

Thomas Raat

MUMU: Malice and Misunderstanding

13 September - 25 October 2008

SPACE, London E8

Exhibition opening: Friday 12 September 2008 6-9pm

In residency at SPACE, throughout July and August 2008, is Dutch Artist **Thomas Raat**. Supported by SPACE as part of its new initiative for International Contemporary Artists, Raat has been working towards his solo exhibition '**MUMU: Malice and Misunderstanding**', opening on the 12th September 2008. 'MUMU: Malice and Misunderstanding' will premiere a new and challenging body of work.

MUMU is an examination. Calling into question two extremes situated on the borders of art criticism. Two extremes that determine how an artist makes their work and how an audience perceives it. Both dependent on the other. In their juxtaposition an artwork can be created and it can be re-created. It can become outstandingly famous. And it can be destroyed.

Modernism was a reaction, a re-ordering, a rebellion against the past. Against tradition and history. It defined the need for clear, easily recognizable and memorable visual symbols. Out of it emerged the artist as a spiritual totem of creation; creating works of art that have become iconic in art history as unique and original displays of progress.

Neoism on the other hand is a subculture actively engaged in avoiding cultural categorization. It is a process of production that functions by means of shared pseudonyms & identities, a wide propagation of 'fakes', paradoxes and outright plagiarism. As a form of thought it ultimately challenges the cult of the image and the role of the artist who creates them.

MUMU is a project in which the artists Malevich, De Kooning and Barnett Newman are involved in dialogues regarding their work. Mondrian paintings are twisted and forced into awkward shapes. 101 black and white plastic paintings have been lifted from a Neoist internet site and reconstructed in the gallery space. Familiar totemic structures dominate the gallery. One literally melting away, the other stuck in a continuous audio cycle. By adopting plagiarist and prankster behaviour Thomas Raat manipulates the belief structures that surround a series of well known artworks and artists. Reconstructing the dogmas that surround them and highlighting the loss of Modernist ideals that has occurred.

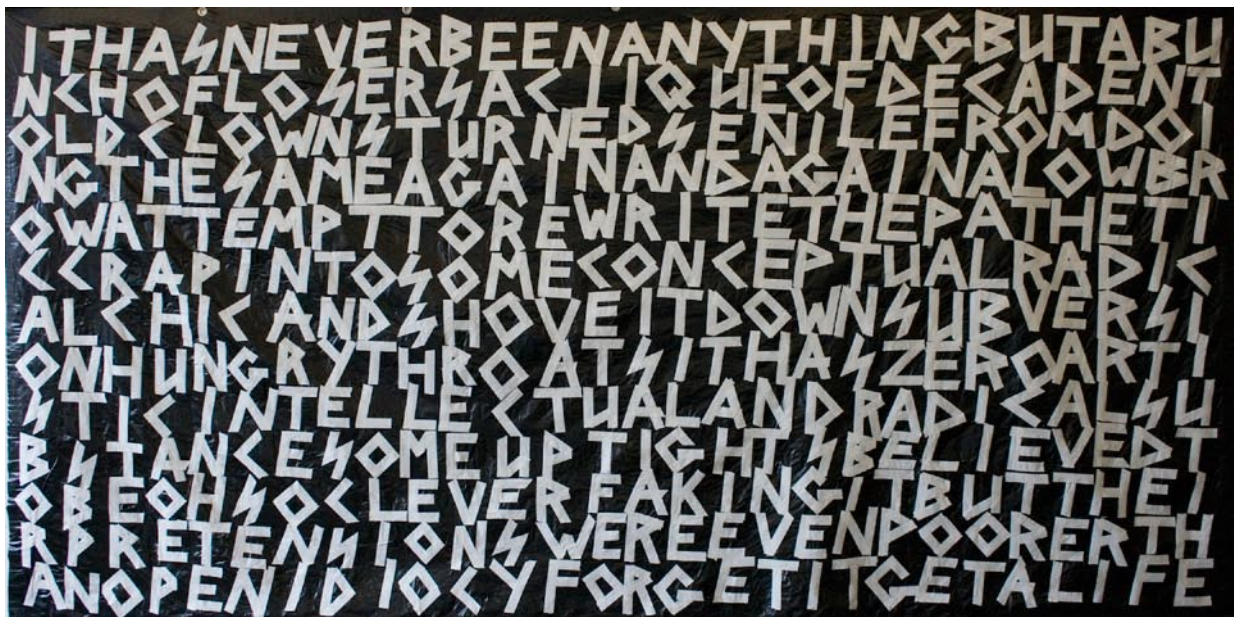
Believers claimed that Mu was the home of an advanced civilization. It has never been found. In the disintegration of a utopian dream pessimism finds its voice. Malice lurks at the heart of every ideal. Progress, so desperately desired, will always be a somewhat humorous and ridiculous cycle of misunderstanding.

Thomas Raat was born in Leiderdorp in the Netherlands in 1979 where he is currently working. He studied at the Koninklijke Academie 1997-2001 and Norwich School of Art and Design in 2000. In 2005-2006 he was accepted for a Delfina studio in London and in 2007 exhibited the solo show 'The Horse Cure' at Alexandre Pollazon Ltd London. He is represented by Gallrie De Expeditie, Amsterdam and in Belgium by Galerie Transit



Thomas Raat, *Corrections*, 2008, Framed 130x100cm, pen on photograph

Thomas Raat, *Corrections*, 2008, Framed 130x100cm, tippex on photograph



Thomas Raat, *Pamphlet*, 2008, 156x310cm, plastic and tape

Note to Editors:-

The International Contemporary Artist platform is a new initiative run by SPACE. The platform consists of support and resources for a selected artist over a 2 month residency, providing accommodation and use of the commissioning studio at the Triangle. The period is an opportunity for an exciting artist to develop their practice and take risks in the production of new work for a solo-exhibition.

SPACE's mission is to provide 'space to create': supporting the creation of art through the provision of creative environments; 'space to engage': widening engagement in artistic practices; and 'space to develop'- supporting the development of creative individuals and communities. It fulfils its mission through providing affordable studio space to over 600 artists across 17 sites in London and an innovative artistic, educational, media and training programme.

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