

E-interview with Martin C. De Waal**Boris van Berkum e-interviews Martin C. DeWaal**

BvB: You've mentioned that you get bored and tired of comparisons with artists like Orlan because of the use of plastic surgery in your earlier work. Was that the reason for shifting gears? If not, what was?

MdW: The urban myth is that I used actual plastic surgery in my work, which I never did. It played a part in my work when I suggested in my interview performances that I did. The transformations whether they be made by computer manipulation or styling, make-up and a damn good acting ability, were never a goal in itself (like with Orlan) but merely a tool to come to a certain desired image suitable for the piece. Of course my work changes: that's evolution for ya! I still make, if you will, 'self portraits' but more like alter ego's in the form of like-minded people or even buildings take a place beside me in the pieces.

BvB: Could you tell us how this most recent panorama work came about?

MdW: I didn't set out to make a panorama as such. My "Nature" series, as I call it, consists of 'portraits' of buildings, elements in the artificial created landscape (the windmills and watertowers) and people that are basically single pieces stuck together in an ongoing work. The 'panoramic effect' is influenced by the way you view them each time a new element is added!

Nature: The longing to be people without future or past, constantly dragged back to the harsh reality of everyday life in the here and now. Jean Cocteau presented a world full of sailors that didn't exist and Dutch author Slauerhoff wrote poems claiming to document the romantic nomadic sea existence that never was. In my work I want to show that the models are well aware that they are trying to portray a non-existent self or world but they try nonetheless. And that's why I love them.

BvB: Performance has been a key feature of your work, but more recently, this has come to the forefront. Does your cooperation with The Ones and Vive la Fete have something to do with that? Could you tell us a bit about this work and what you're trying to do through it?

MdW: My performance work can be described as a "guest appearance" on all sorts of stages. This can be a museum, a gallery or a club. But a magazine can also be my stage! In The Ones and Vive La Fete I found like-minded people and that's why they became part of my work. "The Ones" are featured in this first Nature piece. Vive La Fete were part of a performance/installation piece I made in January 2004 for Cokkie Snoei Gallery in Rotterdam during the opening of the The New Gothic, art for the tortured soul exhibition. After Cokkie Snoei Gallery used my song 'Living on Warhol' as the invitation for the exhibition, music came to play a more dominant role in my work. There is a constant reinvention of the 'Entity' Duvall.

BvB: Has your work ever attracted any strong reactions? Any amusing anecdotes?

MdW: A crowd of 19 000 people were pretty stunned to see me perform this year with Belgian Electro band 'Vive La Fete' on the biggest Dutch outdoor festival: PinkPop. We surprised friend and foe with our version of the Donna Summer classic I Feel Love! Also the appearance I did in FOAM (Fotografie Museum Amsterdam) for the opening of the Guy Bourdin retrospective in September last year, where I performed Living on Warhol, was memorable for artist and public!

BvB: Whose work or ideas would you say has had an influence on your own work?

Painter - Willem de Kooning

Sculptor - Camille Claudel

Installations - Mexican artist Chico (Kunstcentrum Appel Amsterdam 70's)

Performance- Bas Jan Ader

Actor - Christian Bale

Fashion designer - Fong Leng

Entity - Mathilde Willink

BvB: What's next? Any interesting projects lined up?

MdW: New parts of the Nature series will be added! I will be exhibiting at Cell Project Space, London in the "Ladyshave" show. I am working on several new songs, amongst others one that has been written for me by Danny Mommens of Vive La Fete. I will make guest pages in several magazines. And, I will lend my name to a new (soon to be announced) Couture Label from the Netherlands, as a DUVALL-guest-appearance: I will design one piece in the collection. It will be launched in May in Amsterdam!

BvB: Any last words / thoughts or a motto for the day?

MdW: "Tread softly because you tread on my dreams" - W.B. Yeats

BvB: Thank you

MdW: You're very welcome.