

## **Press release**

**12 September 2003**

### **Didier Vermeiren *Collection de Solides***

**13 September - 9 November 2003**

**Following the J.C. van Lanschot award, the Van Abbemuseum is organising an exhibition of work by its recipient, the Belgian artist Didier Vermeiren (b. 1951). 'Collection de Solides' is his first solo museum exhibition since 1998. The exhibition and the accompanying catalogue are based around his most recent sculptures and photographic works, made between 1997 and 2003.**

Since the mid-seventies Vermeiren has worked with great determination on what has gradually become what can be described as a monumental oeuvre. Until recently his internationally acclaimed work comprised two distinct categories – the so-called plinths and chariots. In the Van Abbemuseum exhibition several of these earlier works provide a context for a now evolved third category, the series of 'solides plastiques'. The name refers to the transformation of clay, from soft and pliable during handling to hard and solid after the firing process. Vermeiren's sculptures always refer to other sculptures. Clay, an essential yet ultimate invisible element of the production process, is now sculpture. Within the field and history of sculpture, he continues to delve meticulously into his deliberately well-defined territory. The sculptures illuminate the various relationships between body and mass, sculpture and plinth, form and mould, immobility and movement, the position of the sculpture in space and the relationship with the spectator.

The Belgian artist works continuously on changing and shifting these movements. A similar approach can be seen in his photographic work since 1977. A photograph halts our gaze, gives preference to a certain position from which the sculpture can be observed. At first glance Vermeiren's new series of photographs for the Van Abbemuseum appear to abandon this unique viewpoint. Since the early 1990s Vermeiren has attempted to photograph a piece of sculpture from an infinite number of angles. By using a lengthy exposure the mass of the sculpture begins to move and appears to lose its gravity.

Didier Vermeiren's sculptures and photographs evoke resistance. The exhibition visitor awaits a confrontation, a confrontation with the material, the presence and the memory of the art of sculpture.

#### **Biographical details**

Didier Vermeiren represented Belgium at the Venice Biennale in 1995 and during that same year had solo exhibitions at Kunsthalle Zürich and Galerie Nationale du Jeu de Paume in Paris. This was followed in 1998 by a presentation in La Criée, the centre for contemporary art in Rennes. Galleria Massimo Minini in Brescia showed the first 'solides plastiques' works in 2002.

In 2000 Vermeiren received the J.C. van Lanschot award for sculpture. Earlier recipients of the award – named after the former chairman of Van Lanschot, J.C. van Lanschot, who died in 1991 – include the artists Peter Struycken, Carel Visser, Ger van Elk and Panamarenko.

**Catalogue**

Didier Vermeiren – Collection de Solides

Essay: Jean-Pierre Criqui and Dominic van den Boogerd.

Design: Kühle und Mozer, Cologne

Hardcover, illustrated (colour and b/w) 40 colour images, 15 b/w images, 50 duotone images, 128 pages, format: 24 x 30 cm

Text in Dutch and English, ISBN: 90-5662-337-0

**Film**

During weekdays the film 'Obstade au mouvement. Didier Vermeiren sculptures et photographies', 1994-1997 (15 min.) by Elsa Cayo is being shown in the library. On Saturdays and Sundays this film can be seen in the auditorium.

**Main sponsor**

F. van Lanschot Bankiers NV – the oldest independent bank in the Netherlands with a history dating back to 1737 – is the main sponsor of the exhibition and catalogue. The bank is aimed at three target groups: private individuals of means, medium sized family companies and institutional investors. Van Lanschot represents excellent service in which integral advice, a personal approach and tailor-made assistance to clients' needs play a central role.

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**More information and visual material**

Press information and visual material can be downloaded via Van Abbemuseum's press website at [www.vanabbemuseum.nl/press](http://www.vanabbemuseum.nl/press)

For interviews with Didier Vermeiren, or for more information, please contact:  
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## Fact Sheet

### Collection de Solides - Didier Vermeiren

#### Collection de Solides

The first solo museum exhibition of Didier Vermeiren (born Brussels, 1951) featuring recent sculptures and photographic works (produced between 1997 and 2003).

#### Catalogue

##### Didier Vermeiren - *Collection de Solides* - € 35

With essays by Jean-Pierre Criqui and Dominic van den Boogerd.

Design: Kühle und Mozer, Cologne

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#### Exhibited works

##### **Cariatide à la pierre**

1997

gips

plaster

173.5 x 162 x 172 cm

##### **Cariatide à la pierre**

1997

gips

plaster

126.5 x 141.5 x 138 cm

##### **Profils 1 - 28, Cariatide à la pierre**

1998

zilverdruk

silver print

29.4 x 38.2 cm

**Solide plastique # 1**

1998

gedroogde klei, beschilderd hout

dried clay, painted wood

141 x 118.8 x 118.8 cm

Collection Fonds Régional d'art Contemporain, Brittany

**Groupe**

1999

gips

plaster

119 x 339 x 354 cm

**Modèle # 1**

1999

hout, textiel

wood, textile

108.5 x 119 x 119 cm

**Sans titre**

1999

ijzer, glasvezel

iron, fibreglass

169 x 81 x 88 cm

**Place**

2000

gepatineerd brons, beschilderd hout

patinated bronze, painted wood

331 x 84 x 90.5 cm

**Solide plastique # 13**

2001

engobe op terracotta, hout, polyethyleen film

slip on terracotta, wood, polyethylene film

102 x 82.5 x 75 cm

**Solide plastique # 14**

2001

engobe op terracotta, hout, polyethyleen film

slip on terracotta, wood, polyethylene film

106 x 79.2 x 70.7 cm

**Solide plastique # 15**

2001

geglazuurd terracotta, hout, polyethyleen film

glazed terracotta, wood, polyethylene film

105.5 x 85.5 x 73.6 cm

**Solide plastique # 16**

2001

engobe op terracotta, hout, polyethyleen film

slip on terracotta, wood, polyethylene film

122.5 x 87.5 x 76.5 cm

Courtesy Galerie Xavier Hufkens, Brussels

**Solide plastique # 17**

2001

geglazuurd terracotta, hout, polyethyleen film  
glazed terracotta, wood, polyethylene film

122.5 x 90 x 82 cm

Privé collectie, België/ Private collection, Belgium

**Solide plastique # 18**

2001

engobe op terracotta, hout, polyethyleen film  
slip on terracotta, wood, polyethylene film

133.5 x 86 x 75.6 cm

**Solide plastique # 19**

2001

terracotta, hout, polyethyleen film  
terracotta, wood, polyethylene film

108.5 x 79.5 x 72 cm

**Solide plastique # 20**

2001

engobe op terracotta, hout, polyethyleen film  
slip on terracotta, wood, polyethylene film

109.5 x 84.5 x 68.7 cm

Courtesy Galleria Massimo Minini, Brescia

**Solide plastique # 21**

2001

engobe op terracotta, hout, polyethyleen film  
slip on terracotta, wood, polyethylene film

102.5 x 90.5 x 75.5 cm

**Solide plastique # 22**

2001

engobe op terracotta, hout, polyethyleen film  
slip on terracotta, wood, polyethylene film

119 x 91 x 74 cm

**Solide plastique # 23**

2001

engobe op terracotta, hout, polyethyleen film  
slip on terracotta, wood, polyethylene film

143.5 x 99.2 x 85.5 cm

Courtesy Galleria Massimo Minini, Brescia

**Forme # 1**

2002

hout, polyethyleen film  
wood, polyethylene film

hoogte variabel/ height variable x 125 x 125 cm

**Forme # 2**

2002

hout, polyethyleen film  
wood, polyethylene film

hoogte variabel/ height variable x 125 x 125 cm

During weekdays the film '**Obstacle au mouvement. Didier Vermeiren sculptures et photographies**', 1994-1997 (15 min.) by Elsa Cayo is being shown in the library. On Saturdays and Sundays this film can be seen in the auditorium.

## Press release

12 September 2003

**JOURNAL is the catch-all name for a new series of displays and exhibitions plus newspaper which highlights a young generation of Dutch and international artists and which is being launched in September at the Van Abbemuseum.**

How does reality – the actuality of now – reveal and lodge itself on our consciousness?

JOURNAL explores artistic, economic, political and social relations, between fact and fiction, in word and image.

The newspaper, published by the Van Abbemuseum, will appear with each exhibition or display.

Artists, curators and reviewers will supply news about various aspects of the shows, including the work and reference frameworks of the invited artists. Their reports will be about a world and museum on the move.

JOURNAL does not let itself be coupled to one physical space but reveals hybrid communal locales.

**JOURNAL # 1 - Jennifer Tee (NL, 1973) in collaboration with Roé Cerpac (NL, 1967), Harmen Liemburg (NL, 1966), Erwan Mahéo (F, 1967).**

13 September – 9 November 2003

Jennifer Tee is showing a new series of mainly collaboratively produced works at the Van Abbemuseum. For this solo exhibition she worked for six months in close association with artists Roé Cerpac and Erwan Mahéo and graphic designer Harmen Liemburg. For Tee it is her first large-scale collaboration with fellow artists. They were invited to enter her visual world and, together with her, produce a many-voiced narrative based on their own individual practises and thinking. The exhibition takes the visitor on an explorative investigation, with various 'visible moments', along, for instance, ceramic liana and tablets (produced this summer at the European Ceramic Work Centre, Den Bosch), silk-screened fabrics, models, a weeping camel and display tables with numerous objects.

In the exhibition the concept of copy and original, the charting and reproducing of cultural artefacts, as well as relationships and narratives play a major role. The four artists have constructed a catalogue of forms and images, from the undulating landscape designs of Roberto Burle Marx and the painted and assembled wooden bars by André Cadere to a model of the fortress in Karakorum (Mongolia), and the sketches of the never executed *Raum der Gegenwart* by László Moholy-Nagy to copies of the psycho-geographical maps of G.E. Debord.

"Each opening or, wherever possible, each exhibition should be a kind of 'event' or 'festival', a unique happening," Tee says. "A festival is an intense moment that gives meaning and form to life. It is my intention to create a link between visitors, the space and the objects, whereby a temporary moment of liberation is experienced (of time, place or imagination) and in which a temporary oneness is sought between life and consciousness." In her area of research Tee works like a quasi-anthropologist or historian and makes connections between fact and fiction where before they apparently never existed. Working in this manner, in recent years she has developed large-scale installations or so-called Total Tee Transformers. The installations are often initiated by a performance and have an underlying narrative story – about a mummie expedition, secrets about her family, a trip to Brazil for a fictitious meeting with the artists Hélio Oiticica and Öyvind Fahlström or the mysticism of the Mongolian throat singers who sometimes live in the Netherlands.

*Jennifer Tee has had solo exhibitions, among others, at the Stedelijk Museum Bureau, Amsterdam (1999), Het Domein, Sittard (2001) and Galerie Fons Welters, Amsterdam (2003).*

*With thanks to Jacqueline de Jong for her cooperation as well as the loan and perusal of archive material of The Situationist Times.*

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## Press release

12 September 2003

### JOURNAL # 2 - Erik Wesselo (NL, 1964)

13 September – 9 November 2003

The Van Abbemuseum is showing the installation *Forest Time* (2002) built around a series of nature photographs taken by Erik Wesselo over the past few years. These are chiefly blown-up Polaroids of landscapes, locations for his 16mm films, including *Backward* (1997) and *Isostar* (1998). The pictures are grainy and sometimes unsharp, inert and almost peaceful, yet at the same time they conceal another story, an underlying tension. The works sharply define the space although the individual photographs are undoubtedly not defined (it is difficult, for instance, to discover where the photographs have been taken). An extraordinary atmosphere hangs in the air – an emotional charge.

Wesselo himself does not appear in the photographs, unlike the 16mm films where he uses performances to explore structurally his relationship with the environment and sometimes defines these with radical physical actions. *Forest Time* also consists of a chair, a record player and headphones. Spectators can sit down and listen to *Forest Time* by the American singer and lyricist Will Oldham (USA, 1965). He composed the catchy folksong at Wesselo's request and together with the landscape an exceptional dialogue between music and image has been created.

*Erik Wesselo is represented by the Annet Gelink Gallery, Amsterdam. His work has been shown, among others, in New York, where he lived for several years, Paris (Galerie Yvon Lambert) and Rotterdam (Witte de With).*

November 2003: JOURNAL # 3 - Matthijs de Bruijne (NL), JOURNAL # 4 - Joe Scanlan (USA).

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## **Fact Sheet Journal #1 – Nameless Swirls, an Unfolding in Presence**

Jennifer Tee, Roé Cerpac, Harmen Liemburg, Erwan Mahéo

The exhibition *Nameless Swirls, an Unfolding in Presence* is the result of an intensive collaboration between four artists: Jennifer Tee (NL, 1973), Roé Cerpac (NL, 1967), Harmen Liemburg (NL 1966) and Erwan Mahéo (F, 1968). During its preparation, not only were many ideas exchanged on the nature of the project and its objective but new works were also collectively produced. Works which no longer bear the signature of one particular artist. Thus the process of collaboration resulted in the artists actually relinquishing their individual authorship.

### **A selection of works exhibited:**

Love's Luscious Slumber (Un) (Re) veiled, 2003  
Secret Suburban Garden Love Bench, 2003  
Silver Tree, Mother of Pearl, 2003  
Deliciously Coloured Festival Sticks, 2003  
Empty Minds, 2003  
Small Empty Minds, 2003  
Small Kharkhorum, 2003  
The Crying Camel, 2003  
Jennifer's Lovely Lianas, 2003  
Petit espace du present (hommage à Moholy-Nagy), 2003  
Table + Liane (Matrix), 2002  
Untitled (Tables), 2003  
Mind Screens, 1197 – 2003  
Map of Nameless Swirls, 2003  
Whistles, 1992  
Egg Construction, 1992  
Two Plastic Cups in a Glass Bell, 1992

### **Catalogue**

Journal # 1 - € 2

An interview with the artists with additional texts by Jacqueline de Jong and Arne Hendriks

Design: Arlette Brouwers

8 pages

Text in Dutch and English.

## **Fact Sheet Journal #2 – Forest Time**

Erik Wesselo

*Forest Time* (2002) is the first installation by Erik Wesselo, comprising 10 photographs, a chair, a record player, headphones and a similar-named music track.

### **Catalogue**

Journal # 2 - € 2

An interview with the artist and a text on Will Oldham by Tycho Fokkema

Design: Arlette Brouwers

8 pages

Text in Dutch and English.

## **Biography's**

### **Roé Cerpac (NL/ IS, 1967)**

Roé Cerpac has worked in close collaboration with several people – sometimes individuals and sometimes groups or institutions. Many of these people are artists and have met in connection with their work, a particular project, a display or exhibition, while others have a background in design, science, education or whatever. From the art world Cerpac has worked, among others, with Jeroen Kodjman, Liza May Post, Theo Schepens, Klaar van der Lippe, Louwrien Wijers, Ram Katzir, Paul Goede, Pia Wergius, Sander Haccou and Jennifer Tee.

Cerpac teaches students from various schools of art, including the Rietveld Academy and Rijksakademie, Amsterdam, the Academy of Art and Design, Den Bosch, and the College of the Arts, Amhem. In April 1998 he was also involved in the concept and execution of the workshop "Mythological Europe Revisited" - a gathering of 68 first and second degree art students from diverse schools of art in 17 European countries held in Tuscany, Italy.

### **Harmen Liemburg (NL, 1966)**

From Autumn 1998 until summer 2002, graphic designer Harmen Liemburg, along with fellow designer Richard Niessen, formed the Golden Master team, working for various commercial and non-commercial clients. Self-initiated, mould-breaking projects like the illustrated magazine 'Sec' and the interdisciplinary 'JACK' events increasingly triggered experimental forms of presentation and collaboration with other designers and artists.

In his graphic work Liemburg strives to link a modern visual language with more traditional production methods. By being responsible for as much as possible of the printing process himself, he aims to gain a greater insight into the technique and to integrate the various qualities into the design process. Since July 2002 he has worked for himself again.

### **Erwan Mahéo (F, 1968)**

The French artist Erwan Mahéo lives and works in Brussels. In 2002 he produced new work 'La perspective de Grenland' for Belgium's Watou Poetry Summer and had a solo exhibition 'Ismène, le générique de l'émergence' at the "Mettre en scène" festival in Rennes. This exhibition covered two parts of his so-called Ismène-project and he is now working on part three: 'La Naissance d'Europe'. In the past Erwan Mahéo has worked, among others, with the Belgian artists Michel François, Ann Veronica Janssens and Isabelle Arthuis. He participated in the group exhibition 'Laboratorium' from Hans Ulrich Obrist and Barbara Vanderlinden in 1999 in Antwerp and in that same summer was invited for 'En attendant l'année dernière' at the 49th Venice Biennale.

## **Jennifer Tee (NL, 1973)**

From 1995 – 1998 Jennifer Tee attended St Joost Academy of Art, Breda, and the Rietveld Academy, Amsterdam. She then continued her training at the Sandberg Institute (1998 – 1999) and the State Academy of Fine Arts, both also in Amsterdam (2000 – 2001). In 2002 she made two working visits to China (Art Foundation Xiamen) and Los Angeles.

This spring she won the Prix Nouvelles Images in The Hague and had a solo exhibition 'Ultra Violet. Ripeness of Event' at Galerie Fons Welters. She has had earlier solo exhibitions at the Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam ('Down the Chimney', 1999) and at Het Domein Museum in Sittard ('In Air I Presume. The Non-Logical Hunt for Toverknaal', 2001).

## Press release

12 September 2003

### *In the Vitrines* BARTLEBY & CO.

13 September – 9 November 2003  
Location: Museum Library

A first review of editions and artist's books will be displayed *In the Vitrines* over the next few months.

At Bartleby & Co., a newly launched publisher, the artist's book is recognised as a fully-fledged artistic genre. The company's publications are represented in several public collections, including the Busch-Reisinger Museum, Cambridge (Mass.), Tate Gallery and the Victoria & Albert Museum, London, the Museum für Angewandte Kunst, Vienna and the Graphische Sammlung der ETH, Zurich.

Publisher and book artist Thorsten Baensch took the name Bartleby & Co from a character by author Herman Melville who worked as a scrivener or copier. Copying would seem to be synonymous for mindless repetition, but the opposite is true when you reflect on the Latin word *copia* – meaning, among others, a 'superabundance' and 'wealth of expression'.

*Copia* serves as a metaphor for the versatility and wealth of forms of expression manifest in this book series – evident not only in the choice of 'co-authors' with whom Thorsten Baensch works, or their outstanding quality, but also in the experimental nature of the projects and the humour emanating from them. Like the text by Sophie Albrecht (1757-1840), which after two hundred years is brought alive again in the publication *Bunte Kinder schwarzer Nacht*, or the revised *Acht Baumgedichten, Sieben Rosengedichten* and *Zehn Flussgedichte* by Friedrich Hölderlin (1770-1843). One of the works from 2003 – a collaboration with the American artist Joe Scanlan – features Melville's Bartleby himself. Is it a tribute or a satire on Bartleby & Co?

Bartleby & Co.'s books are published with great care. Their authors go to great lengths to have the right layout so that text and image mutually enhance each other. The books are published in small limited editions, often hand-bound and sometimes come with objects or an original artwork. While the text may be identical in each book, the differences lie in a co-author's contributions, thus creating a certain uniqueness.

Open: Tuesday-Friday 11am – 1pm and 2 – 5pm  
Free admission.

For more information, please call Diana Franssen +31-(0)40-2381051 or  
[d.franssen@vanabbemuseum.nl](mailto:d.franssen@vanabbemuseum.nl)

## Press release

12 September 2003

**Jeroen de Rijke & Willem de Rooij**

**Untitled, 2001**

35mm film, without sound, 10 minutes

13 September – 9 November 2003

Studio

One of the recent Van Abbemuseum acquisitions is the film *Untitled, 2001* from the Amsterdam-based artists Jeroen de Rijke (b.1970) and Willem de Rooij (b.1969). The film provides a 10-minute view of a graveyard just outside the Indonesian city of Jakarta from a static camera angle. The camera is in a slightly elevated position overlooking the graves, which are overgrown with all kinds of grasses, flowering shrubs and trees. This element takes up about half the image, while in the background a row of skyscrapers are outlined against a bright blue sky. Due to the exceptionally large focal distance of the lens, foreground, middle distance and background are all rendered just as sharp and detailed.

*Untitled* is the third in a series, this far, of five 35mm films made since 1998. Like the previously made films, the static camera position gives the impression that we are looking at a classic composition of a painting. This is enhanced by the fact that the artists have deliberately and carefully 'staged' the space where the film is shown. Moreover, the film is only shown on request. By so doing, the artists intend that concentration will be completely focused on the dimension of time and on observation. With *Untitled*, which carries no sound, viewers are thrown back on themselves and on the state of their own bodies within the environment. In a peaceful yet, at the same time, emphatic manner aspects of the individual self, of the finity of earth and also general sociological reflections are opened up within a modern medium panel.

This screening of this work in the Netherlands is accompanied with a publication on working with 35mm film, which sows the seeds for a fresh interpretation of the work of Jeroen de Rijke and Willem de Rooij.

### Publication

**De Rijke & De Rooij -€ 25,-**

Concept: Jeroen de Rijke & Willem de Rooij, Eva Meyer-Hermann

104 pages, 20 b/w images, 4 colour images, format: 18 x 23 cm

Text in English and French, ISBN: 90-70149-87-7

Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven in co-operation with Villa Arson, Nice

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## Press release

12 September 2003

### Positions in Painting: 1970 – 1985

13 September 2003 – 1 February 2004

In the 1970s and 1980s several fascinating developments took place that were diametrically opposed to each other. These developments triggered heated debate between those for and against.

After a period in which the emphasis in painting lay on the painting as material object, comprising paint and canvas, several German painters again started to use themes and representations as a reason to paint. Among this group were Georg Baselitz, Markus Lüpertz, Anselm Kiefer, A.R. Penck and Jörg Immendorff. Artists who, in retrospect, won acclaim for their work, but at the time evoked much criticism because their style of working was not considered innovative enough. Their way of painting looked expressive and dynamic. A few of them also provoked disapproval due to their choice of subject matter, including German historical themes. Subject matter and brushstroke vied for the viewer's attention.

Other artists continued with developments from the previous period. They analysed the painting as a form or as a carrier of paint and colour, or took the physical act of painting as a subject of a painting. Examples in this respect are Robert Ryman, Remy Zaugg, Alan Charlton and Niele Toroni.

The Van Abbemuseum presented these differing viewpoints of the 1970s and 1980s in several high-profile exhibitions. The museum was one of the first in the Netherlands to organise exhibitions on these artists and also purchased their work for its own collection. In the opening exhibition *OVER WIJ / ABOUT WE* a limited selection from this was shown. Until 1 February 2004, a broader survey from this collection will be displayed.

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## Press release

12 September 2003

### Matt Mullican - Matt Mullican under Hypnosis, 1996

13 September – 9 November 2003

Videotheque

Ever since the video camera conquered the market in the late 1960s as an unwieldy and affordable means of recording for a wider public, it has also become a major and popular medium for artists. Thus, the Van Abbemuseum owns a considerable number of videotapes recording performances from the late 1960s to the present by such artists as Bruce Nauman and Lawrence Weiner to Mike Kelley or Matt Mullican. Selections from the collection can be regularly seen in the exhibition galleries or may be viewed in the library by prior arrangement.

From 13 September to 9 November a selection of performances by the American artist Matt Mullican can be seen in the video gallery of the Van Abbemuseum. These public performances were staged at different locations in Brussels in 1996 and recorded on video. They are exceptional in that they were carried out by the artist under hypnosis and have such titles as *Making a Drawing as a 4-Year-Old*, *Looking for a Picture and Entering a Picture* or simply *Smelling*. They are like reconstructions of the subject's identity, built from memories and images stored in the subconscious to be addressed here, outside censoring consciousness. The curiosity of what happens when critical consciousness is suspended is precisely what Mullican is all about.

Mullican's performances form part of an extensive and versatile oeuvre. From the mid-1970s he developed his own cosmology, drawn from pictograms and symbols representing various knowledge systems. He used these signs in drawings, posters, banners, light boxes, maps and sculptures. As well as abstract concepts and classifications there is also room for empirical knowledge and subjective experiences. He has been exploring this latter category in his performance work since 1978.

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