

Press Release

René Daniëls: Painting on Unknown Languages

23 September – 28 November 2010

Gallery 1, 2 and 3

Admission Free



René Daniëls. *De terugkeer van de performance* (The Return of the Performance), 1987. Oil on canvas, 190 x 130 cm. © the artist / Courtesy of Paul Andriessse



René Daniëls. *Cocoanuts*, 1982. Oil on canvas, 200 x 240 cm. © the artist / Courtesy Jan Maarten Boll

Camden Arts Centre is delighted to present a new exhibition of paintings and drawings by Dutch artist René Daniëls, spanning works from 1981 to 1987. Following the inclusion of three paintings in *Archipeinture: painters build architecture*, a group exhibition at Camden Arts Centre in 2006, the interest in Daniëls work has become apparent amongst contemporary artists and is the primary catalyst for bringing together this larger body of works.

Born in 1950 in Eindhoven where he still lives, Daniëls is an important figure in the history of Dutch art, his sketchy, open, expressive and fluid paintings defy simple interpretation and definition as meaning is often concealed within their surfaces. 'Ambiguous and playful, they are a combination of visual poetry on one hand and painting on the other' (René Daniëls, 1983). The works include references to art, music, literature, performance and architecture as well as forming a critique of the art establishment and Daniëls' position within it.

Looking at the relationship between language and image, bringing in visual puns and word play, the paintings and their titles invite a lively dialogue with the viewer.

The painterly surfaces of Daniëls' early works evoke the expressive and physical feeling of punk music – especially the raw, unpolished sounds of Talking Heads and the Sex Pistols. His later works use more solid shapes, often exploring architectural space and abnormal perspectives. Rather than looking at the image the viewer is invited to 'look through' into an imagined space.

Basic everyday motifs such as hats, chimneys and skateboards appear in many paintings, metamorphosing in different works. One such shape, which resembles a bow tie, occurs frequently; as a repeating motif or as a simple interior space, hung with paintings or punctuated with windows. Using this simple symbol, Daniëls, through scale and painted surface, encourages the opening up of imagined spaces and places within the work.

Daniëls admired the sense of freedom and independent artistic vision found among artists such as Marcel Duchamp, Francis Picabia and Marcel Broodthaers. Like them, he conceived art as a game that never allows for definitive meaning, but always leaves room for new interpretations.

Painting on Unknown Languages is organised by Camden Arts Centre with curatorial advice from Paul Andriesse and is supported by The Mondriaan Foundation.

Notes to Editors:

Press View: Wednesday 22 September 2010 from 4.00-6.30pm. Exhibition tour at 5.45pm.

Camden Arts Centre is a venue for contemporary visual art and education, where ideas are made visible and people of all ages and abilities can engage in the creative process of making art. Camden Arts Centre's pioneering and varied programme of artist-led courses and other education activities has gained an international reputation as a model of good practice. It is known as a forward-thinking organisation where artists and others can see, make and talk about art.

Artist bio

Born in Eindhoven in 1950, René Daniëls graduated from The Royal Academy in Den Bosch in 1976. His first exhibition was with Hans Biezen at the Stadt-Sparkasse, Düsseldorf (1977). Daniëls was included in numerous group exhibitions including *Schilderijen, gouaches en tekeningen*, Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum, Eindhoven (1978), *Zeitgeist: Internationale Kunst-ausstellung*, Martin Gropius-Bau, Berlin (1982), *Documenta VII*, Kassel (1982), *Daniëls/Dieleman: tekeningen*, Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam (1983), *René Daniëls: Schilderijen en Tekeningen 1976-1986*, Stedelijk Van Abbemuseum Eindhoven, Kunstmuseum Wolfsburg and Kunsthalle Basel (1986), *Art from Europe*, Tate Gallery, London (1987), *Documenta IX*, Kassel (1992) and *De Aankoop I: René Daniëls*, Bonnefantenmuseum, Maastricht (1993). More recently Daniëls' work has been included in *René Daniëls*, Bloomberg Space, London

(2002), *Archipeinture: Painters build architecture*, Camden Arts Centre, London (2006) and *Robbrecht and Daem: Pacing Through Architecture*, Whitechapel Gallery, London (2010). In December of 1987, Daniëls suffered a stroke and hasn't painted since. He still produces drawings, some of which were recently exhibited alongside older work in *Drawings and Paintings 1977-1987*, De Pont Museum, Tilburg (2007).

Opening times:

Tuesday - Sunday: 10am-6pm

Wednesdays Late 10am-9pm

Open Good Friday (2 April) 10am to 6pm


Closed Mondays

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