

FLOATING ON THE CURRENT MISTER MOTLEY Mister Motley 18-10-2019 ALEX DE VRIES

Artist Roos van Geffen has made a work for Corrosia Theater Expo & Film in Almere-Haven that creates a picture of the city in thirty years' time. The work consists of two parts: a documentary part, "The Collection of Fears and Desires / 10x10 Years" and an autonomous work "Drift". For the first part, she invited ten-year-olds to talk to her about how they see the future. Children at that age begin to exchange their own dream and fantasy world for a more concrete understanding of reality. As a result, they are able to project something onto reality that they do not really know about yet, but that is emotionally true and not just fantasy. Roos van Geffen has been researching the desires and fears of people for a long time and invites them to discuss them with her. She does that emphatically, without prescribing anything to people. There are only two questions she asks: what is your deepest desire and what is your greatest fear? She is a non-judgmental, listening and recording partner. She now has a large archive of piles of paper under the title "The collection of fears and desires". The answers are almost always about personal relationships with the situation in which the world finds itself and how people are part of it. Depending on the urgency of that situation and its concrete influence on people's living situation, the fears and desires vary from quite abstract to very concrete.

She does that emphatically, without prescribing anything to people. "The Collection of Fears and Desires / 10x10 years" in Almere-Haven directly relates to the situation of the children. They give precise, individual representations of their vision of the future. It is striking that they think a lot about how climate changes will affect their lives. In their view, the water-rich Almere runs the risk that it will be a drowned city in thirty years. The fact that the Flevopolder, where Almere was built, was only recently captured on the water makes this vision of the future rather nauseous. To find out what the ten-year-olds expect from the future, Roos van Geffen and ten children walked separately through Almere and spoke to them for two and a half hours. Therefore, we managed to ignore spontaneous and superficial statements that only relate to their personal lives. Over time, more and more layers were tapped into the perception of the future and how you can influence it. In any case, the ten-year-olds were extremely aware of the danger of humanity depleting and destroying the Earth. It was expressed, among other things, in the fearful vision of the future that 'the sun will swallow up the earth' or 'that people will be victims of a war and enslaved' and more directly involved in Almere 'that the water will be as high as the Weerwater is wide. Climate care is not the only thing that determines future expectations. There is always a personal layer with regard to, for example, the family situation, the relationship with loved ones or someone's origin or past.

An important aspect of this project is that Roos van Geffen did not speak to random people. She made an appeal in the newspaper to which children responded with whom she made an appointment after an initial meeting. Not only the ten-year-olds were her interlocutors, but often also the people from their immediate surroundings at their home. Everyone had the freedom to say what was necessary, and this was precisely why no-obligation was avoided. Due to the longer recording time, it has a more contemplative and literary character. This lengthy, documentary research has yielded a lot of material. Among other things, the collected fears and desires and a series of analog photos of the children who are absorbed in a situation that concerns them. Due to the longer recording time, it has a more contemplative and literary character. This forms the foundation for the final, autonomous work "Drift" that Roos van Geffen made. It consists of a series of 25 color photos of the children, family members and other residents of Almere Haven. She shows the portraits in very large format just below the water surface in the city moat. The photos together seem to be swept away by the stream. Where the water is often a dividing line, especially between life and death, it also creates a connection. Roos van Geffen has conducted experiments to determine how the photo portraits are affected by the water. The longer they lie in the water, the more they undergo all kinds of

influences and slowly become an abstract image. It is an image that goes without saying. Where the water is often a dividing line, especially between life and death, it also creates a connection. The photos can be viewed from the bridge or from the bank. Here and there you can see a few separate portraits from the series as a pre-announcement in other city waters. Everyone looks directly and plainly at you. It is like with the people themselves, we are part of a community, but are each not representative of the collective. We stand on our own, whatever the future holds.

"The Collection of Fears and Desires / 10x10" will be open every Saturday from 11 am to 5 pm, Markt 82, Almere, from 5 October 2019.

"Drift" can be seen until November 5 in the canals of Almere Haven.

This project was carried out on behalf of the Municipality of Almere as part of the urban renewal Almere Haven.