

cyte magazine

Henrike, Heick: Interview

April 2018





Text / Henrike Heick  
Photos / Stephan Ziehen





# ZIGARETTEN UND ANDERE GESCHICHTEN

Ich hatte Antwerpen nie wirklich auf meiner Agenda. Wusste, dass es existiert, dass da irgendwas mit Mode und Diamanten läuft, Paul Peter Rubens da gelebt hat. Das war 's. Dann ging es plötzlich um Restaurants. Restaurants in denen alles stimmt, Ambiente, Wein, Styling - der Gerichte und des Service ... Und dann kam Sergio Hermann mit seinem Pure C in Cadzand, oben an der holländischen Küste - unweit von Ostende. Da wollte ich tatsächlich schon immer mal hin. In Ostende waren wir nicht. Aber in Cadzand. Und vor allem in Antwerpen.

Und das war unfassbar. Wir waren gut essen, wirklich gut – erstes Anliegen erfüllt.

Zweites Anliegen: Mode. Dries van Noten, Ann Demeulemeester, A. F. Vandevorst, wir haben sie gefunden und in den Kollektionen perfekte Klamotten gesichtet. Gekauft? Nein. So mal eben macht man das dann doch nicht. Also, ich nicht. Ich brauche gerne mal etwas länger.

Und wenn man keine Tüten aus den Geschäften trägt, dann bedarf es anderer Befriedigung. Das MOMU, das ModeMuseum schien uns der richtige Ort, um den Gedanken an schöne Sachen weiterzuspinnen, tiefer in dieses wohlige Gefühl Mode machen, kreativ sein einzutauchen, noch mehr Glam inklusive Schauer der Hochachtung, Demut aufkommen zu lassen und letztlich gutes, gesundes, befriedigendes Wissen aufzusaugen. Der Plan ging nicht auf, das MOMU wechselte gerade die Ausstellung. Uns blieb nur der Museumsshop. Und da kam uns plötzlich Rinus dazwischen, in Form seines Ausstellungsplans. Bei Dries van Noten hatte man uns die Galerie Tim van Laere empfohlen, in dem Zusammenhang war auch der Name Rinus van de Velde das erste Mal gefallen. Jetzt sahen wir seine Bilder in seinem Buch und wussten, dass wir da auf jeden Fall noch hin müssen. Sind wir dann auch. Und waren sofort eingenommen, von diesen großen, dunklen Bildern, den bunten Pappalmen, der quietschigen Pappbadewanne, dem bruchgelandeten Pappflugzeug ... von dieser Geschichte des Absturzes, die sich um uns herum aufbaute. Ich wusste zunächst nicht so recht, wo ich anfangen sollte, bei welchem Bild, bei welcher Installation; sollte ich nah an diese riesigen, rußigen Flächen gehen, um die Geschichte am unteren Bildrand zu lesen oder über den Blick von weit weg (im Rücken die nächste Pappalme) diese „Graphic Novel“ einfach nur über die vielen Details in diesen großen, dunklen Welten in mein Hirn dringen lassen? Ich schwankte in dieser niedrigen Galerie, mit diesen wahnsinnig netten Menschen, mit Absurditäten von Jonathan Meese im Innenhof, dem pinken Jutebeutel (YEAHH) und letztlich Rinus` Ausstellungsbuch konstant zwischen offenem, ausgetrocknetem und aufgeblähtem Mund, weitgeöffneten und eng zusammen gekniffenen Augen, grübeln, rätseln, stolpern ...ziemliches Chaos. Und dieses Mal sehr ausgeprägt: Kribbeln auf der Haut. Schweres Schlucken. Hochachtung. Demut. Glücksgefühl. Rinus geht uns nicht mehr aus dem Kopf – und jetzt auch nicht mehr aus dem Blick. Zwar haben wir keins seiner Bilder. Aber wir haben seinen Kopf, mit drittem Auge, dem Auge seines vergangenen Ichs.







I HAD A FLASH OF INSIGHT THAT THIS WAS IN FACT NOT LIFE, BUT A HOW IT WOULD BE LOOKED AND FEELING, WITH  
THEY NOW THEY WERE NOT LIFE, THE ZEROS OF THE WORLD, THE LIGHT OF A SHOT, THE WORD OF A BROTHER, THE  
THE





# WE ASK HIM

**Do you lie to your friends and family?**

Haha, good first question. To be honest, yes, but I reassure myself that I only do it with less important issues. Often I think suddenly to myself: why did I lie about this trivial thing. For example somebody asked me what I had for dinner earlier tonight and I answered pizza instead of telling the truth and saying it was meatballs. I think it is a kind of game I play with myself.

To tell a lie is creating a story, you have to remember your lies and tell the story correctly and logically. You have to act as well while you are telling the lie. When time passes you have to remember all your lies and it is a good way to deal with your memory. All these things I find myself doing in my work too. **Is drawing**


**and your art your only obsession?**

No, I noticed to have a strong tendency to obsessive behavior in all sorts of things. For example I play tennis obsessively and I smoke obsessively. For me it is important to know this because some areas I don't want to go into because of this obsessive behavior. I have to prevent myself sometimes from getting into something which would not be healthy anymore. **Is music important for you?**

Not so much. I have to admit that I don't know anything about music. I only listen to music when I am not listening to an audio book while drawing. Then I listen to Nils Frahm or Bob Dylan. Almost never anything else. My assistants are music lovers and connoisseurs, they listen all day long to obscure things I never heard about, I use headphones so I can concentrate on my audio book and I am not so much interested in this music they are playing. **Is/was youth culture important for you?**

I don't know for sure what you mean with youth culture. My youth was extremely important for me. Where I come from, the environment shaped the way I am today and what I make today. This testing out of different artist personas or alter ego's in my work comes directly out of the place, the time and the situation I was raised in. I was raised with TV and Internet for example, that is a big difference with an artist from the 50ties for example. **Is it important for you to live and work in Belgium?** No it is not that important. I often think I would rather live in Los Angeles. This city has a good effect on me. Every time I am there I think I should move. I like the atmosphere and the

climate way better than here in Belgium. Although Belgium also has its qualities. We have a long, beautiful and strong history in the arts, from Jan Van Eyck over Rubens to Ensor and Tuymans. **Do you care about the art scene?** No, I think I use to care more about it when I was younger. I find myself more and more focused on the work in my studio. Which is for me the most important. The art scene can be an inspiring place with all its stories for my work but at the same time if you are too busy with it can affect you in a bad way. I have many artist friends and I like going to openings of them but I am not at every party. **Does money matter to you?** Yes it does, I want money to be able to make the work I want to make. I want to be able to build my sets, make my drawings and develop the fictional world I like so much seeing in my studio. **What inspires you?** A lot. I try to be as open as possible. I believe you can't look for inspiration. It comes to you. You can't search it I mean. So everything can be inspiring. A book, a film, a talk you have or you overhear in a bar, an image, a dream, a little thought while driving your car. I listen to audio books all the time and I go to the movies all the time, that's where most of the ideas come from.



**Often you are in your pictures. You are the one who goes through those adventures. Do you create this fictional life, because your own is not exciting enough?** No. I see this man in my works not as myself. For me it is a fictional character, like in a novel. I don't believe in the life he is living for one single second. However I do think that I am drawn to making up these stories and this parallel life because I have so much time to fantasize while I am drawing. For hours and hours I can think about what the character will experience. And of course he experiences all kind of different things that I myself am experiencing in my real life. It is way more interesting to invent things you don't know from real life. **Where do you want to be with your work in 10 years?** That's hard to answer. I don't want to set too specific goals because it would frustrate me if I didn't make them. I just hope I will continue to work with pleasure and interest in my studio on new things and that people will somehow care about it. **Do you think you will continue illustrating your second, fictional life?** Yes I think so, although from time to time I think I will be an abstract painter like Willem De Kooning or a portrait painter like Alice Neel but then I remember that it is just the impulse I always feel to fictionalize myself again and that it is time to create a different alter ego.

Now just a few keywords. Please answer them very quick and spontaneous in 2-3 sentences. Or also just one word. **REALITY** As Picasso said: Art is a lie that makes us realize truth. **DRIVE** Very useful at night to settle your thoughts **FRIENDS** One of the most important things and perfect models and character to inhabit my drawings. **LOVE** Strange, beautiful and complicating thing, which comes close to friendship. **FREEDOM** Very relative. I feel myself most free in my studio. **LONELINESS** Never experienced it, probably because as an artist you are used to it. **TRAVELING** I don't like it when it is not with a goal. I don't see the point for myself of trying to know the world by travelling around it. **ANGER** An emotion I most often feel at the tennis court. **CIGARETTES** A companion. **TIME** A constant struggle not to waste any of it. That's what I fear most, wasting my time.