



Extremely Experimental Art by My Grandma, 1999/2019, acrylic on wall and wood, approx. 14 by 41 feet.



Old People Making Spectacular Experimental Art, 1999, acrylic on wall and couch, approx. 14 by 11 feet.

all of us have some similar health-care experiences. I see the work as recording the reality of people my age. All of my peers, friends I still know from childhood and art school, have various illnesses now: some chronic, some deadly. It's really scary, but we have no other choice than to deal with it.

All of the information in "Exhibition of the Medicines" is true and mine: there needs to be some truth to make it juicy, to make it touch people. But really, it doesn't matter that it's about me. Some people thought I made the exhibition because I was diagnosed with some deadly disease, that it was confessional art, but it's less spectacular than that. I wanted to portray everyday life: a physiotherapy appointment, a cold, a bout of flu, my bladder medication.

VAN HEUMEN Looking at the paintings, I see the types of support networks that many of

us rely on, especially as we grow older. Care is banal and everyday, and as you say: unspectacular. But this doesn't mean that it's unimportant. Today, in Western culture, we place a high value on autonomy and independence; we forget that, in reality, we all depend on each other in our everyday lives. Dependency is often associated with weakness and shame, which I think is part of why care labor, usually performed by women, is often unpaid or underpaid. You're showing respect to these health-care workers by putting their names on the wall.

VAN DER STOKKER When I made *The Tidy Kitchen* [2015] at the Hammer Museum in LA, I was celebrating domestic tasks. Some people thought that this wall painting, which was about washing and cleaning and tidying, was a complaint. On the contrary: in this work, I was supporting and highlighting women, and also men, who clean and take care of our houses and our messes, because people do look down on these traditionally feminine tasks.

VAN HEUMEN Can we talk about young people? Or are we the bad guys?

VAN DER STOKKER The art world needs the energy and new ideas of young people. Still, I find it sad that, when artists get older, they cannot be considered avant-garde any longer. Most older artists are not taken as seriously as they once were. A few are said to make their best work at the end of their lives, but most not.

For my show at the Migros Museum, I made a wall painting about this issue titled

Extremely Experimental Art by My Grandma [2019]. It was a big piece – around forty feet long – and I redesigned it several times because I was not, and am still not, satisfied that it is experimental enough. I first made a series called "Extremely Experimental Art by Older People" in 1999 and 2000. At the time, I was forty-five and thinking about my future. I already thought I was pretty old!

Making work about oldness is a bit taboo in the art world: once you're no longer young and fresh, you're not as much part of the art discourse anymore. Nowadays, however, maybe I do want to slow down. Maybe I don't want to participate in the hype around the newest cutting-edge development, but instead want to reflect on all I did over the last forty years. So I enjoyed imagining a peculiar grandma making extremely experimental art. For me, the work was an alibi to happily create something weird and ugly. The work is tongue-in-cheek and confronts us with our own tendency to discriminate against the old. ●

— Moderated by Emily Watlington

LILY VAN DER STOKKER is an artist who lives and works in Amsterdam and New York. She has a solo exhibition scheduled for this fall at Camden Arts Center, London.

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