

Artist Talk: Luc Tuymans

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Dallas Museum of Art
Horchow Auditorium

Jeffrey Grove: Good evening. Welcome to the Dallas Museum of Art. I'm Jeffrey Grove. I'm the Hoffman Family Senior Curator of Contemporary Art, and I am proud and privileged to introduce to you Luc Tuymans.

[Applause]

I hope you all had a chance to preview the exhibition before you came in for the talk. We are going to be very casual this evening. I'm not going to tell you everything about Luc's life story because you probably already know it or you wouldn't be here, or you've seen it in the paintings down the hall. What we're going to do is we're sort of breaking our evening into three segments. Luc and I are going to talk first about the installation that you will see here at the DMA, about the exhibition overall, some of the pictures covering the arc, the trajectory of his career up to now. And then we're going to take a break and Luc's going to move over to the podium and do a presentation on pictures and some of his work and some aspects of his career that are not necessarily encapsulated in the exhibition we have on view at the DMA.

And he'll spend about 15 minutes on that then we'll return over here. He and I will have a short dialog, and then we're going to open up the floor to you for conversation and questions because I think that you'll find what he has to say provocative, thought provoking and really will challenge some of your assumptions about what you may think you've seen in the work. One of the beautiful things about working with Luc over the last week, he's been so involved, so attentive, and it's really a pleasure to have an artist who cares very deeply about how his work is presented and interpreted.

And that is not to say that, and if I may, that Luc prescribes a reading of what his work should be. I think that what's wonderful about it is a picture that's painted in 1988, 1999, 2008, they begin to resonate back and forth across time and build these relationships to lead up to totality that you can really experience in an exhibition like this, in a way that is quite rare.

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And I just want to give you a quick overview. The exhibition was organized by the Wexner Center for the Arts in Columbus, Ohio, in collaboration with SF MoMA, the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art. It was co-curated by our good friends and dear colleagues, Madeleine Grynsztejn and Helen Molesworth, who were here last night and this morning for a press preview but had to go back home to work on other projects. But I can tell you that they spent over six years of their life and Luc's life going through over 500 of his paintings which he has produced over the last 25 years to winnow this beautiful selection that gives you a really tight perspective into his oeuvre and the issues that have affected him, and the issues that concern him in the practice of painting.

And I think for all of us at the DMA, we have a wonderful history here of presenting beautiful painting exhibitions. And I have to tell you, I've only been here nine months and I've learned much about those exhibitions through stories that people have told me, installation shots, and what's unique and special about this exhibition is it returns to issues of humanism, it returns to the figure. We have a great tradition of abstraction here at the DMA, but Luc is bringing a new perspective, I think. And I hope that you will agree that the installation in the Barrel Vault and Quad Galleries is quite special. And it offers an opportunity to see his works that I think is quite different than what we've experienced at the other institutions.

Luc Tuymans:

Yes, I think also that every show of course is in accordance to the space and that is always the fight. I also try to not alter the space that much because I want to work with the space as it is even when it is a difficult space. The Wexner was a exceedingly difficult space because there was, firstly, no wall—there was not enough wall space basically. And luckily we missed out on seven paintings because I would not know where to hang them.

[00:04:03]

[Laughter]

It is architecture in the Wexner is like a ramp, but we came out doing the show and really getting it together. And so when Peter Schjeldahl, the day before the opening, came in he said, "I didn't know we could do a show here". But it worked out and that's why every exhibition is so specific, every venue is so specific. In the San Francisco, it has much more

museum space, but also there you had like a sort of corridor, smaller ceiling-like entrance where the all works were, and then in the bigger spaces in the end, they opened up to the bigger works, which is like the logical thing to do. But although the same body work, completely different layout.

What is important to know is that the two curators have decided to make a show which is chronological, which is new for me. I have been putting up my show and I did about, before this tour started, about 95 solo shows of quite sizable shows actually. The biggest one was in Munich. I'll talk about that later on when we get to the 15 minutes. And that was a show at 95 paintings for example which is actually bigger than this one.

But what is interesting is that they decided and that's quite intelligent to reconstruct three entire shows, actually gallery shows. The first one is actually the one that is from, yeah from '94, it's called *At Random*, [Zeno X Gallery, Antwerp]. That's quite an introverted show actually, not so much thematical. The second was *The Architect* was much more about—it had to do with Speer—it was a retraction[?], actually, towards the idea of the war, and a show about architecture and snow because eventually not a lot of what Speer dreamed of was really built. And then the third one is the most politicized actually and stirred up quite some commotion in Belgium and around the world because it was first shown at David Zwirner's gallery which is *Mwana Kitoko* [*Mwana Kitoko: Beautiful White Man*, David Zwirner, New York] with the sort of a loose translation of "beautiful white man," because that's not the real translation. The real translation is actually, it means a beautiful white boy.

[00:06:14]

The government changed it into Bwana Kitoko which is Swahili to make it "beautiful white ruler." But by no means, for an African chief, somebody who was not married at the time and when he came and did his trip to the people of the Congo, and have no children. Eventually, they never had children, could have been perceived as a chief.

JG:

Do you mind if I just say that you when you walk into the exhibition—this is one of the first pictures you will see and it's one the earliest in the exhibition. And that begins the chronology and we've kept the chronology in place and then when you go into the four quadrant galleries, you have these individual exhibitions reconstructed. And so the earliest work in the exhibition is 1986?

LT: No the earliest work is actually one from 1978. That's the *Hands*. Before we go to these things and talk about more, I mean, in-depth, I want to say that Jeff and I from the start had this idea not to show like the big [inaudible], which it is the *Turtle* painting in the middle of the Barrel Vault because that would have swallowed the entire show. It would've also killed—would have killed the construction of the show and also its chronology, actually. And actually it's amazing how these sort of spaces can hold out, this size space can hold a lot of work, they can contain a lot of work actually which is quite interesting. And it makes that everything becomes quite monumental. And the minute the paintings came up, like especially the *Diagnostic View* paintings, the guards stood at a distance, which is a good sign.

Now, let's come to this painting which is also not big [Laughter] is called *Schwarzheide* and I think that the collector of that painting, Aime, is here because he's traveling to all the venues. And this is a painting which is based upon visits. I visited a lot of these concentration camps, but also some of them were not death camps but they were actually work camps, and this is one that was a work camp.

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It has no real museum; it just has a block house in which you can see drawings of the detainees. They made some kind of fluid with charcoal and something that gives it a sort of azure-like, color like this. And in order not to be detected by the guards, they ripped the drawings into pieces like in strips and they distributed it among the other detainees. So survivors of that then put the pieces together in the end which is quite shocking because most of them were of course, incomplete.

What I did is not take the block house with me or the drawings. I actually took the trees around with me, which is the pineapple trees. And I put a canvas which was already ground[?] into the sun during two months, so was yellow naturally. And then in a quick move, I actually painted this. Anyway, all the paintings I have made take a long time to conceptualize, but the execution is one day, even the big one. What you see is symbolized by that. It's a sort of like, a sort of—yeah. It has the element that it sort of naturalizes death, if you could say that.

And then this is also quite iconic. It was used several times as a poster child for my exhibitions. It comes out of a show which is called *Suspended* and deals with everything as an object. It started from the idea of toys and the other paintings were actually about very small cutouts of dioramas of like modeling real world situations. And the Germans again, after the war, came up with the idea of *heile welt* in the sense that they

made these little figurines about this size and put them in all these situations.

I took out these situations and start to work it, also with a sort of backlash in terms of a fascination with Edward Hopper, because Edward Hopper when I saw it the first time in a group show in America, I think I was 16 years ago in the Hayward Gallery. I didn't know it, but I felt something in my back.

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Everything that I see something, I also feel it, like with Friedrich and all that. And I was so shocked by it because it was so strange. It looked like something was put into a scene. It didn't look totally real, and in a sense for me, it also became something like I wanted to have that. When you feel like you want to have a toy, also the best things that he made were also made in the 20s and the 30s. And so there is this very strange aura about it, so that was another thing. And also toys can give you the idea of omnipotence. You can change everything, you know because you're—about that I will talk also later on. But here you see a doll that I still have which I used to have as a kid actually, which is made out of cloth, which you can open up with a zipper and then comes alive.

It's very a small painting, the size nearly of the doll itself. And this is one of the rare paintings that in the first place didn't work out. But by doing a gestural thing on the side, it all sort of like came together naturally. Painting sometimes, you have to be lucky also, in a sense. It's also mostly about the idea of timing and precision.

Then this is one that's in the show also which is also like half of it is a banner, here. And that's one of *The Diagnostic Views* as the only one—I made ten. Most of them are all—besides body parts—are portraits. And when I was in Kunsthalle Bern [*Luc Tuymans*, Stiftung Kunsthalle Bern] doing my show in '92, I wanted to go back to painting portraits. I hadn't done it for a long time. But I didn't want to make like a psychological portrait or a portrait that would stir up some kind of emotion from the viewer. I wanted to have something very distanced. And I had that idea already in '78 but I didn't have enough distance to actually make that distance. And that's why I also stopped painting, went to film, and after the film adventure, then came back to painting. But this is '92.

JG:

May I just ask you a quick question because I think this brings into focus an issue that some people talk about certain of your images as being portraits. But in fact, they're actually pictures of images.

[00:12:03]

LT: Yes, mostly it's reworked imagery like this. So when I was doing—I mean the show at the opening, I meet up with a psychoanalyst and said, "Do they still have these medical textbooks from which actually students, medical students have to derive the diagnosis from like a photographed person?" Now, most of these people look in the lens like this one, which has anemia. And then the other ones, I all shifted the eyes so that they don't look outside of the frame.

I also, for the first time, applied the paint horizontal so it makes a grip, so we cannot get into it. And that means that there is no emotive part played out anymore and so it was all thrown back with a certain flatness nearly, and awkwardness and directness towards the spectator. And so it's maybe the most naturalistic of paintings that I've made but at the same time, it misses the real totally because it's symptomatic.

JG: And in this group is when you developed this particular style of brushwork that goes horizontally.

LT: Goes horizontal. It's sort of like nearly scans the imagery if you want.

JG: Which in a way denies the contour of physicality of the real?

LT: Which denies the multilayer actually. I'm quite a fan of Manet for example. This idea—the *Olympia* is such a fantastic painting. It's a painting of one of his models—might have been a prostitute, whatever—but it's especially not something which is idealized and it's really in this idea of taking the blank out of the imagery which I think is great.

JG: Becomes very analytical.

LT: Yeah, then this guy should have been the poster child here, but isn't, is actually the guy Miller, who yeah, this sort of—yeah, typical American dude.

JG: Looks like a Kiwanis...

LT: Yeah but it could be anybody. You know like your grandfather or whatever. Like the eyes like a little bit popped out, you know because of the sunglasses, the glasses I mean. But this was also made straight, I mean '95, a little bit later.

[00:14:02]

But you carry always from the former experience—you carry on with the painting. You can't go back in painting which is quite interesting. I can, of course, remake a couple of things but it won't work because first of all we'll not have the same intentions, the same strength, the same intensity.

This was out of a series called *Heritage*, and I had made a series about a national problem in my country which is like national, Flemish nationalism with a very racist touch. And the main core of that political movement was in my town and at that point, one out of three Antwerpians were utterly racist and they were actually voting for this thing. Now, luckily it's sort of like dying off. But then after that, I wanted to make something new. I have to make show for David. I make a show for David every two years up until the tenth show, as I made for Frank, always, a show every year during ten years, and that was this year, '96. I had the idea to make something about patriotism instead of nationalism, and then we went to look at the imagery.

And so this is one of those guys that is presumed—was in touch with a sort of whole conspiracy of JFK, the memory of JFK who sort of like burned down in his house under very suspicious circumstances in 1978.

JG: And he was a leading Klansman.

LT: And he was a leading Klansman, you're right.

JG: And he looks so benign, which is—

LT: Yeah but that, that's always the thing. It's like a little bit what Aristotle always says, "It's always the face of evil which is quite normal." It's like it's—everything is shocking and horrific, can be quite trivial to a point, everything twists like in one blow. Then this is *Orchid*, which was painted for a show at David's called *Security*. [*Security*, David Zwirner, New York, 1998] And it was out of my fascination because I'm not really a nature lover at all. I mean, one thing I have to say about the work is that the work should be always mute. I mean it should not remind you of music, or sound, or the sound of music for that matter. So I never bought a record in my life.

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I never put on the radio, and that's why I also hate Kandinsky because it's too lyrical and [Laughter]. Actually, once in the lecture in L.A. where I had to talk about Rudolph Steiner, which I profoundly hate, that at the end of the lecture the guy with the Steiner collection—I had to show with drawings in Berlin about all these drawings of Steiner who had this fan who put like 9000 lectures[?] in between him and the blackboard and it went all the way to fucking Beuys in that sense, alchemy you know. And I talked about the appalling[?] effects of mysticism on the avant-garde. So having—that's why I also said to him, "Why the fuck do you like Kandinsky [inaudible]?"

But this is actually what came out of a newspaper article about plants changing their gender, because of the climate change, from male to female. And I thought of the orchid. Orchid has of course a very sensual touch to it. It nearly looks like genitals, basically. And it has a female element into it. But I covered it with a green foliage and therefore you get a sort of toxic element in it, too which then no longer shows up as something organic.

JG: And definitely in this exhibition, if not on your entire body of work, this palette is quite atypical.

LT: Yeah, that's true. It is like—but there are, I mean, we're going to see that later on with some works that are not in this show also that first of all, that's also the situation that at a certain point, for example, the toy paintings from '90 were very, very, very bright because it was plastic and some colors were like really straightforward. But I worked with the sort of tonal palette because I believe that is important because it's very difficult to memorize that. And also it's important that when you memorize a painting, your memory is inadequate and a tone will grow in your mind, in your memory. I once had a guy from Honolulu, from a museum, who hated the work. And he went to see the show in the Tate Modern, still hated it, and then he started to dream of it and now he's the biggest fan.

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JG: That's alchemy.

LT: Right, but that's also how it functions. And I came out of a country where painting has a bit different approach in a sense. It's not so much the idea of the Renaissance in terms of the perspective and the illusion of depth. It is depth within the painted matter, and that's why tones are so

important. So actually the work is totally full of color, even when it's gray, it's a mixture of colors.

JG: Right.

LT: And if you look at the work like, which I like, I like work of Ellsworth Kelly or Barnett Newman but that goes into a sculptural element because that's also what it means. It goes to a concreteness of the imagery as such. And then, yeah of course *Lumumba* that comes out of a show. That's what I will talk about, *Mwana Kitoko*. I will talk about that later also in the 15 minutes that come up. But important to say is that Lumumba was the most unlikely figure in the African politics and probably the first Pan-African thinker who was an idealist, basically that's why he got killed.

He was not a power mongrel as was his compatriot Mubuto who really killed him off also, by the way. And he was actually not killed by the CIA, but by the Brussels establishment, the power mongrels out of my capitol and also with the knowledge—and the king had the knowledge—that that was going to happen.

It all led up to a very important situation that when I did the show at the Pavilion [*Mwana Kitoko: Beautiful White Man*, Belgian Pavilion at the 49th Venice Biennale: Plateau of Humankind, Venice, 2001] which was, of course, even more important because it was like a political statement. First of all, I want to say that I don't think work should be loaded up politically from the start, because then we get propaganda but an artwork can get a political stance at a certain given moment. In fact, that was such a moment because what I didn't know is that the Pavilion—

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JG: This is in Venice.

LT: This is in Venice. —was built by a colonial architect so no better place than to show that. The reactions to that were like enormous, I mean like either the Belgium newspaper put him on the cover, or the King. There were international reactions. And what was also quite coincidental is that a Belgium journalist actually came out at that time with a book simultaneously—I didn't know that. It was, as I say, coincidence—which was about the murder of Lumumba. And this reporter had investigated, and had access to all the archives. And for the very first time, the book had a huge impact up until South Africa. It was read out loud in

translation on the Congolese radio and all that. And this actually made sure and set the point that it was Belgium who killed Lumumba.

And also Raoul Peck came out the same year with a long feature film about the murder of Lumumba, so this all coincided. A year after the Venice Biennale, we all got together in Geneva[?], which is the center of culture studies, to decide to talk about this momentum. It led to the Lumumba Commission in my country to which I was also invited and Peck, as also Ludo de Witte, the writer. And our final conclusion was that the Minister of Foreign Affairs, Louis Michel at that point, excuse himself in name of the Belgium state towards the Democratic Republic of the Congo and in particular to the family of Lumumba, but the royals did not. There's another tale for that story but we can talk about that later.

This is from the same series and this is actually—these are the arms of my wife, gloved in black gloves and carrying a broken piece of chalk. It goes back to when I was painting this series and this is also quite interesting, I mean, because the things just happened and then they fall together. While I was making these paintings in 2000, there was remaining police officer who had to get rid of the bodies after the execution, after the night of the execution, by putting them and dissolve them in a bath of acid, not only Lumumba's but the entire cabinet.

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So once he comes to Lumumba's corpse, he gets the feeling that this person might be a sort of big, nearly mythological proportion, so he tears out the last teeth, I mean the back teeth of Lumumba and he kept them right before he died. It was like 2000, and then he threw them in the Northern Sea. I actually then changed that around into chalk, because chalk goes through the failure of the acculturation process and there's also a painting with a mission post where both he, I mean Lumumba, and Mobutu had got their schooling.

JG: At the same time?

LT: At the same time, yeah and then of course this quite nice, big. This is Condi. So I did a show called *Proper* and I'm going to also talk about that because that's in the [Voice Overlap]

JG: In the other presentation.

LT: In the other presentation in the 15 minutes I'm going to do—yeah. And then *Loyola* which is, this is actually the death mask of Loyola. I was at a

colloquium in Venice, the run up for the Venice Biennale, and I was under the shower and I said, "I forgot something, *The Jesuits*." It was the first actually—but also yet again something organic nothing really totally told out of structure like that—I wanted to make something about the utopic actually. And I'm trying to find a spiritual lead towards that. And of course, the Jesuits are also quite important in Western image building. I mean, think about the Baroque, think about Rubens who was like actually the first person who actually made the largest paintings on the globe when he was alive. And they were made after Reformation and they refilled, actually, the churches, which actually through the Reformation a lot of artwork was destroyed.

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And then of course, it is of course a utopic element but a utopic element with a hidden agenda, is to convert people. But what's really important is their education which is high-rank education and also the network which lead to the entirety of Latin and South America. And is responsible for a great deal of culture and was born out of a figure who was actually a knight, not even a spiritual, I mean, not a trained spiritual person, and organized like an army basically, also. These people informed themselves utterly before they go do something or go somewhere. They learn the language, they infiltrate and from there on they work to the point where they can convert people. Then this is the first step of the idea about the utopic.

JG: I just have a quick question, is this a death mask?

LT: It is the death mask that's now in Rome but they altered it. They made a skull behind it and they re-opened the eyes and it's kept there because he became a saint, of course.

JG: And for that reason, it has a strong connection to the painting that's in our collection.

LT: *Man from Wiels [The Man From Wiels II, 2009.2]*, yes. Maybe, we should also say that quite nice touch that they have here in Dallas because, actually, Dallas has the highest concentration of my work in an institution and which is...

JG: In the United States.

LT: In the United States which is like seven works and six of them are in the special space which is, I think, beautifully installed by Jeffrey. And it also holds the very first painting I ever sold which is the little *Airplane* [*Airplane (Vliegtuigje)*, 1988]. I sold it to the most important curator in my country who was also a museum director who still is somewhere probably still a museum director Jan Hoet, which you may or may not know. He was the, he also put me in Documenta, he was looked upon at the Documenta, the journalists thought he was like Columbo, Peter Falk... [Laughs]

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But so, he kept that painting, but then a couple of years ago, his son went into a marriage with a very wealthy family, and there was a very big party, so he actually put the painting up for auction. He bought the painting for—to give you an idea—something like, I mean, between a 150 and 200 euros. It was auctioned off for about 150,000 pounds.

The painting is also interesting because it depicts something, it depicts actually not just a plane, depicts the Spirit of St. Louis, which was the first transatlantic flight by Lindbergh. And it's quite interesting and also *The Man From Wiels* to have that in combination, because *The Man From Wiels* is not a death mask but it's actually a reconstruction made by the police whilst Tommy and I, my assistant, were actually conceptualizing the show. Wiels is, sort of used to be a brewery, and the name of the beer was Wiels and the name of the man who made the beer was also Wiels. A modernistic building out of the 20s, 30s is now converted into a quite interesting and important recent center for the contemporary arts.

Mike Kelley was one of the opening shows. There was a [inaudible] show.

JG: And you had a show? [Luc Tuymans: Against the day, April 23 – August 2, 2009]

LT: And I had a show there, yeah, which traveled also. I'm going to show you some of the works that were in that show actually. But we didn't put *The Man From Wiels* in that show. I made two paintings for an art fair which was Freeze, I suppose, twice the same face. What happened is that when we were conceptualizing the show, the director of this institution told us that when they were constructing the building, the construction workers

found a corpse. And he was working around with sponsors, trying to get sponsors and they find this corpse.

And the police comes in and like say CSI Brussels and they eat off the skull with worms and they make clay construction with like glass eyes, and that's what you see. Until this day, the man is not being identified. So they call him the Man From Wiels. And it also has this sort of Vincent Price feeling.

[00:28:05]

JG: Yeah, very much so.

LT: Now, this is *W*, which is quite appropriate but—

JG: But not the *W* we think?

LT: It's not the *W* you may encounter because this one is long gone. So this is Walt Disney himself. And Disney is standing in front of a map after having concluded a year-long travel in the United States to find out the spot where he was going to build the ideal city. This time he hadn't made the same mistake not to buy all the land around it, he did, because then he could prevent like bars and whorehouses to be built there.

So it's a good thing it was not built because I saw a whole documentary about him talking how this would be organized. It would be a circle or city with a big main building in the middle and suburbia around it, but it could also happen to the people whilst they worked, when they were tunneled to their work and the tunnels were separated, which already is the case in Disneyland because the goods just pop up like magic in the shops.

And so this megalomania of this whole situation is quite interesting. Also interesting to know, the guy was a chain smoker and actually quite a manic depressed person. And of course a genius, because he is a genius, I mean, the guy is amazing. But the political or apolitical implications go far further than you can actually expect because it went into the point that the people who worked in the city could come home and he would have changed your furniture. So it goes right into—every sort of privacy was like banned out of the whole situation. But as I say, it remains an enormous figure with an enormous cultural impact worldwide and I

always was quiet in our research because I didn't want to make something about Mickey Mouse, I made something about like the first day that Disney opened then everything fell apart, which of course he couldn't have.

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And then these more the science elements, he also made a lot of scenographies for world exhibitions and so on and so forth. And that I think is much more interesting because it's the core of the situation of the park[?], and it's also the first time that fantasy is put into a topography and then turned into entertainment, which I think is quite interesting.

But I always asked myself the question, how did the guy perceive himself? Did he perceive himself as big artist? And actually, I think he saw himself much more as an entrepreneur and somebody who was like busy with some kind of mechanics. And he always said to people when this question came up that it all started with a mouse. So it was the story of mice and men.

JG:

Before you move to the next segment, I just want to ask you one question, because it came up in this brief discussion of ten pictures. A great deal of your work addresses issues in your own country but a great deal of your work focuses on American culture, and I wonder if that's because of the time you have spent here or what you perceive as a dominant influence of the exportation of a certain kind of...?

LT:

Yeah, let's put this way. The reason why I also took the Second World War, there are two reasons for that, there is an autobiographical one and there is a large, I mean, a larger sort of plan behind it. I didn't start from the idea of Modernism, Postmodernism, Minimalism, no, I started from a point of view which was like in a historical date setting, which is the end of the Second World War as a departure point.

The Second World War destroyed in its entirety the powers that Europe had. In two world wars, the entire elite was decimated, the colonies disappeared, and with the Holocaust, it was a psychological sort of like breakdown formulated in the West but also specifically of course in Europe. After the war, there was of course this thought, which is a Belgian idea actually, to come with up with a European union, which was

killed off by the Marshall Plan immediately. And of course we were colonized by the ones who won the war, which were the Americans.

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Now, the Americans came in—these two—very successful wars for them at the rear end of the situation. So they were able to—and they were also the only people could do that at that point. And so, that had quite appalling effects on your life as kid, on how cars looks, how consumership and of course, everybody loved the Americans. I mean, they were the conquerors, they were the liberators also, which is quite important to understand on a psychological level, I think. I mean, and if the soldiers then finally left Europe, there were mixed marriages, there were like different links.

And on the other hand, anyhow, I mean, I regard America to be part of the western hemisphere, so that's why I got really mad at the French during the Bush legislation times, that the French who actually founded this country, because the first revolution was the American Revolution, which the French used as their own guinea pig. And then these mother fuckers go like shitting on the Americans the whole time, which I don't understand, you know because that's also where we come from. So basically, I'm a big [inaudible] for—and especially with the Chinese coming into the back door fast, is that we stick together because otherwise we're not going make it.

So in a sense, it is important that the influence on the culture is quite interesting. I'm working on a show now in Bruges, which a show which goes together with the festival and it's about—they asked me to make like—a strong point on the Eastern European Contemporary Art [curated by Luc Tuymans and Tommy Simoons, Luc Tuymans: A vision of Central Europe, The reality of the lowest rank, October 22, 2010 – January 23, 2011]. But we are also building in a structure which is a bit more historical. Now, think about Andy Warhol, Andy Warhol comes from Eastern Europe. His mother came from there. And think about pop art and Warhol, for example. And we're going make a show and [inaudible] is the most important[?] artist, also performer and thinker actually in Poland and was instrumental for his generation up until Miroslaw Balka.

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He was a guy who once made one idea. I mean he said in one sentence, he propelled an idea. He said art in this region is actually the reality of the

lowest rank. Now, if you think about that and you think about Warhol and you think about pop art, you can come at pop art in a totally different way. So I think all these things are fully culturally interconnected.

JG: Thank you. So now, Luc is going to move over the podium to present about a 15-minute presentation on work that's not in the exhibition, to give us all a fuller understanding—

LT: Well, there is work in the exhibition and there is work that is not at the exhibition. So this still works. Yeah, so this is *Against the Day I & II*. The title of a book of my most and I think one of the American artists I like the best, which is Thomas Pynchon, which is actually inventor of paranoia in American literature, I think. His *Crying of Lot 49* is actually the predecessor of the Internet, although it was written in the 60s.

And so, what you actually see is actually two paintings, and it was like—they were first shown in Wiels in the show we were talking about, and that was a show that consisted of about twenty paintings. The guy who runs the institution and ran it then too, didn't have the money to have loans and things like that, so I made an entire body of new work to be shown to the first place there and then it traveled to Baibakov Art Projects, which is already gone now, but this was in Moscow and was part of the Moscow Biennale and it was the first show in the art center in Malmö, which is a brand new art center which was the rehabbing of another art center, which was called Rooseum and it's all part of the Moderna Museet.

[00:36:09]

So now, we can move on. So actually put it quite clear. This is the title. This is where we come from. This is what we do and this is how it should be. So this is where we come from. And unlike people like Reubens who come from my town, and I should be maybe be more chauvinistic, or Ensor or Magritte whatever you can think, I am a big [?] even of the painter Jan van Eyck. Because I think, personally, it is probably the most important image-maker in the western hemisphere, and he was that in the 15th century. It's not Rembrandt, as I said, not Reubens, but surely Jan van Eyck.

And this is also one of my preferred paintings because you can see something happening in the painting. Although, everything at that point was still under the cloak of let's say religion, science, everything, there was no point. There was no dilettantism. He, by heightening, actually, the realism in the painting goes out of the frame. Also, what's important is that you have to look at the mirror. The code is being cracked on this painting by some academics, and apparently, you see one candle. There are different ways to deal with the iconography of course, and that should be an indication that a woman who is pregnant also is deceased.

Then you have the mirror in the back. Underneath the mirror he wrote, "Jan van Eyck was here." Jan van Eyck also made a painting of his wife, which we don't—unluckily of course, there is a lot of things Belgians don't take care of their cultural heritage and we lost this. This is in the National Gallery in London. And right next to it is the presumed painting of his wife on which he wrote, "Jan van Eyck finished me off then and then."

[00:38:02]

So it's about unforgiving realism. My country is about that. We also invented the first idea of a documentary film, which was the first long film before W. Griffith, which is the film made in the First World War, and it was a documentary, a gruesome one.

So what I really love about this is that it also states that we are no romantics, romanticism does not really go well in Belgium, a country which is a region overrun by many foreign powers and we have learned to survive.

We can go to the next—this is the painting of the series of Wiels and it's called *Map*. And as I say, this is more recent paintings. They were painted like a year ago or something like that. And it's a painting, it shows a sort of one side, actually, a flip side of the heads of a person of African descent. The image shows the self as something unfinished. It's like a site still under construction. The image is fully virtually produced to a computer program. Every detail is recreated, the hair, the texture of the skin, creating a sort of like nonexistent entity.

I was amazed, you know, like after the show that I did about Disney and the one about Jesuits. This is the total deleting of the utopic, you're in the

moment. And you have these programs on websites that are called the normals where they are creating fully like from pinups to real people. This is actually called the normal with movements and everything with it. And by taking that in the process and arresting it with the anachronism of painting, it becomes something completely different.

Next. And then this actually is in the show. It's a painting that's actually now, I think, is in the collection of the National Gallery in Osaka. It was also first shown in Osaka. And it is actually based upon a photograph that I took years ago in the former Czechoslovakia of a real church, the inside of a church. It was not a rich church. It's Jesuit church.

[00:40:11]

The things that are real in this image are actually where you have the altar, you have the paintings and then you see the whiteness of the wall. That's the real construction. But everything else behind it is a tromp l'oeil. It's painted on the wall. So to double that with a painting is quite interesting, I thought. But it also deals with a simulacra. It deals with the idea of the illusion and that's where the idea of the image building actually comes in.

Now, I'm going to show you a second church. This is the church I painted on the wall since I didn't have the money to get the painting there, in the show, quite a large painting show in the Zachęta which is the museum in Warsaw. This is actually the only building that survived out of Hitler. This is the only building that's still a real building in the center, all the rest is a reconstruction. And on this wall, the first president, who was president of the Republic of Poland after he was installed after two weeks was killed by a mad artist. This was a detrimental[?] city of course, loaded with history and whatever.

What you see and what's interesting is that by painting this church which you might or might not have seen. It's eight meters high and I've done a lot of these wall paintings. I've made about forty-seven wall paintings on site which have all disappeared. We're going to make a publication about that. I also just finished off a thing that will stay, which is a huge mosaic of forty by forty meters of a painting that's now at the National Gallery which called *Dead Skull* in front of a new museum. It's like a city museum in Antwerp near the waterfront.

[00:42:01]

But what's interesting is that by painting this again, it's no longer the photograph of the painting that became the point, but the painting of the photograph. And so you make a really sort of distance on distance on distance and we'd make references and loop holes in between. And so this gives you —in that sense, it sort of deletes itself and it becomes like the image itself.

Now we go to yet another church, which was from 1990. And that's where the church, is actually what I was talking about the toy situation. And I say older, and it also came out of the show called *Suspended*. And it's dealing mostly with objects related, say to the world of modeling, such as dioramas, railroad models and so one. The world is small, the overview, the omnipotence that one has. Where one can do anything one wants, the ability to change and control everything. The image came across to me as fully stripped to its bare essentials. It was more like a maquette when I saw the image. I cut off the image in a way one does no longer perceive its base. So it's sort of like unclear where it stands, which gives us a sort of senseless dynamic, a little bit the idea of a Potemkin Village, a blind façade. Next.

And then this is in the show, *The Diagnostic View*. And I think it talked about *The Diagnostic View*, so we can sort of like skip this one and then we go to inserts of glasses. So if you see the catalogue, there was a Japanese designer who wanted to work with the tactility of the work. So what he did is cut up the portrait of *W* and we got this old abstract like things in between the chapters. And I said no. And then while preparing this show, I was amazed to see that I made an enormous amount of people or paintings or portraits with glasses. And this was actually by no means deliberate. It was like something, I didn't just realize that. And it's amazing because glasses are something that everybody takes for granted in a sense. But they are clearly an imposing element within a physiognomy of somebody. And it was an invention of course at the end of the middle ages and then, of course, it was through the course of time perfected, but the shape sort of remains the same.

[00:44:20]

And although, as I say, they radically change the physiognomy of the face, glasses are never perceived to bring about this radical change. They are seen as a part of normality and to which we only respond with a sort of indifference.

Next. Yeah, right. And these are all the glasses, not all the glasses, some glasses, but the ones that we used for the book actually. That's the Lumumba one. And I thought this was a better idea to get the tactility and yet, an ideal image and so also this element of the gaze which I can kind of find interesting. And I love painting people with glasses.

Then we come to a painting called *The Demolition* which was out of the *Proper* show, which is also on exhibit in this show. And it is actually derived from a demolition of a building in Chicago in 1995, so there's nothing to do with 9/11 but of course, when it was shown, it immediately resonated as such. And this goes from an instrument of focus to a substance like the clouds or rubble. This image is an image of a demolition that I said from Chicago building in 1995. Although, when shown, I've already said that. And then the towering dust clouds heights conceals the scale of devastation. These are like in front of a wall, you cannot persevere. Although amorphous, changeable, and intangible, it forms a complete obstacle osculating between the sublime and devastation, simultaneously, sort of a veil, a projection.

Next. This is also in the show, *Ballroom Dancing*, same year. And this came about after 9/11, it was virtually impossible to not negotiate feelings of induced fear and paranoia. The painting *Ballroom Dancing* came up because of its reminiscence of times of crisis and the Great Depression like Fred Astaire, Ginger Rogers, and so on.

[00:46:11]

While browsing on the web to find more contemporary imagery with my wife, Carla, who is also an artist in her own right, I found an image of the Governor's Ball of 2005 in Texas, and where are we now? In Texas, the perfect metaphor for society receding back to regressive and defensive form of conservatism.

Then we go to the one we saw a bit larger, which was actually even better[?], *The Secretary of State*. And this came about because, in a very strange way, one of my former friends is the former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Karel de Gucht. And when I had the image of the ballroom dancing, I needed of course other imagery. And Carla and I, my wife, were in a bar in the evening and I read the newspaper of the day, which I hadn't done yet. And I read a sort of commentary of—she came to visit

our country. And there was a sexist commentary of the Minister of Foreign Affairs, who said she's actually quite intelligent and not unpretty. And I said, "That's it! Condi and *Ballroom Dancing*."

It's interesting that's why I also gave the title *Proper* because "proper" immediately makes you think about improper. And also the person of Condoleezza Rice is somebody who learned to get out of a limo without showing her underwear. Her face is portrayed within a horizontal format, like a flat screen, like a public thing emphasizing upon the public figure, frozen in an intense expression of what seems to be determination. Instead of going for the obvious within the Bush legislation, the aberration of an Afro-American women sharing the same convictions with a little catch of course because it was not the Democratic, but the Republican Party that abolished slavery.

[00:48:05]

Next. And then we go to something far more gruesome. I based the work *Wiedergutmachung*, which is in the Barrel Vault next to *Insomnia*, on this thing. And this comes out of the archive. And this was also shown in—I based those two images, of course, looser—painted in a looser way on this impact that I had myself when seeing this quite gruesome documentary film about die Wiedergutmachung, which means actually "repayment." It comes out of Wittenberg [inaudible] Archiv. And it was a woman I got to know who made the documentary. It was Katrin Seybold and it was made in 1989, the time that I painted the painting also. And I saw this like the size of my television screen. And the documentary deals with the fact that there was this experimentation upon gypsy, like one egg[?] twins.

Now, they were actually never repaid because the guy, who was responsible in Germany and Germany is quite an elliptical country when it comes to that, himself actually had experimented on these people, so they never got repaid. When he dies off in '83, that was before the documentary was completed, in his bureau drawer, they find these contact prints of eyeballs and disengaged hands. And this is so interesting because we also to take in mind that the concentration camps allowed people to experiment on people. Actually, something that after the Second World War was taken over by both sides, who became the most powerful ones, which was actually the Russians and the Americans, experimenting on people just went on. But this was the first time it really,

on a very amateuristic level, actually started out. And what is also quite interesting is that it had an impact on genetic manipulation within medicine and so on. So that was quite interesting. Now we go to the next.

[00:50:00]

This is an image which was also in the show and it's called *Correspondence*, it's from—it's a bit earlier 1985. And it's the first image that I actually painted after the film adventure[?]. It's based upon an anecdote, and it's based upon a postcard as the other painting and of course they are like right opposite in the space and like sort of opposite of this painting. And it is actually a story about a writer who was—it was a modernist writer van Oudshoorn, Dutch, who was actually based in Berlin from 1905 to 1910 at the embassy.

He didn't have enough money to bring his wife over and out of a sort of homesickness, he actually bought these postcards during lunch because these—you had, in the turn of the century, these elaborate bourgeois interiors and they also had postcards. So he bought the postcards and then every time he would cross on the table with a red pencil where he had eaten and then he would send that during the duration of five years to his wife. So it's the idea of total presence basically.

Okay. We could actually—no, wait. We could actually go also to the fact that what the state of contemporary painting could be at this point. There's always been a lot of talk about painting, is it dead or alive or whatever. And I will say, Is it safe? Is it dead? Is it alive? Will it survive?

And then we come to the *Gas Chamber*, it was 1986, which is not in the show. And it's probably one of the most problematic paintings I've ever painted, since it represents the unrepresentable. Without the title, the painting would just be a reductive depiction of a non-descript basement. In this way, the painting is nearly a conceptual work of art. It is the idea, as I said before in my text coming up to this one, of the doubling of the distrust through the experience of maintaining painting images. And then we go to the next one, which is in the show, *Superstition*.

[00:52:06]

And *Superstition* is one work out of 1994 and it's in front of a backdrop. It has some kind of links actually with the other smaller image of the body

basically and it also deals with physicality. And in front, an image—in the front of a backdrop, you see actually the outlines of a human figure. And in place of the genitals, you have this sort of like poltergeist insect that sort of like comes out of the body and sort of tears you out or throws you in basically. This is something that sucks you in or throws you out. And it's an elliptical pulsating loop to look at the painting and it's also to prove that small paintings can hold their ground. This painting is quite, quite powerful because of course it's quite graphical, but you can see it from miles away.

Then we go to the next one which is called *Towel* and that's also in 1986. And it's probably the only funny painting I've ever made. Because when I was doing the dishes, I came across this image which is a towel. It made me laugh because it reminded of concrete painting, Mondrian, modernism, only where the lines crossed sort of superimposed the space gave way to the idea of layerment. The idea of layerment is a common place for design, in opposition of the self-designated idea of the utopic and the so-called new.

And then we come to the *Leopard* painting which is from 2000. And this is the painting I talked about a little bit already. And also by no means, the leopard was this sort of unanimous symbol in the Congo. The Belgians just exported it and reimported it as the unanimous symbol. And you can see in this image, this comes out of a propaganda film from 1955 which I also saw as a kid. And this is where the King enters actually goes—was his first step in then Léopoldville, which is now Kinshasa.

[00:54:10]

Now, you see the African hands holding the leopard skin to the soil and he just passed. It's quite interesting because it's also an image that comes back to Mobutu with the camp and all that. He just took it over and they were quite close, this king and Mobutu. And then in a sense, it also has this sort of resemblance with *Map*, full of blind spots bearing Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* in mind. Next.

And then we have a painting called *Tits*. It's from 2008 out of the series *Against the Day*. The image shows oversized breasts of a life-size doll packaged in a colorful bikini hardly holding it together. The fetish, the idea of the pornographic, the abstraction of what one is compulsively forced to look at, more than showing the vicinity or closeness it seems to

be detached. It was also shown in the show that traveled to Moscow. And the father of Masha Baibakov also has a collection. And he said to me when he saw this painting, "I also have a collection and it's a very sexy collection. And there is one painting that I like. It's *Tits*. So if you'd make one more of those paintings, I buy."

Then we go to this painting which is the sizeability[?]. I mean it's maybe even bigger as it's shown here now. And it's a pendant actually of the *Turtle* painting. This is the *Wonderland* situation I was talking about, and it was the first image that my assistant just cropped up and showed me and it's sort of needlessly went into the prolonged story of the Jesuits in a totally different way and the first deletion of the idea of the utopic. The title of the show was called *Forever: The Management of Magic*.

[00:56:04]

So it's a huge painting and it's also a size painting that's actually—the American size painting, which is quite interesting. And it's sort of like, as I already said, it deals with the [inaudible] of true designated boundaries of fantasy, our fantasy. And it turns it into a topography and the idea of entertainment. And then we go yet to another wall painting, actually, which is quite big. This was in the Haus der Kunst in Munich where I did the show with the 95 paintings. And we couldn't show the painting because the painting was still on show when I was installing the show in New York.

So I decided to make a wall painting which is the size of about, let's say, 12 meters high and 16 meters long. And it's in the spot where actually you have what the Germans called *das mauseloch* which means like the mouse hole. And this is a building which is quite important because the building was built by Troost and this was out of his personal museum or gallery or whatever you can think of. It's an extremely dominating building of course. The biggest space is about forty meters deep, the heights are enormous, and they're all quite symmetrical except for this one door. This one door leads to what's called a salon which is the cafeteria basically, and the whole thing is made with colored chalk. So you could walk through the situation, and there's not an image where you could see actually a little small painting because on the other side, there are paintings and they're quite small, so quite interesting to see that installation. It entered also the bigger middle space basically.

What's also quite interesting to know is that Hitler was quite a fan of Disney in a sense that his preferred movie—one of his preferred movies was *Bambi* and *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs*. And at the end of his career, when everything was going down, he was looking at his own journalists, like the news, without sound and he was looking at Disney movies, animation films without sound.

[00:58:21]

When we were putting up the show, we found out that a couple of drawings of Adolf Hitler was auctioned off. And on the back side, there were three drawings, there were also three drawings of three of the seven dwarfs of *Snow White*.

And then the *Turtle* painting of which I already talked a little bit. It's a construction that's made out of steel and it was from these light parades, and the first day, sort of like totally broke down. And it's quite interesting because also when Carla, my wife, saw it and a lot of people say that also and since my wife saw it, I cannot get away with it. And again, I can't get out of it anymore, so everybody sees, a sort of kissing couple in it, which now that somebody pointed it out, sorts of sticks to your mind. But it actually is an abstraction of this turtle; actually, it's quite an abstract image. You cannot really make it out in a way. The compelling thing about it is that it's all about this light situation. It's on about nearly the scale where you see it here, for real.

And then another one which is out of the same series which is called *Magic* and this is the last one I will actually show in the same show. It's a little bit half of the image of a doll holding a bell and he's depicted, he's actually called the Dream Maker. And he's in the Epcot Center. And it's him we should give all our ideas which will then be processed by available new technologies and put into use. On the right of the image, you see a hologram and on the other side, you see a projection. And it's actually guided through technological gear, sort of ersatz. And in the quest for an animated world without anima you could say, the world as gigantic robot in which failure through contingency[?] are ruled out by a timed and fully secured closed circuit.

[01:00:25]

This is *Measurement* which is actually a computer program with which you can measure space, and it's actually the negative of it. This is the negative image which seems to be like a sort of still life, cylinder and all

that because actually, the black spaces, the shadow spaces, the spaces that the computer no longer can measure. And then we go on.

And then, of course, *Big Brother* which is amazing that people sort of like put themselves and imprison themselves in the sort of like voluntary captivity and the sort of voyeurisms, and then do this shit which is, I think, inhumane to begin with for the fifteen minutes of fame. And it always ends up in sort of voyeurism. You see the beds, it's like the British *Big Brother*, the sort of surveillance element, the surveillance camera on for twenty-four hours. So, the circle of beds. And it also has this light that you can feel. It has a sizability. But what's also strange is that through the voluntarily captivity always ends up in this voyeurism, but it's always segregated and exemplary.

And then we go to a far older painting about which also Joseph Leo Koerner writes in his essay "Monstrants" and it's called *Le nuque* which is French for "the neck." When I made this painting, I mean the neck, I mean it's like—it came to me as a—dreamt[?] in a sense. It's like somebody shows your back to you, is actually like an insult to a point. And what's also interesting is to know that the word "mal" in German means actually a scar. So "malen" could be understood as scarification.

[01:02:16]

Now, go back in history where things are destroyed even by the people who made them and they are remade by other people and so on and think about the Reformation, of course, where a lot of images were destroyed basically. And then sort of like re-operated and regrouped themselves, but I had this idea which was an instinct idea. And so, with the back of the other side of the pencil, I punched holes into it, which sort of like mutilated or stigmatized the imagery. By doing so, the image got a sort of its own urgency in the way it portrayed the incapacity of both the maker and the image itself.

And then we come to the last thing of my talk, which is *Ende*. And it was a project that I did in the Kunst Kabinett in Bremerhaven, which is a fantastic place, which is run by a nutcase, which is like a 75-year-old, 77-year-old professor of the university and teaches engineering. And already in the 60s showed Laurence Weiner, Richter, Palermo in that space, only one space. And he only makes one photograph at night of the window, which is an amazing thing. I did my first show there in '93. And with the

opening of the new museum in Bremerhaven, his son who is now doing and following up his father—also just like that. And they both were able and are responsible for the Kunstverien, they are responsible for this new museum. And since Basel had to have a show there, the son wanted me to have a counter attack with this.

[01:03:56]

And we decided to make a wall painting that goes all over the space. So the floor, which is actually tiled, is covered with linoleum. And we had them paint that in a sort of grayish color. And then when I came, I actually made the drawing and the white you see, because this is at night, is actually the white that I painted on the grey surface, or painted surface also. So it's like the light that falls in through the window, which we did actually organize with a maquette and we could make that in such a way. There's a book of that. I don't know if they have it here because it's quite interesting.

And I also made Polaroids, which were then actually sold as a multiple for this institution, at night, during the day, and so on. The book is filled with that. And it also is quite reminiscent not only of the window or the wall painting or the mural of Blinky Palermo once painted this window on the wall, actually the sizeability already has that. It's also reminiscent of actually a painting of Edward Hopper and maybe his presumed last one which is *Sunlight in an Empty Room*. And it literally means translated—it means “the end.” And the wall painting does not confine itself to the two dimensionality of the wall, but it takes over the entire space.

Now, we're going to look at the images a bit more faster. It's like a rewind, and this is pause or how it should be. *Against the Day I & II*, two vertical images hung closely side by side, like the sign for pausing the image on the remote control. Not only distance from the viewer to the image is estimated, but also the distance between both images. *Against the Day I* shows somebody dressed up with a cap, rubber boots, and a blue over coat, mimicking a presumed gardner, positioned in the far end corner of my city garden in Antwerp, senselessly shoveling away at night. *Against the Day II* shows the same figure with an interval of time having stopped shoveling, no longer holding the grip of the shovel and without the cap, bald headed, frozenly staring at something. What he's looking at, I have no fucking clue.

[Applause]

[01:06:08]

JG: We ran a little bit over and Luc has graciously agreed to do a signing of his book which is for sale in the book store across and down the concourse. We have time for two hyper-intelligent, well-articulated questions. Given those parameters, who's up for it? Yes sir.

Audience Member: You mentioned Gerhard Richter and how he helped Germany come to terms with its post-war baggage and I wonder what artists or can you comment on the baggage that maybe the West has yet to come to terms with, and who's the Richter of today, who can help....

LT: Well, first of all, I don't think that Richter or Polke went there to begin with. He tried to but he dropped it. The most politicized and also I think one of the bodies of work which is now unfortunately—because it should have stayed in Germany—but it's now in the MoMA, which is the *October* group which deals with the after-war effects, which is the Baader-Meinhof group. But directly, except just a portrait of his uncle, Richter deliberately did not go there.

So that's not something—because for a lot of Germans, and I disagree on that part, the horror was too big and therefore no longer depictable. Remember the words of Adorno, "No poetry could be written...," although Celan wrote a fantastic poem about it. The guy eventually killed himself, jumped from a bridge in Paris, but nevertheless. So I don't think so. No. No, I think that we also have to make a distinction and the fact is that Italian fascism was much more based upon a social commitment, basically.

[01:08:06]

German fascism was totally made out of culture. And that's an important element. If you should see the films of Hans-Jürgen Syberberg, he, far more than Richter, and he's also now eighty or something, he's the only person I know who made the first attempt to identify himself with this character which had been this monstrosity of a character in three films.

I filmed some of them and you can see them in the hallway. Those are the ones that are subtitled and that's with the films that I saw in '78 on still a black and white television. That's when his film came out which was

called *Hitler: A Movie out of Germany*. The two former movies, and they all have this epic length of seven hours, are the film about Ludwig zweig [2], the nutty[?] king out of Byron who loved Wagner. And then we have Karl May in the middle who was the preferred author of Hitler when he was a kid. And he says at the end of the movie, "Watch out when the wrong guy comes."

If you see that, that's 150 years in German history, so that's, I think, a bit more decisive than Gerhard Richter did. And it's not about coming to terms with it. That's not the point. It's the point that you have to not obliterate it from culture. It is part of culture. And that's why I decisively went there because, of course, you can have a sense why are you—morally, can you do that because you didn't have the experience, but of course, people who went to the gas chamber, they didn't come back, right?

And I made this painting when I went to visit it. It's the only existing and non-replica, so the real thing. And I made, in the space, I made this watercolor and only seven or eight years later, it turned into a painting, with the yellowing of the color and everything.

[01:10:00]

JG: Thank you. Yes? Final question.

Audience Member 2: Your work seems to be about humanism and the failures of humanism. What are your thoughts on humanism? Is it salvageable? Do you have a position, do you have your own theory, or do you think it's best left in the garbage bin?

LT: Well, I'm quite a pessimistic character actually so... Why is that? Because then at least you don't get disillusioned. It better be one step ahead. And apart from that, I have quite a funny character, so I'm not like work like totally depressed and all that.

But the thing is my personal opinion is not such a bright one in the sense like the bright future. I think it's a more pragmatic one. And as the world looks now, and with the velocity and the speed, it evolves itself. Humanism has been a little bit sort of like put aside, I mean in terms of bigger ideas, even in the educational framework because things have

become highly specialized basically. Everything has completely disentangled itself from bigger ideas or something like that. So it's all quite pragmatic, which I don't necessarily say that we are evolving into a society without history. But in my concept for example, history is gradually becoming like a study of choice. So when I got my education, I still got the old education, which is called the *Humaniora*, which was like a more generalized education. That then dissolved into something specific which doesn't mean that people are more stupid, they just think differently and with, of course, then the whole situation with the computerization of the world, websites, Twitters, whatever, chatting, a whole generation changes. I mean, the kids of my assistant[?], they don't talk to people. They first chat with them and then they will decide if they will talk.

[1:12:02.3]

So that is a totally different concept of how you build human relationships to begin with. So where will this all end? Will it only end in an ultimate user's mentality and that's it? Will we use everything? That's actually what Leonardo da Vinci said when he died and he's the real inventor of capitalism. He said, "People will use everything until it's done." And that's why I'm also not such a big believer in renaissance, but the thing is just that maybe he's afraid. It's quite detrimental to say so, but maybe the guy was right and proved to be quite visionary.

Jeffrey Grove: Thank you, Luc. Thank you all for coming.