

Villa d'Arte

'The Museum of Everything'
by Anita Moore

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This spring Kunsthal Rotterdam hosts a special guest: The Museum of Everything, with a leading overview of more than hundred so-called outsider artists, although the founder hates this kind of label.

The Museum of Everything is known for its powerful and impressive installations showing works by artists who operate outside of the field of academic art, traditional art history and its logic and language. The audience is invited to explore the wondrous world of the Museum; the mighty fairy tale panorama's of the janitor Henry Darger from Chicago, the dream universe of the Indian road worker Nek Chand Saini, the towering visions of the Chinese factory worker Guo Fengyi, and Sam Doyle, the African-American whose graphic renditions of his view on history inspired Jean-Michel Basquiat.

The exhibition also encompasses several of the more established names, who gained recognition through the artist Jean Dubuffet, like Augustin Lesage, miner and spiritualist, and the anonymous sculptures known as Les Barbus Müller. More recent discoveries include the Romanian street collages by Ion Bîrlădeanu and the Japanese wrestling fanatic Tomoyuki Shinki. Attention is also paid to Dutch artists, from the obsessive biographical illustrator Willem van Genk to upcoming personalities such as Marianne Schipaanboord and Pauls de Groot. In the exhibition some of the works are accompanied by accessible essays by internationally renowned artists such as David Byrne, Ed Ruscha, Marlene Dumas, John

Baldessari, Christian Boltanski, and many more. The exhibition has collaborated with the magazine *Kunstschrift*, in which the phenomenon of non-academic art is placed in a wider context, and which explains how it liberated itself.

The Museum of Everything does not offer an ordinary encounter with art. The installations of the wandering Museum are created in collaboration with the Oscar-nominated production designer Eve Stewart (*The King's Speech*, *Les Misérables*, etc.) and have welcomed over 750,000 visitors worldwide. Ingenious installations lead the visitor deep into the private worlds of unconventional creators. Worlds where the established rules of art are replaced by the visual language of dreams, rituals and details. Within The Museum of Everything there are no limits to the possibilities of the imagination. The terms outsider art, art brut, naïve - or primitive art are often used to describe the works of artists who operate outside of the conventional art circuit. The Museum of Everything does not use any of these categories. It prefers to describe these individual, non-academic artists as "undiscovered, unintentional, untrained and unclassified artists of modern times". Because The Museum of Everything is much more than a traveling exhibition. It is a philosophical pledge for cultural equality. The English founder of The Museum of Everything, James Brett, is on a mission: "Imitators and false messiahs, be warned... Outsider art is a myth! We reject all discriminatory definition and reductive terminology. We strive for the universal right to free visual expression..."

5 March until 22 May 2016

More information: www.kunsthal.nl