

Joep van Lieshout
Functional Art Projects

Joep van Lieshout: sculptor and visionary

Joep van Lieshout was accepted to the Rotterdam Academy of the Arts at sixteen years old. After graduating, he rose to fame quickly with projects that travelled between the world of easy and clean designs and the traditionally non-functional area of art, creating sculpture and installations, buildings and furniture, utopias and dystopias.

In 1995, Van Lieshout founded his studio, Atelier Van Lieshout, and has working solely under the studio's name ever since. The studio moniker exists in Van Lieshout's practice as a methodology toward undermining the myth of the artistic genius. Over the past three decades, Van Lieshout has established a multidisciplinary practice that produces works on the borders between art, design, and architecture. By investigating the thin line between manufacturing art and mass-producing functional objects, he seeks to find the boundaries between fantasy and function, between fertility and destruction. Van Lieshout dissects systems, be it society as a whole or the human body; he experiments, looks for alternatives, takes exhibitions as experiments for recycling, and has even declared an independent state in the port of Rotterdam AVL-Ville (2001)—a free state in Rotterdam's harbors, with a minimum of rules, a maximum of liberties, and the highest degree of autarky. All of these activities are conducted within Van Lieshout's signature style of provocation—be it political or material.

Van Lieshout combines an imaginative aesthetic and ethic with a spirit of entrepreneurship; his work has motivated movements in the fields of architecture and ecology, and has been internationally celebrated, exhibited, and published. His works share a number of recurring themes, motives, and obsessions: systems, power, autarky, life, sex, and death—each of these trace the human individual in the face of a greater whole.

AVL-Ville was followed by Sportopia/Disciplinator (2002-2004), a series of installations built with scaffolding, a readymade non-design material, which explores the borders of freedom, discipline and community. The Organs series (2003-2007) focuses on the human body as the ultimate system while the Technocrat (2003-2005), features a closed circuit of food, alcohol, waste and biogas-energy, with humans as one of the cogwheels to make the giant machine work.

More recent projects include SlaveCity (2005-2008), a utopian project that is simultaneously carbon neutral, cultural, and hedonistic. Here, current ideas about ethics, aesthetics, food, energy, economics, management have been turned upside-down and reformulated, resulting in the design of

an imaginary city of 200.000 inhabitants. At its core, SlaveCity is rational, efficient, and profitable. It is also the first 'zero energy' city—a green town, recycling everything, not wasting any of the world's resources, and completely self-sufficient. Cradle to Cradle, an installation from 2009, is a follow up to SlaveCity.

New Tribal Labyrinth (2010-ongoing), is representative of a more recent series of works by Van Lieshout, and reflects on the possible end of civilization as we know it. Our advanced society is extremely dependent on the current globalized economy with its complex relations and systems, and with over-consumption being the norm. Van Lieshout envisions and craves a return to simplicity, to industry and farming, to simple products with a passion for materials. He literally sculpts a new, simple way of living that he believes will blossom. The New Tribal Labyrinth presents the public with a vision of this possible future, an alternative society inhabited by imaginary tribes. This project focuses on the three main pillars of this tribal society, farming, industry and ritual objects, to become a 'Gesamtkunstwerk'.

Currently, Van Lieshout is working on a series of robotic installations and what he is referring to as "crypto futurism" or "nouveau brutalism." His work with new materials explores ongoing, and perhaps more relevant themes today, surrounding independence, autarky, alternative energy, and systems.

selected functional art projects

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The Original Dwelling, 2015, pavilion for Design Miami Basel, Basel, SZ



The Original Dwelling, 2015
pavilion for Design Miami Basel
Basel, SZ



Ball Skull, 1996, private collection Miuccia Prada, Milan, IT



Hagioscoop is one of the farms from the *New Tribal Labyrinth* series, a large cross-shaped diorama set in the imaginary date of “year zero”. As part of *New Tribal Labyrinth*, AVL will create farms for the future, but also from the pre-history, the year zero, the Middle Ages, the Golden Age, and post-war modernist utopia. The final goal is to create a larger than life farm which consist of all the individual farms, connected by tunnels, corridors, doors and hatches. The farm can be entered on the inside, but also viewed from the outside through small openings - comparable to the small windows which can be found in some churches, which enabled outcasts to witness the celebration of mass from outside – the so-called Hagioscoop.

Hagioscoop, 2012
pavilion
dertienhectare sculpture parc, Heeswijk, NL



Caban, 2015
pavilion and performance space for Bangor University's theater, music venue and cinema
Pontio Cultural Centre, Bangor, GB





Bar L'Absence, 2009, public bar/pavilion for the Architecture Faculty at Nantes University, Nantes, FR

brutalist



The Good, the Bad and the Ugly is an extraordinary settlement: an installation and art village for large scale cultural festival the Ruhrtriennale, which will be exhibited for three consecutive year from 2015 to 2017.

Central to the settlement is the *Refektorium*, which serves as a theatre, a meeting point, a restaurant, bar and foyer. The *Refektorium* is the focal point in a labyrinth of new and existing iconic works by Atelier Van Lieshout: *BarRectum*, *Pioneer Set*, *Workshop for Alcohol and Medicines*, *Workshop for Weapons and Bombs* and *Domestikator* – a large scale artwork that serves as a totem, a temple and a beacon within the hectic festival grounds. *Domestikator* symbolises the power of humanity over the world; its playful and provocative appearance led to the installation going viral in its opening year.

2016 has seen the addition of a series of new large-scale artworks focussing on the relationship between Man and Machine, including *House of the Talking Heads*, where two large automatons will be deeply engaged in conversation, touching on subjects like mankind's growing dependency on modern technology. Ironically, the heads appear to react without actually listening to each other.

The work *Oracle* takes the concept Man and Machine even further. *Oracle* is an interactive installation, a giant wire-steel head equipped with a mechanism that enables it to talk and move its jaws, goggle his eyes and revolve around its axis. It is set in motion by text messages sent by the public, who are actively sought to engage with the sculpture.

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly, august - september 2016
festival village for Ruhrtriennale festival
Ruhr area, Bochum, DE





Les Brutalist is a body of cubist, functional sculptures in a style that Joep van Lieshout refers to as “nouveau brutalism”. With its abstract, geometrical shapes, *Les Brutalist* hold a clear reference to the utopian modernist movements of the early 20th century. At the same time, however, the installation addresses mans’ most primeval needs. The installation is part of a series by Atelier Van Lieshout, entitled *New Tribal Labyrinth*, which presents a vision of a future, yet primitive, world inhabited by imaginary tribes where there will be different ethics. This world will see a return to farming and industry, to rituals and rites.

Les Brutalist, 2015, 1995, presentation at Design Miami/Basel by carpenters workshop gallery



Flatpack Table XL, 2016, Furnification by Carpenters Workshop Gallery
Flatpack (wood), 2016, Furnification by Carpenters Workshop Gallery

architectural units





Insect Farm is a high tech farm for the future where insects will be bred as a high protein, low carbon footprint solution for feeding the increasing world population.

Insect Farm, 2012, info stand for Z33 Arts Center, Hasselt, BE



The director of the Centraal Museum wanted a small extension in which to work, sleep and relax. AVL's solution was to devise a piece that is mounted with large bolts onto the museum's outside wall. Since AVL tends to build without detailed drawings, the works evolve inside the studio and often change in unforeseeable ways during the construction process. In this case, AVL began with the three basic elements of the extension – a table, a bench and a bed – and then started building the space around them. The final piece on the outside of the museum was not designed; its appearance is the result of the coincidental form of the space needed inside the structure.

Clip-On, 2003, office extension, Centraal Museum, Utrecht, NL



Single Person's Dwelling, 2008, full scale model for *SlaveCity*/Holiday retreat, Hoek van Holland, NL



AVL-Headquarters, 2001, part of the Freestate AVL-Ville (2001), Rotterdam, NL



With the Pioneer Set AVL has created a prefabricated farm and equipment with which individuals or groups can travel into the world. After arriving at a certain location, they can set up the farm and live self-sufficiently. The Pioneer Set is built in such a way that it can function indefinitely without any need for repairs and extensions. The set consists of a big container, a farm house, a stable, a chicken coop, a rabbit hutch, a pig pen and several tools and equipment and fencing

AVL considers the Pioneer Set a very important milestone artwork. The goal was to make something for survival. Not to create the type of farm that would make a profit or be economically competitive with other farms. But it has to be able to actually be a farm and function as one. It's not an imaginary piece of work. Nevertheless it gives some nostalgic, utopian and even romantic idea of living. Longing to go back to nature or to be independent, or not to be even a part of this world. It should be a mixture of the good things of the 'old world' and the good things of 'the new world', with the Pioneer Set as a simple result.

The Pioneer Set is similar to previous AVL work but also different. The individual is more important. It is actually a new and improved Autocrat sculpture. That piece is a mobile home in which you can survive with simple means. With the Pioneer Set it could be possible to colonize the world.

Pioneer Set, 1997, mobile autarkic farm, Museum Kröller-Müller, Otterlo, NL



Artist-in-Residence Choco, 2011
Artists-in-Residence in the Colombian Jungle,
built together with the local indigenous communities for MasArteMasAccion foundation
Choco, CL



Dynamo, 2015
Hotel capsule
Domaine du Muy, FR

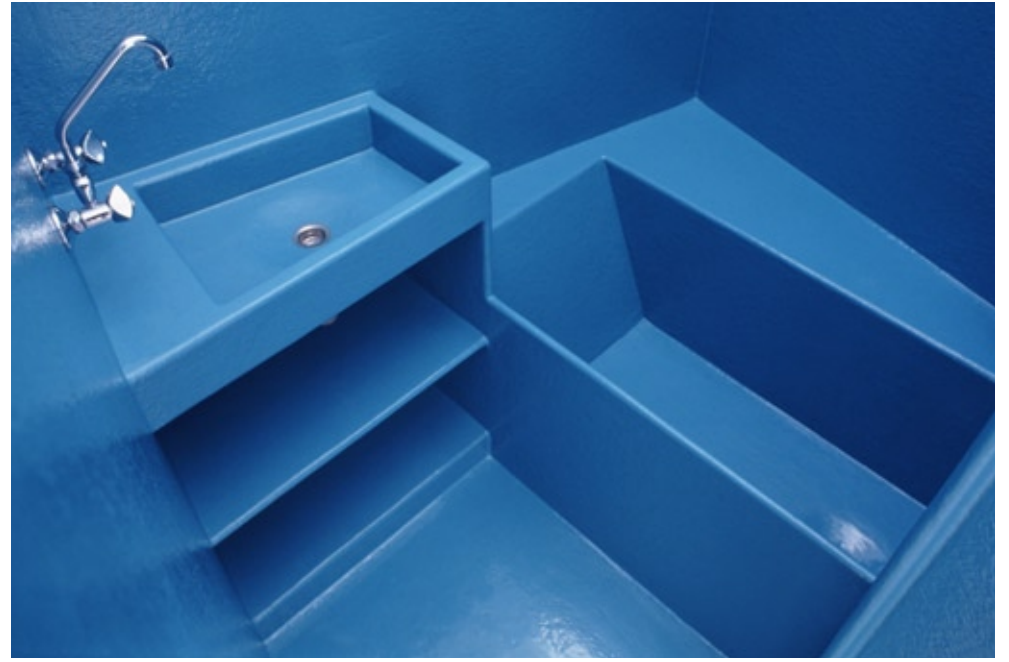


Mini Capsule Side Entrance (6 units) can be viewed as a people farm. Stacked together, the units look like a large fibreglass rabbit hutch, if not the hutches of the mobile Pioneer Set. Each of the six hotel units has space to sleep two people; the interior is not much larger than a double bed and is equipped with the basics: a mattress, sheets, blankets, a nightlight, clothing hooks, an electricity outlet and a shelf. A modest version of Maxi Capsule Luxus, the Mini Capsule is made to function as a budget hotel without staff.

Mini Capsule Side Entrance 6 units, hotel capsule, collection Brad Pitt, USA



3-Star room bathroom design, 2004, Lloyd Hotel, Amsterdam, NL



Sanitary Units, 1998 - 2004, sanitary units for various public and private clients



Grand Palais Lille, 1995, design for bars and sanitary units for expo building, in collaboration with OMA/Rem Koolhaas, Lille, FR



Lappia Kitchen, 2005, kitchen design for private client, Rotterdam, NL

installations



Blast Furnace, 2013, Blast Furnace is a monument to Machines, created site-specifically for La Friche Belle de Mai, Marseille, 2013



Cage, 2017
Facade
Middelburg, NL



Designed for the Indianapolis Museum of Art, Funky Bones is a group of 20 benches with drawings of large bones that will together form the shape of an enormous, stylized human skeleton. The work grows out of ideas about native heritage and cultural development, with bones iconically referring to artifacts and remains from previous occupants. The artwork doubles as seating and a playground for visitors in the park. The piece is very popular with the public, used for education, and it also played an important role in both novel and movie "The Fault in our Stars."

Funky Bones, 2010
public sculpture for the 100 Acres sculpture park
IMA, Indianapolis, USA



Mobile Home for Kröller-Müller is also fondly known as The Master and Slave Unit. The Master Unit forms the central block; the Slave Units can be clicked or screwed into any one of the five modular holes in the Master Unit. Each Slave Unit has a specific function – bedroom, sanitary space, kitchen, office – and can be easily moved from one hole to another in the Master Unit. With no fixed layout, no foundation, nor final form, The Master and Slave Unit breaks all the rules of traditional architecture. The absence of an overall design makes any rule infinitely expendable and flexible.

Mobile Home for Kröller-Müller, 1995
Kröller-Müller Museum, Otterlo, NL



Toilet Units, 2014, The Good, The Bad and The Ugly, Ruhrtriennale, Bochum, DE



CasAnus, 2007, Hotel pavilion, Verbeke Foundation, Kemzeke, BE



CasAnus, 2007,
Hotel pavilion, Verbeke Foundation,
Kemzeke, BE

This hotel capsule takes its shape from the human digestive system: starting with the tongue, continuing to the stomach, moving through the small and the large intestines. While it is anatomically correct, the last part of the large intestine has been inflated to a humongous size to serve as a hotel capsule. It was commissioned by the Verbeke Foundation, a sculpture park in Belgium, and can be booked for the night by visitors.