



AMERICAN MEDIUM

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Press Release

Harm van den Dorpel: Just-in-Time

Feb 20th - April 3rd, 2015



American Medium is pleased to present new sculpture, video and wall works by Harm van den Dorpel. Just-in-Time is Harm van den Dorpel's first solo exhibition with the gallery. Just-in-Time will be on view from February 20th - April 3rd, 2015.

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I'm chatting with Harm van den Dorpel. I'm wearing the sweater my mom knitted for me, 12 years ago, the black one with a grey Nine Inch Nails logo on it. I'm too fresh for my haters. I'm asking pushy questions, I'm trying 2 understand.

Harm has a Wikipedia page. Harm is 33-34 years of age. Wikipedia calls him a 'conceptual artist'. What the fuck does that mean in 2015?

[Madonna:]

Come on boy I've been waiting for somebody to pick up my stroll

[Justin:]

Now don't waste time, give me desire, tell me how you wanna roll

Harm has chosen me to write about his work because I seem like someone who hates the art world, a post-artist, someone who has decided to give up. I'm trying to gauge if he wants me to tear his practice apart. I'm trying to figure out what that would mean. Is it BDSM?

The title of the show, Just In Time, reminds me of 'Justin' and 'In Time', Timberlake's flop star turn in the 2011 dystopian Sci-Fi thriller. Like all Sci-Fi movies it was about the time when it was made. In the film time is literally money. You buy and sell your minutes, your years. The rich have more time. The usual, then. NYC.

[Madonna and Justin:]

If you want it
You've already got it
If you thought it
It better be what you want

I think the show is 'about' programmer workflows and how they are visualized in corporate environments. Charts and drawings and post-its and mind maps and shit.

Harm:

the aim of the text is not to make sure people will want to see the show
i think it should be more about giving context
im very very confused about being an artist
as you might have noticed in the chats

Jaakko:

yeah
i'm confused about it too, like my 'practice'

Harm:

on the verge of quitting all the time

I'm scrolling up this Facebook chat window. We've been chatting about the press release a lot. What can be said? Nothing has been said, almost. Harm's responses are evasive (elusive?), which might be fine. I feel like my role is to understand and report back, but maybe that's not necessary. I'm kinda over understanding tbh. I'm into being near something. I don't really get Harm's work. I can be near it though.

[Madonna:]

You gotta get em a heart
Tick tock tick tock tick tock

"Men always want to be influential. I see that somewhat as an onlooker. Do I see myself as influential? No, I want to understand. If others understand in the same way I've understood that gives me a sense of satisfaction, like being among equals."
– Hannah Arendt

Harm:

i think thats the point of doing it
putting some thoughts and ideas there, and then see what other people think about that
thats the thrill
in this quote of hers, im not on the side of the 'men'

Harm has introduced this quote into our chat. He is onto something. I immediately challenge him in a predictable way, pointing out that Hannah Arendt was massively influential and accomplished, that this humility rings false.

We start talking about failure and I paste a quote about how failure exhibited is reframing it as a success and somehow really neoliberal or something. I'm trying to be analytical and sharp but I'm kinda worn down and foggy.

Harm van den Dorpel's work is about language, process and infrastructure. When he makes images they are about other images. They're like lol what is an image anyways.

[Justin:]

But if I die tonight at least I can say I did what I wanted to do
Tell me how 'bout you?

"There are various ways to become invisible: one is to become transparent; another is to put up an opaque shield. Neither tactic is fully realizable."
– Elvia Wilk

Harm:

one way is to be like a chameleon and mimic your environment
then people also dont see you

I think I kinda want what Harm wants but I'm using opposite methods. He wants to be invisible so as not to be influential, to not be one of the men. He wants to understand. He has chosen an opaque shield. Maybe the shield changes color according to its surroundings. It's online and off. I'm trying to be transparent.

Harm:

i tried to read agamben
and he says something interesting about absolute potentiality
which means
decide to rather not do anything
i just in general feel incapable of expressing in art pieces the stuff that really
interests me

Two things stick out to me. First of all I'm like wait are you reverse psychologizing me to legitimize your practice for you by saying that it has nothing to do with what really interests you? Then I'm like wait how does not doing anything work up to absolute potentiality.

Harm:

maybe im trying to legitimize my focus on process, thought and all other aspects of creation that happen _before_ actually creating something substantial and possible to communicate . maybe decide in the end to leave it unrealized, unactualized uncommunicated
because the incentives to actually make something are unclear to me - because they are so wound up in other processes. like market stuff, and who's going to see it anyway

[Madonna and Justin:]
If you want it
You've already got it
If you thought it
It better be what you want

If you feel it
It must be real just
Say the word and
I'm gonna give you what you want

[Justin:]
We only got four minutes to save the world

- Jaakko Pallasvuori, 2015