich or boarding the train, that you get new ideas and see things in a different light.

Gam

— Volcanism and erosion. Deep strata and deep time. The geology of the landscape, that fits my work. The changing processes of the earth. Its natural power, its structures and the traces it leaves in stone. You can compare this with how changes take place in our lives, from within and due to the outside. And how we have to adapt to that. This also applies to creating work. In art, as in geology, there's a relationship between duration and change. In my drawings, I try to locate the structures of that relationship and make them my own. It's a voyage of discovery. Repetition, practice, experimentation. You try to do things just a little differently than you're used to. Sometimes it works, sometimes it doesn't. But that's also interesting, when you try to give shape to what does not work.

Emmie

— Accepting what is, accepting what arises. That's transformation to me, however strange that may sound. Instead of trying to force change, I try to work with whatever comes my way. Making the most of every opportunity or dealing with every disappointment. Bailing out on something, having doubts, being in limbo. Perhaps an unexpected encounter. Caring about something or someone. Yes, to be able to accept all of this: that's transformation to me.

Sanne

— One morning, I awoke to birdsong so loud I could scarcely believe it. I went outside, stepping into the birdsong, feeling the wind brush against my face... In that moment, it felt like everything was interconnected and in motion. That experience, that wonderment, inspired me to start making movement. The academy integrated seamlessly into this desire. However, so much was set in motion within me, so much came loose; I was sent in so many directions that, in all the change, I no longer knew which way to look. Vipassana meditation, among other things, has really helped me to cope with this. Allowing change, letting it wash through me, as it were. I'm trying to develop an antenna for the dynamics at play in my work: to experience change, face it and then allow it to affect me once more. Therein lies the risk and the pleasure. It's like doing a cartwheel not because you're so good at it, but because it's so wonderful to do.

Britte

— In my work, nothing is what it's supposed to be. In my studio, my work consists of objects. In the exhibition space, these same objects transform into sculptures. Back in the studio, they turn into objects again. And in the process, I make mistakes. That's important. I don't erase mistakes. I try to work with them. Mistakes trigger transformation. When I'm creating my work, I'm confident. I show my work, and then, when I look at it, it's me, it's Britte. But when I have to present myself as Britte the artist, something changes, and not always in a positive way. As if I have to become somebody other than who I am. That I have to be smart, that I have to perform. It makes me nervous, this extra layer of transformation. Does it really help, do I really need it? Who needs it? Maybe we do need it, this extra layer, in the arts, but only mildly.

— What is the effect of the changes due to digitisation and the use of social media? We're right in the thick of it. It seems like we barely have a grip on it anymore, with all the technology involved and the influence of giant tech companies. But the idealism it began with still attracts me. Genuine activism, involvement, the desire to improve, the need for more explanation. How can you promote these? Which tools and strategies do you employ? Major issues, to be sure, but they're just as applicable to me in small ways. They also apply to the work I do at Witte Rook and how I coach artists. Change cannot be forced. It's a delicate process in which you try to relate to the expectations, your own and those of others. I start with the qualities that are already there. There's no need for a radical change. Sometimes, you only

— Turning water into steam, that's how a teacher at the art academy once described my development. And it's true. That's how it worked; that's how I got up to speed. Like a steam engine, slowly. But once in motion, totally unstoppable. Ambition, yes. And a storm, that too. That's how it feels, change. Only, now I'm no longer steam, now I'm fucking fire.

Vince

— Funny, yesterday I met someone while out and about, who said to me, 'You're still transforming.' And I replied, 'Wow, I'd like to be.' My practice reflects that, I guess. But I also have reservations about transformation. My work has a lot of movement; it's about being a migrant and coming from two different places. But it also focuses on the process that takes place in that in-between space, while moving from one place to another. I recently realised how passionate I am about writing. I never thought I'd call myself a writer. Now I do. For me, I've really experienced that as a transformation. But does that mean that I transformed from one thing into another? When you use words, they can seem naked, as if they're not wearing a suit. But they don't need to, and that's fine. The work can carry itself.

Maja

— During a strict choreography of repetitions — like in my work 'Constructions' — happy accidents arise. In the act of moving, changes occur in the interactions with others or the surroundings. By incorporating these accidents, the choreography also changes. A dialogue is initiated. That's what interests me. It's like a reality check. Transformation can happen in the interface between what you're supposed to be doing and what's happening at that moment. The work becomes 'the work' due to its relation to the context, the space, the objects and the audience. It's like when a blacksmith, after melting a piece of iron, plunges it into cold water to solidify it. Then what does it become?

Sam

— What causes me to constantly think about change is the ceramic process. At EKWC, I'm right on top of that. You start by working with something soft and malleable. Then, it gets placed into the oven. It turns rock hard. You can't go back anymore. The only way to change the result is to destroy it. And to start all over again. It's rather frustrating, but addictive too because there are so many possibilities. How can it be made differently? How will it work this time? That slow process takes time: days, weeks, months even. In which case, you need an environment with as little tension as possible. Mutual competitiveness can make you lose sight of your fellow artists' human and artistic qualities. Sometimes, I say that the art world is hell because I know how it works. It does not make you a better artist or a better person. Ambition is not bad, as long as it's an exercise in what the ceramic process has to teach you: to persevere, but with sensitivity.

Ranti

we

Paul

— Now and again, I have the feeling that my practice depends on coincidences: on not knowing what I'm going to do or make the next day; absolutely no idea. Then, suddenly, I just know: the need is there. That's how it should be, inescapable. I like that tension, especially when I'm seeking out areas that are unfamiliar to me, where I'm a visitor. To see what happens. That can be uncomfortable, perhaps it's that uneasiness that attracts me and makes me change. It's difficult to get a hold on my work; it can irritate me. But then the process begins all over, and then you can grasp it again. It's as if you're gazing into the mirror, but you're a stranger to yourself, or a new version of yourself, some other possibility. That's what I find important, not so much the work that rolls out. That's actually more of an afterthought, the residue. What matters is that we all — and I'm certainly not referring only to artists — are trying to make other images, stories and ways of thinking possible.

Ch

Klaartje

— What can I contribute and what can I pass on? This has become less clear, less evident to me in my work with young makers. The reaction I expected has not been forthcoming. I think I have something to tell them, but what I get from them is what I need. This makes me contemplate how processes work in art. Something gets under your skin and sparks your curiosity, but it also has a paralysing effect. It's like being in a vacuum, a kind of freeze. What do you do when faced with something out of your control? Are you afraid or do you choose to fight? Perhaps there's a third option, which is to pretend. To pretend there's not much going on. This is not necessarily negative. It's a survival mechanism. A way to gain time so that you can see what has really changed and how this affects you, however difficult that may be to figure that out.

With change as the motto, Erik Hagoort initiated four small-group discussions among various Inversion programme participants, mentors and employees. Based on these conversations, Erik was able to distil a unique approach to change for each person.

Ad

character of Gregor Samsa transforms into some kind of vermin. He becomes unrecognisable to himself and to others. When we can no longer recognise ourselves as who we once were, where does that leave us? Bruno Latour poses this question, and it keeps me extremely busy. In the current art world, I see that which is instantaneous, activist and immaterial. There's some intriguing work happening in all that, but I get the feeling that art which does not coincide with these concepts is no longer seen as contemporary art. How can we change this? Reclaim the work of art? When the war broke out in Ukraine, I notified my children. Suddenly, I was reminded of when my father told me that Allende had been killed. That was 1973, fifty years ago. My father was completely shaken up then. Yet, in talking to my children, I had been as calm as anything. Now, as a father myself, I didn't recognise myself at all in his reaction then. I asked myself, 'What has changed?'

Erik

— During one of the conversations, Ad van Rosmalen asked me, 'What do you want to bring about by asking us about change?' The verb 'to bring about' was aptly chosen. To bring something about not only means to set something in motion, but also to cause something to happen due to that movement. What brings about change? How does change impact you? How do you experience change? Mutually reflecting on that experience: that's what I wanted to bring about in the discussions.

A conversation can take on a magical quality, not unlike a metamorphosis, according to philosopher Hans Georg Gadamer (1900-2002): 'Ein Gespräch ist eine Verwandlung ins Gemeinsame hin, in der man nicht länger ist wer man war'; (a conversation is a transformation into something communal, in which you're no longer who you were). You bring about a conversation together; it's something collective. You can become engrossed in it. This allows you to break free from the thinking you're used to and from the way you're used to thinking. In this way, you may even become detached from who you are, as Gadamer suggests. I recognise that; a conversation can impact me like that. Sometimes, however, I experience it differently. And that's just as wonderful. A conversation exists by the grace of each person's contribution. Thinking out loud together in a conversation calls upon each participant. It's precisely when I'm absorbed in a conversation that I'm made to think. It's then that, in the presence of the others, I arrive at my own thoughts and have the feeling, perhaps for only a moment, that I'm becoming who I could be.

trust that things will work out even though you may be doing something differently from how you think you should, differently from how you decided to do it before. This gives me peace of mind. It's difficult to explain, but I feel like I'm the employee of my work; my work is my employer. I ask my work, 'What should I do? What do you want from me?' and that's fine. The work can carry itself.

— For a while, I've been occupied with disassembling hard structures through diversity. However, ignoring universality and emphasising diversity breaks down even the things that we lean on. Eventually, this attitude leads to emptiness. Therefore, for me, the way transformation might work is to situate myself between rigidity on the one hand, and dismantlement on the other. Between universality and variety, rigidity and dismantlement, there's a fluid space that's softer than a solid but harder than a vapour; softer than structure, but harder than deconstruction. How can one survive in that liquidity? I try to be a fluid phenomenon through the use of everyday props. So, please do not pay too much attention to the products that I've made. It's better to

be curious about the phenomena arising from these products.

Ahn

— How do we look back on the art of fifty years ago? And how will we look back on the art of today in fifty years' time? In Kafka's 'Die Verwandlung', the

— Change? I question that, especially when asked, 'What is your next step in life?' That adds so much pressure. Nobody knows what that is — that next step, and whether

it will be good. I prefer to talk about adapting; adapting to ever-changing contexts. In 2012, I worked with artists from Ukraine, from the city of Kharkov. War broke out there in 2014. It was unavoidable. To continue what I was doing was simply not an option. Artists there were working to make their environment better. I wanted to do that too, only here. That's how Kont came about: a magazine that was also an opportunity, a platform. That's already quite remarkable because making the most of difficult circumstances is no easy task. But now I'm activated, by people and events, but also physically. I feel that strongly, and that's where a decision must still be made. Where do I want to be physically, and with whom? How can we safely come together to discuss our deepest concerns?

Griet

— As an artist, I might be a shape shifter similar to an amoeba. This single-celled organism is always in motion with ever-changing plasticity. It adapts and takes on different shapes, and yet it remains an amoeba. Trust, yes,

trust that things will work out even though you may be doing something differently from how you think you should, differently from how you decided to do it before. This gives me peace of mind. It's difficult to explain, but I feel like I'm the employee of my work; my work is my employer. I ask my work, 'What should I do? What do you want from me?' and that's fine. The work can carry itself.

Urša