

A LEAP OF THOUGHT  
Waalko Dingemans  
12 January - 23 February 2018  
Former signal-box Muiderpoort Station

In one of Muiderpoort Station's most striking buildings in Amsterdam-East, the 20 metre high white signal-box (now a national monument) stands directly behind the station building, rising over the two elevated tracks. Waalko Dingemans built his light installation 'Gedachtsprong' here. A photo collage consisting of an 11-meter-long roll is moving slowly in an aluminum frame along the windows at the top of the signal-box. As soon as night begins to fall LED lights from behind the circular photo roll illuminate the image so it is clearly visible from the adjacent platforms. The work takes about an hour to complete a full rotation. This slow movement is exactly what Waalko Dingemans is looking for in his work. He wants our perception to be slowed, to make us rely on our own experience, memories and sensations to therefore discover new relationships and new meanings of the things in question.

A Leap of Thought is a work that can not be consumed all at once and its meaning is not immediately apparent. The work requires an active response, a way of looking where the viewers cannot simply accept what is offered, but must research it for themselves. Not only because the work moves constantly and thus it continually offers different viewpoints, but also the nature of the image itself requires an enquiring gaze.

A Leap of Thought is a collage, based on a single photographic image of a forest clearing near the childhood home of the artist. It is an ever-recurring memory that reappears in several of his works. In this case the photo has been printed in mirror image, as a first step in the removal and alienation from the actual location. Collages have been applied to the photo, first by hand with paper and later digitally edited. Orange circles around the collages act as wormholes that suggest a passage to another time and space. Pieces of tree bark, the inside of an eyeball, blue sky appear as jumps in the image. Just as our memories are never pure but always intertwine and constantly change when they are attached to new events, so images pile up here. In some places lines flow seamlessly into each other and what is seen seems clear but then suddenly the image is interrupted and it derails us and brings us elsewhere.

Waalko Dingemans works with images from his personal life. By starting from his own early memories he wants to connect with images that are part of our collective memory. Experiences of nature, as memories of where we came from and are connected to, is something we all share. Placed in the urban environment, the image forms an opening to another moment, a memory of a place of relaxation and reflection. The choice for the train station is significant. Although Dingemans has deliberately placed his work outside the timelessness of the museum in the everyday environment, he has chosen a location that is also a place of waiting, where one can still take the time to observe and lose oneself in looking.

The signal-box is clearly visible from both tracks as its function once required it to be and the brightly lit, slow-moving image will simply capture the gaze of everyone who is there. But the choice for the train station gains another meaning here, not only as a place to waiting but also as a transition, where we are transported elsewhere. The windows behind which the collage moves, like the frames of a film or the windows of a passing train, function as another montage in which memories and observations are bound to each other to form new stories.

Alice Smits

