

BACHELOR OF ART: AUTONOMOUS
SEE WHAT HAPPENS 2010

ABKM



The students' conceptual approach to their work becomes increasingly important during their studies, as learn to think and discuss complex notions of autonomy and context in their "studio". Theoretical subjects present an interesting and contemporary addition to this.

Next to the development and work in their own studio, students are also confronted with different issues that concern public and social contexts. A course on artistic research for examples covers new and innovative aspects within the artist world. In order to appropriately react to these issues, the department is in close cooperation with different art institutions in the region, such as Hedah, KuS, UM, the Bonnefantenmuseum,

B32, Huis van Bourgondië, Intro/In Situ, 't Brandweer and the Huis voor de Kunsten.

Guest lectures and a course on vocational preparation inform students about their future perspectives, different specializations and professional opportunities. The final exam is characterized by a growing independence as well as the reaching and development of the relation between form and content.

The bachelor Fine Arts is an art study programme that allows students to study and develop different mentalities within the entirety of fine arts, a diversity which is also reflected in the team of lectures and teachers. ■



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Autonomous fine arts

The bachelor Autonomous Fine Art focuses on providing its students with several working techniques such as painting techniques, materials management, sense of space and plasticity, working with film and video. Working areas play an important role in this process. The department's most important goal is to help the students to work on their own "visual practice" and refine its application.

Joep Vosseveld
4th year of autonomous fine arts



Why have you chosen to study here?

I wanted to study at an arts academy; that was clear from the beginning. I had always known that I was going to study arts and had a look at different academies in the Netherlands. But I have to say that the atmosphere here at the ABKM was something that really attracted me (to come here). The way of working is different than in the North of the country—here we are more focussed on creating things, in Amsterdam etc, the focus lies more on conceptual arts.

Why did you then opt for autonomous fine arts?

In the beginning I did not know which direction to choose. During the first year, you get an insight in different disciplines and I worked a lot with textile. I still do that now, but I enjoy a more independent approach. I then started with theatre design, but the restrictions that are imposed by directors or budget did not reflect what I wanted to do. This is why I eventually came to the autonomous department.

What was the most important thing you have learned at the ABKM so far, on a personal and professional level?

I now feel more confident with regards to my work. I am able to play with arts. I do not take myself too seriously any more. This is something I have learned during my studies here. I am also proud of the work I have done so far, with the help of my education. It always gives you a good feeling if you have finished something and it is received well, both within your department, i.e. your teachers and outside.

How do you perceive the atmosphere at autonomous fine arts?

I do not particularly feel a strong relation to the ABKM itself, or rather the other depart-

ments, but within our department, we are very close. We work together, but we also go out and have fun with each other. We also cooperate when it comes to exhibitions or similar events.

Maybe, one could improve the relation to the other departments by more common projects, exhibitions for example that take place under a certain heading. I think it is a pity that after the first year, you somehow loose contact with students from other departments.

Do you have a special source of inspiration?

Not exactly, I may be inspired by anything. Sometimes I see an item I worked on weeks ago and was nearly going to throw it away, but suddenly, it inspires me eventually. I have found it is always good to keep everything you have worked on, it might come in handy later.

At the moment I focus on basic concepts like colour, shape and the right materials.

What would you like to achieve for the future? What are your dreams?

I would like to continue studying, maybe also in a different setting. Maastricht has been very good for my personal development, as it is not as busy as Amsterdam to give an example. It has been a great start, but I would like to move on. Maybe even go abroad. Berlin sounds like an excellent place to begin with, as it offers you lots of possibilities: rents are cheap and the art scene is well established. However, that might also be an obstacle, as you might end up as one among many other artists in the city. ■

EXAM STUDENTS



Thomas Burke
4th year of autonomous fine arts

Why did you choose for the ABKM and why did you then opt for autonomous fine arts after your first year?

Actually, I have always wanted to study autonomous fine arts. However, I did not come here on the most direct way. In the first place I studied to become a teacher, with arts as a main subject, but quit after one semester as it did not seem to offer what I wanted to do. Afterwards I committed myself to an apprenticeship to become a stone mason, as I was under the (wrong) impression that this job would entail artistic work. I did finish that apprenticeship, but finally, I took the step and applied here at the ABKM. After the first year, I had to choose again, which has always been difficult for me. I had already registered for a class in viscom, but in the last minute I changed to this department. I thought that the time for compromises was over now.

Was it the right decision?

I think so, yes. I have now reached a point, where I would not be without the three years of study at the department. You have a lot of freedom within your work, but you are guided and advised very well by the teachers. At the moment, I am busy with my final project. Although I came here with the goal to paint, I am not painting any more, but making videos. For my propedeutic project, I had worked with videos for the first time

as I liked the challenge of a new medium very much. Before I came to the academy, I had hardly ever touched a computer. Only because of a digital camera that I was given shortly before I came to study at the ABKM, I bought a computer.

In the second and third year, I have then further explored the field of video, while still doing other collages. In this final year, I have only been doing videos.

You said that you reached a point now, where you would not be without your studies. Was there a specific success that shaped you?

I could not name a single event, but there are several things that have shaped me as an artist. We go to excursions as a department, but I also started to go to museums more often. The most important thing for me was that I had the freedom to do everything possible here. It gives you the space to develop yourself. During my last project, I was interviewing myself in an auto-interview—I asked myself the same thing, but could not find an answer.

Where do you get your inspiration from?

Mainly, I write dialogues. I think about a situation and start thinking about a dialogue. However, their characters only develop, while I write the texts. I find inspiration in every day life, actually. I like to work with conversations that I overhear in trains and busses for

example. I am fascinated by the reciprocity of words and body language, which can sometimes result in logical deadlocks. If you say that you feel good, while at the same time you are very sad—you also display that with your posture.

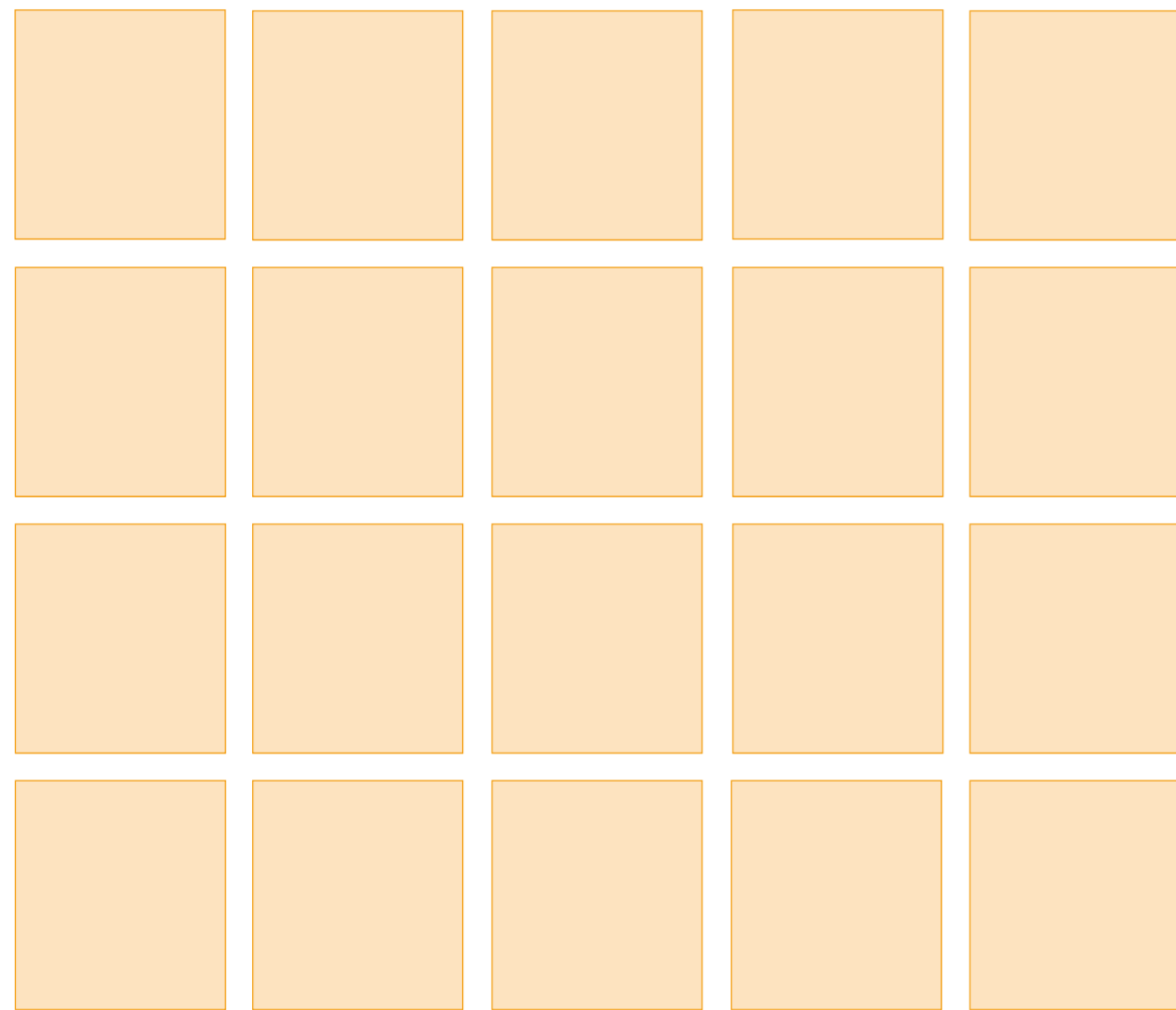
The work at your department is mainly more individual than at others. How do you feel within the department? What is your relation to each other?

Oh yes, there is. We organize exhibitions together etc, but I have to say that I am more of an einzelgänger and work from home a lot, as sometimes, it is a bit too busy here and I cannot work properly. I also have a laptop now that allows me to be a bit more mobile.

What are your future plans?

I am not sure yet. For one year, I have planned not to continue my studies yet, I am taking some time off to decide what I am going to do. I feel a bit uncertain now—sometimes it feels as if the academy is a safety net, here you have so many possibilities that you do not want to consider the uncertain future. I would like to take part in more video and film competitions in the future, it helps to gain experience and find a broader audience. ■





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