

Amsterdam, Thursday 26 August 2010

***Monumentalism – History and National Identity  
in Contemporary Art. Proposal for Municipal Art  
Acquisitions 2010***

**Presented as part of The Temporary Stedelijk  
at the Stedelijk Museum  
28 August 2010 – 9 January 2011**



Lucia Nimcova *Milkmaids*, from the project *Unofficial*, color print, 2007, 60 x 80 cm

Another highlight of The Temporary Stedelijk is the exhibition *Monumentalism—History and National Identity in Contemporary Art: Proposal for Municipal Art Acquisitions 2010*, which occupies one half of the ground floor galleries. The 2010 presentation of this highly anticipated annual exhibition of works by artists living and/or working in the Netherlands addresses the concepts of history and national identity. The large number of diverse submissions—359 in all—demonstrates the particular significance and relevance of the theme. Organized by the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, the exhibition is curated by Jelle Bouwhuis, head of Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam, and features the work of 19 artists selected by this year's Municipal Art Acquisitions jury.

History seems to be an increasingly important factor in how we identify ourselves, our cultures and our norms and values. In the Netherlands alone, the recent establishment of a national history canon and the initiative to found a Museum of National History provide tangible evidence of the trend. In the 19th century, a similar upsurge in historical awareness led to the production of large history paintings and monuments commemorating national heroes and historic events. Contemporary art increasingly reflects on the past in myriad ways. However, unlike these earlier precedents, today's art is seldom made specifically for the glorification of a nation; rather, it deals with the broadened scope of issues related to social developments such as globalization and transnationalism, which challenge a clear comprehension of what constitutes 'the national'.

This idea forms the scope of this year's municipal art acquisitions exhibition, which shows a wide range of possible responses and takes the subjects of national identity and history beyond nostalgia for a mythical past. Instead, the works yield an inherent fragmentation. Demonstrating a keen awareness that documentary images in photography or film are never straightforward representations of historical reality, the artists address those representations through all kinds of media—painting, drawing, sculpture, photography, video, sound and installation—while offering various insights and perspectives on cultural artifacts, language, politics, labor and capitalism through their individual explorations of questions surrounding national identity. Many of the exhibited works are being presented to the public for the first time.

The 2010 Municipal Art Acquisitions jury has selected the following artists:

Yael Bartana (1970, Kfar Yehezkel, Israel)  
Lonnie van Brummelen (1969, Soest, the Netherlands) /  
Siebren de Haan (1966, Dordrecht, the Netherlands)  
Ruth Buchanan (1980, New Plymouth, New Zealand)  
Hala Elkoussy (1974, Cairo, Egypt)  
Marianne Flotron (1970, Meiringen, Switzerland)  
Zachary Formwalt (1979, Albany GA, USA)  
Melissa Gordon (1981, Boston MA, USA)  
Nicoline van Harskamp (1975, Hazerswoude, the Netherlands)  
David Jablonowski (1982, Bochum, Germany)  
Rob Johannesma (1970, Geleen, the Netherlands)  
Iris Kensmil (1970, Amsterdam, the Netherlands)  
Gert Jan Kocken (1971, Ravestein, the Netherlands)  
Job Koelewijn (1962, Spakenburg, the Netherlands)  
Rachel Koolen (1979, Rotterdam, the Netherlands)  
Renzo Martens (1973, Sluiskil, the Netherlands)  
Lucia Nimcova (1977, Humenne, Slovakia)  
Wendelien van Oldenborgh (1962, Rotterdam, the Netherlands)  
Barbara Visser (1966, Haarlem, the Netherlands)  
Mieke Van de Voort (1972, Nijmegen, the Netherlands)

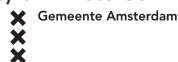
The members of the Municipal Art Acquisitions jury 2010 are:

Jelle Bouwhuis (chairman of the jury and curator of the exhibition), Valentijn Byvanck (director of the Museum of National History), Binna Choi (director of Casco, Utrecht), Roy Villevoeye (artist) and Krist Gruijthuisen (co-director Kunstverein and freelance curator).

The Municipal Art Acquisitions exhibition offers an important overview of the current state of the visual arts, photography, design and the applied arts in the Netherlands. Organized annually by the Stedelijk Museum and curated by an invited guest curator, this event focuses on one particular discipline or theme. With each edition of the exhibition, works are selected by the Stedelijk Museum's director for acquisition for the collection of the Stedelijk Museum.

*Monumentalism* will be accompanied by a catalogue co-edited by Bouwhuis and Margriet Schavemaker, Head of Research and Collections, Stedelijk Museum, with contributions by the editors, Jennifer Allen (art critic), Hendrik Folkerts (art historian) and Joep Leerssen (historian). The book will also include information on the artists in the exhibition and a reprint of an article titled *The Goodness of Nations* by anthropologist/political scientist Benedict Anderson. The bilingual (Dutch and English) volume is co-published by the Stedelijk Museum and NAI Publishers. Suggested retail price: € 19.50.

The exhibition is partially funded by the City of Amsterdam.



## Info on The Temporary Stedelijk at the Stedelijk Museum

Address:  
Stedelijk Museum  
Paulus Potterstraat 13, Amsterdam  
+31 (0)20 – 573 29 11

Dates and opening hours:  
28 August 2010 – 9 January 2011  
Tuesday – Sunday: 10 a.m. – 5 p.m.  
Thursday: 10 a.m. – 10 p.m.  
Closed on Mondays and on 1 January 2011.  
Museum Night, Saturday 6 November: open with a special program of activities

For fire safety reasons, we must limit the number of visitors permitted in the building at any one time.

For information on ticket sales, exhibitions, events program and educational activities, visit [www.stedelijk.nl](http://www.stedelijk.nl).

## Note to editors:

For further information, please contact: Stedelijk Museum Press Office, Marie-José Raven, + 31 (0)20 – 573 26 56, [m.raven@stedelijk.nl](mailto:m.raven@stedelijk.nl) / [pressoffice@stedelijk.nl](mailto:pressoffice@stedelijk.nl).

Press materials also available via: [www.stedelijk.nl/press](http://www.stedelijk.nl/press) under 'Pers'.