



Éric Duyckaerts

“idéo”

From March 5 to June 5 2010
Opening Friday March 4 at 6:30 PM

Press release

Inviting Éric Duyckaerts to MAC/VAL from March 5 to June 5 2011 is part of the museum's programmatic focus on leading artists who are French or who work in France*. MAC/VAL is the first French institution to devote a solo exhibition, “idéo”, to this leading performance artist, who for years has blended knowledge with the absurd. Éric Duyckaerts has produced a set of new videos for MAC/VAL, as well as new objects, sculptures, wall paintings, screen prints and mosaics. Much has been said about this artist and his œuvre: brilliant speaker, enigmatic theorist, mysterious scientist, clownish savant. So who is Éric Duyckaerts, exactly? Hard to say, because this man of a thousand faces won't be pinned down by his own words. His thought is slippery, his statements skip freely from one field of learning to another. Everything is incredibly credible, irrespective of the subject at hand.

Éric Duyckaerts's work is notably rooted in his wish to implode the standard discourse on art. His performances often lead to staged depictions of scholarly learning and pranks on the art of dissertation. He distorts, with evident glee, styles of diction to the point of ridicule. He slips in and out of accents and peppers his presentations with obscure quotations, always creating an endless series of mirror images between learning and humor.

“Don't think that ideas precede form” he tells us. The method he proposes is based on logical principles offered as tools for interpreting his work.

Be they in figure eights, circles, or lines, it's always the same enigmas phrased in the same ways. He calls his mysterious sculptures, composed of objects suspended from the ceiling, **analogies**. They reflect a formal logic, such as toying with letters, numbers, and typographical signs, creating a playful and celebratory approach to thought. As he explains regarding his analogies, *"They are not just analogies. Does everyone draw analogies all the time? No. These are interlinked chains of analogies. Or concatenations of analogies. As you wish. The idea is that you start with commonly accepted truths and end with absurdities, in a continuous line of reasoning. For example, I can easily segue from 1 over 2 equals 3 over 6 to something like an olive plus a Camembert equals the ONU flag plus a horn of plenty. Without it becoming unintelligible."*

True or false? The visitor/spectator doesn't have time to ask that kind of question. And who cares, since all of it is convincing! Éric Duyckaerts proposes an odyssey across the universe of knowledge, an unexpected marriage of art with science. The itinerary of this multifaceted body of work is made of this to and fro between knowledge and art, where certitudes no longer matter.

*Éric Duyckaerts was born in Liège in 1953. He currently resides in Nice, where he teaches at the Villa Arson. His work humorously combines visual art with knowledge from external fields, such as science, law, mathematical logic, etc. He has also focused on exploring figures such as analogy and interlacing patterns. Éric Duyckaerts published a work of non-fiction, *Hegel ou la vie en rose*, in 1992. He represented Belgium's French-speaking community in the Belgian pavilion at the Venice Biennale in 2007.

“idéo” : the title refers to “video” and “idea”. It is based on the Greek and Latin root “id”, which means knowledge (ideas) and sight. The apostrophe replaces an archaic Greek letter, the digamma. It can be replaced by an accent, and “e”, or a “v”, thus providing the two meanings of sight and knowledge.

MAC/VAL, Musée d'art contemporain du Val-de-Marne

Place de la Libération
94400 Vitry-sur-Seine
T : 33(0)1 43 91 64 20
contact@macval.fr
www.macval.fr

Press Contact : Anne Samson Communications

Christelle de Bernède
T : 33 (0)1 40 36 84 35
christelle.debernededeannesamson.com