

PRESS RELEASE

ART BLASÉ

ERIK VAN LIESHOUT

September 3 – October 10
Opening September 3, 5-9 PM

Annet Gelink Gallery proudly presents *Art Blasé*, Erik Van Lieshout's fourth solo exhibition at the gallery. Tackling the Coronavirus crisis and the current political and economic climate, *Art Blasé* – an anagram of that icon of the art world, Art Basel – forms Van Lieshout's account of the 'new normal'.

Art Blasé forms the overspill of a project Van Lieshout had been working on prior to the crisis hitting, a film about luxury, the art market and the position of the artist. To shoot footage for the film, Van Lieshout embarked on a cruise to Norway in the summer of 2019 aboard the *Nieuw Statendam*, the newest ship of the Holland America Line. Though the film was completed in March 2020, the première and its screening were postponed until 2021 due to Covid-19.



Erik van Lieshout, Studio view April 2020

Facing the abyss of quarantine, along with increasing cancellations of projects and shows, Van Lieshout kept following the course of cruise ships - a sudden focal point of the corona crisis. Prompted by the fate of the *Nieuw Statendam*, Van Lieshout investigated how the virus not only put a hold on daily life, infecting human bodies, but also infected the art market, the art world and the economy. The resulting drawings, collages and video work on view in *Art Blasé*, present a journal-like report of day-to-day life under the Coronavirus lockdown: the aimlessly floating cruise ships, the political grandstanding, the economic downturn and near collapse of the EU, the renewed joy in nature, the social unrest, the boredom. In typical fashion, Van Lieshout employs bold statements to uncover the subtler points of the anxiety surrounding the Coronavirus and its impact.

Anchor point to the show are two large collages of the *Nieuw Statendam* as it sails into Rotterdam. The ship was finally allowed to sail into Rotterdam after weeks at sea. The video work on view in *The Bakery* adds further context, with Van Lieshout's documenting of daily life interlaced with animations and performance.

With air travel and tourism complicated if not controversial and the economy looking evermore bleak, the current state of the artworld and its global span face an uncertain future. "Stay Home" Van Lieshout pleads, whilst remodeling the famous Art Basel typeface into an ironic new moniker. In the quagmire of mounting panic, whether political, economic or indeed sanitary related, Van Lieshout attempts to clear the path towards a new approach. As he states: "The crisis has made me a moralist. It is clear now that one can no longer talk about ecology and climate change while at the same time flying to openings or Biennales for talks and to show these same topics. Has global become local?"

Erik van Lieshout studied at the Academy of Art and design in 's Hertogenbosch and Ateliers '63 both situated in the Netherlands. His work has been internationally shown, featuring large solo and group exhibitions at MMK, Frankfurt (2019), Albertina Museum Vienna (2019), the South London Gallery (2017), Hannover Kunstverein (2017), Wiels Contemporary Art Centre, Brussels (2016), TENT Rotterdam, Pauluskerk, Rotterdam (2016), Tesseloniki Biennale, Tesseloniki (2015), Manifesta 10 St. Petersburg (2014), Center for Contemporary Culture - GCCC, Moscow (2014), Moscow Bienale, Moscow (2013), 55th Venice Biennale, Venice (2013), Manifesta 9 Genk (2012), Art Unlimited, Basel (2011), The Museum Boijmans van Beunigen, Rotterdam (2006) and many other.