

THE ABSENCE OF MARK MANDERS

4 February to 24 May 2020

Opening: attended by the artist, Sunday 2 February – starts at 15.00, free admission

The Bonnefanten is starting off the new year with the extensive retrospective The Absence of Mark Manders. It is already five years since the last solo exhibition by Mark Manders (Volkel, 1968) on Dutch soil. This new retrospective shows how Manders' exceptional oeuvre is continually developing organically: from revisions of older work up to his latest creations. The exhibition therefore forms both a retrospective of Manders' work and a new step in his artistic process.

Self-portrait as a building

All the work created by Manders is part of a large self-portrait: the 'Self-portrait as a building', his magnum opus on which he has been working since 1986. The self-portrait is added to and revised over the years. The public sees a snapshot of this oeuvre, which is continually in motion. When Manders has made a work, he leaves it behind in his 'building', thus forging an unbreakable bond between artist and artwork.

The rooms in *The Absence of Mark Manders* can be regarded as the rooms of his building. The works have been 'left behind' by the artist in three different zones. First, the visitor enters *The living room*, then *The museum*, and finally *The studio*. According to Manders, all the works are interchangeable and can be put into a different context: 'like words in a sentence can also be used in different combinations'. In the exhibition, you walk through Manders' self-portrait. At the place where he 'has thought and acted'. This brings the viewer very close to the artist.

In *The Absence of Mark Manders*, it seems as if the artist has walked out of his 'building' for a moment. His work is presented in an intimate and dynamic way, and the exhibition focuses on the artistic process, which plays a central role in Manders' oeuvre. Attention is also paid to the often paradoxical nature of Manders' work: his relationship to time, in which he searches for a balance between movement and timelessness, and his relationship to language, in which he walks the borderline between precision and universality.

Mark Manders has been regarded as one of the most important Dutch artists for years already and his work is well represented in the Bonnefanten's collection. In 2013, Manders had a big international breakthrough when he represented the Netherlands at the Venice Biennale with, for example, the iconic work *Mind Study*, which was acquired by the Bonnefanten after the biennale. One of his most recent projects was shown in Central Park, New York, in 2019. Manders created the four-metre-high statue *Tilted Head* at the request of the Public Art Fund, the foundation that commissions renowned artists to create works for the public space in New York. His work is now included in the collections of

more than 50 international museums, such as the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Moderna Museet in Stockholm, and the Museum of Contemporary Art in Tokyo.

Publication

The exhibition is accompanied by an artist's book published by ROMA, entitled *Composition with Yellow Verticals*. Later on, an exhibition catalogue will also be published entitled *The Absence of Mark Manders*, which will be available from the museum shop and online.



Credits: Manders Mark, *Composition with Yellow Vertical*, 2017, painted epoxy, painted wood, painted canvas, offset print on paper, iron. 233.0 (h) x 73.5 x 111.5 cm. Photo EPW STUDIO, courtesy Zeno X Gallery, Antwerp & Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/ Los Angeles

Note for the press: for more information and visual material, please contact Justin Livesey through pressoffice@bonnefant.nl or on +31 (0)43-3290109 / +31 (0)6-53226816