"Don’t just paint. A painter can become an ‘observer’. Somebody who is able to surprise, who awakens and opens our eyes for a new experience and gives meaning to things of every day life. It is a privileged role that must be appreciated and stimulated."

Queen Beatrix, during the 125th anniversary of the Royal Prize for Fine Art, 1996 – as quoted by Yashmin Campagne, as an artist statement, on her website.
Dear Reader!

The fourth edition of Sranan Art Xposed is currently scrolling down your screen … SAX number 4 is the first of this year, 2011. A year that stands to mark itself, to us, as a year of change. Our steady graphic designer for example, Sabine Jong A Lock, has left the SAX-team for a steady job at Digicel. We wish her the best of luck and thank her for her devotion and her great involvement with SAX and Surinamese art in general. Simultaneously we welcome to our team Wendy Alberts, who from now on, from her graphic design company Moksi Graphics in The Netherlands, will take care of the layout. Wendy has previously lived and worked in Suriname for quite a long time, and we look forward to working with her again!

One more change that lies on the horizon, is putting together a plan to make Sranan Art Xposed even bigger … We have so many plans, and there is also so much happening when we look at the Surinamese visual arts. In our leading article, ‘Going Places …’, it becomes obvious that Sranan art is penetrating into the great World. In April Ada Korbee will start researching the possibilities of involving more sponsors in our project which currently consists of a web magazine, a blog and a photo-account which we have been updating more regularly. Up until now the - no strings attached! - sponsoring comes mainly from Readytex Art Gallery, although others also lend some support by for example making contributions available for the blog. We hope however, to increase our platform, so that we become even more visible on international forums, in word as well as by being there, by participating in all the dialogues and conversations that take place worldwide. We also increasingly want to take all those international experiences “back home” with us.

We hope that the readers of SAX keep reacting, thinking along, criticizing, inspiring, debating, etcetera!

Enjoy,

Marieke & the SAX Ladies!

Dear reader!

Colophon

Sranan Art Xposed

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SAX is made possible by

Marieke Visser

Brussels

By invitation of KultuurKaffee (Vrije Universiteit Brussel) Kurt Nahar resides in the KK Gallery’ for a period of 6 weeks (from February 15 until March 31). During this time he works on an exhibition with the title Mitschien, Maybe in which he obtains inspiration from current events in Belgium. His attention goes out especially to the scandals which recently came out with regards to the church. The residency project is set up as an open atelier. Anybody is free to drop in and start a conversation with the artist. An inspirational experience.

After a long walk in Antwerp Kurt Nahar writes the following poem, “to the tunes and the steps of Wim de Pauw”.

If it is not here, it is there

if it is not here, it is there

if it is not there, it is somewhere along the way

if it is not somewhere along the way

it is there, o my wee lass, o my wee lass
don’t be troubled
every step has it’s finder
are you weary
try to soar like a butterfly

Saint Laurent du Maroni

Marcel Pinas exhibits in Saint Laurent du Maroni, in French Guiana, late in 2010. A picture of the large Afaka symbols gently making the crossing over the Marowijne River in a small boat, intrigues me. Early January when Pinas concludes the exhibition, I am there as well. There is an extensive report on the blog. On the way back, I myself am now in the boat as well, in between the KI and the WI and the KO … And it all seems so natural, ebb and flow, back and forth, east and west, dis ‘sey and dat’ sey …

Many thanks!

Many thanks!

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02 | SAX 04

03 | SAX 04

TEXT Marieke Visser

The Surinamese artist community is sometimes reminiscent of a brightly feathered flock of birds in her multicolored variety. One thing is certain: these birds of different feathers are busy spreading their wings. World, here we come! The transatlantic route has been tried and tested, but now other destinations are on the itinerary. On these pages several impressions.

One thing is certain: these birds of different feathers are busy spreading their wings. World, here we come! The transatlantic route has been tried and tested, but now other destinations are on the itinerary. On these pages several impressions.

During his stay in Belgium, the artist sends email messages to Suriname with images, but also texts.

A fragment from “Identity crisis”

[...] are you certificates on paper or human being with rhythm that sways with the wind and moves to the ticktock of dada are you yet again a breath that comes and goes [...]
Surinamese artists are showcased, opens in January 2011 in the Art Museum of the Americas, which is held in March. This initiative is an event, an exhibition in which exclusively art from the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) Secretariat.

The first event, an exhibition in which exclusively art from the Caribbean is showcased, opens in January 2011. In this exhibition named “The real thing” remains irreplaceable, but it is a tremendous improvement that the world wide web has thrown open the communication, inspiration, discussion, conversation and more, and makes it easier than ever to spread ones wings.

In the magazine Kunstbeeld Daphne Pappers writes a short review on Wrestling with the Image: Caribbean Interventions for which she visits the exhibition virtually. “The feeling of being dark/black, but feeling as though you are fair/white”.

In December 2010 I spoke with a friend I hadn’t seen in a long time, about a subject that intrigued me – and countless others – immensely: identity. How most people are pre-conditioned to label their fellow man as belonging to one Group or another, within the blink of an eye. Some, more than others, may struggle with those quickly assigned labels. And then a specific Group or label applies more to some, than to others.

My friend said: “You should try talking about this with Yashmin Campagne. Her work deals with these issues as well.” Yashmin Campagne, one more person I had lost sight of. In the meantime, after having lived in Suriname for a number of years, moved to Trinidad, to Diego Martin, and with many other things going on, she has been quite busy painting. Through e-mail, contact with her was quickly established and on the website I could take a look at the work that Yashmin Campagne (Nijmegen, 1 december 1966) has made in recent years. In particular the work from her exhibition Identity deals, in a free and playful manner, with the fact that color so quickly defines how people look at you – and judge you.

“The theme I was trying to express with the works in Identity dealt with the feeling of being dark/black, but feeling as though you are fair/white. This because of my background, growing up in the white culture of the Netherlands. Back then, in my youth, I never considered myself as being different from everybody else. But once back in Suriname, since 1996, surrounded by so to speak ‘the colorful people’ which I myself supposedly had to be a part of, I strangely enough did not feel like one of them.”

The paintings in Identity show self portraits, reflections and mirror images, animals in different skins, flowers in strange colors and canvases upon which a mix of different cultures have been portrayed.

The exhibition Identity March 10-21 2010, was organized by the Dutch Embassy in the National Museum & Art Gallery in Port of Spain, Trinidad. In november 2010 Yashmin participated in a group exhibition Femmes, in Nomade Gallery in Coconut Grove, Miami.

The blog of Sranan Art will soon include a more extensive contribution about the work of Yashmin Campagne.

Encounters can have far-reaching consequences. During a workshop in Gadani, Pakistan, two young female artists meet each other. Ellen Ligteringen, now living in Suriname, and Rehab El Sadek from Egypt, who currently lives in the USA. On the Sranan Art blog Ellen and Rehab share an account of this encounter and talk about how, spanning great distances, by way of the internet, they have continued to play important roles in each other’s lives because of the strong sense of connection they feel.

From the reaction of a woman named Judy from Canada it becomes clear how much this speaks to others: “Wow, thanks for writing. A Jamaican born woman living in Canada, exploring ‘art’ and what we can really be // means a lot to hear similar voices.”

CAYENNE

Towards the back of this S.A.X, in the pages that fall under the section ‘Beyond Borders’, the recent exhibition of Sri Iridikrommo and Kit-Ling Tjon Pian Gi is mentioned. In Cayenne, in Galerie L’Encadrieri where many Surinamese artists have shown their work, their Les Surinaamse aux cinemais is held in March.

And thus the birds keep on flying, unencumbered by geographic borders. Going places … ©

Marlous Visser (Bornekom, the Netherlands, 1962) studied journalism and language- and literature studies. As publicist she writes much about art & culture, history and tourism, from her own press agency Swamp Fish Press. The two most recent large projects she contributed to were: WestKam Drawing lines, connecting dots and Paramaribo SPAN.

She is currently chief editor of Stanner Art Xpoted.

Yashmin Campagne: “The feeling of being dark/black, but feeling as though you are fair/white”.

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From the reaction of a woman named Judy from Canada it becomes clear how much this speaks to others: “Wow, thanks for writing. A Jamaican born woman living in Canada, exploring ‘art’ and what we can really be // means a lot to hear similar voices.”
my work is intended for public places. Sadly enough it is not easy to get this done in Suriname. Requesting and ultimately receiving permission is a long and arduous process, because the government is not sufficiently aware of all that art can mean in a society. Much that I manage to do in this regard (for example my 'I love Su' installation), is done with my own private means. I hope these initiatives can serve as a stimulus to the government, the business community and other artists, so that art in public spaces will have a much stronger presence in Suriname in the future.

Loβ'i tu tamara [Love me too tomorrow], is a continuation of your previous theme Loβ makandra [Love each other]. What has inspired this development? Just like then, the focus in much of my installation art is on the fate of children in foster homes. These children who already have to do without so much, first and foremost need, just like everybody else, love and attention. Here I symbolically portray that this need does not only apply to today. We have to keep supporting these children now and into the future. Then there are also parents who leave their children behind in foster homes and subsequently seem to forget about them, while the kids keep yearning for love and attention from their parents. That is sad. With my installations I mostly make reference to the needs and desires of these lonely children.

You also have a special performance planned; what can tell us about that? I always try to add new elements to my exhibitions. On the opening night as well as the last day of the exhibition dancers (from the Soeki Irodikromo Volksacademie voor Kunst en Cultuur) which I have body painted, will perform a special choreography by Dweight Karsodikromo against a backdrop of large painted canvases. Their movements will lead up to several image stills, at which time man and canvas become one in a three-dimensional painting. The paintings on dancer and canvas flow beautifully into one another. This new experiment is a fascinating challenge for me as well as for the dancers and we hope to present something very special to the public.

George Struikelblok also has his own website.

The art installations you are creating are destined in part for De Hal and in part for public locations. Why is this? Art in public spaces has always interested me. I have also studied the subject during my two last ‘artist in residence’ periods in the Netherlands and managed to learn a great deal about suitable materials. Suriname has so many beautiful locations that would be ideal for public art installations, but regrettably that capability is greatly underutilized. What we encounter here for the most part, are busts and ‘men on pedestals’, but public art is so much more than that and that is something I would like to show during my exhibition. Art, especially abstract art, can trigger something in people, put them to thinking and stimulate discussions. With art in public spaces you also reach the ‘average man’. That is why part of
**Royal House of Art, Paramaribo, Suriname, presents two wonderful exhibitions near the end of 2010. In the first half of December, Patricia Ma Ajong shows a number of small paintings where old Surinamese houses are depicted in a striking manner. The exhibition is called *Overreind staan* (Standing upright). The artist: “The Surinamese house from the 19th century is slowly disappearing from the cityscape of Paramaribo in 2010. Thus another small piece of history gets lost. These houses define the city. Can’t anybody rescue these houses? I hope that these emotions come through when people look at my work.” Photographs can be found on the Flickr-account of Sranan Art. For more information: Patricia Ma Ajong, maajongpatricia@hotmail.com**

**Halfway through December 2010 the first Art Market is organized in De Hal. Alternative, non-mainstream, different, refreshing. The Art Market-pioneers: Roberto Tjon A Meoeuw (furniture and objects from waste/scrap materials); Next Level Art (video art); Gloria-Ann Jap (objects made from natural materials); boJules (artistic jewelry); Purcy Tjin (paintings and ceramic heads); Cheryl Ceder (bags); Giselle Slument (jewelry); Rooteo Ravales (Dobru t-shirts); Henry Lamijo (children’s furniture); Aston Brielle & Cedric Cooman (neon art & Photoshop); Ellen Ligtering (cacao-art); Jon Tjen Tin Koei (chocolate-fountain). Pay close attention in the following months, through the blog of Sranan Art we will announce when the next Art Market will take place. One of these months …**

**For some a confrontational exhibition; for others it could have been taken one step further. Regardless though: innovative, different. In December 2010 Sirano Zalman showed numerous ‘larger than life’ photographs of nudes in De Hal, in an exhibition titled *EXE: Expression of Emotion*. Or rather: he showed photographic artworks. Zalman paints with pixels, reworks his photos, layer by layer, places his models in totally different surroundings. Male and female nudes are floating in the air, lay curled up on a leaf, and hang suspended in an old prison cell in Fort Nieuw Amsterdam. For some a confrontational exhibition; for others it could have been taken one step further. However: the viewer is introduced to a whole new side of the artist. Bohé: “It is miraculous: to a white surface you bring life. You make others happy with color, dimension and form.” More information: August Bohé, boartus@yahoo.com**

**Showing from December 17 - 31 in Royal House of Art is the exhibition *Voortplanting (Procreation)* from artist August Bohé. In *Voortplanting* Bohé gives free reign to his own fantasy, his own artistic interpretation of the process of procreation. This turns out into a colorful and surprising exhibition in which the viewer is introduced to a whole new side of the artist. Bohé: “It is miraculous: to a white surface you bring life. You make others happy with color, dimension and form.” More information: August Bohé, boartus@yahoo.com**

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**Artist Paul Chang has been living and working in the USA since 1986. After five years he finally exhibits his work in Suriname again, in De Hal at the Grote Combeweg 45 from February 10 – 12: *Inspired by Nature*. Many experience the exhibition as an oasis of tranquility which is created by colorful and cheerful compositions in which elements from nature are the central theme.**

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**During the Sranan Heritage Festival in Commewijne from February 10 - 13 there is also special attention for visual arts. Artists affiliated with the FVAS combine their efforts to create a Gapuro (Arabesque for honorary gate/arch) which is unveiled on February 10th at the opening of the festival. This new monument now serves as a wonderful welcoming archway at the boat landing near Fort Nieuw Amsterdam for guests arriving there.**

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**The Gapuro with individual paintings on metal sheets by artists from the FVAS.**

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Sunil Puljhun

At the opening of the exhibition *Vredig, vrij en vriendelijk* in De Hal on November 23rd 2010, Simone Issa was immediately taken with a work of art hanging on the wall to her right, just past the entrance. It was an untitled mixed media artwork, by artist Sunil Puljhun. With this piece the artist warns against the decline and the threat of deterioration in this blossoming district from olden days. "Initially I think the colors were what attracted me most to the work. The work really stood out to me but I thought to myself: No Simone, you have only just arrived. Take a good look at everything else first. There were certainly other Works of art that I liked, but nothing spoke to me quite as that particular piece did. I suddenly noticed that there was quite a commotion surrounding the work of Puljhun and I decided to take action. I still don't know what was going on exactly, but from what I understand several other guests were actually interested in the work. Luckily I was the first one to actually take the plunge, because I already had the perfect place in mind for this piece. I am extremely satisfied with my new acquisition. It has a prime spot in my new house, on the wall above an antique buffet, the only thing I took with me from my old home. In it are segments of a poem by Michaël Slory and that takes me back to a time in my childhood when I saw the poet coming in to see my father in his store. The fact that Puljhun also incorporated a page from a book with a historic text about Coronie is fascinating. I do have a bond with Coronie. In the past we used to go there occasionally with our parents and now, as an avid participant in the auto rally sport, I come there more often. Then there is something that was probably not the artist's intention, but the part that resembles burned wood with right next to it a bright white 'flame' makes me think of white Sandy beaches and weathered driftwood. And I absolutely love the beach. This piece of art really speaks to me in several ways and every day when I look at it, or try to decipher another piece of text within, I discover yet another fascinating little tidbit."

Sunil Puljhun, *Untitled*, mixed media on paper, 2010

PHOTO Readytex Art Gallery/William Tsang, 2010

An Amazing Experience

When Marcel Pinas spoke to me about the Tembe Art project two years ago he was so excited that his enthusiasm jumped out to me. As I came to understand it, the idea was to engage national and international interest for the area and its inhabitants through dialogue with the Caribbean and the rest of the world. The vehicle through which all of this was to happen was an Artist in Residence program in the mining city of Moengo, Suriname. The invitation to be part of that great project was too good to miss. So two years later, there I was, ready to be a part of Marcel's vision.

The *Kibii Foundation*, which is the overarching body that oversees the Tembe Art residency, acquired a two story house in the center of Moengo. During my time there (January-February, 2011) we were the first batch of four artists to actually live in the house.

I usually started working around 08:00am. This is not because I am such an early bird, but by 2:30pm it really is too hot to do anything. In my case the idea of ‘studio’ moved from an enclosed space to the vastness of the Moengo landscape. On rainy and stormy days this meant having compulsory breaks due to heavy rainfall. The good thing about that was that those days were cool enough to work until 05:00pm. Another thing is that coming from the West, trying to materialize something in a country like Suriname is a whole different ball game. The idea that anything you want may be ordered online, or the thought that the hardware store actually has everything you need must be abandoned straight away. Not only is the environment totally different, but you are forced to rethink your attitudes in relation to the pace, space and the people.

Initially the intention was to make a large ceramic sculpture to be placed in the public space. However, this proved to be unfeasible in the amount of time that was available unless I made it in Paramaribo. The idea came up to make it out of aluminum. Seeing that Moengo is the bauxite city that provided the raw material for aluminum since the beginning of the previous century, this idea did...
Mickey Mouse in Moengo

TEXT Wouter Klein Velderman

The Fonds voor Beeldende Kunsten, Vormgeving en Bouwkunst – Fund for Visual Arts, Design and Construction (Fonds BKVB) invited me to partake in a pilot-project at the Tembe Art Studio in Moengo, Suriname. TAS is an interesting residency-project of which the Fund is trying to determine whether it is suitable to have more artists from Holland participate in, in the future. With TAS Marcel Pinas initially wanted to create a place where the children from Moengo could be guided in their creative development.

Mickey Mouse, the popular Disney character, counts as a symbol for a certain kind of progress - the progress of Western society. A progress to which I suspect that not every Surinamer is willing to conform. But even so, I choose to put down a Mickey in Moengo. At least in form, because for the most part the details will be done in a unique way by the people from Moengo and children from the surrounding villages. For asking inhabitants of Moengo, and the children from the village, to think along with me about techniques, materials and to add (woodcarving) elements to the sculpture of Mickey. I also get a great deal of daily help from my very gifted assistant, woodcarver and musician Ras Zu. The children from the surrounding villages Olia Oło, Dantapu and Ricanau Mofo are currently busy creating woodcarvings that will be added to the jacket of Mickey. Ultimately Mickey’s legs will be carved into two large totem poles with a chainsaw. Thus Mickey Mouse becomes a structure, completely infused with elements referring to the local culture; a customized symbol for progress.

A longer version of Wouter Klein Velderman’s report - with more pictures- can be found on the Sranan Art blog.

TAS has quickly matured and the projects that are initiated here have also grown a great deal. The Marowijne Art Park is the most recent example. For this project the public space of Moengo and its surroundings has been made available for contemporary art. I decided to construct Mickey Mouse here, done exclusively in wood.

It seems like the country of Suriname is in some sort of transition. Many of daily peculiarities that I run into here have somehow to do with this. But how the country was, and how it will become is quite unclear to me, as a visitor. What I do notice, is that there is hope for progress.

Mickey Mouse, the popular Disney character, counts as a symbol for a certain kind of progress - the progress of Western society. A progress to which I suspect that not every Surinamer is willing to conform. But even so, I choose to put down a Mickey in Moengo. At least in form, because for the most part the details will be done in a unique way by the people from Moengo and children from the surrounding villages. For asking inhabitants of Moengo, and the children from the village, to think along with me about techniques, materials and to add (woodcarving) elements to the sculpture of Mickey. I also get a great deal of daily help from my very gifted assistant, woodcarver and musician Ras Zu. The children from the surrounding villages Olia Oło, Dantapu and Ricanau Mofo are currently busy creating woodcarvings that will be added to the jacket of Mickey. Ultimately Mickey’s legs will be carved into two large totem poles with a chainsaw. Thus Mickey Mouse becomes a structure, completely infused with elements referring to the local culture; a customized symbol for progress.

A longer version of Wouter Klein Velderman’s report - with more pictures- can be found on the Sranan Art blog.

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One year Tembe Art Studio

Recently the Tembe Art Studio in Moengo celebrated its first birthday. The project is an initiative of visual artist Marcel Pinas, who wants to share his experience and knowledge with the Surinamese community, starting in Moengo, in his birth district Marowijne. In this way Pinas wants to motivate and stimulate especially the youth, to develop their talents. The TAS-project has a very broad set up and contains among other things art-, dance- and music lessons in the Tembe Art Studio. A lot of work was done in 2010 to complete the Alaka Guesthouse, restaurant Masanga and a training facility at Olia Oło. Furthermore there were also national en international art- and educational exchange programs amongst which a photography project with Maartje Jaquet from the Netherlands.

The Artist in Residence-program which is discussed on these pages in the contributions from Charl Landvreugd and Wouter Klein Velderman, is a key segment of the TAS-project. This project has been developed to be much more than a fun and informative period for the artist in residence. There is close and intense contact with the children and adults on site, and an art installation is created and left behind in Moengo. It is the intention that a real bond is forged. From the TAS-press release: “The TAS stands for ultimate creation: the creation of works of art in totally different surroundings and circumstances, but also to learn more about oneself, how to deal with situations and how to react to them.”

The first Surinamese Artist in Residence (AIR) was visual artist Jhunry Udenhout. The firts artist from abroad was Pieter Kemink, ceramics-instructor from Amsterdam. The first group to actually reside in the AIR-accommodation were Jakup Ferri and Wouter Klein Velderman from the Netherlands, Sheena Rose from Barbados and Charl Landvreugd from New York, USA. On the Sranan Art blog we will include regular reports in word as well as image on the Artists in Residence.

For additional information and visual materials, visit the website www.kibifoundation.org or follow Tembe Art on Facebook.
Symbol of freedom

Located on the corner of the Johan Adolf Pengelstraat and the Henck Arnemstraat is the square of 10 October 1760. On October 10th 2007 Caprino Allendy and Michel Felisi, at that time vice-chairman of the National Assembly and Minister of Regional Development, unveiled a monument there, made by artist Marcel Pinas. This monument, a so-called “boto ede”, half a boat from rusty metal of which the tip points up towards the heavens, symbolizes the freedom of the maroons. That freedom was attained on October 10th 1760 when the peace treaty was signed between the maroons and the colonial government of that time. Marcel Pinas was commissioned to design this monument by the Foundations Pina Bosu and Sabana Pit.

Just like every year, a ceremony was held at the monument on October 10th 2010. This year however, a committee made some adjustments to the square and the gray concrete pedestal had been tiled in shiny bright blue tiles. Furthermore, the original plaque mentioning the previous unveilers had been removed and on this date the monument was basically unveiled again.

The artist raised an objection against this; he had consciously left the pedestal gray and he was not consulted about the adjustments. By now the pedestal has been restored to its original state. A “wake-up call” for the community to take care not to interfere in somebody else’s creation.

Fatu time … in Suriname …

Bringing people together, just by hanging out and having a good time together, chillin’ or “liming” as they say in the Caribbean. That is the purpose of the fatu bangi’s that Roberto Tjon A Meeuw makes. Inspired by the many fatu bangi’s which can be found in plenty of Surinamese neighborhoods, Tjon A Meeuw started his first version of this bench in the beginning of 2010, within the framework of Paramaribo SPAN. This artist prefers working with discarded wood and other scrap materials and proves that second hand by no means equals second rate. On the contrary. And the word is spreading …

Dyadya uma immortalized

On March 8, the International women’s Day, the bust of the recently deceased Surinamese poet Johanna Schouten-Elsenhout was unveiled, in front of the Eddy Wessels- auditorium at the Cultureel Centrum Suriname (CCS) in the Henck Arnemstraat, Paramaribo. The chairperson of the Nationale Vrouwen Beweging (NVB) (National Women’s Movement), Eline Graanoogst, expressed the wish that Surinamese artists would help immortalize in word as well as image, dyadya women. Women such as “Tante Jo”, but also Elfriede Baarn-Dijsteel and Juanita Altenberg for example.

The bronze sculpture is made by Erwin de Vries and the unveiling was done by the Director of the Central Bank of Surinam, Otto Ezechiel, Eline Graanoogst of the NVB, and great granddaughter of Johanna Schouten-Elsenhout and the artist Erwin de Vries.

The Central Bank of Surinam financed the project. According to Ezechiel the mother bank hereby promotes “the good work of De Vries and the word artistry of Schouten as a great female word artist”. The poet would, had she still been alive, have celebrated her 100th birthday on July 11 2010.

The creator and his sculpture. Johanna Schouten-Elsenhout, Erwin de Vries, bronze object, 2010

PHOTO Courtesy Central Bank of Suriname/Frank Doelwijt, 2011

The sculpture of Marcel Pinas with the tiled pedestal. The artist is not pleased

PHOTO Courtesy Starnieuws/Raoul Lith, 2010

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The creator and his sculpture. Johanna Schouten-Elsenhout, Erwin de Vries, bronze object, 2010

PHOTO Courtesy Central Bank of Suriname/Frank Doelwijt, 2011
Several artists who are participating in the project *Tembe Art Studio* in Moengo as artist in residence, gave presentations at the Nola Hatterman Art Academy (NHA) in Paramaribo. By now Jakop Ferrt and Charl Lauvrieuwgla have already had their turn. The presentations of Wouter Klein Velderma and Sheena Rose are yet to come. The presentations offer the opportunity to get some more insight into the process of creation of the artworks by these artists. Elsewhere in SAX you can read more about this project. Also follow the updates on the blog!

The well known art critic / curator Rob Perrée was once again in Suriname during the month of March. A productive visit! On Thursday March 17 for the occasion of 30th anniversary of the AHKCO he gave a lecture in Theater Unique for students and other interested people. The title: ‘Contemporary (Modern) Art, How Do You Approach That?’ And on March 19th Rob Perrée also gave a lecture at the IOL facilities about ‘Contemporary African Art.’ Furthermore, he wrote an article for Par bored about the question whether Surinamese should really get a national museum and if so, what that would have to look like. … Also, published in de Ware Tijd a review by Perrée, and in Sranan Art Xposed number 4 as well!

The earnings of this diary will go to the drinking water projects represented in the Dutch Caribbean Art Diary. This edition was already the tenth in a row, published within the framework of the Pikin Sranan-Parbode. facilities about ‘Contemporary Craft’.

Amsoistraat 49, Nieuw Charlesburg, Paramaribo, +597 (0)851 0525 / 547090, e-mail, website

Fort Nieuw Amsterdam
Wilhelminastraat, Nieuw-Amsterdam, Commewijne, +597 (0)32 2225, website | Kind aan de ketting, December 13 2010-June 30 2011, Tuesday - Friday 09:00-17:00 and Saturday, Sunday and holidays 10:00-18:00

Gallery Singh
Koningstraat 63, Paramaribo, Tel: +597 492608, e-mail

Guido Oso, koto- en angipa-museum
Paltan Tewariweg 2, Livorno, Paramaribo, 10:00-17:00 | Christine van Russel-Henar, the manager of the museum, says: “Visitors should get the feeling that they are stepping into a house from the past.”

De Hal

House of Art
Kleine Dwarststraat 1, Paramaribo, +597 426585 | April 18-21 2011, “Stille Ontmoeting” (“Silent Encounter”) do more with simple things, du exhibition by painter Edika (Miguel Keerveld) and photographer Snesi Su (Johnathan Chen). Edika and Stesi Su’s quest for possibilities to do more with circumstances as they present themselves brings them back to the basics: the space from which they create and the viewer views: the light

KKF-building
Kemkampweg, Paramaribo | June 21-28 2011, Solo-exhibition Marcel Pinas Kibi Wi Koni The Event in KKF-building

Mini museum SMS pier
Waterkant 5, Paramaribo, +597 (0)820 9210 and (0)854 0558

Numismatic Museum
(central Bank of Suriname), Mr. F.H.R. Lim A Postroom 7, Paramaribo, +597 520 016, website

Readytex / Readytex Art Gallery
Maagdenstraat 44-48, Paramaribo, +597 421750 / 474380, e-mail, website. For exhibition schedule look above at De Hal schedule

Royal House of Art
Royal Torarica, Kleine Waterstraat 10, Paramaribo, +597 473821 / (0)855 3525 | April 18-May 7 2011, Solo exhibition Anand Binda. During the second half of this year Anand Binda will participate -invited by Arte Euroamericano- in an exhibition in Buenos Aires, Argentina

Surinaams museum
Fort Zeelandia, Paramaribo, +597 425871, e-mail, website

Villa Zapakara
on the grounds of Ons Erf, Prins Hendrikkstraat 17-b, Paramaribo, +597 422212, e-mail, website

Apr 26 - 30 exhibition of art installations made by schoolchildren within the framework of the project Marcel Pinas Kibi Wi Koni The Event
In the beginning her paintings consisted of backgrounds in bright colors, onto which contrasting tones were applied. Since 2003 Iris Kensmil [1970] starts to work in a more figurative way. Such as drawings, in which portraits accompanied by text are portrayed. But also paintings or installations consisting of portraits on colored backgrounds, again accompanied by texts. Gradually her drawings change in character. Black planes, dark shading and bodies in dance positions. Her painted works become dark and heavy, because of dark paint thickly applied in short strokes. In her installations she currently works a lot more with portraits. She leaves these as sober as possible to better put across the directness and the meaning. She does the portraits first in ink and subsequently adds color accents in pastels.

The texts on Kensmil’s work command attention. She finds working with texts extremely interesting because letters are very graphic. Texts are very direct and can put viewers on a different path. As an artist she can thus influence the viewing habits.

In almost all the work of Kensmil the emancipation struggle of the black people is a central theme. The first eight pages of Iris Kensmil Negroes [are oké] consist of a collection of historical material: prints, drawings and photos of black people who were of great influence to World history. Who also influence Kensmil’s work. Aside from the texts that are part of her work, these figures, either in their realistic form or not, also play an important role in her work. She describes it as follows: “Those images fascinate me. Being black is an emotionally charged thing for me and that black emancipation is even more emotionally charged. I was not personally involved in the emancipation, but if I think of myself as a black person, I arrive at that emancipation.” * Her first portraits were geared primarily towards the Afro-American history. But she also did portraits of the Jamaican national hero and leader of the maroons, Granny Nanny (app. 1700-1740) and of Nelson Mandela (1918), freedom fighter and former president of South-Africa. When Kensmil participated in the Wakaman-project, in 2006, she concentrated more on the granmans (chiefs of the maroon communities) from Suriname and their emancipation in relation to Europe. Kensmil primarily wants to show the positive side of black emancipation and sets no limits with regards to her choice of black heroes.

2010 was an interesting year for Kensmil. The greatest part of the year was spent in New York, where she was in residence at International Studio & Curatorial Program (ISCP). It was an inspiring but difficult period. Especially a period of networking, during which there were weekly visits from at least two curators who came to meet her and look at her work. Twice a year the ISCP organizes Group shows with all the residents, in which she participated as well. Aside from this, she also had an exhibition with fellow artist Charl Landvreugd titled No salan na bakra sturn (Don’t sit in the white man’s chair). The exhibition was homage to Elfríeide Baarn-Dijkssteel (1947-2010), chairwoman of the cultural association Na Afrikan Kultuurfu Sranan (NAKS) in Suriname.

In the meantime Kensmil had submitted her entry for the exhibition Monumentalism in The Temporary Stedelijk of the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam. Her work was chosen for their first exhibition. Because of this she had to return to the Netherlands in July 2010. The Temporary Stedelijk exhibited ‘Sidonhopo’ 2009/10. A mural in which, on a pastel colored panji, a piece of a letter was incorporated, that Granman Adj unkose, leader of the Saramaccan maroons, wrote to the secretary of the League of Nations in Geneva. On the painting she also applied portraits of several granmans. The mural portrays yet another emancipation battle of the black population, this time in Suriname.

Recently, as a result of the exhibition Monumentalisme – Geschiedenis en nationale identiteit in de hedendaagse kunst (History and national identity in contemporary art), the Stedelijk Museum decided to acquire three works of art from Kensmil. They purchased two drawings and an installation ‘Who Speaks (December 1902)’, 2008/2010. The installation was made by Kensmil in 2008. It was then exhibited in Museum Jan Gunen in Oss. The piece consists of 15 portraits of the Surinamese men who were murdered in December 1902. Kensmil adapted the installation for the Stedelijk Museum by adding lines from a poem by Edgar Cairo, Ti fi sa jie. The 15 portraits now hang in between these lines of Cairo’s poem. The two drawings, ‘Mellow Dance’, 2007 and ‘Cool Down the Space’, 2008, which were also purchased by the Stedelijk, portray figures making typical Ragga-dance movements.

“Texts are very direct and can put viewers on a different path”

Sara Blokland a.o. | Identity Bluffs | February 12-March 21 2011 | SMBA

In her installation Home Sara Blokland ‘dissents’ houses in Amsterdam by using photos and videos. The material was made by Sara Blokland, but also by others. For example, she uses photos she found in the archives of Amsterdam. Sara Blokland’s exhibition is over when you read this, but remember her name, you’ll be hearing more from this artist! In SAX 3 you’ll find an interesting interview with her. You can visit this page to download previous SAX editions.

Kurt Nahar | February 15-March 31 2011 | Kultuurkaffee Gallery

Kurt Nahar has resided in Brussels during six weeks. His residency was set up like an open atelier, where visitors could drop by and have a chat with the artist. During the residency he made work which resulted in an exhibition: Massenief, Maybe. The Belgian daily nieuws served as a source of inspiration for this work. The residency ended with a ‘vernissage’ on March 31. Read the opening article in SAX 4 for more information.

Dan Ernst | Fara wé | March 5 - April 3 2011 | Galerie 23

For a period of one month Surinamese artist Dan Ernst will put a cross section of his work on display. Ernst is best known for his batik and his ceramics. The exhibition will also include graphic art and drawings from his hand. On the photo account of Surinam Art you will find many photographs.

Stichting (Foundation) Thami Mnyele - 20 years | March 12 - April 29 2011 | CBK Zuidoost

For the occasion of the twentieth anniversary of the Stichting Thami Mnyele, the CBK Zuidoost organizes, in collaboration with the Foundation, an overview exhibition. Stichting Thami Mnyele is mostly occupied with the exchange of art and culture between Africa and the Netherlands. African artists are invited for an exchange project of three months. From the 68 artists whom resided at the studio in the past twenty years, work of 26 artists will be shown. On April 14th 2011 there will be a conversation in the Kunstcafe between those involved with the exhibition and the artists.

In the Dutch newspaper Het Parool from March 4, 2011 a short report about a rare glass from Suriname, from the 18th century. The antique glass was recently in acquired and incorporated in the collection of the Rijskmuseum in Amsterdam. On the glass an image of the Surinamese plantation Siparipabo has been engraved, along with the text “the prosperity of Siparipabo”. The sugar plantation Siparipabo, which was established on the banks of the Commewijne River, was first mentionned on an old map from 1686. When the Rijskmuseum will be reopened in 2013, the glass will on display in the museum department that deals with the 18th century. In this department the story of Suriname’s plantation economy will be told.

The artist Kit-Ling Tjon Pian Gi and one of her works
PHOTO Kit-Ling Tjon Pian Gi, 2011

Following successful exhibitions from Rinaldo Klaas, Reinier Asmaordje and George Struijksblok in 2010, the ‘1 Encadrier Galerie in Paramaribo has now invited two Surinamese female artists, Kit-Ling Tjon Pian Gi and Sri Irodikromo, to show their work in the Gallery. In close collaboration with Readityer Art Gallery in Paramaribo they thus put together the exhibition Le Sranan Heritage, which shows from March 11 - 31 in ‘1 Encadrier Galerie in Cayenne. Kit-Ling Tjon Pian Gi shows a diverse collection including the paintings from her new Hybrid heritage collection which showcase the Surinamese cultural variety. Sri Irodikromo participates with a collection in which she once again pays attention, in her own unique style, to the Surinamese kotomisi and the maroon woman in traditional pangi together with cultural symbolism.

The artist Sri Irodikromo with a visitor by one of her works
PHOTO Kit-Ling Tjon Pian Gi, 2011

In Rotterdam the fatu bangi was also present as part of the exhibition Paramaribo Perspectives
PHOTO Marlies Vissers, 2010

In Rotterdam the fatu bangi was put together a Trinidadian fatu bangi. The Trinidadian fatu bangi was put together by the artist and collector George Struijksblok who has lived in Paramaribo for many years. George Struijksblok has been working for several years on the fatu bangi’s which can be found in plenty of Surinamese neighborhoods. Tjon A Meeuw started his first version of this bunch in the beginning of 2010, within the framework of Paramaribo SPAN. This artist prefers working with discarded wood and other scrap materials and proves that second hand by no means equals second rate. On the contrary. And the word is spreading ...

Bringing people together, just by hanging out and having a good time together, chillin’ or “Doctor” say it in the Caribbean. That is the purpose of the fatu bangi’s that Roberto Tjon A Meeuw makes. Inspired by the many fatu bangi’s which can be found in plenty of Surinamese neighborhoods, Tjon A Meeuw started his first version of this bunch in the beginning of 2010, within the framework of Paramaribo SPAN. This artist prefers working with discarded wood and other scrap materials and proves that second hand by no means equals second rate. On the contrary. And the word is spreading ...

The fatu bangi arrives in Amsterdam Cuudoo at Centrum Beeldende Kunst
Zuidoost
PHOTO Courtesy Centrum Beeldende Kunst Zuidoost, 2010

Chillin’ … in the Netherlands …
In Rotterdam the fatu bangi was also present as part of the exhibition Paramaribo Perspectives
PHOTO Marlies Vissers, 2010

Chillin!!! In Zuidoost everything is cocoool!
PHOTO Courtesy Centrum Beeldende Kunst Zuidoost, 2010

Chillin’ … in Trinidad …
In Alice, Yard Richard Mark Waters put together a Trinidadian fatu bangi.
PHOTO courtesy Mark Waters, 2010

Lime time … in Trinidad …
Caribbean Art for beginners?

Each new book that is published about ‘Caribbean Art’ is generally speaking a valuable addition to my bookcase. My ‘Caribbean Art’ by Veezie Poupeye (1998), however useful and interesting it still proves to be, is in need of expansion and an update. I was thus quite happy with the catalogue of the same name at Infinite Islands by Tunmelo Mosaic (Brooklyn Museum, 2007); it contained at least some effort to bring me up to date visually about important artists from this region. And it was there that, to my knowledge, Suriname was really included for the first time. You will understand my curiosity for Art in the Caribbean. An introduction, a book by Anne Walmsley and Stanley Greaves that has recently appeared. After reading it, I am however left with mixed feelings.

The subtitle, ‘An introduction’, should have put me to thinking. It is in fact rather sympathetic when writers do not make pretence of wanting to be complete and exhaustive. It does after all involve a vast and extensive subject ‘situated’ in a region that is not known for thoroughly documenting its own cultural heritage. A lack of means and expertise undoubtedly plays a role here.

In the case of these authors however, ‘an introduction’ seems rather like a built in excuse made in advance for inconsistency and flawed information, while those deficiencies were unnecessary. They mention in their preface that the book is in the first place intended to be a “gallery of contemporary art of the Caribbean”. Meaning, a collection of artworks including explanatory notes. With regards to the latter, it does as it says. The explanations of the different works of art are adequate and useful. There is however something to be said about the selection. In the first place, there are only 60 works of art. Rather limited for a period of more than 60 years. Furthermore, the artworks only begin to become really ‘contemporary’ from around 2000. As though there was no art made previously that incorporated themes and modes of expression which were in keeping with international trends and developments.

Can this shortcoming be ascribed to an outdated point of view with regards to what is considered ‘Caribbean Art’? To some degree, yes. The authors have chosen artists who live and work in the Caribbean. Caribbean artists who have settled elsewhere were not included. That’s something that is difficult to keep up for non-European and non-American artists in general. Those in fact define themselves – by nature or compelled by limiting circumstances in their homeland – by a great wanderlust. Is Meschac Gaba, just to mention a random example, no longer an African artist because he has been living in Rotterdam for some time now? Is Remy Jungerman not Surinamese because he works in Amsterdam? Is Marlene Dumas South-African or Dutch?

But aside from this point of view, does not the conservative choice of the authors also have something to do with their own, somewhat conservative view on art? I’m afraid so. The new media (photo, video) and installation art for example are clearly under-represented.

In and of itself it is praiseworthy to provide, next to the gallery of works, a historical background of the various islands within the Caribbean. That knowledge is lacking amongst many interested parties, that knowledge makes looking at and understanding Caribbean art a great deal easier. The book is after all especially intended for students and “anyone with a serious interest in the visual arts”, not for experts.

In the preface Walmsley and Greaves cite expert Nicholas Laughlin. He says that increasingly artists and critics “are looking at and discussing new work online, sharing images via email, circulating news of upcoming projects and opportunities. This has become the primary medium for regional creative exchange for most people of my generation.”

Actually it is quite courageous of the authors to include this point of view. They most probably did not suspect that after reading this book, the words of Laughlin would become a very sensible recommendation.

Information however, is only information if it is correct.

If I limit myself to the section about Suriname, then according to the authors, there was hardly anything going on roughly between 1990 and 2005. This does no justice to quite a few people and organizations. In the preface the authors state that it is sometimes difficult to gather information. That is undoubtedly the case. About this part of the Surinamese art history however, they could have received help from numerous persons in the field who can be contacted easily and also from publications such as Visual Art in Suriname (2000), Wakaman (2009) and Pinambo’s SRLY (2010).

It is also noteworthy, that the preface suggests that the book is up to date until 2010, while the extensive bibliography – incidentally quite valuable – in the case of Suriname for example, ends in 2002.

You can have a difference of opinion with authors who write about a certain subject. That is perfectly all right. That stimulates the discussion and that, especially when it concerns ‘Caribbean Art’, can almost be seen as an advantage. If however, you ‘catch’ them at being insufficiently informed, you start doubting their entire work. What else is not correct that I as “anyone with serious interest in the visual arts” may have failed to notice? Should students be allowed to blindly accept what is in this book, or should they approach it with some degree of suspicion?

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