

BIO

To what extent does an artwork create itself? And how much of the final product is a result of the artists' guiding hand? I sometimes get the impression that most my works seem to make themselves. It's as if they have all these opinions regarding what they want to be/look like/say, and I find my role in the process reduced to that of collaborator instead of creator. In my work I usually get my inspiration from biology, philosophy and science. I am interested in notions of emergence, the (non-existent?) border between nature and culture, and in all imaginable kinds of natural phenomena and processes. I am especially interested in emergence or how human, animal, or other objects function as systems within a network. I think it is important, that we, human objects place ourselves in a more modest position in relation to other living and non-living objects.

"The best of bees is worse than the worst of architects", Karl Marx famously wrote. He was referring to the difference of intention in human and animal; man, in his view, follows a kind of grand inner vision, while an animal is nothing but an automaton executing an algorithm. But how realistic is this idea, which so obviously springs from an anthropocentric vantage point? When you get down to it, consciousness appears to be nothing more than an amalgam of relatively straightforward electro-chemical processes. Bees seem to be simple automata, yet are capable of language, and have a highly organized society. Consciousness isn't called "the hard problem" for nothing; we understand far too little of it to justify Marx' simplistic "us-them" dichotomy regarding humans and animals.

I have always been inspired by scientific ideas and concepts. At times I have deployed animals in my work, though not really as subject (or object), but in a more collaborative fashion. I for example never have put a live animal in an exhibition space, I prefer to create a situation in which the animal has the option to refuse collaboration. For example the work Koet (2006-2007) for which I convinced a pair of coots to build a nest of my personal belongings. It took months for them to get used to me and my weird objects. What interested me in this situation was the re-evaluation of things that was happening. A personal favourite, like a picture I liked was dismissed in favour of another one. It became clear to me that the coots were approaching my stuff with their own value system.

My method usually consists of deciding on and implementing parameters, and letting the work 'develop itself'. In this sense you could say that I am a spectator in my own practice; I allow the work itself and its context to decide the outcome. I do believe that the end result is usually very personal, even though it seems to be merely the outcome of a process outside of myself. I am always looking for new ways to communicate something very specific about the relation we humans have with the world. I don't work with any specific medium. Technique follows concept. Be it forensic finger print powder, snail trails or heat cameras

