

## Pieter Léon Vermeersch "Beautiful dystopia"

**Exhibition in Aporia gallery from 19 May to 16 June 2018**

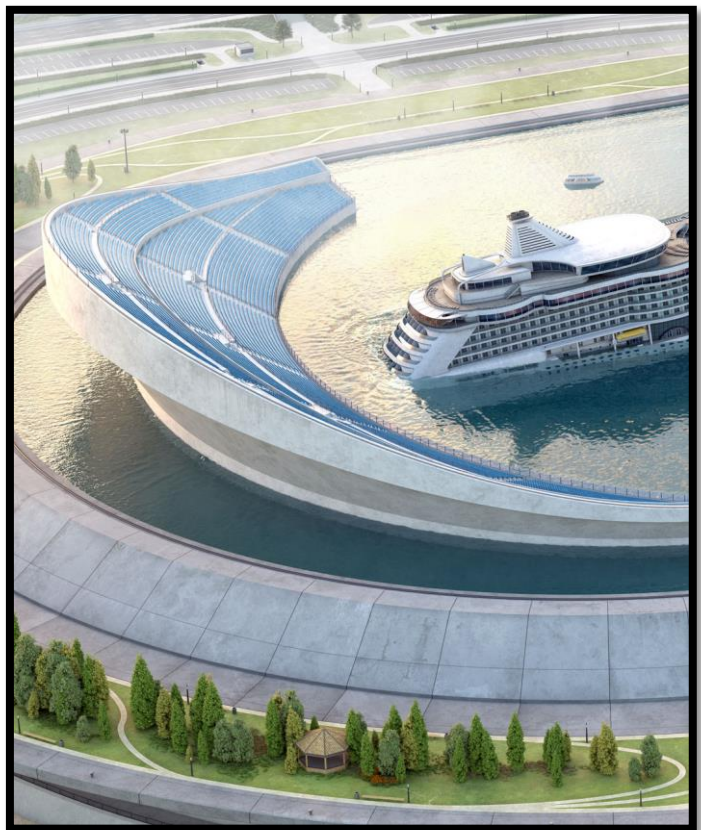
Leuven based artist **Pieter Léon Vermeersch** was born in 1985 and graduated in 2007 from Luca School of Arts in Brussels and obtained a Master in Visual Arts and specialized in Advertising Design. Pieter Léon Vermeersch settled as independent visual artist. His work deals with the tension between the concepts of utopia and dystopia. The dystopian predictions by authors like Aldous Huxley and George Orwell about worlds without privacy which are dominated by the increasing power of authoritarian regimes and/ or big companies, are becoming a reality. The concept of utopia on the other hand has been dismissed after the failures of the 20th century.

A good approach to the art of Pieter Léon Vermeersch would be raising questions such as: "What is happening down there in the dreamlike constructions and cities?". This is because we are used to art which is easily accessible and which very often provide an answer with a glimpse of the eye. Deciphering the subject matter in the case of Pieter Léon Vermeersch art takes more of an effort.

The exhibition is called "**Beautiful dystopia**" in which Pieter Léon Vermeersch shows computer designs printed on paper or visualized in 3D-models or maquettes as art and seem to portray architectural concepts, designs or models which are implanted in unusual and futuristic-like landscapes and environments. The underlying meaning is less obvious and results in questions which are raised by the art work itself and which are addressing the viewer directly.

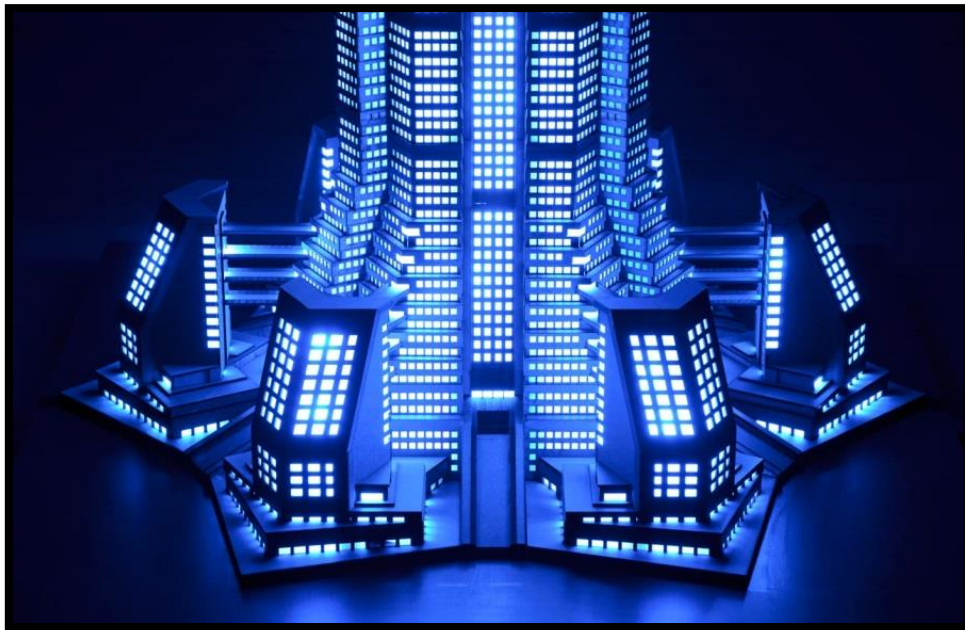
First of all, the architectural designs suggest formal features of how future buildings could look like in an undefined future – they represent visionary views of expressive architectural compositions and forms solidly based on platforms that could apparently, be set in which ever environment. One thing is certain; the architectural "habitats" call upon our interpretation and leave us in no way indifferent. This is not only through the use of expressive forms of totem-like landmark as we see them from ground-level but also as we see them from a bird's perspective where one can discover snowflake patterns and crystalline compositions which indicate to solid building platforms.

Instant questions may relate to their functionality: were these buildings designed for people to live in or were they conceived for other purposes and



perhaps other types of inhabitants? These questions remain unanswered as well as the one concerning the locality of the buildings. Should one imagine them on earth in a urban/dessert-like environment or somewhere in outer space or on an unknown planet. Note for the latter, the skydome structure encapsulating a gigantic cenotaph - we will never be able to give the answer since both options seem valid.

One thing is certain, we can hardly notice any human presence in and around the architectural structures. Perhaps these buildings house a machine or supernatural inhabitant, a divine creature, a survivor of a nuclear disaster. We will never know unless we would ask the artist. Still, viewing the printed images and maquettes raise so many questions and influence our creative mind.



Another issue that is striking is the “impersonal” aspect that breaths through the work; are they placed in a real but distant imaginary world? And what about the scale – are they located on a human, real life scale or rather on a micro- or macro-scale? Are the pieces minimalistic or on the contrary, megalomaniac? We cannot tell, the works leave it open to our imagination. There is also a time related issue; are we looking towards the future or are we looking back into the past? A space that we never yet experienced or lived in before. And then there is the scale of the images – have they been blown up or scaled down? Honestly, we are unable to tell since each alternative seems valid but is unclassifiable – is the artist triggering our reflex to categorize everything?

By entering the imaginative world of Vermeersch we seem to lose our grip of reality in terms of time and space (and thus scale). Have we entered a “quantum” spiritual arena where only uncertainties exist. Are we looking at images that prefigure worlds where probabilities are the only certainties? Are we looking at the inside of a computer machine, or at the functioning of our bodies from different perspectives? All seems possible in the imagination of Vermeersch which testifies for the quality of his creativity and his aptitudes to visualize.

Aporia gallery presents Pieter Léon Vermeersch - "Beautiful dystopia" - 19<sup>th</sup> of May – 16<sup>th</sup> of June 2018

The blurring of frontiers between dream and reality, between reality and fiction, between the concrete and the abstract, between the suggestion and the tactility, between the imagination and the actual, triggers the spectator's mind and that is what makes art to art.

The suggestion of various possibilities is left open for interpretation and evaluation within the eyes of the viewer – it renders the creative act of the artist convincing.

Bart Roefmans, Aporia gallery Brussels, 29 April 2018.

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