

KIERK EXPLORES AT ANY MOMENT HIS IMMEDIATE SENSORIAL EXPERIENCE.¹² THE BEATY OF TRUCKS IS THAT THEY ARE MOVING LIKE HEAVY COWS.



TYPICALLY AN ARTISTS' THOUGHT.

Creative Dystopian 反乌托邦的创作者

Jelle Bouwhuis

Jelle Bouwhuis is an art historian and contemporary art researcher. He has curated over forty international solo and group exhibitions, mostly for Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam and Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, but also large shows such as *Spaces of Exception* for the Moscow Biennale 2013. His intensive long-term, curatorial research projects include: *Project 1975* (2010–2012) and *Global Collaborations* (2013–2015). *Project 1975* comprised institutional collaborations in Amsterdam, Accra and Dakar and a publication of the same title in 2014. *Global Collaborations* included collaborative exhibitions, discussion programmes and publications in Amsterdam, Yogyakarta, Beirut, Belgrade and Mumbai in addition to the alternative, collection-related exhibition in the Stedelijk Museum, "How Far How Near". In 2010, Bouwhuis was a recipient of the Abraaj Capital Art Prize (UAE). In 2009 he initiated the large outdoor exhibition *Paul McCarthy – Air Pressure* for the city of Utrecht (NL). Bouwhuis frequently publishes on art and art theory.

耶勒·包豪斯是一位艺术史家，亦是一位当代艺术研究者。他曾为超过40场的国际艺术个展及群展担任策展人，其中大部分是在阿姆斯特丹市立美术馆和阿姆斯特丹市立博物馆举行的展会，但也有2013莫斯科双年展上“例外空间”这样的大型活动。他精心运作的长期策展研究项目有“1975计划”（2010–2012）和“全球合作”（2013–2015）。“1975计划”由阿姆斯特丹、阿克拉、达喀尔多地合作，于2014年出版同名刊物。“全球合作”除阿姆斯特丹市立博物馆的藏品展《多远多近》外还包括阿姆斯特丹、日惹、贝鲁特、贝尔格莱德和孟买的联合展览、讨论会及出版物。2010年，包豪斯获得阿布拉依艺术奖（UAE）。2009年他在乌得勒支市（UL）组织了大型户外展览《保罗·麦卡锡-气压》。包豪斯多有艺术及艺术理论方面的作品发表。

故事开始于2006年,佩德罗·贝克尔成功申请加入了阿姆斯特丹市立博物馆发起的艺术家驻留计划。这个驻留计划的构思来自英国艺术家克里斯·伊文斯,是2006年秋天“武装的中产阶级:存在主义者的静修”项目的一个组成部分。在“存在主义者的静修”项目中,艺术家就住在一间“波特卡宾”里,这是一种在工地上使用的活动棚屋。它被改造成临时居所,放置在阿姆斯特丹的环城公路沿线。这样安排是受到了J.G.巴拉德的反乌托邦小说《水泥岛屿》的启发,小说中主角就是被困在公路中间的安全岛上。伊文斯这个计划的要旨是让艺术家们住在偏远而不舒适的地方经受折磨,这种折磨正是要成为一位杰出的艺术家或要像伦勃朗、梵高那样享誉世界所必经的——他们至今仍被大众视为因任性率性、坚持创作自由而饱受戕害的典型。¹

贝克尔是第一个申请者。他大老远地从弗里斯兰——一个远离该国工业和文化中心的偏远的农业省——赶来,进行为期一个礼拜的驻留。在此期间他创作了题为《P. Kierk到底是不是个艺术家?》的系列画作。此前贝克尔画里的主角常常是奶牛,这种生物在弗里斯兰到处都是,来到“存在主义者的静修”项目安排的环境后,他立刻被那儿同样无处不在的车辆吸引了,尤其是卡车。从他所住的那个路口看来,他的新描绘对象,用他的话来说“走得还没奶牛快呢”。

那时,在供职于阿姆斯特丹大都会艺术中心的在我看来,贝克尔是一位局外艺术家。他来自边远的弗里斯兰,是艺术学校的辍学生,有精神病史,十五年来一直沉迷于描绘“天真无邪”的奶牛。他是个局外人,在“存在主义者的静修”之后,他开始走进严肃意义上的艺术圈,但仍使用着他局外人的身份。²

贝克尔对现在已被视为局外艺术家代表人物的亨利·达戈(1892-1973)的迷恋催生了我的这些看法。达戈是一名美国的医院雇工,他痴迷地秘密创作了一大批水彩画,灵感来自一桩儿童谋杀案的新闻剪报。达戈的作品启发了贝克尔,他以他母亲掐死自己的婴孩(他的弟弟),后来自杀为主题进行创作。乍看之下,贝克尔的身份与达戈很相似:同样对自杀、谋杀和死亡无法自拔,同样通过绘画而非写作来为自己立传。他也将自己的过去导入了画作,只是在极端和偏执的程度比达戈略轻一些。

局外艺术家

尽管“局外艺术家”这个词看来有拒绝被归类的意味,“局外艺术”却已经成为了艺术史上的一个类别。“局外艺术”被用来形容那些在公认的艺术圈之外进行创作的艺术家的作品。局外艺术家得名于他们的边缘位置:他们要么是找不到门路进入艺术圈,要么根本就没打算找。同样地,他们有的知道这个圈子的存在,有的则根本不知。从前,局外艺术指的是精神异常者、隐居者、儿童、“原始人”或部落民(不管那具体指什么)的艺术,但渐渐地也涵盖了一些自学成才的艺术家和手艺人——他们没有受过正规的学院训练——的艺术。局外艺术最初在浪漫主义运动时期得到公众认可,

¹ 见《阿姆斯特丹市立博物馆艺术计划简报》2006年92号(从www.smba.nl可下载PDF文件)。
² 关于这一点的重要文章是科林·罗兹2000年发表的《局外艺术:自发的替代品》。

This story starts with Pedro Bakker's successful application for an artist residency initiated by Stedelijk Museum Bureau Amsterdam in 2006. The concept of the residency was developed by British artist Chris Evans, as part of the project *Militant Bourgeois: An Existentialist Retreat* in autumn 2006. The physical residence of the Existentialist Retreat consisted of a mere Portakabin, the type of mobile hut used on building sites. This was adapted to function as a temporary dwelling located along the ring road of Amsterdam. The choice for this location was inspired by J. G. Ballard's dystopian novel *Concrete Island*, in which the main character gets trapped on a motorway island. The principal idea of Evans' project was that artists must suffer by staying in remote and unwelcoming places if they wanted to be any good or enjoy fame like that of Rembrandt or, of course, Van Gogh. Popular opinion still views them as victims of their wilfulness and claims to artistic autonomy.¹

Bakker was the first artist to apply. He came all the way from Friesland—a rural province in the north of the Netherlands, a remote place in the eyes of the industrial and cultural heart of the nation—for a one-week residency during which he created a series of drawings entitled *Is P. Kierk an Artist or Not?* Bakker was used to painting portraits of cows, creatures in abundance in rural Friesland, but in the immediate surroundings of the Existentialist Retreat, he became fascinated by the equal abundance of cars and especially trucks. His new subjects, in his own words, “hardly moved any faster than cows” at the specific junction where the residency was situated.

From my view from the metropolitan art centre of Amsterdam, at that time I thought of Bakker as an outsider artist. He was an art-school dropout from the periphery of Friesland with a psychologically troubled past who had been obsessed with painting “innocent” cows for 15 years. He was an outsider, but after the Existentialist Retreat, he was an outsider who had begun to manoeuvre the serious art world while still making use of his outsider position.²

My opinion was motivated by Bakker's fascination with Henry Darger (1892-1973), currently considered representative of outsider artists. Darger is an American hospital employee who obsessively and secretly painted a vast body of watercolours inspired by news clippings about a child murder. Darger's work gave Bakker the tools he needed to draw his mother strangling her baby (his brother) as well as committing suicide much later. So at first sight,

¹ See SMBA Newsletter no. 92, 2006 (download the pdf from www.smba.nl).
² The key tekst on Outsider Art in this case is Colin Rhoades, “Outsider Art: Spontaneous Alternatives”, 2000.

颂扬原始、野性、淳朴、真实，视之为学院派培养方式和教条之外的另一选择。到20世纪，局外艺术家变成了与学院派艺术家对立的“他者”。他(大多数情况下艺术家是男性)是启蒙运动价值观所塑造的富于可塑性、以走向更好的未来或世界为目标的艺术家身上的消极印记。随着1929年的纽约当代美术馆、第二次世界大战后欧洲的一批艺术机构——如阿姆斯特丹市立美术馆的成立，当代艺术的地位得到确立，局外艺术也成为了一个固定的类别，常在当代艺术机构举办展览。局外艺术成为了旨在追求表达自由的解放运动的一部分，这种追求正是建立当代美术馆的动力。虽然在20世纪60年代中期之后，人们几乎已不再对局外艺术感兴趣了，但直至今日，在许多艺术机构里，艺术上的局外人位置仍常被与其反面或说对立面——圈内——相提并论。例如，2001年纽约的PS1美术馆就举办过达戈的作品展，2013威尼斯双年展再次把局外艺术带到了聚光灯下。2013威尼斯双年展的首席策展人马西密里阿诺·济欧尼说：“如果你眼里只有大师和专业艺术家，你就相当于把艺术只当做视觉娱乐。而我想要看到艺术本身，一个生与死的问题。”³

在20世纪50年代，局外艺术开始得到普遍认可。也许有些反讽地，局外人进入了美术馆，这在很大程度上要归功于局外艺术的主要拥趸，对儿童画借鉴尤多的法国艺术家让·杜布菲。杜布菲的作品在西欧被广泛收藏。其他局外艺术家在欧洲得到他的推介，作品也常被各美术馆收藏，但他们未曾得到与杜布菲一样的认同和成功。今天，在普遍意义上的艺术界，这些“局外人”代表着理想主义的缺乏和对艺术的历史与未来的纷乱复杂的看法。



At Angeline Junction and Strangled in Henry Darger. In the Realms of the Unreal. John. M. MacGregor. p. 609.

如果要为贝克尔写墓志铭，这句“生与死的问题”再合用不过了。而局外人的立场还很适宜于对抗如今艺术界沸反盈天的不追求任何解放理想、但求迎合娱乐业需求的积极论。站在边缘的局外艺术家们能挑战那种“永远向前”走向“更美好的”未来的积极论观点。在他的《P. Kierk》系列画作中，贝克尔提醒我们，正如克尔凯郭尔所言，“审美的选择不算选择”。事实上艺术家必须在善与恶中作选择。“局外”与艺术圈的关系，就如同善与恶，是相互依存的。

贝克尔的作品明显受到法国哲学家乔治·巴塔耶的影响，尤其是他对阿塞法勒(Acéphale)的调用——阿塞法勒是一个无头的神话人物，象征着被理性主义(法西斯主义被视为其体现)统治之外的另一选择。阿塞法勒代表人性中阴暗未驯的一面。贝克尔不仅曾把自己画成阿塞法勒的样子，还在讲述他母亲故事的画作《永恒回归/我的母亲和乔治·B.》(1943)中让巴塔耶扮演了重要角色。在这个系列的画作中，他将他的母亲直接与巴塔耶联系在一起，对善与恶作一种贴近的、个人化的描摹。循着1943年的电

3 见科林·巴瑞2013年5月31日发表在《赫芬顿邮报》网站(HuffingtonPost.com)上的《2014威尼斯双年展歌颂局外人》。

Bakker's position is much like Darger's: he too is preoccupied with suicide, murder and death, but draws on autobiography instead of journalism. He channels his past into drawings, though less obsessively and less monomaniacally than Darger.

The Outsider Artist

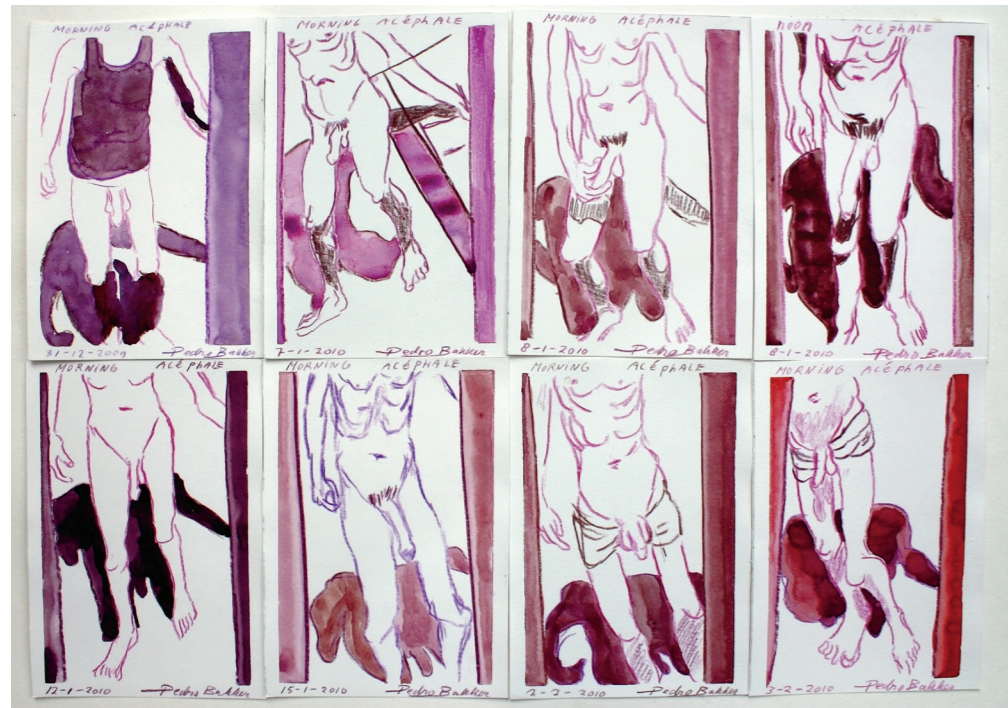
Although the term outsider artist would seem to resist categorisation, “outsider art” has nonetheless become an art-historical category. Outsider art refers to the work of those who venture outside what constitutes the generally recognised boundaries of the art world is considered outsider art. Outsider artists are called thus because of their position on the fringe: they either have no access to it or simply do not seek access to it; equally, they may even be unaware of it or vice versa. Traditionally, outsider art is the art of mentally ill people, hermits, children, “primitive” or tribal peoples (whatever that may mean), but has also come to include a variety of self-taught artists or craftsmen—that is, without formal academic training. Outsider art was first recognised during Romanticism, as a celebration of the primitive, the savage, the pure and the authentic as alternatives to the conditioning methods and disciplines of the academy. In the 20th century, the outsider artist became the “other” of the academically formed artist. He (for it was usually a he) was the negative imprint of the artist who had been shaped by Enlightenment ideals of malleability and teleological progress towards a better future or world. When modernist art became institutionalised, starting with the foundation of the Museum of Modern Art in New York in 1929 and various institutions in Europe after the Second World War, such as the Stedelijk Museum Amsterdam, outsider art became an established category that was often exhibited in the same institutions. Outsider art had become part of an emancipatory movement towards freedom of expression, and this was the driving force behind the creation of the museum of modern art. Although interest in outsider art had died out almost entirely after the mid-1960s, the outsider position in art is still regularly juxtaposed to its inverse or opposite—the inside—in many institutions today. For example, PS1 in New York organised a Darger exhibition in 2001, while the 2013 Venice Biennale put outsider art in the spotlight again. To quote the 2013 Biennale's head curator, Massimiliano Gioni, “If you just stick to the masters and professionals, you sort of frame art as visual entertainment. I wanted to see art as it is, as a matter of life or death”.³

3 In Colleen Barry, “Venice Biennale 2013 Celebrates The Outsider”, HuffingtonPost.com, 31 May 2013.

影《永恒回归》的脚本，贝克尔把他母亲和巴塔耶描绘成一对幸福的情侣——母亲是个“乡村女孩”，巴塔耶是一位“风度翩翩的学者”。

贝克尔对他局外位置的模糊性非常清楚。而他了解艺术圈里的规则，也热切地努力进入这个圈子，这对普遍意义上的局外人是难以想象的。他像达戈和巴塔耶一样，借助作为局外人的独立自主来探索消极论和积极论的纠缠。在这一系列问题上，艺术圈是积极论的体现。例如，像美术馆之类艺术机构要继续存在，前提就是对人性及其未来的积极解读。毕竟他们的主要任务是收集——似乎永远如此。但艺术圈“内”的艺术家，与局外艺术家一样，没必要做出一副与代表他们的艺术机构相同的积极姿态。

贝克尔并不打算创造或预见一个更好的世界。基本上，他的作品是对积极论和目的论思想的质问。他不认同这种思想，至少不认同它的简单、制式化的表现。从《P. Kierk到底是不是个艺术家?》开始的一系列探询，重新界定了贝克尔与艺术圈相对的局外艺术家的位置。《永恒回归》系列(由博恩特·荷姆作序)是他首次尝试通过自传、史实和纯虚构的结合，对善与恶的二元存在进行严肃探讨。



Acéphale 12-31-09 till 2-3-10, 8 drawings. Dimensions: 21 x 14.9 cm. Coloured pencil and watercolour on paper.

In the 1950s, outsider art began to receive institutional recognition. Perhaps ironically, the outsider entered the museum, largely thanks to outsider art's main proponent, French artist Jean Dubuffet, who drew heavily from children's drawings among other things. Dubuffet's work can be found in many Western European modern art collections. While he also promoted other outsider artists in Europe, and while museums also collected their works, these outsider artists did not enjoy the same level of recognition or success as Dubuffet.

In the institutional art world of today, the outsider has come to represent a lack of idealism and a troubled, complicated vision of both the history and future of art.

As an epitaph, “a matter of life and death”, fits Bakker like a glove. But the outsider position is also highly suited to resisting the burning positivism of the art world, which today clearly caters to the entertainment industry rather than any emancipatory idealism. From the fringes, outsider artists can challenge positivistic ideas of always *going forward* towards a *better* future. In his *P. Kierk* drawings, Bakker reminds us, with a nod to Kierkegaard, that an “aesthetic choice is no choice”. Instead, the artist must choose between good and evil. As the outsider position is to the art world, so too do good and evil exist interdependently.

The influence of French philosopher Georges Bataille is clear in Bakker's work, especially his invocation of Acéphale, a headless, mythological figure. Acéphale symbolised an alternative to the dominance of rationalism (which was seen to be embodied by fascism). Acéphale stands for the dark and untamed side of humanity. Not only has Bakker portrayed himself as Acéphale, but Bataille also features in his rendering of his mother's story: *L'Éternel Retour/Ma Mère et Georges B.* (1943). In this series of drawings he relates his mother directly to Bataille in an intimate, personal depiction of good and evil. Following the script of the 1943 movie *L'Éternel Retour*, Bakker makes his mother and Bataille a happy couple—his mother a “pastoral girl” and Bataille a “charismatic intellectual”.

Bakker is very aware of the ambiguous status of his outsider position. Yet he knows how the art world works and is eager to manoeuvre through it, which would have been unthinkable to the classic outsider. Like Darger and Bataille, he uses the sovereignty of his outsider status to explore the entanglement of negativism and positivism. In this constellation, the art world is the embodiment of positivism. For example, institutions like museums must take a



Burnt Home 1, charcoal on paper, 80x110 cm, 2009.

政治性的画

在《政治性的画》系列中，贝克尔首次进入了历史政治事件，尤其是发生在荷兰的那些面目模糊的历史政治事件。这些事件典型地体现了不同历史时期各地局势的复杂性——不管在荷兰还是中国。贝克尔通过自己的历史观加深了这些事件的复杂性。他用自传式的迷狂和对善恶关系的探询将这些事件层层过滤，再呈现出来。

《政治性的画》三部曲中的第一幅打着自传的烙印。《1970年6月4日的重现》的创作以报纸上

的一张新闻照片为蓝本，照片记录了一场反对旧式教育系统的学生运动。六·四学运是在1968年巴黎五月风暴的启发下发生的，是一场政治运动的一部分，该运动旨在呼吁社会改革，以为自我决定和自我表达争取更大空间。当时还是一个青年学生的贝克尔出现在了原始照片中，而在他根据这张照片创作的画里，他以四十二年后的面目出现。这幅画完成于“占领运动”时期，当时人们以此运动抗议全球资本主义带来的（译者按：与学运时期）形式相似的家长制。

《重现》向我们展现了荷兰历史上一个特殊时刻的画面，而该系列的第二幅作品《纪念1871》的历史主题表现得更加精细。这件作品以一幅画的篇幅总结了与艺术家的关注焦点相关的一系列事件。

同样，这幅画的历史背景仍然是在阶级革命和大众解放——这一次是工人阶级的解放——过程中人性的发展。中心人物是19世纪荷兰第一位在国会占有一席之地社会主义者费迪南德·多梅拉·纽文休斯。画面描绘了贝克尔所在的弗里斯兰的泥炭工人，纽文休斯曾支持这里的劳动者要求加薪的运动。他手里拿着一本他在1871年创办的社会主义杂志《同享公正》(Recht voor Allen)的出版物。这位女士是他的四个妻子之一⁴，因此她的形象在画面中重复出现，扮演着卫士的角色。纽文休斯那四位都叫乔安娜的妻子对他产生了深刻影响，尤其在女性主义方面。按照荷兰传统观念，男性角色纽文休斯一直被视为重要的历史人物，而在贝克尔的画中，男人背后的女性角色也得到了表现。这是贝克尔的典型风格，使人想起他之前在《永恒回归/我的母亲和乔治·B.》(1943)中将他精神异常、有自杀倾向的母亲与乔治·巴塔耶配对的做法。

《政治性的画》系列的第三幅，亦即最后一幅，是创作于2014年的纪念性场景画《奸羊者》。《奸羊者》的背景设置在一个光线幽暗的公园里，2004年11月，声名狼藉的荷兰电影制片人、伊斯兰教抨击者提奥·梵·高在这里被一个摩洛哥裔穆斯林刺死。梵·高曾恶劣地对荷兰的摩洛哥裔及其他穆斯林进行种族侮辱，充满色情意味地称他们为“奸羊者”，据此该画描绘了肥胖的梵·高正试图与一只山羊交媾的情景。这个蔑称本出于伊朗前总统阿亚托拉·柯梅尼的一句俏皮话，说男人在妻子身体不适时（行经

4 为“妻子”充当模特儿的是声音艺术家、演员罗贝塔·佩丘特，她还在贝克尔的画前演出中扮演了这几个不同的乔安娜。

positive view of humanity and its future in order to continue to exist. After all, their main task is to collect—for eternity, it seems. But artists *inside* the art world, like their outsider counterparts, need not necessarily share the positivist outlook of the institutions that represent them.

Bakker does not want to create or envision a better world. Fundamentally, his work questions positivism and teleological thinking. He negates such thought, at least simplistic institutional manifestations of it. The line of questioning that began with *Is P. Kierk an Artist or Not?* redefined Bakker's position as an outsider artist in relation to the art world. *L'Éternel Retour* (preceded by *Burnt Home*) is his first serious attempt to creatively negotiate the good/evil dichotomy through a combination of autobiography, historical fact and pure fiction.

To Draw Politically

To Draw Politically is Bakker's first foray into historical, political events, specifically obscure events that occurred in the Netherlands. The events typify the local complexities of historic moments anywhere—in Holland or in China. Bakker enhances the complexity of these events with his historicism. He presents the events through a filter of layers of biographical obsessions and questions about the relativity of good and evil.



Re-Enactment, June 4th, 1970
→ 132

The first work in the *To Draw Politically* trilogy bears the stamp of autobiography. *Re-Enactment, June 4th, 1970* is based on a newspaper photo of a student protest against what they considered an old-fashioned education system. Inspired by the Paris demonstrations of May 1968, the June 4th protest was part of a movement that

demanded reform to make more room for more self-determination and self-expression. Bakker, who appears in the original photograph as a young student, reappears in this drawn copy of the picture, but now 42 years older. The drawing was made during the Occupy movement, which protested similar forms of paternalism associated with the reign of global capitalism.

期间)应该去跟骆驼行房。在贝克尔的《奸羊者》中,画面左边走来一个流着经血的女人,旁边还跟着一头公羊。

1989年铁幕时代结束,1991年华沙公约组织解散,自此积极论长期笼罩着荷兰社会,梵·高的遇刺及之前发生的一系列事件在多个层面上象征着这一时期的结束。梵·高的惨遭杀害成为欧洲历史上的重要事件,因为它振聋发聩地警醒了我们,不能继续像冷战时期那样,把世界看成一个同质性的整体了。⁵

提奥·梵·高在《奸羊者》中的出现,再一次显示出富于创造性的局外人的巨大潜力。他被表现为一个创意十足的狂人,自以为可以置身事外地评论这个社会。贝克尔也是这样一个人,他运用极大的想象力来处理类似这桩政治谋杀的敏感事件,委实可算不敬——然而这幅画的氛围却显得极富感情。这一切,以及画中对女人的安排,都明确体现了贯穿于贝克尔所有作品中的巴塔耶的消极性。⁶

描述性、叙事性的画

贝克尔的一些画作附有文字部分,如《P. Kierk》系列的22幅画都像漫画小说里的画一样附有表达人物想法的台词,但其绘画风格可被形容为“叙事性的”则不仅是因此。贝克尔《永恒回归/我的母亲和乔治·B.》(1943)中的视觉叙事就是受到了简·德拉诺伊的电影《永恒回归》的剧照的启发。



In Memory of 1871 (Domela Nieuwenhuis),
→ 140

从其作品对描述的运用上,我们也能清楚地看出贝克尔是一位带有“作家气息”的艺术家。融入了漫画小说和电影布景元素的构图更加复杂。这些方法使得它们讲述的故事能容纳更多细节。《纪念1871》和另外一些作品,例如《焚毁的

家》系列中的某些画作和《贝克尔的漫游2011》1号作品(《我,T·莫尔和“拍手”们》)就正是如此。

贝克尔用明亮的色彩在亮白的纸上作画,制造出一种印象派的效果,但他叙事性的风格和对史实与个人解读的混融则完全背离了人们对印象派的传统理解。由于主题的史诗性、动态性和暴烈特质,贝克尔的印象主义将狂暴注入了博纳尔或塞尚式的平静场景,这在印象派风格的《奸羊者》中体现得最为明显。继对梵·高故事的沉迷之后,贝克尔又对另一个敏感、复杂的历史人物“██████”产生了强烈兴趣。不过特别的是,他对这一人物的处理比对梵·高要温柔许多,较多地使用了印象派场景的宁静氛围。

5 梵·高事件似乎也为法国小说家米歇尔·韦勒贝克提供了灵感,他的新作《屈服》和梵·高与世界知名的社会活动家、伊斯兰教者抨击者阿扬·赫西·艾里合作的电影同名。
6 在动画《嘲笑黑格尔》中,贝克尔当面嘲笑黑格尔,但气氛很愉快。

Whereas *Re-Enactment* offers us a picture of a specific, minor moment in Dutch history, the historical motif of the second work in the series, *In Memory of 1871*, is more elaborate. Narrated in one picture frame, the work summarises a variety of events connected with the artist's preoccupations.

Here too, the historical context is the progress of humanity through class liberation and emancipation of the masses — this time, the labouring class. The central figure is Ferdinand Domela Nieuwenhuis, the first Dutch socialist to hold a seat in parliament during the 19th century. The scene features peat workers in Friesland, where Bakker lives, and where Nieuwenhuis supported the labourers' demands for better wages. In his hand he holds a copy of the socialist magazine he founded in 1871, *Justice for All* (*Recht voor Allen*). The woman is his wife.⁴ He had four wives, hence the repetition of them as guards in the scenery. His four wives, all named Johanna, influenced Nieuwenhuis deeply, especially his ideas on feminism. Whereas traditional Dutch historical images would have focused only on the seminal, male figure of Nieuwenhuis, Bakker's picture represents the women behind the man as well. This is typical of Bakker, and recalls the earlier coupling of his own troubled, suicidal mother with Georges Bataille in *L'Éternel Retour/Ma Mère et Georges B.* (1943).



Performance of sound artist and actress Roberta Petzoldt.

well. This is typical of Bakker, and recalls the earlier coupling of his own troubled, suicidal mother with Georges Bataille in *L'Éternel Retour/Ma Mère et Georges B.* (1943).

4 The model who posed as the wife is sound artist and actress Roberta Petzoldt, who also played the different Johannas in a performance piece, in front of Bakker's drawing.



116 Preparatory Study (Woman Having Her Period), 150×95.5cm, 2013.



The Goatfucker
→ 160

The third and last drawing in the *To Draw Politically* series is the monumental tableau *The Goatfucker*, from 2014. *The Goatfucker* is set in a luminous park setting, where the notorious Dutch film maker and Islam-basher Theo van Gogh was stabbed to death by a

Muslim man of Moroccan descent in November 2004. Van Gogh's fleshy body is shown in the act of attempting sexual intercourse with a goat, which exploits the erotic connotations of an ethnic slur that Van Gogh infamously used to describe Moroccans and other Muslim citizens of the Netherlands:

“goat fuckers”. The insult itself was a pun on a statement made by Ayatollah Khomeini of Iran, namely that a man should have sex with a camel if his wife is indisposed (i.e. menstruating). Bakker's *The Goatfucker* shows a bleeding woman approaching from the left of the scene with a billy goat by her side.

In many ways, the Van Gogh murder and the events that preceded it have come to symbolise the end to a long period of positivism in Dutch society, one which had flowered after the fall of the Iron Curtain in 1989 and the end of the Warsaw Pact in 1991. The brutal murder of Van Gogh is an important event in European history because it has drastically increased awareness of the fact that we can no longer imagine society as a homogeneous whole, as was done during the Cold War period.⁵

The appearance of Theo van Gogh in *The Goatfucker* once more introduces the radical potential of the creative outsider. He too presented himself as a creative nutcase, someone who could comment on society as though he was not participating in it. Bakker occupies a similar position by treating such a sensitive event such as this political murder with considerable imagination, indeed almost irreverence—but the drawing's ambiance ultimately feels lyrical. This, along with the appearance of women, represents the more tangible presence of the Bataillean negativity that runs throughout Bakker's work.⁶

Drawing as Descriptive Narrative

Bakker's style of drawing could be described as narrative, and not only in the sense that some of his drawings include text, as does the *P. Kierk* series of 22 drawings which includes written lines of

⁵ The murder of Van Gogh also seems to have inspired French novelist Michel Houellebecq. His recent book *Submission* carries the same title as the anti-Islam film that Van Gogh made with Ayaan Hirsi-Ali, an internationally renowned activist and Islam-basher.

⁶ Bakker laughs in Hegel's face, but does so with cheer, in the animation *Laughing About Hegel*.



thought as in a graphic novel. The visual narrative in Bakker's *L'Éternel Retour/Ma Mère et Georges B.* (1943) is inspired by some film stills from Jean Delannoy's *L'Éternel Retour*.

That Bakker is a *writerly* artist is also clear in the way his drawings employ description. The compositions which use elements of graphic novel style and film scene arrangements are more



Travel 1
→ 58

complex. These methods allow the stories they tell to include more detail. This is certainly the case with *In Memory of 1871* as well as in other works, like some drawings from the *Burnt Home* series and Bakker's 2011 *Travel 1 (Me, T.more and "the Flappers")*.

Bakker uses bright colours on a sparkling white paper background, creating an impressionistic effect. But the narrative style and intermingling of historical fact with personal interpretation completely go against traditional understandings of impressionism. Given the epic, dynamic and often violent nature of Bakker's subject matter, his impressionism introduces violence to a peaceful tableau that recalls, for example, the work of Bonnard or Cézanne. This is most evident in the impressionistic *The Goat-fucker*. After being preoccupied with the story of Van Gogh, Bakker became fascinated with the no less inflammable and complex historical figure of ██████████. But paradoxically enough she has been treated much more gently than Van Gogh, doing more justice to the calm of the impressionist scenery.



The Woman of Fate, Performance at DAC & Chongqing AIR, June 13, 2015.