

# Ger van Elk

## *As is, as was*

Opening: September 8, 2012 from 5-7 at BORZO,  
Keizersgracht 516 & GRIMM, Frans Halsstraat 26.

*In presence of the artist.*

BORZO and GRIMM are pleased to announce the solo show *As is, as was* | *As was, as is* of Ger van Elk in both gallery spaces. Van Elk will present at BORZO the retrospective *As was, as is* with a selection of work made during his career. At GRIMM his most recent work and new photographic installations will be presented in the exhibition *As is, as was*.

Ger van Elk (1941) is a member of the heroic avant-garde generation, which formed the art of the late 1960s and '70s. For more than forty years Van Elk has been working on his multifaceted oeuvre containing installations, actions, photography, painting, sculpture and new media. The theoretical foundation underlining his career is the rejection of traditional views on the art object and the production of art in general. Like many of his contemporaries he was preoccupied by issues such as authorship and the original, questions that proved to be highly significant in the development of conceptual art. Van Elk was amongst equally minded artists such as John Baldessari, Gilbert & George, Vito Acconci and Joseph Kosuth who, disenchanted with art as a decorative commodity, developed alternative ways of working. In their attempts to redefine the art object and to deal with long-standing approaches to art, they each came independently to similar conclusions in particular the use of language and mechanical reproduction techniques.

Ger van Elk's often rebellious, as well as witty and playful expressions, rests on the premise that art is simultaneously a real and fictional construct. "*What I want is a realistic representation of non-realistic situations*", Van Elk explains. This tension between reality and imagination, between presence and absence, is one of the leitmotifs behind Van Elk's oeuvre. Another reoccurring element is the reference to the art-historical canon and combining the classical artistic techniques of painting with the latest technical possibilities, re-classifying the traditional categories.



**GRIMM**

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Ger van Elk's most recent work consists of two parts, which will be exhibited in two places simultaneously: Borzo Galerie and Grimm. The titles reflect the dual nature of this artwork: As is, as was. As was, as is. Although it seems the same, there is a slight difference. One work is particularly made in and for the space of Galerie Borzo, and the other in and for the space of Grimm. In addition the dual character underlines the nature of the work, a combination of two and three dimensions, and to be regarded as a painting or sculpture.

Like most of Ger van Elk's older and more mature work, this can also be read as a reprise of his themes, or as an anthology of his work. It refers both to the all-important coordinates in La Pièce as to the melancholy tone of the series Adieu. New here is the impressionistic meditation on the eternal feminine, sometimes appearing then disappearing. As in a dream, or - perhaps - a bad dream?

Ger van Elk (1941, Amsterdam) attended the Rietveld-academie to 1965. He moved to LA in 1963 and enrolled at the Immaculate Heart Collage. In 1965 he studied Art History at the Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. His work is included in the collection of Tate (London), MoMA (New York), the Van Abbemuseum (Eindhoven) and the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, amongst others, and has exhibited in numerous international museum and gallery exhibition such as 30/40 at Marian Goodman Gallery (New York) and most recently in La Casa Encendida (Madrid) and The art Institute of Chicago. Van Elk was awarded the Van Lanschotprijs in 1996 and in 2004 he received the Oeuvreprijs Fonds BKVB, in honor of his entire body of work.

The exhibition runs at the Frans Halsstraat 26, 1072 BR in Amsterdam from September 8 till October 14, 2012

GRIMM is open from Wednesday till Saturday, from 12:00 am to 6:00 pm.

For more information, please contact:  
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