

# GER VAN ELK

## EXPO Chicago

September 27 – 30, 2018

Navy pier, Chicago (IL)

BOOTH 332

GRIMM and BorzoGallery present a solo booth dedicated to Dutch artist Ger van Elk (1941-2014) at EXPO Chicago, 2018.

The presentation at EXPO Chicago is a recreation of Ger van Elk's last exhibition in the Netherlands before he passed away. Conceived as a mirror image of itself, the exhibition *As is, as was* at GRIMM consisted of four plexiglass wall-based objects and a single mobile hanging in the middle of the gallery space. Simultaneously, a variation of these works was exhibited at BorzoGallery in the exhibition titled *As was, as is*.

Continuing Van Elk's investigation into ongoing dualities like illusion and reality, presence and absence, each of these plexiglass works depict a different woman slowly turning away from the viewer as the perspex sheets approach to the wall. The hanging mobile, consisting of two crossed plexiglass sheets with images of multiple figures printed on them, reveals itself only as the viewer circles around the work.

In addition Van Elk presented at each gallery a series of his "Conclusions", that will also be exhibited at EXPO Chicago. This series consists of painted-over photographs of different urban and rural landscapes, a historical Dutch painting genre, that are pulled into abstraction by the multiple layers of paint that are added to the photograph printed on canvas. The color of the acrylic paint is based on the main colors of the landscape or cityscape predominant in the photograph, for instance a white snow landscape in Santa Moritz or the black volcanic rock façade of the Clermont-Ferrand cathedral. The results are apparent monochromes that still show a glimpse of the underlying landscapes, on the thick edges of the canvas. The layers of paint are not smooth and blank like most monochrome paintings, but the texture of the paint is patterned. While the image becomes invisible, the brush strokes in the paint form a cloudy pattern that establishes a new landscape or image. The title of the series, *Conclusions*, implies an end. Possibly the end of painting, but the blank canvases can simultaneously be seen as a new beginning.



Ger van Elk | *Portrait - As is, as was* | 2012



Ger van Elk | *Conclusions II - Vejer de la Frontera "Red"* | 2012

not for publication

For more information, interview and royalty free image requests please contact the gallery in New York.  
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GRIMM



Ger van Elk | *As is, As was* | 2012 | Installation view

## About the artist

Ger van Elk (NL, 1941-2014) belonged to the avant-garde generation of conceptual artists that shaped the art of the late 1960s and '70s onwards. As an interdisciplinary artist averse to conventions, Van Elk's multifaceted oeuvre contains installations, actions, photography, painting, sculpture and new media. The theoretical foundation underlining his career was the rejection of traditional views on the art object and a general criticism of the production of art in general.

Van Elk studied at the Art and Design College in Amsterdam (now Rietveldacademie), where he became friends with Bas Jan Ader. He also studied Art History at the Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles (US) and at the University of Groningen (NL). In 1969 Van Elk participated in the groundbreaking exhibition *When Attitudes Become Form* at Kunsthalle Bern (DE) and *Op Losse Schroeven: Situaties en Cryptostructuren* at the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam (NL); the latter exhibition marked the introduction of conceptual art

in the Netherlands. He often exhibited at Art & Project, a leading contemporary art gallery in the Netherlands (1986-2001).

Van Elk's work is shown extensively and is the subject of an upcoming retrospective at the Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam (NL). Recently his work was exhibited at the Kröller-Müller Museum in Otterlo (NL), at the Prada Foundation in Venice (IT) that recreated *When Attitudes Become Form*, and at La Casa Encendida in Madrid (SP).

His work can be found in the collections of the Art Institute of Chicago (US); The Museum of Modern Art, New York (US); Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris (FR); Musée de Peinture, Grenoble (FR); National Galleries Scotland, Edinburgh (UK); National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne (AU); S.M.A.K., Ghent (BE); Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam (NL); Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam (NL); Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (NL); Van Abbe Museum, Eindhoven (NL); as well as in many international private collections.

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