

ARTFORUM

Navid Nuur

BONNEFANTENMUSEUM
Avenue Céramique 250
September 27–January 26

Navid Nuur's "Lube Love" presents an artist who unperturbedly incorporates the basic foundations of Conceptual art in his work, while at the same time modifying these into a completely new language. Nuur's exhibition showcases a very personal etymology that allows room for humor, failure, beauty, sensuality, and even a hint of anthroposophism.

The first room viewers encounter is dedicated to Nuur's personal regard for the color black. On the wall is an large-scale text piece that details a candid fictitious interview between him and black, in which he professes his faith in its formal as well as magical properties. In the back of this space, a new work—'Untitled' *The Inker's Inn*, 2013—allows visitors to the show to get a tattoo of Nuur's design (free of charge), with black ink as the only available option. A similar work of devotion is on view in a following room—'Untitled' *Let us meet inside you*, 2005–13—wherein water from Nuur's studio becomes the object of adoration. Hundreds of bottles in blue crates are filled with water from a tap that Nuur brought from his studio and had connected to the museum's water supply. On the inside of a label affixed to each bottle is the title of the work, legible only through water and glass.

Such works reveal not only the artist's curiosity about his chosen materials and their properties but also how he incorporates that constellation of materials into a whole. Further on in the show, the walls are painted with different pastel-hued paints, each containing its own vitamin complex. Nuur seems to believe that it's his responsibility as an artist to provide an alternate way of reading and seeing. (For example, in his textual works, which act as poetic footnotes throughout the show, he treats his dyslexia as a tool, by playing with the manner in which words are spelled and combined to create what almost becomes a new language.) But, more than that, he seems to also consider himself responsible for engendering the collective conditions that best foster these alternatives. Or, to cite a work constituting nothing more than the badge visitors receive upon entering: "We Share Air."

— Huib Hays van der Werf



Navid Nuur, 'Untitled' *Let us meet inside you*, 2005–13, mixed media, dimensions variable.