

DEWEER ART GALLERY PRESSFILE

Koen Vanmechelen

The Cosmopolitan Chicken Project / Ten generations

09.09 - 21.10.07

Since approximately 10 years Koen Vanmechelen is mainly engaged in his gigantic chicken breeding project *The Cosmopolitan Chicken*. In this solo-exhibition, his fourth at Deweer Art Gallery, he made an overview of the whole project since its beginnings and combined it with a live presentation of the last, recently born generation.

The Cosmopolitan Chicken is a worldwide breeding project to which the crossbreeding of different national chicken races is central and crucial. The crossbreeding is the metaphorical quintessence of the dynamic, fertile and creative life and of the peaceful living together of different species and races.

The Cosmopolitan Chicken Project officially started in 2000 in Watou (BE). As his participation in the exhibition *Storm Centers*, curated by Jan Hoet, Koen Vanmechelen crossbred the Belgian chicken *Mechelse Koekoek* (*Cuckoo of Malines*) with the French pride *Poulet de Bresse*, creating a second generation, the *Mechelse Bresse*.

And Vanmechelen went on. Until now, *The Cosmopolitan Chicken Project* has produced ten generations. The descendants of each crossing are named after the first generation and the new race that is brought in. For example the eighth generation, the '*Mechelse Fighters*', was crossbred with the Brazilian *Auracana* to create the ninth generation called '*Mechelse Auracana*'. Recently, Koen Vanmechelen has crossbred the *Mechelse Auracana* with a Turkish chicken called the *Denizli longcrower*.

The resulting generation, the *Mechelse Denizli*, is on display in this exhibition. The first animal that reaches adulthood will be portrayed and when it has died a natural death it will be stuffed to testify of its new generation, all of which was also the case with its predecessors.

The Cosmopolitan Chicken is an artistic and aesthetic project that not only touches a lot of contemporary social issues such as genetic manipulation, cloning, globalisation, multiraciality, multicultural society, and so on, but also tries to influence the debate on these themes from an artistic and humanitarian point of view. Although the artist has a lot of inspiring contacts with the medical and scientific world, the *Cosmopolitan Chicken Project* has found its ideal setting in the art world.



Mechelse Auracana, 2006, photography, 160 x 120 cm

**Koen Vanmechelen - The Cosmopolitan Chicken
Project / Ten Generations
09.09 - 21.10.07**

**opening 08.09.07 15:00 - 18:30
in the presence of the artist**

**DEWEER ART GALLERY
Tiegemstraat 6A
B - 8553 Otegem (BE)
0032 (0)56 644 893**

**Wed - Sun 14:00 - 18:00
Fri 10:00 - 18:00
and by appointment**

www.deweerartgallery.com

www.koenvanmechelen.com

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O T E G E M

Koen Vanmechelen

1965 BE

1965

born in Sint-Truiden, Belgium

Koen Vanmechelen lives and works in Meeuwen-Gruitrode, BE.

selected solo exhibitions since 2000

2000

“Meat, Meet & Me” (happening) & “Mechelse Bresse”, La Feuille d’Or, Dilsen-Stokkem (B)

2001

“The Cosmopolitan Chicken - Between Natural Breeding and Genetic Engineering”, Deweer Art Gallery, Otegem (B)

2002

“Artificial Cross-breeding”(installation), Berengo Fine Arts, Miami Art Fair (USA)

“Meeting”(installation), Deweer Art Gallery, 20th Art Brussels (B)

“Who’s Calling”(installation), Berengo Fine Arts, Mi Art, Milano (I)

2003

“The Cosmopolitan Chicken Project”, Musée Départemental de l’Abbaye de St. Riquier (F)

“Cosmopolitan Chicken Project – Desire”, De Brakke Grond, Amsterdam (NL)

“Cosmopolitan Chicken Project – Mechelse Owlbeard” (cur. Roel Arkesteijn), GEM Den Haag / KunstRAI, Amsterdam (NL)

“Cosmopolitan Chicken Project - Second Generation: Mechelse Bresse - Sex & Mortality”, Deweer Art Gallery, Otegem (B),

2004

“Red Jungle Fowl - Genus XY”, Z33 - Provinciaal Museum, Hasselt (B)

“Mechelse Dresdner”, Galerie K4, München (D)

2005

“Cosmopolitan Chicken Project - Virtual Mechelse Fighters”, Deweer Art Gallery, Otegem (B), catalogue

“Red Jungle Fowl - Genus XY”, CRAC Alsace, Altkirch (F)

2006

“Cosmopolitan Chicken Project – 8 Generations” in “6 Kunstwerken op locatie”, Kunstvereniging Diepenheim, NL

2007

“The Accident”, Berengo Contemporary (curator Agnes Huslein), Palm Court, Miami, FL, USA

selected group exhibitions since 1999

1999

“In de ban van de ring”, Provinciaal Museum, Hasselt (B)

2000

“Storm Centers”, Watou (cur. Jan Hoet), catalogue

“A Shot in the Head”, Lisson Gallery, London (GB)

“Berengo Collection”, Fundacion Centro Nacional del Vidrio, La Granja (E)

2001

“Secret Gardens”, Rekem (B)

“www.murano.be”, Venetiaanse Gaanderijen, Oostende (B),

“Wir sind die ander(en)”, Marta, Herford (D)

2002

“3 FEB 02”, Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle (D), catalogue

2003

“Le Coq”, Musée Départementale de l’Abbaye de Saint-Riquier (F)

“Beaufort 2003” (cur. Willy Van den Bussche), Blankenberge (B)

“The Walking Egg”, Shinchu Museum, Taipei (T)

2004

“Cultivando la Naturaleza” (cur. Bianca Visser), Fundacion César Manrique, Lanzarote (E)

“(W)aanwezigheden, Sint-Truiden (B)

“New Brood”(installation), “ECLIPS / 25th Anniversary Deweer Art Gallery”, Transfo Zwevegem (B)

2005

“LAT”, Oda-Park, Venray (NL)

“Super!”(cur. Edith Doove), Hasselt (B)

“Slow Art - Neue Akzente aus Flandern und den Niederlanden”, Museum Kunst Palast, Düsseldorf (D)

“Two Asias, Two Europes”, Duolun Museum of Modern Art, Shanghai

2006

“Drawing the Animal”, Marijke Schreurs Gallery, Brussels (B)

“6 Kunstwerken op locatie” (with a.o. Hans Op de Beeck and Ricardo Brey, cur. Roel Arkesteijn), Kunstvereniging Diepenheim (NL)

“Facing 1200°”, Museum Moderner Kunst Kärnten, Klagenfurt (A)

2007

“Genesis”(cur. Emily Gomart), Centraal Museum, Utrecht (NL)

selected projects

> 1999 “The Walking Egg” (scientific periodical with Dr. Willem Ombelet)

> 2000 “The Cosmopolitan Chicken Project”

> 2003 “The Cosmopolitan Chicken Project”, Mbulu Tanzania

> 2005 “The Cosmopolitan Chicken Project”, Arusha, Uganda

public installations

“11 September 2005”, Abdijsite, Sint-Truiden (B)

“The Walking Egg - Born”, installation at the ZOL Medical Center, Genk (B)