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Renée Kool

Research: Archaeology of the near future – on the announcement of new urban life

Both the artistic practice and the research of [Renée Kool](#) are concerned with ideologies of progress and the ways in which they are manifested in the public domain. Most recently she has been concerned with textual and visual representations of new urban life as expressed in the public domain, in communication and advertising expressions, and in advertorial photography.

Realistic representations of apparently everyday scenes are conjured up before us on posters, advertisements on scaffolding and monitors in the urban landscape around us. Free lifestyle magazines issued by chain stores and glossy non-commercial government campaigns present us with images of women, men, children, animals, landscapes, objects and utilities as if the photographer had caught them by surprise at an arbitrary moment in everyday metropolitan life. It is a well-known fact that these are rarely actual snapshots of authentic everyday life, but are carefully staged, subtly illuminated products subject to sophisticated technical post-editing. After all, the everyday and the casual have been important visual style figures for a long time by now.

As a result of digital photography, digital printing technology and other changes, there are now significantly more images to be seen in the public domain that belong to the genre of photographic realism. This contemporary genre of scenes represents seductive dreams of a life that we hope will come true in the near future. The more you examine such dream images, the clearer it becomes, it seems to me, that new urban life will no longer be necessarily linked to physically living and residing in the city. You can be a new metropolitan wherever you like, especially in the Netherlands.

This research is intended to result in a publication and an exhibition. Both will present new works made during the research and earlier works that bear on the theme.

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