

SITE SPECIFIC PROJECT - EXHIBITION
OUDE KERK, AMSTERDAM (2020)

For this new site-specific project, I am interested in exploring situations of conflict that involve the church, and in particular the Oude Kerk's relationship to the city's history and inhabitants.

Several year ago, the church officially became a space for contemporary art along with its regular functions as a church. Many voices contested and publicly questioned and argued against this new use of the Oude Kerk. In response to this opposition, director and curator Jaqueline Grandjean invited the people that openly expressed their anger and concern to join in an open group gathering to exchange ideas and opinions. I am interested in using the recording of these meetings as working material.

Next to this, I want to delve into a more historical conflict of the 16th century, the destruction of religious images named 'Beeldenstorm', in which the Oude Kerk played an important role. During these spates of iconoclasm, Catholic art and many forms of church fittings and decoration were destroyed in actions by Protestant crowds as part of the Protestant Reformation.

Using these two conflicts as a starting point, I want to focus on the relationship between institutions and their communities, specifically, looking at the reasons behind conflict situations created around the feeling of transformation, appropriation and belonging.

The first step in the production of this project will be organising a writing workshop at the church where a specific group of invited guests* will engage with the transcripts of the gathering which was organised to discuss the problematic of the new use of the building as a space for contemporary art. The proposition for this workshop will be 'working with the words of others'. The participants are invited to write by using fragments or words from the transcript of the meeting. By doing so I want to use the discussion's transcript as raw material, to think of the transformation of conflict into a new form. The outcome of these writing sessions will function as the material source for the exhibition.

Furthermore I will document all traces that have been left visible after the 'Beeldenstorm'; the empty spaces left where once images were placed. I will carefully document these traces of the past by photographing all 'physical' marks on the building.

The project directly engages with the past and present of the Oude Kerk, looking at processes of transformation, by addressing conflict at different moments of the institution's history.

*to be edited/Add information on collaboration School der Poëzie Amsterdam <https://www.schoolderpoëzie.nl/>