

So, what now? You've disassembled your Graduation Show presentation, you've got your Rietveld Academie diploma in the pocket. The world is at your feet. Or so they say. But where will your feet lead you?

This is a returning question, that cannot get debated enough somehow. But at the Rietveld Academie there's no distinct course on 'life after the academy' or 'life in general'. And how could there be? As an artist, you're not trained to perform specific tasks, not like, say, an electrician or dentist is. There's not one well-paved path to becoming an experienced artist. But there are what we call in Dutch 'olifantenpaadjes' which can be translated to 'little elephant trails', or the more rougher German term 'Trampelpfad' (stomping path). What it means is that, when a route is non-existent, but a lot of humans or animals need it, one or more distinct trails will emerge.

In this journal, we've assembled some articles about these elephant paths for you. The articles are the result of conversations that will hopefully lead to more conversations. One platform for this is the artist talk organised by Public Rietveld in the fall of 2021 at the academy.

We were pleased when art journalist Edo Dijksterhuis proposed in the fall of 2020 to follow four Rietveld alumni for a few months during the corona period. He was especially curious to find out how they were doing, having just graduated under difficult circumstances caused by all the corona measures. He published his interviews in the Dutch newspaper Het Parool and wrote a updated longer piece for this journal. We found it moving to see these graduates finding their paths in the art world. Some paths were more or less straight-forward, others took detours.

Tara-Eva Kuijpers Wentink (Fine Arts graduate, class of 2020) makes us part of her search for an answer to the question 'am I an artist now'? For this article she talked to her former teachers as well as gallery owners. This article first appeared on the website of Mister Motley within the framework of @all_inn_graduates, a series of articles written by artists who graduated in 2020. We're very happy to be able to re-publish it here.

These alumni are just setting off, but some alumni who graduated a little while ago, managed to clear a path already. Alumni Now is a series of interviews with alumni, published on the Rietveld website (rietveldacademie.nl/alumni-now). The interviews are conducted by Celina C.F. Yavelow (Graphic Design graduate, class of 2015). She asks artists to look back on their studies, to consider the unforeseen effects the Academie may have had on their life, their work, their values. We selected two motivating interviews with alumni.

With these articles we intend to encourage more debate and exchange of all elephant trails; the known and the unknown!

Elephant Trails

Gerrit Rietveld Academie

Alumni Journal Issue #1 Fall 2021



Nadia Schenker

- 0: Collaging Beirut, 2020
- 1: Collaging Beirut, 2020
- 2: Cityscape Vase - Beirut series, 2020
- 3: Cityscape Vase - Beirut series, 2020
- 4: Inseparable, 2021
- 5: Inseparable, 2021
- 6: Paper bench, 2020
- 7: Rising Giant, 2021

- 8: Shoreline Memories, 2021
- 9: Vertical Formation, 2021
- 10: Vertical Formation, detail, 2021
- 11: Vertical Formation, detail, 2021
- 12: Collaging Beirut publication



Majis Rinkel

- 0: The Pendant
- 1: How To Read A Spread, 2021
- 2: How To Read A Spread, 2021
- 3: How To Read A Spread, 2021
- 4: How To Read A Spread, 2021
- 5: How To Read A Spread, 2021
- 6: How To Read A Spread, 2021
- 7: How To Read A Spread, 2021

- 8: The Pendant, Gerrit Rietveld Academie Graduation show 2020
- 9: The Pendant, Gerrit Rietveld Academie Graduation show 2020
- 10: The Pendant, Gerrit Rietveld Academie Graduation show 2020
- 11: The Pendant, Gerrit Rietveld Academie Graduation show 2020
- 12: The Pendant, Gerrit Rietveld Academie Graduation show 2020
- 13: Frans Alexey
- 14: Paul
- 15: The Crew

Launching a career with the handbrake on



Transitioning from student to professional artist is difficult even under the best of circumstances. The class of 2020 had to deal with lockdowns, curfews and other Covid-19 related restrictions that seriously impacted the art world. Four graduates shared their experiences of their first year after leaving the Rietveld Academie.

Graduation is a time of closure and the opening of new, exciting vistas: the world is out there, waiting to be conquered. At least, that's normally the case. However, 2020 was not a normal year and the 2020 graduation show was nothing like the usual festive occasion. First of all, the date was pushed back, from early July to late August. Right up until the opening, the possibility of new Covid restrictions and thus cancellation hung over the event, causing a lot of stress. When the doors finally did open, timeslots were enforced for limited numbers of visitors at a time. Stretching the show's run time from four to eight days partly remedied this restriction, but it obviously couldn't bring back the feverish atmosphere of euphoria and anticipation mixed with relief and release that normally marks a graduation show.

Still, Rietveld graduates were among the lucky few who did have a graduation show. Most other art schools in the Netherlands cancelled their final presentation, sometimes offering graduates a consolation prize in the form of an online platform. But this type of exposure forgoes the face-to-face meetings with curators, gallery owners, critics and collectors that make a graduation show such an important, stepping stone towards life as a professional artist.

"The run-up to the graduation show was quite intense, given all the uncertainty and the Rietveld being closed because of the lockdown," Nadja Schlenker (designLAB) remembers. "I was quite happy to have had a graduation show at all. It's crucial that my work can be experienced physically, looking at pictures of it is not the same as walking around it."

The German-Swiss artist presented four-metre-high plaster and ceramic sculptures inspired by the architecture of Lebanon's capital Beirut, where she spent four months doing research. After her return to Amsterdam a massive explosion in the port area killed over 200 people and destroyed a large part of the city on 4 August. Worries about the people she'd left behind overshadowed her graduation stress. "Working in the deserted studios at the academy was actually a nice distraction. It was quite luxurious in a way. But the graduation show itself was tame, to say the least, and the traditional farewell party was also cancelled."

"It wasn't the type of climax everybody expected after four years of hard work," Mayis Rukel (VAV – moving image) admits. "Still, the Rietveld tried its best. But after eight days on my feet, living on sandwiches, I was completely exhausted."

The Turkish video artist saved himself a lot of trouble by starting work on his graduation film early. When lockdown arrived, he had shot all his footage. By the time graduation came around The Pendant had already been selected for the student programme of the Dutch Film Festival, the Berlinale and several other film festivals.

Dutch-Vietnamese Irene Ha (Fashion) felt seriously hampered by the Covid restrictions. "Originally, I was going to do a traditional runway presentation. But interaction with teachers on Zoom, trying to explain my ideas, bordered on the surreal. They couldn't even make out the difference between cotton or silk. In the end I turned the entire concept upside down and made an installation under the moniker Baby Reni, the internet persona I've cultivated since high school."

Danielle Alhassid (Fine Arts) from Israel, who graduated with an animation, also shifted her attention to the digital domain in the months preceding the graduation show. "I worked as a tour guide in museums during my studies. When lockdown was declared I started doing Zoom performances called Must See, virtually taking people around the Rijksmuseum. It gave a whole new spin on how we experience museums, how we use cameras and what a museum tour could be. This form of online storytelling worked really well. I got to show people the Rijksmuseum who would never have travelled to Amsterdam otherwise, but I did miss direct human contact."

"At the graduation show I got to meet people face-to-face, but the number of visitors was much lower than usual. The upside was that you got to talk more intimately with the ones who did come. But after eight days I felt like going into hibernation."

Week 49 of 2020 (30 November - 4 December)

The first few weeks after graduation are for partying and a well-deserved rest. After that you have to get used to life outside the Rietveld bubble. No longer a student, you have to establish yourself as a professional artist. It's no different in times of Covid, but the means to insert yourself into the cultural field were severely limited in a city where network events had been suspended and openings temporarily banned.

Under these circumstances it's difficult to take advantage of any spin-off from your graduation. Rukel and Alhassid were lucky to be selected for The Best of Graduates show at Ron Mandos Gallery, which generated some publicity and kept them in the public eye. Alhassid: "I feel like I'm making the transition from student to professional life, but things remain slightly blurry. That's partly due to the absence of openings, social gatherings and other informal moments where you get to meet people in a natural way. My friends from Rietveld also noted that things have suddenly slowed down. I did have a meeting with a curator who was at the graduation show and we went for a walk in the park with a coffee – something I would never do otherwise. And I visited a collector at home. But mostly my life has shrunk to the size of my computer screen, family interaction and work blending together."

Rukel presented The Pendant at poetry platform Perdu, but he finds it difficult to plan ahead, let alone make long-term commitments. "There is too much uncertainty. I can't think about a residency or a masters. The last months before graduation also exhausted me emotionally and I need a rest, maybe even a sabbatical."

In the meantime, he works as an editor and a colour corrector for other video artists. He also manages to keep his expenses in check. "I was fortunate enough to find a studio in Rotterdam through a live-in guardian agency: anti-kraak."

Even though Ha has an online exhibition lined up with art magazine Mister Motley, a nomination for a fashion award and almost daily requests from stylists to borrow pieces for photo shoots, she doesn't make enough money to pay rent in Amsterdam. "I've moved back to my parents in Arnhem. Two or three days a week I work for public health services as part of their contact tracing programme. I directly invest all the money I make. The web shop I've been running for several years doesn't provide a stable income and I don't want to spend all my time on commercial activities. Still, at least three shops carry my collection now and two more will do so starting in late December. I find it hard to do all production work by myself; before I could fall back on friends from art school. I'd rather channel my energy and focus on writing funding applications for a fashion show for the summer of 2021."

Schlenker is a couple of years older than the rest and has few doubts about the direction she's steering her career in. She applied for the Artwell Residencies at Neverneverland, an artist's residency programme in South-East Amsterdam and was accepted. "I also want to show my work at art fairs and I was already selected for Talente, a new design fair in Munich. It does feel a bit odd preparing for an event that might never take place. But hey, that's the new reality."

"Travel is an important part of what I do, but I guess I won't be doing much of that soon. In the meantime I earn a living working as a freelance translator and assistant at Marjan van Aubel's studio. Because all the events I used to go to have been cancelled, I have a lot of time on my hands to think about what I do and which direction I want to take my work in. It's a process of ups-and-downs, but I'm slowly emerging from the graduation tunnel."

Week 3 of 2021 (18 - 22 January)

The lockdown and curfew that came into force on 15 December made life a lot harder. Museums have been closed which means the options for meeting other artists and soaking up inspiration have dwindled even further. Worse still is the closing of artists' supply shops. No one knows when they'll reopen.

"Even Gamma and Praxis are closed!", exclaims Schlenker, who partly depends on these Dutch DIY stores for her materials. "I used to stroll through these places and discover all kinds of stuff. Now I have to order online." And that's not the only disappointment she had to swallow during this third wave of the Covid-19 pandemic. "Talente got cancelled. At least Object Rotterdam confirmed my selection, but that fair has been postponed and may or may not take place in June or July. It's good to have a goal when you're creating new sculptures. That's lacking now, so I'll finish what I'm working on and then start doing research, probably something connected to the Bijlmer, the area I'm working in at the moment."

"Doing this residency is keeping me sane. It's great to have a place to work and talk to fellow artists. I try not to think ahead too much and focus on the present. I would like to work with a craftsman and was also planning to cooperate with a designer, but all those ideas had to be put off because all studios are closed."

Rukel made the best of the situation by redecorating his room and making his workspace more comfortable. He spent most of his time at his desk, communicating with the outside world through the computer screen. "I recorded a 12-part podcast called Soft Edges with Lucie Gérard, who also graduated from Rietveld in 2020. We talked in depth about texts, films and art we feel are relevant. It's a nuanced, slow paced discussion, for example about Adrienne Maree Brown's book Pleasure Activism. We produced the entire series remotely using headphones, voice recorders and online editing software."

"I'm also working on a novel and writing essays. The Julian Andeweg affaire in particular inspired me to think about call-out culture, victim blaming and how to deal with severe abuse. At the end of this month I'm hoping to have a first meeting with Diego Ospina Melo and six other filmmakers to see if we can start a film collective. However, I don't see many art world professionals at the moment. Instagram contacts remain rather superficial and most of my close friends are also trying to adapt to the new situation. I see a few of them occasionally for puzzle and pizza dates, but it's a fairly small circle and I do miss the broader social contact."

Ha's situation is quite different. In spite of the lockdown her world has opened up since she secured a studio and a room in Amsterdam West. "Not having your stuff in five different locations and working at your own studio makes life so much easier. I can use my own sewing machine and clients can come by for a fitting. To be honest, I'm surprised by how many commissions I'm getting. At the same time I want to be selective and not waste most of my energy on logistics instead of creating. I miss my inspiring trips to the fabric store. Or spending an afternoon with my friends watching videos or visiting exhibitions."

The same holds true for Alhassid, who moved to Israel right before Christmas and experienced the grinding down of everyday life while the country went into severe lockdown. "I had many projects going immediately after graduation, but now I've hit a void. It was great seeing my family after having been gone for over a year, but it was hard to leave my home, friends and network in Amsterdam. Fortunately, I'm in a relationship. I met my partner, who's also an Israeli, in New York where he teaches. He is also in Israel now, unable to return to the US because of the American travel ban."

"Restrictions in Israel are even stricter than in the Netherlands. I'm working on an ongoing project about the modernist architecture of Tel Aviv, but it's almost impossible to go out. I'm also rebuilding my animation studio, but my thoughts don't grow beyond the sketchbook. It's an odd feeling, trying to start a project without art school's structure. Having too much time on my hands has made me lose my edge. Everything has slowed down and become bland. I have the feeling we're living month by month rather than day by day."

Week 8 and 9 of 2021 (22 February – 1 March)

The Israeli vaccination programme turned out to be a lot more effective than efforts in the EU and Alhassid had her first jab when in the Netherlands health services had only just started vaccinating octogenarians. "I get my green passport next week, after my second shot. No more testing before going to an event, that's great and makes it easier to work, but I don't expect a sudden rush to freedom. I got a new studio a 15-minute cycle from my house. There I'm working on a live animation for international women's day. I also participated in the Dead Darlings benefit auction for W139. My painting was sold to a Dutch couple who sent me an email. It feels good to have pieces of me in Amsterdam."

Meanwhile Ha has gone into a five-day quarantine no less than three times because her housemates were possibly infected. While Alhassid felt 'a fresh vibe', the fashion designer experienced a new low. "The time in self isolation has thrown me into doubts. Should I be an artist? Why am I doing this? I tend to be an optimist but this period really gnawed away at my motivation."

Work hasn't come to a standstill, though. Ha was commissioned by the Rietveld Academie to design a scarf for all the students. Her work is on show at Beijing's X-Museum and will soon be on sale at pop-up stores in New York. "I see the results on Instagram and people send me videos, but I'd really like to be there in person, to celebrate. My work is very physical and warm, it's about making a connection. But because of the lockdown I can't be part of the community I've created."

Schlenker recognises this feeling of a boxed-in world, but German friends of hers who work as classical musicians have it much worse. "The hopelessness of their situation is killing. Research has shown that 30% of German musicians are thinking of quitting and 10% have already done so. When I hear that I'm happy to have my studio and be able to focus on work instead of Covid-19. I was a bit stressed before, but now I know: things will return to normal at some point and I'll be able to do projects again. I use my time now to pave the way."

Rukel, who has been accepting, even stoic up until now, has reached some sort of breaking point. Restrictions make it impossible for the film collective to meet in person and Zoom is proving to have its limits. "I feel disillusioned," he says. "The hope for change that isn't coming is extremely tiring. I keep working on my novel and go for lots of walks. But I've also started attending workshops to become a doula, someone who assists people in the final phase of their lives. Death is all around us nowadays and I wanted to spend time with the idea of death. The week I enrolled, my father tested positive for Covid-19. I call him every day and fortunately he only has a mild case. A friend of mine lost his father however and he's both angry and sad. I think that even a year from now, when hopefully this pandemic will be over, the death toll will loom over us like a global trauma."

Week 14 of 2021 (5 - 9 April)

Rukel finished his doula course. "It was amazing and I learned a lot. For example how we can prepare for our own death and what you would like to leave behind. It's about really practical things like bank accounts, but also family secrets – do you want to take them to the grave or not? After our last day of training I ran into a childhood friend, whose father was dying. She stayed with me for a couple of days and the lessons learned in the doula workshop helped me deal with the situation."

In conversation with Nadja Schlenker, Mayis Rukel, Irene Ha and Danielle Alhassid

Launching a career with the handbroke on by Edo Dijksterhuis



0; Expo MAISON AMSTERDAM
 1; Expo 37PK Haarlem
 2; Emma Wortelboer with BabyReni Scarf
 3; Collage
 4; Studio experiments
 5; Studio experiments
 6; Studio experiments
 7; Customer wears BabyReni Scarf

Launching a career with the handbrake on
 8; Clearout sale in vending machine
 9; Scarf Municipality of Amsterdam
 10; Expo MAISON AMSTERDAM
 11; Installation experiments
 12; Installation experiments
 13; Installation experiments

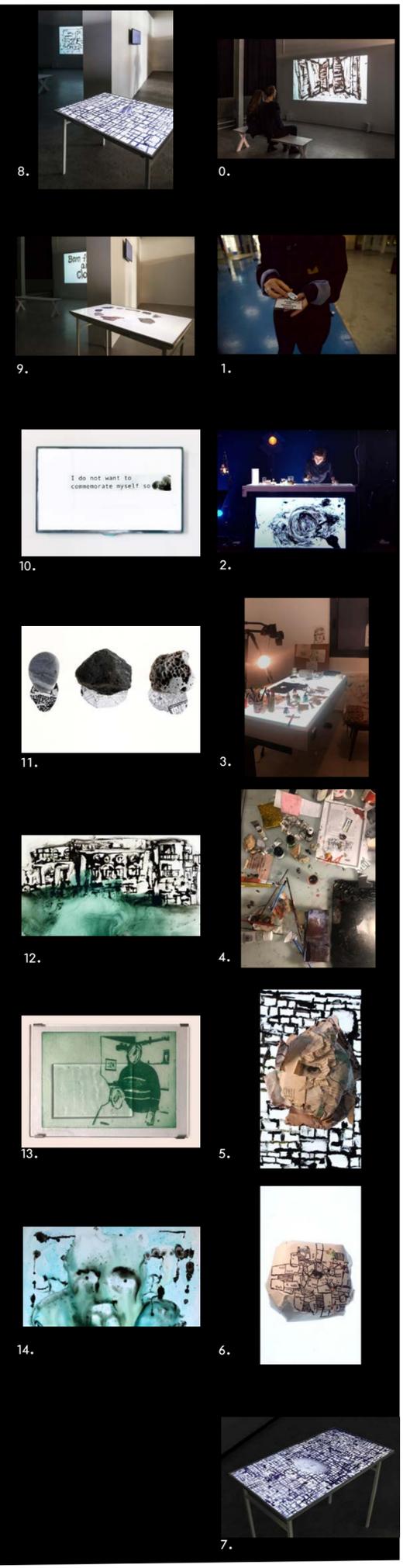
Irene Ha



0; Born from Sea and Cloud, Gerrit Rietveld Academie Graduation show 2020
 1; MEET ME AT THE ENTRANCE, a performance, in collaboration with SIS, 2020
 2; Variations, live animation performance, in collaboration with Maya Belizzman, Holon theater, Israel, 2021
 3; Studio view, 2021
 4; Studio view, 2021
 5; A Stone from a Wall, video installation commissioned by Azrieli Gallery, Israel 2021
 6; A Stone from a Wall, video installation commissioned by Azrieli Gallery, Israel 2021
 7; What's gone is gone, Gerrit Rietveld Academie Graduation show 2020

8; Memories of a Stone, Gerrit Rietveld Academie Graduation show 2020
 9; Memories of a Stone, Gerrit Rietveld Academie Graduation show 2020
 10; What's gone is gone (no. 2), Gerrit Rietveld Academie Graduation show 2020
 11; Born from Sea and Cloud, Gerrit Rietveld Academie Graduation show 2020
 12; Born from Sea and Cloud, Gerrit Rietveld Academie Graduation show 2020
 13; Roberto Shemoon, stop motion animation, Video still, commissioned by Studio Bank, Israel 2020
 14; Roberto Shemoon, stop motion animation, Video still, commissioned by Studio Bank, Israel 2020

Launching a career with the handbrake on
 8; I do not want to commemorate myself so
 9; I do not want to commemorate myself so
 10; I do not want to commemorate myself so
 11; I do not want to commemorate myself so
 12; I do not want to commemorate myself so
 13; I do not want to commemorate myself so
 14; I do not want to commemorate myself so



These positive experiences are coloured by the ongoing curfew that severely limits social interaction. "I haven't met any new people in a long time," Rukel realises. "The slowness of the vaccination programme is depressing."

For Ha, the Dutch national elections brought a new sense of isolation. "Almost everybody I know has voted BIJ1, but in the end the party only got one seat in parliament – I couldn't believe it. But that's the bubble you live in and social media don't help," says the artist who relies on the internet to make and distribute her work. "I'm tired of virtualisation's impact. The polarisation, cancel culture – it's all become worse because everybody's online all the time. Covid-19 has turned the internet into a not so pleasant place."

Tel Aviv, on the other hand, momentarily is. "When I talk to classmates from Amsterdam I get the feeling I'm living in a parallel world," says Alhassid. "Restaurants and bars are fully operational in Israel. We're not all the way back to normal but the energy and liveliness has returned. I'm hopeful we'll be able to move to New York at the end of summer and put an end to our nomadic life."

Meanwhile Schlenker works persistently, creating one sculpture after another. Gallery owner Pien Rademakers paid her studio a visit. They had met at Big Art, one of only a few art events that weren't cancelled last year. "As of next week I'll be represented by a gallery," the sculptor rejoices. "I'm cautiously looking forward to travelling again. I'm dreaming of Italy, Bangkok and Lebanon of course. And I'm looking forward to visiting exhibitions, even if we're still obliged to wear face masks and have to social distance. It's far from normal but to be honest: I wouldn't know what normal is. We've never experienced normal. The here and now is normal."

Epilogue (September 2021)

Schlenker got what she wished for, as did the other graduates. Towards summer, restrictions were slowly lifted and social life started picking up pace. At the end of June, Art Rotterdam heralded the return of art fairs and in the following months anticipation built towards the opening of a new cultural season.

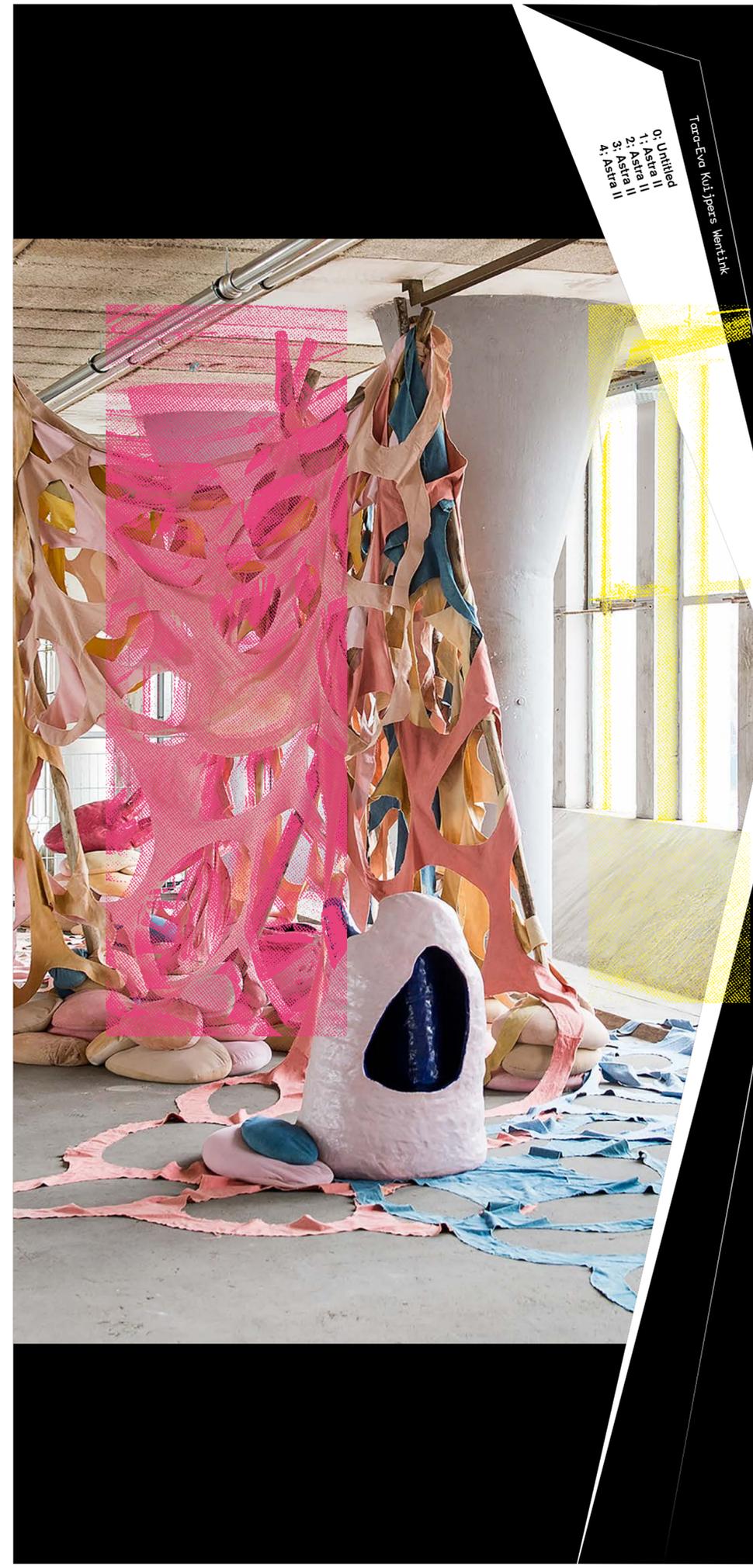
Schlenker really enjoyed the summer exhibition at her new gallery, where she showed new sculptures. She had another show marking the end of the 6-month residency in the Bijlmer. The day after the opening she was on a train to Berlin, where she spent 2 months at Livingstone Gallery's project space on invitation. "I was happy with the change of scenery after having spent the entire lockdown in Amsterdam. I'm currently in Beirut, where I started a project with a Lebanese designer. I'm thankful to have the opportunity again to visit Lebanon after everything that has happened and see my friends again. To have new experiences, visit new places and meet new people – all of which will translate into new projects."

While Schlenker is travelling, Ha has settled down, but not slowed down. She's been selected for a presentation at Haarlem's 37PK and is part of the prestigious Maison Amsterdam show in De Nieuwe Kerk. During Amsterdam Fashion Week she was featured on billboards in metro stations across the city. And she was one of 15 talents selected for AFK's 3Package Deal. "This not only enables me to deepen my practice, but also takes away financial worries. I notice that I like this stability, it fuels my creativity. Last year, I was stressing out about money and often accepted commissions I wasn't 100% on board with."

Alhassid has finally settled down as well, although she's at her fifth address in eight months now. She moved with her partner to New York in August and started the MFA programme at Hunter College. The months leading up to the move were, as she puts it, "crazy". "I was working at the educational department of the Museum for Modern Art and a ceramics centre while simultaneously doing art tours. I also got my very first solo show at the Liebling House in Tel Aviv, but it took me a long time to celebrate since at the same time Gaza was bombed and violence broke out in Israel. I'm trying to find some tranquillity now in New York and I'm actually starting to feel at home."

Last, but not least, Rukel has emerged from his Covid cocoon. In May the film he made for Rietveld TV, *How to Read a Spread with The Pendant Tarot Deck*, premiered on AT5 [regional TV broadcaster in the Amsterdam metro area]. He spent the following months researching character design for visual and textual mediums, experimenting with materials and working on text/image/Polaroid collages. "My sister also moved to the Netherlands recently and has been living with me. That has been miraculously helpful in recovering from the lonely echoes of the lockdown."

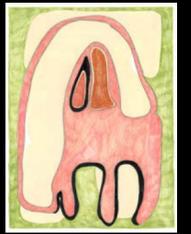
Having overcome his sense of hopelessness he applied to the Sandberg Instituut and was accepted. "I started the master's programme *Ecologies of Transformation* in early September. It's beyond anything I thought possible, something very unique and there's nothing I'd rather be focussing on these coming years."



- 0: Unlitled
- 1: Astra II
- 2: Astra II
- 3: Astra II
- 4: Astra II

Tara-Evo Kuli peers Mentink

Am I an artist now?



0.



1.



2.



3.



4.

The article below was written within the framework of ALL IN, an exhibition at Het HEM featuring work by recently graduated art academy students from all fine arts bachelor's programmes in the Netherlands. Mister Motley published a series of articles written by artists graduated in 2020, in the infamous Covid-19- year and timidly but in good spirits entered a slowed down art world. The articles depart from a question that occupies these artists and describes personal experiences from their young practice.

It's August. I recently graduated from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie and am sitting at my best friend's kitchen table. Her father, who still remembers me from the time I was wearing two braids, is an accomplished Dutch artist. I had intended to ask him for advice. After the graduation show I have to get used to the amount of free time. I watch him as I lift the teabag out of my cup and place it on a dish. "May I ask you something?", I say. Without waiting for his answer, I continue: "Where do I start now?" – "Start with an internship or make sure you have a reliable income, to make sure you have the space to make your own work," he says. But what stuck most from his advice, is: "Life as an artist is not to be viewed as a sprint, but a marathon."

Starting out at an art academy, you soon know that a diploma offers no guarantee of success: it is not a 'golden ticket' for recognition in the art world. There's no specific amount of learning material to be mastered in art education, as there is for a law student trying to become a lawyer. The focus of the learning process is on challenging the student to discover their own voice, to form a world view that you support as an artist and a human being. After graduating from an art academy, the question arises: Am I an artist now? And if an artist's life is a marathon, then what is the best route?

After our conversation at the kitchen table I decided to talk to people who know the art world well, in order to find my own way. I spoke to two of my graduation teachers (artists Jay Tan and Becket Flannery), one of the directors of PlatformBK (Koen Bartijn), the director of Gallery Fons Welters (Nick Terra) and gallery owner Jedithja de Groot from Gallery dudokdegroot.

And if an artist's life is a marathon, then what is the best route?

Where to start if you have just graduated? At the academy itself, in my case the Rietveld, no standard plan is offered. Both of my teachers agree on the fact that an artist's life is unsure. However, during my education we did not talk much about the future after the academy. Jay Tan says you can discuss with students what might happen after graduation, but there is no real preparation for the specific feelings that come along with it, or a standard for how to deal with these things. "Everyone's journey is different. The case is: we cannot instruct a class in a way that includes all the potential experiences that you're going to have as an artist." There are other Dutch art academies that teach classes in targeted market competence, in which students are being taught how to obtain a position in the art market. That can be positive, because students are more apt to establish themselves in the art market. However, there's also criticism: students possibly lose an open mind towards the artistic value of their work.

My graduation teachers wanted to influence us as little as possible before we entered the art world. Becket Flannery refers to the doctor's oath of Hippocrates, giving notice that he will teach to the best of his abilities and judgement and never harm anyone. By 'harming someone' he means not wanting to influence a student with his own positive and negative experiences in the art world. According to him, the experience of each student after graduation is unique. There are so many different ways to be an artist.

My graduation teachers wanted to influence us as little as possible before we entered the art world.

For my teachers Jay Tan and Becket Flannery, becoming an artist was a process of gaining experience and continuing to develop yourself. Yet it also has to do with recognition of your ability by others, says Flannery. "At a certain point you find that others recognize you as an artist and that helps viewing yourself as such. That is important. Perhaps it allows you to then move past the feeling that you're just pretending, which I think affects a lot of people." Now that I have just graduated from the academy, I often have the feeling that I am pretending, too. Artistry does not automatically mean "blockbuster-show after blockbuster-show", as Flannery puts it in our conversation. It's something I was aware of during my studies, but the lack of stability is difficult to imagine until you're standing on your own two feet.

Translated by Jesse Lemmens



The dream to be an artist is often challenged in the periods after shows or events, when you're alone with your own work, according to Flannery. During these moments, it is important to continue to develop yourself by making work, without the need of exhibiting it. The uncertain intermediate stages in which no one seems interested in your art are daunting for all artists. This is often even more difficult for beginning artists without a built-up oeuvre. According to Tan, it is important for a recently graduated artist to connect to other beginning artists. You need to keep coming together and create opportunities together. "You don't have to do it alone. You need to help each other realize projects. The less competitive you are and the more you support one another, the better it is for everyone."

Koen Bartijn, co-director at PlatformBK, also emphasizes the importance of association and cooperation. The platform is committed to a more inclusive, transparent and fair art world. According to him, starting artists are often looking for 'exposure' and confirmation of the quality of their work. They are diligently searching for recognition of their identity as an artist. It can be difficult for young artists to say 'no' to opportunities that offer little certainty, because they are less aware of the consequences they bring. According to Bartijn, young artists have been the largest investors in the art world over the last ten years, because they want to exhibit at all costs to make themselves visible, even if that means working for free. In order to make institution less likely to take advantage of this vulnerable position, PlatformBK helped to create the directive Kunstenaarshonorarium ('Artists' Honorarium').

You need to keep coming together and create opportunities together.

The Kunstenaarshonorarium is an initiative that has been active in the Netherlands for three years, to enhance the rights of artists. It is a directive to ensure that artists receive a minimum fee. With a calculator, artists can calculate what they are entitled to receive, so that they can stand up for fair merits at art institutions. If art institutions receive subsidies from public funds, they are obliged to adhere to the fee. The amount of current cultural subsidies do not allow all institutions to pay everyone fairly, while maintaining the fixed number of exhibitions, according to Bartijn. As a result, the number of exhibitions where newly graduated artists are given the opportunity to exhibit their work is decreasing – even more so because at professionally organised subsidised exhibitions, preference is given to established artists. Consequently, many young artists are willing to work in different places for little compensation.

Am I an artist now?

by Tara-Eva Kuijpers Mentink



ALL INN took place from March 31 to April 4, 2021 at Het HEM. The exhibition aimed to provide a befitting answer to a graduation season scattered by Covid-19. For the first time in history, recent graduates from all fine arts departments in the Netherlands presented their work in one exhibition.

Due to the fact that for many funding applications or open calls you are required to have graduated at least one year ago, recently graduated artists often end up in an uncertain 'intermediate stage'. Due to cuts under Halbe Zijlstra's policy (former state secretary 2010-2012 Rutte 1), financial support for after graduation, such as the BKR scheme, has disappeared. This precarious position poses the risk of putting pressure on the development of your art practice. Much precious time goes into earning an income and for novice artists in particular it is not immediately possible to do that through selling work of their own.

Consequently, many young artists are willing to work in different places for little compensation.

For an artist who has just graduated, there is little financial certainty and in order to continue your own art practice, you need to look for ways to support yourself. For some, it is a wish to be represented by a gallery to show their work and possibly to be able to live from their art. In addition, novice artists regard representation by a gallery as a necessary step to be recognized by the art world. But that is easier said than done. What is needed to be picked up by a gallery as a newly graduated artist? In other words: In the eyes of a gallery, what makes a good artist? Is it a specific kind of personality? A certain degree of mal-adjustment? Are they visionaries or natural talents? Or it's just a matter of marketing? "None of those", answers Nick Terra, director of Gallery Fons Welters. "A good artist is comparable to someone who excels in another profession. It is about being totally committed to what you do, and it radiates in everything you do. Of course, the quality of work must appeal to people, which is less subjective in other professions."

How likely is it to be picked up by a gallery as a newly graduated artist? Galerie Fons Welters is open to newly graduated and young artists, according to Terra. Every year the gallery pays visits to graduation shows, but chances remain small that they exhibit newly graduated artists. Sometimes one or two are shown, but that is no guarantee that the gallery will represent those artists. Jedithja de Groot, gallery owner of dudokdegroot, indicates that they hardly work with newly graduated artists as well. Because they're a small gallery, they have few exhibitions and that is why dudokdegroot is committed to artists, from which they know what to expect. They keep track of how artists develop, before asking them to exhibit. It is reasonably exceptional to be chosen by a gallery as a newly graduated artist.

According to Jedithja de Groot, it is important that young artists engage in conversations with people from the art world and visit many exhibitions and museums. This way they can discover which galleries and institutions best suit their art. This decision, she says, should not be rushed. Terra emphasizes the importance of keeping yourself visible as an artist. They do not have to be high-end exhibitions; the main issue is that beginning artists continue to show physical work. "What I consider to be important is that, even after the academy, should an artist not have been picked up there or come into contact with a gallery owner, the artist tries to be part of exhibitions as much as possible. Galleries generally receive a lot of portfolio's, but that seldomly works in the way that people intend. Seeing a physical work, works the best for us. Whether it's an exhibition in a garage or a living room, or only open for a weekend; as long as there is something going on, you don't want to miss it."

How likely is it to be picked up by a gallery as a newly graduated artist?

But becoming part of a gallery is not always the best nor the only route for an artist. Young artists increasingly choose not to be part of a gallery and to represent themselves through social media instead. As my teachers, Tan and Flannery emphasized, you have to continuously reflect, talk about your work and decide what kind of artist you want to be. Becoming an artist starts with yourself and your own work.

Am I an artist now? It's a question you can keep asking yourself, at different times in your life. I don't think there's an unequivocal answer. At the end of our conversation, Jay Tan makes a comment that sticks with me: "I had teachers that said; 'you should continue with what you do if you want to continue doing it.' The artists who become successful, whatever that means to anyone, are those people who just continue to go on."

2021.6.23 22:00
talita:
thanks for one more
nice event :)

2021.6.23 22:00
(♡_♡) The Hmm
(♡_♡):
thank you talita!

2021.6.23 22:00
(♡_♡) The Hmm

2021.6.23 22:00
talita:
thanks for one more
nice event :)

2021.6.23 22:00
(♡_♡) The Hmm
(♡_♡):
thank you talita!

2021.6.23 22:00
(♡_♡) The Hmm
(♡_♡):
get in touch:
info@thehmm.nl

2021.6.23 22:01
(♡_♡) The Hmm
(♡_♡):
Join our Telegram
channel!
https://t.me/the_hmm

Show only URLs

Lilian Stolk
0. The Hmm @ Distance Disco, 2020.05.21 22:25
1. The Hmm @ MPAKT, 2020.05.27 20:52
2. The Hmm @ Arttalk, 2020.05.27 20:52
3. The Hmm @ Platforms, Esheredac, 2020.05.27 20:52
4. The Hmm @ Hacked, 2020.05.27 21:11
5. The Hmm @ Teacher, 2020.05.27 21:11
6. The Hmm @ Teacher, 2020.05.27 21:11
7. Behind the scenes, 2020.05.27 21:11

In a time like this

8. Screenshot 2021.03.15 15:34
9. Screenshot 2021.03.15 15:34
10. The Hmm @ MPAKT, 2020.05.27 20:52
11. Screenshot 2020.05.27 21:11
12. Screenshot 2020.10.28 22:06
13. Screenshot 2020.11.18 20:31
14. Screenshot 2020.11.18 21:03
15. Screenshot 2020.11.18 21:58

8.		0.	
9.		1.	
10.	2020.5.27 21:11 men: this chat has a feeling of being in a cramped room - something I haven't felt in a while.	2.	
11.	2020.10.28 22:06 Loes: thank you the Hmm for making webtalks so fun!	3.	
12.	2020.11.18 20:31 Robin: clapclapclapclapclapclap	4.	
13.	2020.11.18 20:31 Alex: 👏👏👏	5.	
14.	2020.11.18 21:03 Amsterdam! it brought everyone's crazy parts closer together	6.	
15.	2020.11.18 21:58 Nate: Each presentation was so meaningful. Thank you speakers for your insights and to Hmm for hosting. :)	7.	

It was April 23 of the year 2020, and on this exact date eight years before, Beeld & Taal alumna Lilian Stolk was in the midst of keeping track of international celebration days for her graduation project 'Ik hou van vieren' ('I love celebrating') at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie. A quick look at her archive tells us that April 23rd is World Book and Copyright Day. ("Ah yes," she later reminisces with a chuckle: "Those days never fail to pop up.") The significant difference between 2012 and 2020 is that during the latter, we'd find ourselves in a time of worldwide lockdown.

Physical closeness is carefully avoided, travelling reduced to a minimum, activities cancelled or postponed until further notice. Usually, Lilian works in her studio—a lofty work space shared with other artists, in a tall building hovering over an otherwise bustling street in the midst of Amsterdam—but now, we connect virtually, each from our own home. Lilian is happily expecting a baby, so she's playing it extra safe, just in case.

Since the publication of her research on emoji, *Het zonderwoorden-boek*, Lilian has been known and acclaimed as emoji-expert. Meanwhile, however her main focus is on The Hmm, an inclusive platform she co-founded in 2016, investigating the mechanisms of internet and people's online behaviour. A brand-new website just went live, so in getting that up and running Lilian has been working digitally anyway. Living somewhat outside of the city, in a beautiful farm house sustainably reconstructed by her partner Joris Brouwers, also an alumnus of the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, she's been finding herself quite relaxed under these unprecedented circumstances.

Business as usual?

She smiles, understandingly. "You might expect that, because The Hmm deals with internet culture, we're already attuned to a solely online, non-physical way of working, but actually, almost all the events and lectures and workshops we organise take place in real life. The online-offline combination is part of the fun. You kind of take the internet out of its usual context and that gives a necessary distance to really see it, as a viewer instead of a consumer, together with other people instead of alone from behind your computer screen. An evening with 10 speakers in five minutes, which is kind of our usual, PechaKucha format, might feel very similar to scrolling through the internet, but in an offline setting you sense it differently, with more reflection."

"So, I can't really say I'm not at all bummed out by the fact that all the events I had coming up with The Hmm couldn't take place as planned: preparations were made, guests were confirmed, everything ready to go... And to be honest, it did take me a moment to readjust. But as I was thinking back at my studies at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, thinking about what I took from it, I realised that, especially in a time like this, I am pretty equipped for dealing with things creatively. I feel challenged to think about other ways of doing things, but I take a lot of pleasure out of that. I really enjoy it."

Creative, as usual?

"It's a huge advantage! When something new happens, a change, people generally tend to be somewhat anxious and critical. Take emoji: there were a bunch of skeptics who really thought using emoji would be a threat to writing, that we would forget how to write, forget how to express ourselves with words. But in essence, change is rarely that drastic. Things kind of stay the same, we just develop different ways of doing them. Like with the winking smiley, for instance. Apparently, our brains register that winking smiley in the exact same way it would register someone winking in real life. When it comes to forgetting how to write: the opposite proved true. With all the app-ing and messaging, people are writing more than ever, and even actively expressing themselves through posts and discussions on social media platforms."

"Interestingly enough, though, it turns out that, in a time like this, when there's basically no physical contact, people are less inclined to connect through the usual habit of texting and emoji. Instead, we massively turn to video-calling. Apparently, that alternative comes closest to the real thing, to real, physical communication. Maybe, in the end, texting just doesn't cut it when it comes to that kind of contact. Maybe writing a text just takes too long?"

Questions, as usual.

"Yes, and investigating the right shape for something. A new, different shape, maybe, or a variety of shapes. Is Zoom really the best platform for our current, virtual way of living? Do we have to give up our privacy for public health? Do we need more emoji to express ourselves? That open attitude has come to define how I like to work. The emoji-project in particular prompted me to consider all kinds of shapes and media—be it a lecture, a book, a workshop, an app... Working that way allows me to look at the subject from all the different sides that interest me: the historical and cultural side of it, the technology behind it, but also the graphics and design."

"Coming from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, you might expect my first impulse would always be to approach things artistically, in terms of an exhibition for instance. I mean, for me at least, becoming an autonomous artist seemed like the ideal. But then, well, it turns out to be more complicated, and that realisation can be a struggle—I'm sure you can relate—especially in those first years after graduation."

"Maybe it is because of the fact that I had both an academic and an art education—since I studied history before—that my interests and abilities seemed too wide ranged to really fit into that label of an artist alone. I always end up with a lot of research and analysis, and an amazing amount of stories. In a way, it's almost a necessity to exceed the limits of an exhibition, that's to say: of just one kind of medium, let alone a single work of art."

"But for me, it's absolutely liberating to work that way. And in fact, I think studying Beeld & Taal—and maybe that goes for studying at the Rietveld in general—got me to think out of the box like that. Despite the artistic emphasis, the medium was never a fixed thing. Writing poetry, painting, film making... It was all possible. I felt continuously challenged to turn things over and find the best fit, and that really triggered an openness and flexibility of thought. That's definitely what appealed to me about the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in particular."

So, in a time like this...

"In a time like this I'm really happy with that background and I consider myself pretty lucky to have been able to attend both university and art school. Of course, I can't speak for everyone coming from the Gerrit Rietveld Academie, but I think that, thanks to my studies there, I definitely developed a more open, curious attitude towards change. In a time like this, when things don't go as planned, using that creativity is downright fun and exciting."

On April 29, 2020, The Hmm organised a live-stream experiment investigating the platforms and tools best suited for virtual events and experience. Take a look at the Quarantine dossier (and many more) on thehmm.nl to read about The Hmm's thoughts on the role of internet in a time of self-isolation, including an interview with artist and Rietveld alumna Alina Lupu. Stay tuned by signing up for The Hmm newsletter and be sure to check out Lilian's newest app: the Emoji Voter!

And where is Lilian Stolk now? Finding herself, yet again, in a thrilling time. Not only is there a toddler running around the house, The Hmm's explorations of hybridity between on- and offline worlds proved to be requisite and visionary. Just recently, the platform was honoured with a nomination for the Amsterdamse prijs voor de Kunst, a prize for artists and organisations that offer a topical contribution to the city: "In a time like this especially, The Hmm's relevance is evident. The platform keeps us alert and critical towards Big Tech, and does this in a playful and creative manner." Lilian herself is just as excited. The cross-medial possibilities are still unfolding and things are growing all around her, both online and offline.

In a time like this - Lilian Stolk

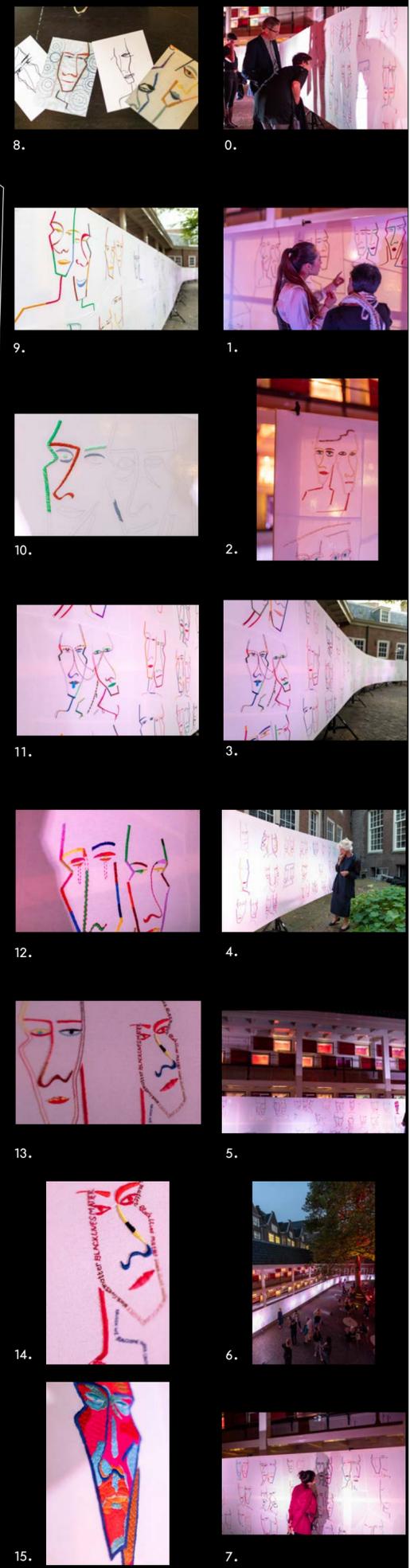


Karim Adduchi

- 0: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 1: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 2: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 3: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 4: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 5: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 6: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 7: Expo Social Distancing Fabric

- 8: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 9: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 10: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 11: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 12: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 13: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 14: Expo Social Distancing Fabric
- 15: Expo Social Distancing Fabric

The fabric of our time



Spring 2020. As the world came to a staggering halt, the vibrant life of Fashion alumnus Karim Adduchi slackened to a slower pace. Shows and events were cancelled or postponed; private clients briefly retreated. Usually working on multiple projects simultaneously and with a closely knit team, Karim now sat alone in his studio, quietly, like "in the beginning," when he had just steered from fine art to fashion at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie and worked day and night to make ends meet. Or before, when he had been painting portraits in Barcelona during his art studies there. Or even before that, when Karim had learned to speak through drawing, after he and his mother moved from Morocco to Spain to rejoin his father who had started working there a few years prior.

Just as much at ease with the unexpected slowness as he is with the hectic schedule of a critically acclaimed fashion designer, Karim describes his usual surroundings: "At the moment, I'm in my atelier. This is where I make samples and bespoke pieces for clients. It's a bit messy and, now that things are going back to normal, people are coming in and out again. For a while, that wasn't possible, of course, and it was just me, by myself, with my own thoughts."

Can you recall those thoughts? The ones that come with the quiet?

"I thought a lot about how lucky I feel to be a creative person, because creativity keeps you going. Sometimes it may seem like being a creative is the most fragile place to be in society, but we are also the strongest ones. Just look back at any crisis in history, at wars and pandemics; it's always creativity that pulls people through. Even when there's nothing left, we have our creativity. People tend to think: I need money to make something, or: I need a big platform for a project to work. But you don't need anything! All you need is an idea and the creativity to break it down into solutions."

"For me, those months in lockdown made me appreciate that strength more than ever. I felt so lucky to be able to draw and experiment in my studio. Many people don't have that, you know. They don't have that experience, that sense of creativity that assures you there's always a way out."

"So, while everything slowed down to a stop and got canceled, I started to make a plan with friends from the World Makers Foundation. We thought about how we could address the creativity in people and have them feel less lonely. I always want to bring people together, to create community, but because it wasn't possible to bring people together physically, we came up with a project that would connect them in a different way, each from their own home."

The project, titled Social [Distancing] Fabric and tethered to the foundation which Karim recently co-founded, was casually posted on Karim's instagram feed:

In this time of isolation, we want to connect, be creative, and make something to remember this time with color and hope. Join our collective embroidery work, and work with others, from your home. We will send you an envelope with fabric, needle, and thread. The fabric will have a drawing by designer Karim Adduchi. You can embroider the drawing according to your taste, using your technique and choice of colours (...).

To Karim's sincere surprise, the responses skyrocketed, expanding the sum of the collective fabric into two-hundred parts in total. And it could have been many more.

"Participants just kept signing up! It's such an example of the fact that people want to be creative, especially in a time like this. By now, we got about one-hundred embroidered pieces back and I'm really impressed by the work. Technically, the pieces show a lot of skill, even when coming from someone who might be embroidering for the very first time: the rhythm, the composition, the solutions people come up with, the precision of the stitching, or the freedom of it..."

Eventually, the fabric's puzzle will be pieced together, and in the process, Karim and his team will carefully collect every scrap of information that comes along with it: the embroidered pieces of fabric themselves, the age and whereabouts of participants, their background, their religion, small notes or long letters with personal stories; even the envelopes. All together, the Social [Distancing] Fabric will amass into a huge, embroidered collage, planned to be exhibited in the Amsterdam Museum conclusively.

Quite literally a fabric of our time?

"It is. And it should be! Fashion is a social document, just like photography, and painting, and journalism... It has to reflect the now. All the projects I work on say something about our time. And as artists, that's the story we need to tell. Every human being has a story to tell, but our job is to tell that story not only to ourselves, but to others; so they can learn something, question things, so that they feel understood and less alone."

Alumni Now* by Ceilina Yovajow

The fabric of our time – Karim Adduchi

"Anyone becoming an artist started that path for a reason: once in their life they saw something, read something, heard something that made them feel good, that they could instantly relate to. People need to relate, people need to feel welcome, and that's only possible if the story is human and real. It's a challenge, but it's important."

"Fashion, mostly, is an industry that sells dreams, but I'm not interested in the dream, I'm interested in reality. I need to draw from my own experience, from my own life, so that I actually have something to answer to. You can't fake it, really. If you do, it'll just be superficial."

This attitude has made Karim's collections stand out from the beginning, from the moment his graduation work caught the world's eye: the personal stories they tell, threading together glimpses of Karim's youth memories, nomadic ancestry, and traditional crafts from the country of his birth. His choice of material, like Berber carpets, reflect his cultural heritage; the shape and silhouettes of his garments capture something of both the natural and societal landscapes of North-Africa.

Even the titles of Karim's collections are like short stories in themselves: She lives behind the courtyard door, She has 99 names, She knows why the caged bird sings. "In the end, clothing is clothing; what makes it art or fashion is the story that comes with it" is a favoured quote in articles and editorials about Karim's work.

Considering your story, the fabric that you are made of, what threads were spun during your studies at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie?

"Studying at art school highly influenced my approach to fashion. Normally, when you're educated in a fashion school, you'll be taught how to make a collection, how to make it commercial, but you won't be taught to come up with innovative ideas. You won't learn about the possibility to match fashion with music, or art, or social work, because the focus is so explicitly on fashion itself."

"Just imagine only having an atelier where you can sew and stitch! At the Rietveld, the access to other workshops allows you to link all kinds of other disciplines to your own. Ceramics, wood... Once I found a chair and I made it into an outfit. Your brain is constantly shifting its perspective. You're constantly pushed out of the box, so to speak."

"That open mind was perfect for me because I love to experiment. I love using all kinds of material, to feel it with my hands, to listen to what it wants to become, to grow with it and mould my way through the process."

"I remember that, during my studies at the Rietveld, my fingers were always bleeding because I used my hands so much! It was hard: I had a full-time job next to school, working in a restaurant every night from 6-2, I was tired all the time and the communication with teachers wasn't always smooth, but I loved it and I did my best. And in the end, it all paid off. It was a relevant time. Thanks to my education, I don't see my work through the lenses of fashion alone. I'm a creative! And especially in our time's current fabric, that makes me feel very lucky."

And where is Karim Adduchi now? Busy as ever: his graduation work freshly acquired by Kunstmuseum Den Haag for their permanent collection and his brand new Freedom Dress, celebrating the common thread running between three world religions, showcased in De Nieuwe Kerk. The Social [Distancing] Fabric project has been transposed into an elegant publication designed by Graphic Design alumnus Brent Dahl and the embroidery of all participants have been sewn together into a panoramic windbreaker with the contours of countless colourful faces stitched diligently onto a common linen base. Karim in the centre of it all, stringing stories together, joining forces, never tiring from weaving the world into his work.

**PARTICIPATING
ALUMNI**

Karim Adduchi
Fashion graduate,
class of 2015
@karimadduchi
karimadduchi.com

Danielle Alhassid
Fine Arts graduate,
class of 2020
@dani.alha
daniellealhassid.com

Irene Ha
Fashion graduate,
class of 2020
@baby_reni
babyreni.nl

Tara-Eva Kuijpers Wentink
Fine Arts graduate,
class of 2020
@taraevakw_art
tara-evakw.com

Youngjin Park
Graphic Design graduate,
class of 2020
@ll_ll_s
ypark.info

Mayis Rukel
VAV - moving image graduate,
class of 2020
@mayisrukел
mayisrukел.com

Nadja Schlenker
designLAB graduate,
class of 2020
@nadjakimschlenker
nadjaschlenker.com

Lilian Stolk
Beeld & Taal graduate,
class of 2012
@the.hmm
lilianstolk.com
thehmm.nl

Celina Yavelow
Graphic Design graduate,
class of 2015
@celinayavelow
celinayavelow.com
chivesarchives.com
watnuoetsier.nl

Contact details

Colophon

ELEPHANT TRAILS
Alumni Journal, Issue #1 fall 2021

ASSEMBLED by
The Rietveld Society

INITIATIVE by
Bieneke Bennekens, Public Rietveld
On the occasion of the Elephant
Trails Talk, fall 2021

INTRODUCTION TEXT by
Sophia Zürcher, Public Rietveld

ALUMNI NOW by
Celina Yavelow

**LAUNCHING A CAREER WITH THE
HANDBRAKE ON by**
Edo Dijksterhuis

AM I AN ARTIST NOW? by
Tara-Eva Kuijpers Wentink
Translated by Jesse Lemmens

DESIGN by
Youngjin Park

TYPEFACE by
OPS Favorite
Akzidenz-Grotesk BQ

PRINTING by
Rodi Media 

SPECIAL THANKS to
Karim Adduchi, Danielle Alhassid,
Edo Dijksterhuis, Irene Ha, Tara-Eva
Kuijpers Wentink, Youngjin Park,
Mayis Rukel, Nadja Schlenker, Lilian
Stolk, Celina Yavelow and Sophia
Zürcher for all the conversations.

© The Rietveld Society 2021
Gerrit Rietveld Academie, Amsterdam

For more info about our alumni, The
Rietveld Society, Alumni Now and
our Alumni Portal (with a selection
of useful links for Rietveld Academie
alumni) check out
rietveldacademie.nl/alumni

*Alumni Now is a series of interviews with Rietveld graduates, some only just finished, some long done with their studies. Scattered across the world, alumni from all departments are paid a visit in their current workspace; whether it is a resin splattered studio, their own kitchen table, or a cubicle on the 8th floor of a high-rise. Looking back on their studies, they contemplate the unforeseen effects the Rietveld may have had on their life, their work, their values, and viewpoints. Some have pursued an artistic practice as planned, others find themselves on another path entirely. Whatever the case, the alumni talk about where they are now, what they are doing, and where they hope to be going — thanks to, or in spite of, their Rietveld degree. Their personal anecdotes, life stories, and memories offer multifaceted prospects to new students or anyone interested in the potential reverberations of an art school like the Gerrit Rietveld Academie.