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Biennale of the Art of Painting

the joy of looking

29.06 – 21.09.2008

Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens - Roger Raveelmuseum

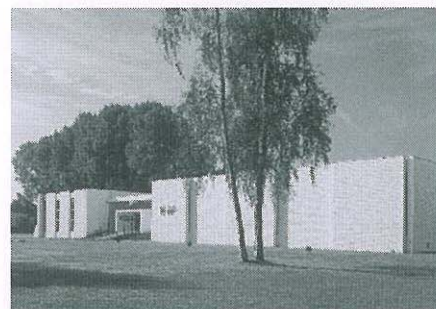
The great esteem in which Mr and Mrs Dhondt-Dhaenens held the early twentieth-century Flemish painters resulted in the foundation of the eponymous museum in Deurle. And what could attest more to Roger Raveel's great passion for the noble art of painting than his own museum in Machelen-aan-de-Leie? Roger Raveel is actually not simply a painter—he embodies the art of painting itself.

It is precisely this boundless love of the founders for the art of painting that links both institutions. From their persistent fascination with paint and the canvas the need grew to share their passion and to keep it alive in our digital age. It is therefore not the aim of this biennale to confront the most recent and most trendy products of unrestrained artistic violence. Rather, we present a subjective enquiry into a number of paths the art of painting has followed during the past hundred years.

For the first edition of this biennale, we compiled a selection of works, not strictly based however on a criterion that takes into account the subject represented. In each instance the artist has chosen an arbitrary subject as an alibi for painting itself—the actual themes of these artists are form, colour, texture, light and shadow, imagination, the evocation of various emotions, the sensuality of the skin of paint. These artists are not iconoclasts, yet they are true innovators. They attempt to inscribe themselves in the great tradition of painting and consider the past as a companion who escorts them on their quest for themselves. In the end, this is all about an open-minded approach to the medium, regardless of artistic trends.

The oldest works at this exhibition are from *Lovis Corinth*, *Jean Brusselmans*, *Constant Permeke* and *Francis Picabia*. The most recent are from *Laura Owens*, *Wilhelm Sasnal*, *Koen van den Broek*, *Jan Van Imschoot* and *Anselm Reyle*. Though chronologically the exhibition spans a long period, the number of artists is limited. We have deliberately chosen to present ensembles of artists to enable the public to sense how the artists think and to make it possible to grasp the subtle differences of their individual quest.

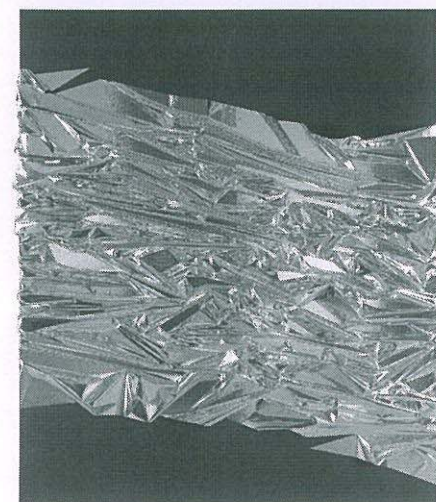
Every two years, we will choose a different approach for the biennale. We invite the public to regard the art of painting from an ever-new perspective, to reflect and dream about it, to taste it. Neither time, nor style, nor artistic school are relevant in this regard. This biennale neither pretends for that matter to be objective, nor exhaustive. Rather, it is about enjoying the many lovers that are all called painting. The subtitle is therefore "The Joy of Looking".



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Images

1. MDD (museum Dhondt-Dhaenens)
2. Jean Brusselmans, *Naakt met wit laken*, 1937, olieverf op doek, 134,6 x 124,6 cm, Collectie Vlaamse Overheid
3. Anselm Reyle, *Zonder titel*, 2007, Mixed media op doek, acrylglass, 234 x 199 x 25 cm, Collectie Vanmeerberke, Oostende