

Strategies for Survival (1986)

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

Strategies for Survival (1986) is an archives project produced by UNIT/PITT Society for Art and Critical Awareness in 2023, funded by the BC History Digitization Program at the University of British Columbia.

Strategies for Survival: State of the Arts / The Art of Alternatives: An International Conference for Artists was organized by the Vancouver Artists' League, as a component part of *Vancouver: The Place, Vancouver: The People*, a City of Vancouver centennial project for 1986.

Find the rest of the project linked at unitpitt.ca



TABLE OF CONTENTS



































	QUOTE
	INTRODUCTION (2023)
	DOCUMENTS AND ACCESS
	DAY 3, SPEAKER 2
	BIOGRAPHY (1986)
	INTRODUCTIONS (1986)
	INTRODUCTIONS, AGAIN
	THE STORY OF T.V. JANE
	T.V. JANE, CONTINUED
	A LETTER FROM T.V. JANE
	T.V. JANE, FILMMAKER
	T.V. JANE, WOMAN ARTIST
	ALL THE ARTS AND ARTISTS
	BUREAU KREDIAT REGISTRATIE
	CH-CH-CH-CHANGES
	Q&A
	COMRADES VS. CLIENTS
	A QUESTION FROM A FILMMAKER

TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS

				
			00:00:00	
			00:00:21	
			00:00:49	
			00:02:00	
			00:02:58	
			00:03:44	
			00:06:22	
			00:11:09	
			00:14:13	
			00:20:07	
			00:22:40	
			00:24:33	
			00:26:54	
			00:33:37	
			00:34:33	
			00:35:42	
			00:37:34	
			00:41:58	
				

- ↑ [COMMERCE VS. CRITIQUE](#)
- ↑ [CRITERIA FOR SUPPORT](#)
- 👁️ [PORNOGRAPHY, AGAIN](#)
- ↑ [2-D VS. 3-OR-4-D](#)
- ↑ [STATS AND SPATS](#)
- ↑ [ARTISTS AS DECISION-MAKERS](#)
- 📄 [CLOSING REMARKS \(1986\)](#)
- 📄 [CLOSING REMARKS \(2023\)](#)



[The [TABLE OF CONTENTS](#) is linked at the end of each section.]

- ↓ [00:44:27](#)
- edited transcript
- ↓ [00:47:27](#)
- 👂 [00:50:18](#)
- ↓ [00:53:37](#)
- ↑ [00:56:18](#)
- textural transcript
- 📄 [01:00:25](#)
- 📄 [01:03:02](#)
- ↓ [01:05:27](#)



[The [TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS](#) is linked at the end of each section.]

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

QUOTE

Last few days, I've met quite a lot of people who said, "well, the Netherlands, that must be a paradise!" But concerning art and artists' support, I'll tell you this: the sun went down in this paradise. It's not a paradise anymore. Although I think it's better than a lot of other countries.



[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

00:00:00

Wilma De Jong, the Netherlands:

Last few days, I've met quite a lot of people who said, "well, the Netherlands, that must be a paradise!" But concerning euh, art and artists' support, well I'll tell you this: the sun went down in this paradise. It's really— it's not a paradise anymore. Al— although I think it's better than a lot of other countries.

[Tone.]



[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

INTRODUCTION (2023)

Strategies for Survival (1986), is an archives project produced by UNIT/PITT Society for Art and Critical Awareness, re-presenting the partial proceedings of *Strategies for Survival: State of the Arts / The Art of Alternatives: An International Conference for Artists*, organized by the Vancouver Artists' League at the Commodore Ballroom in Vancouver, June 9, 10, and 11, 1986.



[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

00:00:21

Francesca Bennett, project coordinator:

Welcome to *Strategies for Survival (1986)*, an archives project produced by UNIT/PITT Society for Art and Critical Awareness, re-presenting the partial proceedings of *Strategies for Survival: State of the Arts / The Art of Alternatives: An International Conference for Artists*, organized by the Vancouver Artists' League at the Commodore Ballroom in Vancouver, June 9, 10, and 11, 1986.

[Tone.]



[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

DOCUMENTS AND ACCESS

For expanded access, this document presents textural and lightly edited transcripts of the presentation.

On the right is the timestamped textural transcript, meant to be read with the audio, linked [here](#).

This column on the left provides the lightly edited, easy-to-read transcript. This can be read with or without the audio, and subject headings from the original conference papers, or added for this project, are linked in the [TABLE OF CONTENTS](#) above.



[A note on the text: English in the Netherlands is taught in the schools as the Queen's English, but American television has a strong influence, as you'll hear. Wilma De Jong's paper mixes British and American spelling, and although typos were corrected, the variance has been maintained.]

00:00:49

If you've already listened to the 2023 introduction (track 00, linked [here](#)), you may wish to skip ahead in this text [to [00:02:00](#)] and then skip ahead in the audio to match the timestamp.

If you haven't listened to the introduction, or any of the other recordings, you'll want to know that this is a multi-part project, presenting archival audio recordings from the conference, alongside textural and lightly edited transcripts, for expanded access.

[All the timestamps are linked in the [TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS](#) above.]

On the left of each transcript document is the lightly edited, easy-to-read transcript, with linked section headings; this can be read with or without the audio.

(By the way, if you're listening to the audio recording, and wondering, "where are these transcripts?" you can find links in the audio description!)

This column on the right presents the textural

edited transcript

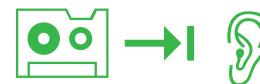
textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

[Return to the [TABLE OF CONTENTS.](#)]

transcript, with all the ums, ahs, pauses, and grammatical idiosyncrasies of the spoken word to represent the archival audio as closely as possible—it may be difficult to read this side of the page without the relevant audio recording, [linked [here](#)].

[Tone.]



[Return to the [TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.](#)]

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

DAY 3, SPEAKER 2

Wilma De Jong, a filmmaker from the Netherlands, was the second speaker on the third day of the conference. Unfortunately, the cassette tapes found in the UNIT/PITT archives provide an incomplete document of her presentation—only the few minutes—or, the first page—of Wilma De Jong reading her paper, “From Engagement to Entertainment: The Story of T.V. Jane”—which she re-worked the night before to better reflect the concerns of the conference—and then what seems to be most of her Q&A.

Between the introductions and the Q&A, the rest of Wilma De Jong’s paper has been cut and pasted here—this time, with a computer.

1986 / 2023 / 1986

[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

00:02:00

Wilma De Jong, a filmmaker from the Netherlands, was the second speaker on the third day of the conference. Unfortunately, the cassette tapes found in the UNIT/PITT archives provide an incomplete document of her presentation—only the few minutes—or, the first page—of Wilma De Jong reading her paper, “From Engagement to Entertainment: The Story of T.V. Jane”—which she re-worked the night before to better reflect the concerns of the conference—and then what seems to be most of her Q&A. To fill in the gap left by the missing cassette tape, most of the paper was read from the copy in the UNIT/PITT archives; the generous reader is Katrina Niebergal, an artist from Vancouver, now living in the Netherlands.

After the tone, I’ll read Wilma De Jong’s biography from the original conference papers, and more tones will mark the start of the conference, the supplementary reading, and the Q&A.

[\[Tone.\]](#)

1986 / 2023 / 1986

[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

BIOGRAPHY (1986)

WILMA DE JONG Netherlands

Wilma De Jong is a film/videomaker from the Netherlands. She resides in Amsterdam, and her specialization is documentary, short drama and promotion films. Two years ago Wilma started a women's production company and makes films around themes of political and feminist issues, Third World issues, as well as business and promotion programmes. To her, the challenge is to "stick to your own principles and still reach a big audience" or "How to make a promotional film for a business company without using a naked brown well-shaved lady's leg."



[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

00:02:58

Wilma De Jong is a film/videomaker from the Netherlands. She resides in Amsterdam, and her specialization is documentary, short drama and promotion films. Two years ago Wilma started a women's production company and makes films around themes of political and feminist issues, Third World issues, as well as business and promotion programmes. To her, the challenge is to "stick to your own principles and still reach a big audience" or "How to make a promotional film for a business company without using a naked brown well-shaved lady's leg."

[Tone.]



[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

INTRODUCTIONS (1986)

Marion Barling, conference host:

—to Roberta Beiser, who is going to do the introductions for Wilma De Jong, who is the last speaker in this conference—yes?

[Someone speaking from the audience.]

One moment you don't have the mic...

Try again.

Unidentified speaker, from the audience:

J'aimerais prendre quelque secondes pour rappeler et demander qu'on rappelle aux gens qu'il y a des Francophones qui assistent à la conférence, et que dans l'esprit de reconnaître la place de Francophones, qu'on dise à chacun de se munir des petits écouteurs qui assure la traduction simultanée. Cette procédure aura peut-être l'effet de nous permettre de faire plus facilement des interventions.

Je pense que ça c'est une question d'équité et de

00:03:44

Marion Barling, conference host:

—to Roberta Beiser, who is going to do the introductions for Wilma De Jong, who is the last speaker in this conference—yes?

[Someone speaking from the audience.]

One moment you don't have the mic...

Try again.

Unidentified speaker, from the audience:

Euh— J'aimerais prendre quelque secondes pour euh, rappeler et demander qu'on rappelle aux gens qu'il y a des Francophones qui assistent à la conférence, et que dans l'esprit de reconnaître la place de Francophones, qu'on dise à chacun de se munir des petits écouteurs qui assure la traduction simultanée. Cette procédure aura peut-être l'effet de permettre— de nous permettre de faire plus facilement des interventions.

Euh, je pense que ça c'est une question d'équité

edited transcript

textural transcript



13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

faire en sorte qu'on reconnaisse bien l'existence dans ce pays de faits culturels français.

Marion Barling:

I'm not sure if I'm supposed to respond, but I got bits and pieces. But I didn't entirely understand what was said.

[Marion pauses.]

Can somebody assist me as I didn't bring up a receiver? Thank you.

Unidentified speaker, at the side:

Marion, what has been asked is simply that the receivers at the front, ah—

Marion Barling:

Yes, I will bring—

Unidentified speaker, at the side:

—everyone who doesn't understand French also have the receivers, so that if someone wants to speak French—

et de faire en sorte qu'on reconnaisse bien l'existence dans ce pays de faits culturels français.

Marion Barling:

I'm not sure if I'm supposed to respond, but I got bits and pieces. But I didn't entirely understand what was said.

[Marion pauses.]

Can somebody assist me as I didn't bring up speaker? Thank you.

Unidentified speaker, at the side:

Marion, I think, um— what has been asked is simply that the— the speakers, um— at the front, ah— have— and ah—

Marion Barling:

Yes, I will bring—

Unidentified speaker, at the side:

—everyone who doesn't understand French also have the receivers, so that if someone wants to

edited transcript
textural transcript
13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

Marion Barling:

[Interrupting—]

Yes— I did announce this at the beginning of the conference, but you're right.

For people who didn't hear my announcement, we're requesting that all the English-speaking people who do not understand French—such as myself—pick up their receivers right now, so that if in the question period, somebody does wish to address the speaker in French, we won't all have to break and rush to get the receivers. So, if you didn't hear that announcement and you haven't got your receivers and you do not understand French completely, would you please pick your receivers up now?



[Marion pauses; someone in the audience claps.]

It looks as if most people had done this...

[Marion pauses.]

[Return to the [TABLE OF CONTENTS.](#)]

edited transcript

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[Interrupting—]

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[Marion pauses; someone in the audience claps.]

It looks as if most people had done this...

[Marion pauses.]

[Return to the [TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.](#)]

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

INTRODUCTIONS, AGAIN

Marion Barling:

So, I will introduce you once again to Roberta Beiser, who is the Executive Director of Vancouver Partnership for Business in the Arts. And we will start with our last invited speaker.

Roberta Beiser, introducing Wilma De Jong:

Thank you, Marion. Wilma De Jong is a professional film- and video-maker. She was born in The Hague, in Holland, and has lived all of her life there. Although she has travelled extensively, this is her first trip to Canada. She studied liberal arts with an emphasis on the social sciences and, following graduation, worked as a public relations officer for various social service agencies. In producing audio-visual presentations at her work, her interest was developed in this area, and she realized that she had real talent.

As Wilma describes it, she got tired of waiting for film producers, so two years ago she formed her own production company. This was her strategy for survival.

00:06:22

Marion Barling:

So, I will introduce you once again to Roberta Beiser, who is the Executive Director of Vancouver Partnership for Business in the Arts. And we will start with our last artist speaker—certainly isn't the last speaker, but the last invited speaker—with her paper.

Roberta Beiser, introducing Wilma De Jong:

Thank you, Marion. Wilma De Jong is a professional film- and video-maker. She was born in The Hague, in Holland, and has lived all of her life there. Although she has travelled extensively, this is her first trip to Canada. She studied liberal arts with an emphasis on the social sciences and, following graduation, worked as a public relations officer for various social service agencies. In producing audio-visual presentations at her work, her interest was developed in this area, and she realized that she had real talent.

As Wilma describes it, she got tired of waiting for film producers, so two years ago she formed her

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13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

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She now produces all her films, and also directs some. Her company is unusual in that—in principle, and largely in practice—it is a women’s company and focuses on women’s issues. She also has a strong interest in politics and in the Third World.

Wilma soon realized the value and necessity of working in the commercial sector. She also has contracts with governments. Her most recent film was done for the Department of Education, and it’s entitled *Girls and New Technology*.

I had the privilege of reading Wilma’s paper last night, entitled “From Engagement to Entertainment.” It is very unique.

Wilma tells a story, an artistic creation in itself. From it, you will learn a lot about her; about Dutch life in the 50s, 60s, and 70s; about politics, women issues, and the Dutch society. She raises many timely issues, such as production and artistic problems of film- and video-making, plus recent artistic and economic developments. She also suggests some answers. But most of all, she presents another form of art, which you will be able to visualize here, and almost touch.

Wilma is an energetic and captivating woman, who

own production company. This was her strategy for survival.

She now produces all her films, and also directs some. Her company is unusual in that—in principle, and largely in practice—it is a women’s company and focuses on women’s issues. She also has a strong interest in politics and in the Third World.

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edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

seizes opportunities without compromise. I take great pleasure in introducing Wilma De Jong and encourage you all to try and spend a few minutes with this most interesting person.

[Applause from the audience.]



Wilma De Jong:

An applause before I even started!

[Wilma laughs.]

Thank you, Roberta.

Before I start with my speech, I would like to make some remarks. Last few days, I've met quite a lot of people who said, "well, the Netherlands, that must be a paradise!" But concerning art and artists' support, I'll tell you this: the sun went down in this paradise. It's not a paradise anymore. Although I think it's better than a lot of other countries.



you will be able to visualize here, and almost touch.

Wilma is an energetic and captivating woman, who seizes opportunities without compromise. I take great pleasure in introducing Wilma De Jong and encourage you all to try and spend a few minutes with this most interesting person.

[Roberta speaks off-mic, "Wilma?"]

[Applause from the audience.]



Wilma De Jong:

An applause before I even started!

[Wilma laughs.]

Thank you, Roberta.

Ahm, before I start with my speech, I euh— would like to make some remarks. Last few days, I've met quite a lot of people who said, "well, the Netherlands, that must be a paradise!" But concerning euh, art and artists' support, well I'll tell you this: the sun went down in this paradise.

The speech I'm going to tell you right now, is completely different than the speech I prepared in advance—

[Audience laughs.]

I had put an emphasis on the new electronic media and its possibilities for visual arts, and the role of new media in society, which is for me as a filmmaker very important, of course. But, for the audience here, there were other things, a lot more interesting, such as government support, and [?] for survival. So, I changed it and, as you can see, the paper is quite a mess, a lot of sentences don't continue. I'm really sorry about that—I needed a computer, but I had a pair of scissors. I hope you can still follow it.



I hope the changes in my speech increase the quality of it. I doubt about it, but I hope it provokes a lot more discussion.

I will start—

[Return to the [TABLE OF CONTENTS.](#)]

It's really— it's not a paradise anymore. Al— although I think it's better than a lot of other countries.



The speech I'm going to tell you right now, is completely different than the speech I prepared in advance. Ah—

[Audience laughs.]

It's strange but aah— I had put an emphasis on, euh, the new electronical media and the possibilities of visual arts in it, and the role of the new media in the society, which is for me as a filmmaker qui— very important, of course. But, for the audience here, there were other things, a lot more interesting, as government support, and ah, we'll [?] for survival. So, I changed it, uh— and— well, as you can see, in the paper, it's quite a mess, a lot of sentences don't continue. Well, I'm really sorry about that, but at the moment, I needed a computer, but I had a pair of scissors, so— I hope you can still follow it.





edited transcript



textural transcript



13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)



I hope the changes in my speech, euh, increases the quality of it. Ah, but— I doubt about it. But ah— it certainly will, euh— I hope, provokes a lot more discussion.

Well, I will start, ahm—

[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)



THE STORY OF T.V. JANE

“The Story of T.V. Jane, from Engagement to Entertainment—”

It will cover the 50s, 60s, and 70s, until the 80s in the Netherlands—

“

T.V. Jane was born in October 1951 in a small town in the centre of Holland—let’s say Coevorden, where the founders of this city came from.

The first half year of her life, she was lactated by her mother. And so, her first impressions of art were very natural.

‘51 also was the year television found its way in the Netherlands. And because T.V. Jane’s parents were neither Catholic nor Protestant, nor part of any other religion, they were amongst those very few who owned in these early days a television set.

[Audience laughs briefly.]

The second important impression of T.V. Jane’s life was a television set. In terms of art, this impression was rather artificial.

00:11:09

The story of tv-jane, from engagement to entertainment—

It will ah, covers the fifties, sixties, and euh seventies, until the eighties in the Netherlands.

“

Euh— tv-jane was born in October 1951 in a small town in the centre of Holland—let’s say Coevorden, where the founders of this city came from. The first half year of her life, she was lactated by her mother. And so, her first impressions of art were very natural. Fifty-one also was the year television found its way in the Netherlands. And because tv-jane’s parents were neither Catholic nor Protestant, nor part of any other religion, they were amongst those very few who owned in these early days a television set.

[Audience laughs briefly.]

The second important impression of tv-jane’s life was a television set. In terms of art, this impression was rather artificial.

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)



To understand how she grew up, you have to understand the post-war situation Holland was facing in that decade. Before the war, the Second World War, the Dutch were split up in religious groups: the Catholics, the Protestants, the Reformists, the Lutherans, the Remonstrants, the Article 32 Protestants—were people who were in always black pants—the liberated Protestant, the Jews, and—in the way they behaved—the Socialist were also a religious group.

Apart from these groups, there were certain individuals, people who lived their own life, didn't belong to any religion, and had rather weird professions. Although the word weird wasn't very common in those days. These were taken for granted by the rest of the society, and their nickname was "artist"—pronounced, of course, in a denigrating way. Well, let's forget about them.

After the war, the same situation continued, with one— only one exception, there weren't any Jews left. But all the other groups took their places in the so-called group system, and attend their



edited transcript



textural transcript



13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)



To understand how she grew up, you have to understand the post-war situation Holland was facing in that decade. Before the war, the Second World War, the Dutch were split up in religious groups: the Catholics, the Protestants, the Reformists, the Lutherans, the Remonstrants, the Article 32 Protestants—were people who were in always black pants—the liberated Protestant, the Jews, and—in the way they behaved—the Socialist were also a religious group. Apart from these groups, there were certain individuals, people who lived their own life, didn't belong to any religion, and had rather weird professions. Although the word weird how— although the word weird, wasn't very common in those days. These were taken for granted by the rest of the society, and their nickname was "artist"—pronounced, of course, in a denigrating way. Well, let's forget about them. After the war, the same situation continued, with one— only one exception, there weren't any Jews left. But all the other groups took their places in the so-called group system, and attend their



own churches, schools, university soccer clubs and women’s circles. And they would have lived—lived happily after apart together, if not this new invention, but a new light in the households of this God-fearing nation. How did a particular household look like in the Dutch ‘50s?



The first drawing T.V. Jane made when she was four years of age tells us more. This piece of kindergarten art shows three balls on sticks. The first ball on stick is called “mum.” This second ball on stick is called “dad.” And the third substantial smaller ball on sticks says “me.” The whole configuration is situated inside a pentagular construction, which tells— which tells us all about the art of architecture in Holland. T.V. Jane’s parents were very surprised to see how Jane has managed to translate her whole world of impressions into one clear realistic drawing—

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[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

own churches, schools, university soccer clubs and women’s circles. And they would have lived—lived happily after apart together, if not this new invention, but a new light in the households of this God-fearing nation. How did a particular household look like in the Dutch fifties?



The first drawing tv-jane made when she was four years of age tells us more. This piece of kindergarten art shows three balls on sticks. The first ball on stick is called “mum.” This second ball on stick is called “dad.” And the third substantial smaller ball on sticks says “me.” The whole configuration is situated inside a pentagular construction, which tells— which tells us all about the art of architecture in Holland. tv-jane’s parents were very surprised to see how Jane has managed to translate her whole world of impressions into one clear realistic drawing—

”

[Tone.]

[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

T.V. JANE, CONTINUED

They framed the work and hung it above the fireplace, not far from the television set.



Although all her colleagues in the kindergarten drew the same drawing, T.V. Jane's was the only one to be exhibited.

And so, 20 years later, a friend of the family and professor of arts, saw the painting—it wasn't really a painting, but because it was framed one could easily call it a painting—and this professor took the drawing as an example for his later well-known theory.

“

“Dutch Neo-Realistic painting,” the Professor explains, “has undergone two periods of strong, self-assured growth: the years from about 1928 until the start of World War II, and the ‘60s, a decade defined for us by phrases like ‘The Cuba

00:14:13

Katrina Niebergal, reading Wilma De Jong's paper from the UNIT/PITT archives:



They framed the work and hung it above the fireplace, not far from the televisionset.



Although all her colleagues in the kindergarten drew the same drawing, tv-jane's one was the only one to be exhibited.

And so, twenty years later, a friend of the family and professor of arts, saw the painting—it wasn't really a painting, but because it was framed one could easily call it a painting—and this professor took the drawing—as an example for his later well-known theory.

“

“Dutch neo-realistic painting,” the professor explains, “has undergone two periods of

Crisis' and 'Vietnam.'”

”

(Of course, the Professor could not know when exactly T.V. Jane made her drawing, because it was not dated and—for the theory of the Professor—the fact was of minor importance.)

“

“The ‘30s,” the Professor continues, “which saw the first flourishing of Neo-Realism, have been called ‘The Frightened ‘30s.’ The Neo-Realism of the first period is irrevocably associated with the claustrophobic atmosphere of oppression and fear of those years. And we may well wonder whether the same is not true of the second period as well, whether our epoch will not be known to future generations as ‘The Anxious ‘60s.’

“Be that as it may,” the Professor explains, “Neo-Realism does seem essentially bound up with an anxious view of life. The painters of the ‘30s, as well as those working today, seem to be proposing a

strong, self-assured growth: the years from about 1928 until the start of World War II, and the sixties, a decade defined for us by phrases like *the Cuba Crisis* and *Vietnam.*”

”

(Of course, the professor could not know when exactly tv-jane made her drawing, because it was not dated, and for the theory of the professor the fact was of minor importance.)

“

“The thirties,” the professor continues, “which saw the first flourishing of neo-realism, have been called *the frightened thirties*. The neo-realism of the first period is irrevocably associated with the claustrophobic atmosphere of oppression and fear of those years. And we may well wonder whether the same is not true of the second period as well, whether our epoch will not be known to future generations as *the anxious sixties.*”

“Be that as it may,” the professor explains, “neo-realism does seem essentially bound up with an anxious view of life. The painters of

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textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

Dutch answer to a question implicit in this kind of historical situation. Of course the Dutch were not alone in this. Then, as now, movements outside Holland ran parallel to those within it, and foreign painters with similar reactions also projected the image of reality as a warning to the observer, as the ‘writing on the wall.’ In Holland however, pre- and postwar Neo-Realism were more than the caprice of a few gifted artists. They were group movements. They can be called provincial—reactions of a group of painters to the specific reality around them—but that does not make them any less indicative.

Dutch Neo-Realism was not spawned by developments outside art. It is the response of a group of artists to what Sartre has taught us to call ‘an existential situation.’”

The existential situation of our T.V. Jane, however, is—although she didn’t know anything about any theory at all in those

edited transcript

the thirties—as well as those working today— seem to be proposing a Dutch answer to a question implicit in this kind of historical situation. Of course the Dutch were not alone in this. Then, as now, movements outside Holland ran parallel to those within it, and foreign painters with similar reactions also projected the image of reality as a warning to the observer, as the writing on the wall. In Holland however, pre- and postwar neo-realism were more than the caprice of a few gifted artists. They were group movements. They can be called provincial—reactions of a group of painters to the specific reality around them—but that does not make them any less indicative.”

“Dutch neo-realism was not spawned by developments outside art. It is the response of a group of artists to what Sartre has taught us to call an *existential situation*.”

The existential situation of our tv-jane however, is—although she didn’t know anything about any theory at all in those days—essential for the

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

days—essential for the development of the Dutch arts and artists.

Her parents, being intellectuals, did not belong to any religious or cultural group, but they did belong to the Dutch system. This system collapsed in the years between the introduction of television in Holland and the mid-70s.

In those 20 years between her first drawing and her first feminist film a lot happened to T.V. Jane, and to Holland. Both grew up under the watching eye of the world around them, the watching eye of television.

An elderly neighbour asked little Jane what the people on her drawing were doing.

She got the answer: “They are watching T.V.”

The woman replied: “But you can’t see the T.V.-set at all.”

Little Jane answered: “It’s not real, but you can see it.”

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This thesis she defended on lots of conferences in later years. And the professor was proud. Because his theory about neo-realism of the

edited transcript
textural transcript
13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

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This thesis she defended on lots of conferences in later years. And the Professor was proud. Because his theory about the Neo-Realism of the Dutch painters, little Jane described in one logical sentence.

Television opened the eyes of the Dutch society. In the first place the eyes were opened for the other groups in the society, and thereafter for other societies.

To learn how Dutch artists nowadays have been perceived in their particular culture, we have to tell something more about the two most popular Dutch T.V.-series for children in the late fifties and sixties. One is about a clown called Pipo and the other about a vagabond called Swiebertje. The main characters in both series are male artists. Artists, that is, not in a professional way—although the clown does have a certain profession—but more in the way they behaved. They behaved like individuals, not belonging to any group or system. For T.V. Jane and her young colleagues, the clown and the vagabond were the symbols on the search for a new and more liberated way of life.

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Now, in 1986, the tv-generation has grown up and finds its way in the establishment of administrative, social and cultural institutions.

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)



Now, in 1986, the T.V.-generation has grown up and finds its way in the establishment of administrative, social and cultural institutions. And it depends on how much they have learned from the clown and the vagabond whether they have an open perception towards art or belong to the group that still believes the artists to be social outcasts. In a way nothing has changed since T.V. Jane was born, although it seemed to be changing in the imaginative '70s, and late '60s.

In Holland, like in most other western countries, in the late '60s a young generation tried to convince their parents and teachers how wrong they were in their perception of the world and the problems in that world. T.V. Jane, watching her television in the mid-60s, agreed with her generation and decided to leave home for Amsterdam, the capital of the Netherlands and also the capital of the rebellious students and so-called Provos.

[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

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[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

A LETTER FROM T.V. JANE

Half a year later she wrote in her first letter to her anxious parents:



"Hi folks, this is Amsterdam.

Sorry to bother you but I have to tell you what's going on here.

The first one I met here was a painter sitting in front of the Central Station. He gave away all of his work to the people coming by, so I asked him why he was doing so and he told me art wasn't a luxury, it was meant for the man in the street.

I asked him why nobody wanted to accept his drawings—they were not very good, in fact they were very bad, but at least they were for free—and he answered that the people were not used to art. They were not educated in an atmosphere of art, but that was going to change.

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Half a year later she wrote in her first letter to her anxious parents:



Hi folks, this is Amsterdam.

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I asked him why nobody wanted to accept his drawings—they were not very good, in fact they were very bad, but at least they were for free—and he answered that the people were not used to art. They were not educated in an atmosphere of art, but that was going to change.

However, the first thing to change was the position of the artists themselves, because in order to educate the masses, it was more than necessary to have no existential problems. I asked him if he needed some money, to which he replied, "don't put it that way," but he accepted my money, and me, and the two of us went to the Rijksmuseum with a lot of other painters to sit-down in front of Rembrandt's The Night Watch. This was my first sit-down, you know, and it worked.

The painters and the sculptors got their so-called BKR. That is social security for artists. That means they get normal social security plus money for tools and materials. Part of their art production they have to give to the government, who creates artothekes, where people like you can rent art.

That's really something isn't it!

Another thing is that my money is gone.

I also tried to get BKR, but it is not that easy, because I'm a woman.

Now I'm living in a house with a musician and an actor. Don't worry, the musician is

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That's really something isn't it! Another thing is that my money is gone.

I also tried to get BKR, but it is not that easy, because I'm a woman. Now I'm living in a house with a musician and an actor.

Don't worry, the musician is not home very much, because he is part of a revolutionary



edited transcript



textural transcript



13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)



not home very much, because he is part of a revolutionary group who call themselves the “Nutcrackers.” They want to change the whole orchestral situation in Holland, because it’s, of course, old-fashioned, and not for everyone.

The actor is not here either because he is part of a revolutionary group called “the Tomato Throwers”. They try to make new and better plays for people who don’t go to the theatre because they cannot afford it or don’t know the ways to buy a ticket. So this group wants to play in the streets, when it’s not raining, or go to factories to reach everybody. That’s really something, isn’t it!

Then you do not know about my neighbours. That is a feminist commune. They run a feminist art centre called “Amazoné”, it is subsidized by the council of Amsterdam.

Please send me some money,

See you, Jane



[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

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[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

T.V. JANE, FILMMAKER

T.V. Jane's parents immediately went to Amsterdam to bring her the money she wanted. Her mother fell in love with the musician—she always wanted to play the piano—and her father fell in love with the actor. They decided to divorce because it was old-fashioned to be married and T.V. Jane moved, because she felt it was better for all of them.

—— told her that she should be part of the feminist art movement.

“In a world without men we can find our own ways of making art,” she told T.V. Jane.

And Jane—who understood that women weren't really members of the revolutionary movement dominated by men—started to revolt against the position of women in the society and to their non-position in art-making.

She became an active member of Amazone and organized workshops, exhibitions and meetings. Jane tried to paint, to sculpt, to

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She became an active member of Amazone and organized workshops, exhibitions and meetings. Jane tried to paint, to sculpture, to make video art. But finally she decides to become a filmmaker.



make video art. But finally she decides to become a filmmaker.



And having spent so many hours in her life watching television, she thought it would not be very problematic to make her own films. Everybody in the group thought so. And they had lively discussions about almost every subject you can imagine to film. Every subject.

T.V. Jane was allowed by the group to make a feminist film. The film was called Woman and it was about a girl brought up by T.V. In the end the girl and the T.V. got married and fundamentally it was a very autobiographical film. Bu the members of the group didn't want to know anything about individual growth processes—

[had to be a documentary about women in the unions or political movements]

—the film wasn't really very professionally made ei[ther].

But T.V. Jane learned fast and now, 10 years

And having spent so many hours in her life watching television, she thought it would not be very problematic to make her own films. Everybody in the group thought so. And they had lively discussions about almost every subject you can imagine to film. Every subject. tv-jane was allowed by the group to make a feministic film. The film was called *Woman* and it was about a girl brought up by tv. In the end the girl and the tv got married and fundamentally it was a very autobiographical film. Bu the members of the group didn't want to know anything about individual growth processes.

The film wasn't really very professionally made ei[ther].

But tv-jane learned fast and now, ten years later she had got her own video-company.



However, tv-jane and her group of female artists were not taken seriously. The most given answer on their art was: "nice hobby you have."



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However, T.V. Jane and her group of female artists were not taken seriously. The most given answer on their art was: “nice hobby do you have.”



[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)



edited transcript



textural transcript



13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)



T.V. JANE, WOMAN ARTIST

And the government had the same opinion, and still has today. Of 10,000 artists in Holland, 47% are women. But only 19% are subsidized by the government. So there is a lot of work to do for the in the '80s-founded Organisation for Women in Visual Art. But the big activities are gone, the whole movement has split up in individual feminists who wants to become professionals in their profession. They are no longer pointed on women but they have a wider and opener social orientation.

So "I am a feminist who wants to make films" changed to "I am a filmmaker and a feminist and a mother and a lover and a taxpayer."

From engagement in the '60s and the '70s to entertainment in the '80s. Of course art didn't lose its critical functions. But it is more difficult to be critical when the economic circumstances have been changed. And also the ideological situation is changed. The biggest change however in Holland is the role of the government.

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And the government had the same opinion, and still has today. From 10,000 artists in Holland, 47% is a woman. But only 19% is subsidized by the government. So there is a lot of work to do for the Organisation for Women in Visual Art founded in the nineteen-eighties. But the big activities are gone, the whole movement has split up in individual feminists who want to become professionals in their profession. They are no longer pointed on women but they have a wider and opener social orientation.

So, "I am a feminist who wants to make films" changed into "I am a filmmaker and a feminist and a mother and a lover and a taxpayer."

From engagement in the sixties and the seventies to entertainment in the eighties. Of course art didn't lose its critical functions. But it is more difficult to be critical when the economic circumstances have been changed. And also the ideological situation is changed. Biggest change however in Holland is the role of the government. No longer government is the big moneyspender.

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

No longer is government the big money spender. The department of Art and Recreation again changed its name. It's now called the Department of Wellbeing, Health and Culture. And hundreds of organisations, depending on government money, have to find other ways and channels to fill their pockets. Sponsoring arts nowadays is a big issue. Is it right to depend on capitalistic organisations like banks and insurance-companies, being a theater company?



“No,” was the answer in the ‘60s. “Company money is dirty money,” would the artist have said.



Nowadays groups of artists say “yes,” under certain conditions or no conditions at all.

They say: “when I can use my creativity, my professional background and it's fun to do the job, I will do it.”



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In fact, it's a matter of survival for Dutch arts to commercialize. And this commercialisation is unknown territory for the artist as an individual and as a group. “Get yourself an agent,” is the

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

In fact, it's a matter of survival for Dutch arts to commercialize. And this commercialisation is unknown territory for the artist as an individual and as a group. "Get yourself an agent," is the new message. Or "start your own company." Or: "profit base." And with the profit you make, you find your independence.

[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

new message. Or "start your own company." Or "profitbase." And with that profit you make, you find your independency.

[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

ALL THE ARTS AND ARTISTS

So far so good. But what happened to the rest of the Dutch art and artists? Can they manage to survive or will there be a situation like before the introduction of T.V.?



To give the answer we have to oversee the whole field of art and art-making in the Netherlands. Film, video, -----, music, literature, painting and sculpturing, graphic design, theatre, dance and museums.

To start with: museums. In Holland we do have about 500 museums with a total of 14 million visitors yearly. All museums have been subsidized by the government but recently they get less money and they have to close down for some days a week because they can't afford the staff and the guards. Museum tickets always were very low priced but most of the museums have to charge up to 100% higher prices. In spite of this inconvenience,

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So far so good. But what happened to the rest of the Dutch art and artists? Can they manage to survive or will there be a situation like before the introduction of tv?



To give the answer we have to oversee the whole field of art and art-making in the Netherlands. From film, video, music, literature, painting and sculpturing, graphic design, theatre, dance and *musea*. To start with *musea*. In Holland we do have about 500 *musea* with a total of 14 million visitors yearly. All *musea* have been subsidized ever since by the government but recently they get less money and they have to close down for some days a week because they can't afford the staff and the guards. Museum tickets always were very low priced but most of the museums have to charge up to 100% higher prices. In spite of this inconvenience, 1985 showed more visitors in the *musea* than ever.

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

1985 showed more visitors in the museums than ever.

The point is that the museums cannot afford to buy high-priced works—the only substantial piece the world-famous Rijksmuseum bought last year was spent by the Dutch population on behalf of the 100th birthday of the museum.

Exchanging collections is another way for the big museums to reach the audience. In 1985 the cultural exchange between Holland and France, called La France aux Pays Bas was an enormous success. In terms of visitors the museums and galleries are doing quite well, but in terms of innovation these are hard times.

Further recent top exhibitions in Holland were La Grande Parade—a personal choice from the leaving manager of the Stedelijk Museum—The Gold of the Incas and a social/cultural exhibition about China. All these events were accompanied very heavily by the media. And the role of the media—and especially T.V.—will

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Further recent top exhibitions in Holland were *La Grande Parade*—a personal choice from the leaving manager of the Stedelijk Museum—*The Gold of the Incas* and a social/cultural exhibition about China. All these events were accompanied very heavily by the media. And the role of the media and especially the tv will furthermore be of high importance for the development of the musea. TV attracts sponsors. But are sponsors interested in innovation? It's up to the future.

The same situation we find as far as theaters and

edited transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

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furthermore be of high importance for the development of the museums. T.V. attracts sponsors. But are sponsors interested in innovation? It's up to the future.

The same situation we find as far as theaters and concert halls are concerned. In the '60s and '70s every self-respecting town or village built a theater. And they were very proud to welcome the big theater companies and dance or music celebrities. One hundred big theatres and some 300 smaller ones have to struggle for life now. They can only afford the big names the public wants to see, but the new and innovating companies are the victims of the dreams of small-town politicians and theater managers. Decentralisation was the magic word a few years ago, but now only Amsterdam has a flourishing theater life. But the money that should have been spent on the artists now disappears in the salaries of the managers and the preservation of the buildings. Theater and concert life in Holland was and still is very rich and various, but it has been changed. More and more actors and musicians perform solo or in small groups, and

concert halls are concerned. In the sixties and seventies every self-respecting town or village built a theater. And they were very proud to welcome the big theater companies and dance or music celebrities. One hundred big theatres and some three hundred smaller ones have to struggle for life now. They can only afford the big names the public wants to see, but the new and innovating companies are the victims of the dreams of smalltown politicians and theater managers. Decentralisation was the magic word a few years ago, but now only Amsterdam has a flourishing theater life. But the money that should have been spent on the artists now disappears in the salaries of the managers and the preservation of the buildings. Theater and concert life in Holland was and still is very rich and various, but it has been changed. More and more actors and musicians perform solo or in small groups, and take the financial risk themselves, or trying to make their way to other forms of art. And often very successful, at least when their performance is covered by the media, and especially by tv.

TV also plays an important role in the Dutch film

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)



take the financial risk themselves, or try to make their way to other forms of art. And often very successfully, at least when their performance is covered by the media, and especially by T.V.

T.V. also plays an important role in the Dutch film business. The basis for everyone who wants to make a film in Holland is the so-called “Produktiefonds.” A government committee that judges film plans and scenarios and guarantees the film producer a good part of the money they need to make their film. Without the guarantee from this “produktiefonds” the movie theater companies won’t even talk about the distribution of Dutch films, because they can only lose money by that.

But the funds of this so-important institution are also cut off in recent years, so the filmmakers now have to go to the various broadcast stations in order to convince the distributors to go along with them. A new role in this fundraising process is played by the upcoming video distributors. While

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While the cinemas are empty—the audience in the movietheaters sank drastically in the last years—30% of the Dutch households do have video at the moment. And the filmmaker wants to be part of the deal, but up till now the filmmakers are not well weaponed against this media—against this video mafia.

In Holland there is no tradition in filmmaking. The filmmakers are the most unorganized group in the whole spectrum of artmaking.

edited transcript
textural transcript
13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

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In Holland there is no tradition in filmmaking. The filmmakers are the most unorganized group in the whole spectrum of artmaking.

From film to literature in 1986 is a smaller step than it was in 1970. Writers in Holland are disadvantaged by the fact that they have to work in a “small” language. They are glad to sell 10,000 copies of a novel and only very few can live just by writing. Of course, government helps, with their literature fund. But for most writers that’s not enough for a living. What we see now is a tendency in literature to write novels with the purpose to sell it to filmmakers. The novel can with little effort be translated into a film scenario. The knife cuts on both sides. For the filmmaker

From film to literature is in 1986 a smaller step than it was in 1970. Writers in Holland are disadvantaged by the fact that they have to work in a “small” language. They are glad to sell ten thousand copies of a novel and only very few can live just by writing. Of course government helps, with their literature fund. But for most writers that’s not enough for a living. What we see now is a tendency in literature to write novels with the purpose to sell it to filmmakers. The novel can with little effort be translated into a film scenario. The knife cuts on both sides. For the filmmaker it’s an inexpensive scenario and for the writer it’s a way to make more money out of the novel. When the film becomes a hit, the book also attracts more buyers; when the book is a bestseller, the film attracts a bigger audience. This exchange only works with Dutch books and Dutch films. Dutch drama about Dutch subjects—that’s what the public wants.

Dutch tv itself is also a part of a new tendency, because of the competition between the tv stations, to get more members, and because of money problems they have to commercialize.

edited transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

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This exchange only works with Dutch books and Dutch films. Dutch drama about Dutch subjects—that's what the public wants.

Dutch T.V. itself is also a part of the new tendency, because of the competition between the T.V. stations to get more members, and because of money problems, they have to commercialize.

Dutch T.V. stations have to spend—official regulations—in their programme, time for information, education, amusement and culture. There is a tendency that the informations (news) is put in forms of amusement; like talk shows, games and quizzes.

An awful tendency in my opinion.

A transformation from hard to soft information.



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The public is not interested in heavy political documentaries.

A possible answer to that is to put political and social issues in a form of drama, which most of the time appeals emotionally—a lot more. So, filmmakers leave the documentary form and make political drama.

[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

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📄 [\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)



edited transcript



textural transcript



13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)



BUREAU KREDIAT REGISTRATIE

The BKR—I mentioned before in T.V. Jane’s story—is the social security for visual artists. But it’s no longer that easy to get this form of social security for painters and sculptors and video artists. In 1983 about 5,000 artists got their BKR. In 1986 about 2,500. The rules are more strict now. Artists have to sell 4,000 [GD?] to get BKR. Artists who are no longer in the BKR only get normal social security. Which means they have to find other ways to get money. One way is—by selling their art. And that’s why you see in recent years a lot of pubs and coffee shops decorated with the work of more- or less-talented artists. And not only coffee shops. But also waiting rooms of dentists, hospitals and numerous other places where potential buyers come together.



[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

00:33:37

The BKR, we mentioned before in tv-jane’s story, is a social security for visual artists. But it’s no longer that easy to get this form of social security for painters and sculptors and videoartists. In 1983 about five thousand artists got their BKR. In 1986 about two thousand five hundred. The rules are more strict now. Artists have to sell four thousand guilder to get BKR. Artists who are no longer in the BKR only get normal social security. Which means they have to find other ways to get their money. One way is— --- —by selling their art. And that’s why you see in recent years a lot of pubs and coffee shops decorated with the work of more or less talented artists. And not only coffee shops. But also waiting rooms of dentists, hospitals and numerous other places where potential buyers come together.



[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

CH-CH-CH-CHANGES

To be short, the changes I see from the '60s up to the '80s are:



- From an artist as a person dedicated to the political cause to a professional artmaker with political ideas.

- From an artist who sacrifices him or herself to the cause to a professional artist who wants to have a good life, fun and excitement in using his or her creativity and skills.

- From an artist who used to get money from the government to an artist who has to find other sources of money, even if these sources use to be "enemies" of art.

① ② ③

RECIPE TO SURVIVE AS AN ARTIST IN THE NETHERLANDS:

- work for commercial enterprises

00:34:33

To be short, the changes I see from the sixties up to the eighties are:



- from an artist as a person dedicated to the political cause to a professional artmaker with political ideas.

- from an artist who sacrifices him or herself to the cause to a professional artist who wants to have the good life, fun and excitement in using his or her creativity and skills.

- from an artist who was used to get money from the government to an artist who has to found other sources of money, even if these sources use to be "enemies" of art.

① ② ③

Recipe to survive as an artist in the Netherlands:

- work for commercial enterprises,
- get involved in other related art forms,

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

- get involved in other related art forms
- reach a bigger audience
- organize big events
- learn how to deal with the mass media
- look for new places to show your art.

Above all: be there where the money is.



Wilma De Jong

June 1986

Vancouver

[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

edited transcript

- reach a bigger audience,
- organize big events,
- learn how to deal with the mass media,
- look for new places to show your art,
- above all: be there where the money is.

[Tone.]



Francesca Bennett:

The text is signed “Wilma De Jong, June 1986, Vancouver.”

After the tone, the Q&A.

[Tone.]

[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

textural transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

Question [01], from the audience:

—if you could address something about censorship or any kind of legislation that your government may practice over video or film.

Wilma De Jong:

Yeah, censorship. There is no official censorship except for pornography. Pornography is allowed to be shown in an audience not above 48 people.



[Laughter from the audience.]

Yeah, it's quite strange, but when you work with so many groups you find solutions that are in the middle, and that's 48 people, that's a living room situation. And that's why it's accepted. You're allowed to show pornography in your living room, but not publicly.

Question [01], from the audience:

Are there any age restrictions on that?

Question [01], from the audience:

... ah, if you could address um, something about censorship or um, any kind of legislation that your government may ah— practice over video or film.

Wilma De Jong:

Ah— yeah. Um, censorship. There is no official censorship except— except for pornography. Ah— pornography is al— allow to be shown in an audience not above 48 people.



[Laughter from the audience.]

Yeah, it's quite strange but that's— when it works— when you work with so many groups you find solutions are in the middle, and that's 48 people that's ah— ah— living room situation. And that's why it's accepted. You're allowed to ah— to show pornography in your euh— living room, but not public— ly.

Question [01], from the audience:

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

Wilma De Jong:

Age restrictions, yes of course, not under 16.

Question [01], from the audience:

So, as an artist your material is not put through any kind of—

Wilma De Jong:

No, but look—there is official censorship, and informal censorship. And, of course, there’s always new trends in art. And, because the galleries are getting more and more commercial, they try to get the paintings that sell the best. You know?



[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

Are there any age restrictions on that?

Wilma De Jong:

Age restrictions, yes of course, not ah— not under 16.

Question [01], from the audience:

So as a— as an artist you don’t— ah— your m— material is not put through any kind of... ah—

Wilma De Jong:

No, but look there is official censorship, and inofficial— informal censorship. And of course, there’s always new ah— fashion in ah— or new trends in euh— art. And ah— well, because the galleries are getting more and more commercial, they try to get the— the paintings who sell the best. You know?



[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

edited transcript
textural transcript

COMRADES VS. CLIENTS

Question [02], from the audience:

You mentioned that artists are trying to sell their work in dentists' waiting rooms, and cafés, and such. Do you have any figures on the percentage of work that sells, and who the buyers are, of this work that's hanging in doctor's offices, and such?

[Assistant off-mic, repeats the question to Wilma.]

Assistance, off-mic:

What percentage of the artwork is sold? Are people successful?

Wilma De Jong:

I don't know—that's quite recent developments. I don't think there has been any research on that. But, what I heard from friends is that cafés are not good places, but dentists' and doctors'—and that kind of place—in very rich areas, are good places to put your art. It's fairly simple.

Question [02], from the audience:

Okay, well, to continue with this, what would be the

00:37:34

Question [02], from the audience:

Ah, you mentioned that ah, artists are trying to sell their work in dentists' waiting rooms, and cafés, and such. Do you have any, um, I guess— figures on the percentage of work that sells, and who the buyers are, of this work that's hanging in um, doctor's offices and such?

[Assistance off-mic, the question is repeated to Wilma.]

Assistance, off-mic:

What percentage of the artwork is sold? Are people successful?

Wilma De Jong:

I don't know that, that's quite recent developments. I don't think there have been any research on that. But euh— what I heard from friends, is that ah— cafés are not— not good places, but dentists' and doctors'— and that kind of place is certainly— in very rich area, are good places to put your art. It's fairly simple.



edited transcript



textural transcript



13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)



general viewpoint of the artists that are having to sell their work in the dentists' offices in the rich areas? Are they upset that they have to do this? Are they being forced to do it? Or are they just going along and believing this is a way to earn a living?

Wilma De Jong:

They don't have much choice, you know. The point is that the government forces you to sell your art, otherwise you don't get social security. So, otherwise you don't have any money at all. So, even if you don't like it, you have to, otherwise you don't have money. But, I don't know. Some of them will hate it, I guess. But others don't really mind.

Question [02], from the audience:

Is there any form of organizing by the artists that resent the fact that they're being forced to do this? Like you were talking about a trend towards networking instead of unionizing, but are there still artists that perhaps are avoiding networking and trying to do something else to make a statement against having to sell in the doctors' offices?

edited transcript

Question [02], from the audience:

Okay, well to continue with this ah— what would be, I guess the general um, viewpoint of the artists that are, sort of having to start— sell their work— to sell their work in the dentist office in the rich areas? Are they upset that they have to do this, they're being forced to do it? Or they're just um, going along and believing, well, you know, this is a way to earn a living?

Wilma De Jong:

Um— they don't have much choice, you know. The point is the government forces you to be— to sell your otherwi— your art, otherwise you don't get Social security. So, otherwise you don't have any money at all. So, even if you don't like it, you have to, otherwise you don't have money. But, ah— I don't know. Some of them will hate it, I guess. But others don't really mind.

Question [02], from the audience:

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13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

Wilma De Jong:

I didn't quite follow that—

Assistance:

Could you repeat that, please? It's a little bit difficult to hear you—

Question [02], from the audience:

Okay, I'm sorry. What I was just asking is if you could address the difference? I guess, this thing about networking, I don't quite understand it. I don't personally feel that it's a good thing to avoid putting one's energy into unions, or the formal ways of objecting to what's happening.

Wilma De Jong:

Ah— well, you need a union, you know, because you need some kind of organization to make now and then a fist to protest or to revolt against some crazy new rule. But, practically, it doesn't work. It doesn't work! The artists don't come! You know? They only come when there is a protest. When there is— when I told you about the occupation of the Stedelijk Museum, then they will come. But normal, regular union meetings about strategies,

unionizing, ah— but are there still artists that perhaps are avoiding networking and trying to do something else to make a statement against having to sell in the doctors' offices?

Wilma De Jong:

I didn't quite follow her— that.

Assistance:

Could you repeat that? Please? We— it's a little bit difficult to hear you—

Question [02], from the audience:

Okay, I'm sorry. Um, what I was just asking is um— if maybe you could address ah— further— the difference? I guess this thing about networking, I don't quite understand it. I don't personally feel that um— it's a good thing to avoid— um— I guess putting one's energy into unions, or the formal ways of ah— um— formal ways of just objecting to what's happening.

Wilma De Jong:

[?] clearly, you ah— I say well, you need a union, you know, because you need it— you need some

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

and political goals, or manifestoes—no one comes!

So, it's a contradiction about what you think that's really necessary and what happens. And now, some people found the solution on that—to invite them to the café!

[Long silence.]

[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

kind of organization to make now and then a fist to— to— to protest or to revolt some crazy new rule. But, ah— practically, it doesn't work. It doesn't work! The artists don't come! You know? They only come when there is a— a— a protest. When there is euh— when I told you about the occupation of the Stedelijk Museum, then they will come. But normal, regular union meetings about euh— strategies, and political goals, or manifest— no one comes!

So, it's a contradiction about what you think that's really necessary and what happens. And now, some people found the solution on that— to invite them to the café.

[Long silence.]

[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

A QUESTION FROM A FILMMAKER

Question [03], from the audience [filmmaker]:

Hi—I'm a filmmaker as well, so I'm glad to see you here! And I was just wonder—

[Wilma laughs and says, "Finally!"]



I was just wondering if there is a comparable filmmaking in Holland that we call "experimental" or "underground" or whatever, or if it's contained—like in Europe—within the feature film industry?

Wilma De Jong:

There is experimental filmmaking, and it's even shown on television!



[Filmmaker from the audience laughs.]

We have a very small television station, and it shows experimental films and it even subsidizes them. But, I think that it won't get much money

00:41:58

Question [03], from the audience [filmmaker]:

Hi, um, I'm a filmmaker as well, so I'm glad to see you here. And I was just wonder—

[Wilma laughs and says, "Finally!"]



Um, I was just wondering if there is a— sort of a— comparable filmmaking in— in Holland that's— we call "experimental" or "underground" or whatever, or if it's contained—like in Europe—within the feature film industry?

Wilma De Jong:

Um, there is experimental ah— filmmaking, and it's even shown on television!



[Filmmaker from the audience laughs.]

We have a very small television station, and it's

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

anymore, because it's also losing members. And—

Question [03], from the audience [filmmaker]:

And is that television station in the hands of the filmmakers to decide what to do with it? Or is it still within the network and they select the films? Like do you have access to television as artists, or—

Wilma De Jong:

If you want subsidy, you have to get films on the air, otherwise you don't get the subsidy.

Question [03], from the audience [filmmaker]:

Yeah, that's the same thing for feature films here. Telefilm says a broadcast license is necessary for funding, but the experimental films wouldn't even come under that at all, because they're not within that sort of form of features. So there's Canada Council funding for that, sort of separately, and those films would be shown more in galleries, or special small theatres that show just experimental film.



euh— it shows experimental films and it even subsidize them. But, I think that the next time, it won't get much money anymore, because it's also losing members. And...

Question [03], from the audience [filmmaker]:

And is that— is the television station in the hands of the filmmakers to decide what to do with it? Or it's still within the network and they select the films? Like do you have access to television as artists, or—

Wilma De Jong:

Euh, if you want subsidy, euh— you have to get them in the air, otherwise you don't get subsidy.

Question [03], from the audience [filmmaker]:

Yeah, that's the same thing, like, for feature films here. The Telefilm says a broadcast license is necessary for funding, but the experimental films ah— wouldn't even come under that at all, because they're not within the feature— that sort of form of features. So that— there's Canada Council funding for that, sort of separately, and those films would be shown more in galleries, or special small

Wilma De Jong:

That's the same in Holland, however, experimental possibilities are very limited. Innovation— it's fairly difficult at this moment.

Question [03], from the audience [filmmaker]:

So, is it starting to be that the solution to that is to find that kind of work being fitted within the form of features? So, you get feature films, but alternative motifs within them? Or are those filmmakers are just giving up, and not doing films?

Wilma De Jong:

Well, a lot of filmmakers are making commercial films, part of the year. And the other part of the year, they have money to make films, which they try to sell to other countries, or to send to festivals.

[Filmmaker]:

Thank you.

[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

theatres that show just experimental film.

Wilma De Jong:

That's the same in Holland, however, experimental possibilities are very euh— limited. That's what I told— so innovation— things— it's fairly difficult at this moment.

Question [03], from the audience [filmmaker]:

So, is it starting to be that the solution to that is to find that kind of work— being fitted within the form of features so you get sort of feature films, but alternative motifs within them? Or are those filmmakers are just giving up and not doing films?

Wilma De Jong:

Well, a lot of filmmakers are making commercial films, now— and— part of the year. And the other part of the year they have money to make films, which they try to sell to other countries, or to send to euh— ah— festivals.

[Filmmaker]:

Yeah... Thank you.

[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

edited transcript
textural transcript
13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

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COMMERCE VS. CRITIQUE

Question [04], from the audience:

Perhaps in a way you've already answered this, but how has [commercialization] affected art in terms of how it critiques society? Has it had a major impact in terms of art as a critique of society because artists have had to become public and sell?

Wilma De Jong:

If you have to sell your art, you have to make art that's accessible for a bigger audience. And that's the point of what I've said—you have to reach a bigger audience. For me, it's no problem—I want my films to be used—but for a lot of different kinds of arts, they have small audiences. And that's very difficult to get subsidized.

And that's what I said at the end, it must be big—big audience, big events, and that kind of thing.

Question [05], from the audience:

You seem to be moving towards the model that we have here, as we're moving towards the model that

00:44:27

Question [04], from the audience:

Hi. Uh— perhaps in a way you've already sort of answered this, but how has this um, development affected um, art in— in terms of how art critiques society? Has it had a major impact in terms of art as a critique of society because they've had to become public and sell?

Wilma De Jong:

Ah, if you ah— have to euh— sell ah— your art, you have to make art that's euh, accessible for a bigger audience. And that's the point of what I've said—you have to reach bigger audience. For me, it's no problem, I— I want my films to be used, but for a lot of ah— different kinds of arts, they have small audiences. And that's very difficult to get that subsidized.

And that's— that's what I said at the end, it must be big— it must— big audience, and big events, and that kind of thing.

Question [05], from the audience:

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

you've had there.

I find that I have so many questions, that I'd like to ask you, that I almost don't know where to begin. One of the things you talked about now, as your model is changing, is that there's a normal Social security, which artists whose work income is less than 4,000 can still get. One of the questions I would have is, in terms of the status of the artist, do the artists who don't receive that, feel that it lessens their status as artists within the society? And, do the people in the society, feel that you are no longer an artist if you're not receiving the special subsidy for artists? And the other thing is, in terms of receiving the social—

[Someone interrupts the question asker, "Wait! I think... one at a time."]

Question [05], from the audience:

There's so many all at once!

Assistance, off-mic:

—if the people do not receive the subsidy, is that a stigma? Is it considered that they're not good?

Wilma De Jong:

You seem to be moving towards uh, the model that— that we have here, uh, as we're moving towards the model that you've had there. uh, and I find that I have uh so many questions, that— that I'd like to ask you, that I almost don't know where to begin. Um, one of the— one of the things you talked about now as your model is changing, ah, is that— that there's a— a normal social security, which artists whose work ah, income is less than 4,000 can still get. Ah, one of the questions I would have is, in terms of the status of the artist, uh, do the artists who don't receive that uh, feel that— that— that it lessens their status as artists within the society? And, do the people, in the society itself, feel that you are no longer an artist if you're not receiving the special subsidy for artists? And the other thing is, is in terms of receiving the social—

[Someone interrupts the question asker, "wait! I think... one at a time."]

Question [05], from the audience:

There's so many all at once!

Assistance, off-mic:

edited transcript
textural transcript
Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)



Yes, of course you lose your status. Because when you are accepted by the BKR, that means that you're an artist—for everybody. But if you're thrown out, then you lose that status. That doesn't mean that there are only good artists in the BKR—which is absolutely not true, because I've really seen very bad art in the BKR, that's coming from the '60s, you know, when it started.

So, you lose your status. But nobody will see it, of course.

[Wilma laughs briefly.]



[Return to the [TABLE OF CONTENTS.](#)]

...if the people do not receive the subsidy, is that a stigma? Is that, is it considered that they're not good?

Wilma De Jong:

Ahm, yes, of course you lose euh— your status. Because when you are accepted by the BKR, that means that you're— you're an artist— for everybody. But if you're thrown out, then you lose that status. And— that doesn't say— euh, doesn't mean that are good artists in the BKR, which is absolutely not true, because I've really seen very bad art in the BKR, that's coming from the sixties, you know, when it started. But— so you lose your status. But nobody will see it, of course.

[Wilma laughs briefly.]



[Return to the [TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.](#)]

CRITERIA FOR SUPPORT

Question [06], from the audience:

I'm sorry, I speak very bad English, so I will speak French.

J'aimerais que vous me précisiez un peu au niveau du système d'aide sociale pour artistes. À savoir, quels sont les critères d'admissibilité pour que les artistes puissent avoir le droit de ce soutien de base, de l'état? Parler également que l'état prenne un pourcentage—

Assistance, off-mic:

Excuse me— it's not coming through.

Wilma De Jong:

Si vous parlez un peu plus lentement, je peux peut-être comprendre votre français.

Question [06], from the audience:

Okay.

Ce que je voudrais savoir c'est au niveau du système d'aide social d'artiste. Quels sont les critères d'admissibilité pour que l'artiste puisse

00:47:27

Question [06], from the audience:

I'm sorry, I speak real bad English, so I will speak French.

J'aimerais— j'aimerais que vous me précisiez un peu au niveau du système d'aide sociale pour artistes. Euh— à savoir, quels sont les critères d'admissibilité pour que les artistes puissent avoir le droit euh— ce soutien [?] de l'état. Parler également qu'il— que l'état prenne un pourcentage—

Assistance, off-mic:

Excuse me— it's not coming through.

Wilma De Jong:

Si vous parlez un peu plus lentement, je peux peut-être comprendre votre français.

Question [06], from the audience:

Okay. Ce que je voudrais savoir c'est au niveau du système d'aide social d'artiste. Quels sont les critères d'admissibilité pour que l'artiste

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

avoir droit à ce soutien?

Vous disiez également qu'il doit commercialiser ses œuvres pour bien avoir droit. Est-ce que l'état prend un pourcentage sur la vente des œuvres? Comment ça détermine finalement son revenue pour l'artiste qui manifeste ce soutien?

Assistance, off-mic:

—what is the price and what are the criteria for getting the subsidy? What do you have to do?

Wilma De Jong:

You have to sell 4,000 dollars a year. And whether it's 10 paintings, or 20 paintings, that doesn't matter. Or even if you get it by teaching, that's also alright. But you have to get an income near that Social security. It's not only the Social security, you have to do something else besides it. Do you understand what I'm saying?

The criteria—that's always the biggest problem, of course—criteria for a committee to judge the art. I don't know them by heart, but I think it's the same with film scenarios—you have to be original, innovative, professional, and things like that. But there's always that moment of, "Well, that's it, or

puisse avoir droit a ce soutien? Euh— Vous disiez également qu'il doit euh— vendre— commercialiser ses œuvres pour bien avoir droit. Est-ce que l'état prend un pourcentage sur la vente des œuvres? Comment [s'est établi] finalement son revenue euh— pour l'artiste qui— qui euh— [manif?] ce soutien?

Assistance, off-mic:

—what is the price and what are the criteria for getting the subsidy? What do you have to do?

Wilma De Jong:

Euhm— the price the— the— you have to sell 4,000 dollars a year. And whether it's 10 paintings, or euh 20 paintings, that doesn't matter. Or even if you get it by euhm— by teaching, that's also alright. But you have to euh— get ah— an income near that Social security. It's not only the Social security, you have to do something else near— besides it. Do you understand what I'm saying? Another— ah— the— the criteria... Ah— that's over— always the biggest problem, of course, criteria to for a committee— a committee to um— to judge the art. And— I don't know

that's nothing," you know? And you can't get that in words.

[Wilma pauses.]

But there's always the possibility to protest, to revolt against it, if they don't accept you.



[Return to the [TABLE OF CONTENTS.](#)]

them by heart, but I think what— it's the same with— with ah— euh— films with scenarios, there is— you have to be original, ah— innovative, euh— ah— professional, and things like that. But there's always that— that moment from, "Well, that's it, or that's nothing," you know? And that's, you can't ah— get that in words.

[Wilma pauses.]

But there's always a possibility that if they don't accept you, to protest, to revolt against it.



[Return to the [TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.](#)]

PORNOGRAPHY, AGAIN

Question [07], from the audience:

Could you talk a little bit about how pornography is defined by your government? And, is there any explicit sexuality shown on any of the TV stations? And, what kind of sex education is there in the school system?

Assistance, off-mic:

—how do you define pornography?

Wilma De Jong:

That's quite a difficult question, to define pornography.

Let me first start with television. There are not really many rules. It's not necessarily because of the TV stations, either. They are Protestant, Catholic, and things like that, so you don't need many rules to forbid pornography. But, what I told you about at one television station, that was always putting experimental films in the air, they once broadcast a homosexual film, which caused almost a revolution in the Netherlands because it

00:50:18

Question [07], from the audience:

Could you talk a little bit about how pornography is defined by your government? And um, is there any explicit sexuality shown on any of the TV stations? Um— And is there— what kind of um— sex education is there in the school system?

Assistance, off-mic:

Ah, how do you define pornography?

Wilma De Jong:

That's quite a difficult question, to euh— define pornography. I— Uhm—

Although— let me first start with television.

There are not really euhm— many rules. It's not necessarily either, because of the TV stations. They ah— they are Protestant, Catholic, and things like that, so you don't need much rules to— to euh— to ah— forbid pornography. But, what I told you about at one television station whose sending oh— ah— was always also ah— putting experimental films in the air, they once sent ah—

was a male homosexual. I don't know if you know the film—it was *Taxi zum Klo*.

[Some agreement from the audience.]

Yeah, it was too much for the television, you know—all the papers were full of it. And so much with repulsion, and it was really terrible, how much we actually said, God—

But normally, in TV scenes, you see naked people, fucking people—everything is shown. That's no problem at all. The Netherlands is quite well-known for that tolerant vision. It still is, too—if you compare with other countries.

Assistance, off-mic:

—what about the education in schools?

Wilma De Jong:

Sex education? Schools don't have to give sex information, it's free, but a lot of schools don't do it. Certainly not the Catholic, Protestant, and all those other schools. They don't do it, because that's kind of “stimulating” the whole thing—and that's not what they want. That's the same with drugs—they don't give information about drugs,

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they brought a homosexual film in the air, which causes almost a revolution in the Netherlands because it was a male homosexual, but it—I don't know if you ah— know, the film, it's *Taxi zum Klo*. [Some agreement from the audience.] Yeah, it's— it's— it was too much for the television, you know, it's— all papers were full of it. And so much with repulsion, and it was really terrible, how much we actually said, God— but normally, in TV scenes, you see naked people, ah— fucking people, ah— everything is shown. That's no problem at all. Euh— Netherlands is quite well-known for that tolerant euh— euhm— vision. And it's— it's still— too— if you compare that with other countries.

Assistance, off-mic:

What about the education in schools?

Wilma De Jong:

Sex education? It's not euh— you don't— schools don't have to give se— sex information at schools, it's free. And a lot— but a lot of schools don't do it. Ah— certainly not the— the Catholic, Protestant, and ah— all those other schools. They don't do it, because that's aah— that's kind of stimulating the

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

because otherwise you're "stimulating" drugs. I think that's quite a old-fashioned and stupid way of thinking about it. More modern schools give information about sexuality, but most of the time in a special way, that's about anti-conception and things like that. The whole pleasure side—I think they forget. Certainly about women, I guess.

Well, I'm *sure* about that.

[Some laughter in the audience.]

[Return to the [TABLE OF CONTENTS.](#)]

whole thing, and that's not what they want. That's the same with drugs, they don't give information about drugs, because otherwise you're stimulating drugs. I think that's quite a lot of— old-fashioned and stupid way of thinking about it. But euhm— so, more modern schools give information about euh— euh— sexuality, but most on— of the time on a— on a special way, that's about anti-conception and euh— things like that. But the— the whole pleasure side— I think that's most time forgets, they forget. Certainly about women, I guess.

Well, I'm *sure* about that.

[Some laughter in the audience.]

[Return to the [TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.](#)]

2-D VS. 3-OR-4-D

Question [08], from the audience:

Could you explain perhaps what venues there are available for installation or environmental sculpture in the Netherlands? Is it accepted commercially? What's the status of that type of art right now?

Wilma De Jong:

There are some galleries who show it but I think I have to tell you something more about it. In Holland, artists can get studios fairly cheap. Not all of them, of course, but there are possibilities. And those artists do get, most of the times, old factories and places like that. And then it depends on the artists themselves, what happens with it. Because you have to organize yourself an exhibition, you have to make invitations and do the press and everything, and then people will come if they are interested. There's always information about exhibitions and things like that, on television. It's important that you get your exhibition in that program, know? That's what I told you about dealing with the mass media—

00:53:37

Question [08], from the audience:

I'd like to— could you explain perhaps what uh— what venues there are available for, um, installation or environmental sculpture in the Netherlands? Uh— is it— is it uh— accepted commercially? Or, what's the status of that, uh— that type of art, uh— right now?

Wilma De Jong:

Euhm— there are some galleries who show it but ah— I think I have to tell you something more about it. Um— In Holland, artists can get euh— studios fairly cheap. Not all of them, of course, but there are possibilities. And ah— those artists do get, most of the times, old factories and places like that. And ah— then it depends on the artist itself, what happens with it. Because ah— if you euh— organize yourself, you have to organize yourself an exhibition, you have to make invitations and do the press and everything, and then will— people will come if they are interested. But if you— there's ah— on television, there's always information about exhibitions and things

take care that everybody knows that you have an exhibition.



Question [08], from the audience:

Is the artist paid for that exhibition? Like, is there some—

Wilma De Jong:

No, no! It's its own initiative!

[Question asker says, "yeah—"]

Everything— a lot of things are becoming more and more your own initiative. If you want an exhibition, organize it yourself!

Question [08], from the audience:

Yeah—

[Wilma and the question asker talk over each other briefly.]

Question [08], from the audience:

—organize an exhibition, and such, is by the artist initiative. But, what you're saying is, more often



edited transcript



textural transcript



textural transcript



13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)



like that. And you have to euh— it's— it's ah— it's important that you get your exhibition in that program, know? That's what I told you about deal with mass media, take care that everybody knows that you have an exhibition.



Question [08], from the audience:

Uh— is the uh— is the artist paid for that exhibition? Like, is— is there some—

Wilma De Jong:

No, no! It's its own initiative!

[Question asker says, "yeah—"]

That's it— everything— a lot of things are becoming more and more your own initiative. If you want an exhibition, organize it yourself!

Question [08], from the audience:

Yeah, oh—

[Wilma and the question asker talk over each other briefly.]



than not, for the artist to survive, they have to sell their flat artwork to hang on a wall. And if they can manage to sell up to 4,000 dollars worth of artwork, that basically is their criteria for being an artist. If that's not your medium, what is available to those artists to create their work? I mean— do people struggle to put their own exhibitions together?

Wilma De Jong:

This too, it's a struggle! I won't deny that! That's why so many artists lost their BKR— because of this criteria of selling so much art—such a high amount of art.

[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

edited transcript

Question [08], from the audience:

—organize an exhibition, and such, it is— is by the artist initiative. But, um— yeah, as you're saying is ah— more often than not, for the artist to survive, they have to ah— ah— sell ah— their flat artwork to hang on a wall. Um— and therefore, if they can manage to sell up to 4,000 dollars worth of artwork, um— that basically is their criteria for being an artist. If— if that's not your medium, what is available to— to ah— to those artists to— to create their work? Other than— than I mean— people do struggle anyway to— to ah— ah— to put their own exhibitions together.

Wilma De Jong:

This too, it's— it's a struggle! I— I— I won't deny that! That's why euh— so many euh— artists lost their BKR— because of this criterion of selling so much art. So much amount— such a high amount of art.

[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

STATS AND SPATS

Question [09], from the audience:

I will speak in French.

[Long pause.]

Oui, j'aimerais savoir madame, là. J'ai deux questions a vous poser. La première question c'est celle si, c'est un question de statistiques— je m'intéresse énormément aux statistiques, je collectionne les chiffres—j'aimerais avoir une réponse statistique à la question suivante: combien d'artistes croyez-vous au Pays-Bas sont ni Noirs, ni homosexuels, ni handicapés, qui n'ont aucun contact avec les syndicats, qui ne savent pas où est l'argent, qui ne s'intéressent pas aux commerces, qui ne font pas de l'art déco?

Combien selon-vous il existent d'artistes approximativement?

Première question, je vous en aurez peut-être une seconde—

[Long pause.]

00:56:18

Question [09], from the audience:

I will speak in French.

[Long pause.]

Oui, j'aimerais savoir madame, là. J'ai deux questions a vous poser. La première question c'est celle si, c'est un question de statistiques— je m'intéresse énormément aux statistiques, je collectionne les chiffres—j'aimerais savoir euh— une réponse statistique à la— la question suivante: combien d'artistes croyez-vous au Pays-Bas sont ni Noir, ni homosexuel, ni handicapé, qui n'ont aucun contact avec les syndicats, qui ne savent pas où est l'argent, qui ne s'intéressent pas aux commerces, qui ne font pas de l'art déco?

Combien selon-vous il existent d'artistes approximativement?

Première question, je vous en aurez peut-être une seconde—

[Long pause.]

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

Question [09], from the audience:

Est-ce que vous voulez que je pose mon seconde question tout de suite?

[Wilma and/or the assistant speak out: "No!"]

Question [09], from the audience:

Okay.

Assistance, off-mic:

—can you answer that?

Wilma De Jong:

No, I didn't get this—

Assistance, off-mic:

—how many artists are not black, or homosexual, or belong to unions, or—how many artists are on their own?

Wilma De Jong:

Um— I'm not black, I'm not homosexual...

???

Question [09], from the audience:

Est-ce que vous voulez que je [?] mon seconde question tout de suite?

[Wilma and/or the assistant speak out: "No!"]

Question [09], from the audience:

Okay.

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Well— Can you answer that?

Wilma De Jong:

No, I didn't get this.

Assistance, off-mic:

—how many artists are not black, or homosexual, or um, belong to unions, or no— how many artists on their own?

Wilma De Jong:

Um— I'm not black, I'm not homosexual...

???

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

↑

Assistance, off-mic:

—any of the categories that you talked about?

👁

Wilma De Jong:

↑

Well, there are about 10,000 artists in the Netherlands, and 47% of them are women—that’s a lot, almost half—and only 19% percent of the subsidized artists are women. It’s a big scandal!

📄

↑

Euhm— about the black, the homosexual, the lesbian, or um— disabled artist—



↑

[Wilma laughs slightly.]

📄

I don’t know how much they are, but certainly in Amsterdam, they organize themselves very well at this moment. They organize exhibitions and they get money for it, because we have that priority system. For women, they have better possibilities, and homosexuals get better possibilities for exhibitions. And certainly black people, at this moment.

👁

↑

↓

Assistance, off-mic:

Right— any of the categories that you talked about?

👁

↑

Wilma De Jong:

↑

Euhm— well, there are about ten thousand artists in the Netherlands, and forty-seven— euh— forty-seven percent of them are women. And ahm— forty-seven— yeah, that’s a lot, almost half it— of it. And only nineteen percent of them get euh— of the subsidized artists are women, huh? It’s a big ah— scandal!

📄

↑

Euhm— about the black, the homosexual, the lesbian, or um— disabled artist—

↑

[Wilma laughs slightly.]

👁

Aah— I don’t know how much they are, but they ah— certainly in Amsterdam, they euh— organize themselves very good at this moment. They euh— organize exhibitions and ah— they get money for it, because we have that priority system, huh? That if you— euh— for women they have better possibilities, and homosexuals get better possibilities and things, for exhibitions, huh? And certainly black people, at this moment.

👁

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edited transcript

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textural transcript

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13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

↑
⋮

Question [09], from the audience:

Ⓜ Okay, merci. J'ai une seconde question, une question de biographie.

Ⓜ Okay, you understand?

↑
⋮

Vous comprenez?

Ⓜ Ma question c'est est-ce que T.V. Jane a rencontrée de [nouveau] le professeur, et comment ah— qu'est-ce que s'est passer de— dans cet rencontre?

↑
⋮

[Many in the audience laugh, and Wilma is laughing slightly.

Ⓜ Wilma, off-mic: “—did she met Professor?”

↑
⋮

Assistance, off-mic: “What was the question?”

Ⓜ Wilma, off-mic: “Ah, euh— if TV Jane did recently meet the Professor and how... the encounter—”]

Ⓜ

Wilma De Jong:

↑
⋮

T.V. Jane—

Ⓜ [Sound of noon-time horns at BC Hydro Building, and the audience laughs.]

↑
⋮

—recently met the Professor and they got into a big fight—

↓

Question [09], from the audience:

Ⓜ Okay, merci. J'ai une seconde question, une question de biographie?

Ⓜ Okay, you understand?

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Vous comprenez?

Ⓜ Ma question c'est euh— est-ce que euh— TV Jane a rencontrée de [nouveau] la professeure, et comment ah— qu'est-ce que s'est passer de— dans cet rencontre?

Ⓜ

Wilma De Jong:

Ⓜ [Many in the audience laugh, and Wilma is laughing slightly.

↑
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Wilma, off-mic: “—did she met Professor?”

Ⓜ Assistance, off-mic: What was the question?]

Ⓜ Wilma, off-mic: “Ah, euh— if TV Jane did recently meet the Professor and how... the encounter—”]

Ⓜ

Wilma De Jong:

↑
⋮

Ah, TV Jane—

Ⓜ [Sound of noon-time horns at BC Hydro Building, and the audience laughs.]



edited transcript



textural transcript



13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)



—because the Professor has such old-fashioned ideas about what’s art and what’s non-art, that they got into a fight and they separated.

[Audience laughs.]

Roberta Beiser:

I think on that note, um—

Wilma De Jong:

—oh my God—

—no, because you know, that Professor of Art, he’s one of the members now, who are creating a television station, where there will be shown *The Art*—with capitals! And I don’t know what it is, but it will be shown. So, that’s a new development— just two or three weeks ago, some people organized themselves and they want “real art.”

—recently met the professor and they got a big fight—

—because the professor he becomes such an old-fashioned ah— ideas about what’s art and what’s non-art, that ah— they got a fight and they were separate— they separated.

[Audience laughs.]

Roberta Beiser:

I think on that note, um—

Wilma De Jong:

—oh my God—

—no, because you know, that Professor of Art, he’s one of the members now, who are created— euh— ah— are creating a television station, where there will be shown THE ART—with capitals! And



Roberta Beiser:

Okay, this will be one last question.



[Roberta is evidently trying not to laugh.]



[Return to the [TABLE OF CONTENTS.](#)]



edited transcript



I don't know what it is, but it will be shown. So, that's a new ah— development, that euh— but, just two or three weeks ago, some people organized themselves and they want “real art.”



textural transcript



13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)



ARTISTS AS DECISION-MAKERS

Question [10], from the audience [Clive Robertson]:

I'd just like to ask you, in the history of the state subsidy program, has there been a change in terms of the amount of artist representation in deciding how this program is structured?

It seems to me that your description of it is not that it was necessarily a bad idea, but that, in fact, the mechanisms of it aren't particularly valuable, as you're saying, for a lot of artists.

Is this a problem of artists not having enough representation in this political situation? Or— can you tell me what it was?

Wilma De Jong:

Oh, that's a very important question—the representation of artists!



Well, it's a point also of class, of course. The successful artists, of course, have very good relationships with political or decision-making

01:00:25

Question [10], from the audience [Clive Robertson]:

I'd just like to ask you, ah— in the history of the state subsidy program, has there been a change in terms of the amount of artist representation in deciding how this program is structured? It— it seems to me that your description of it is not that it was necessarily a bad idea. But that, in fact, the maxim— the mechanisms of it don't put— aren't particularly valuable, as you're saying, for a lot of artists. Is this a problem of artists not having enough representation into this— um, political situation? Or— can you tell me what it was?

Wilma De Jong:

Um— oh, that's a very important question! Ah— euhm— rep— the representation of artists.



Well, it's a point also of class, of course, the— the— the good and fair or good. The successful artists, of course, have fairly good relationships—

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

people. And, there are, of course, official representations. But there's a big gap between the artists who are on those committees, and the artists, let's say, *on the street*—they don't meet each other! There are groups.

The only thing that really changes a lot—and that's certainly true with homosexual and women artists—is that because there is a homosexual movement and a strong subculture, and also a strong lesbian subculture, and a women's subculture, and those people also have normal jobs—official, political jobs or bureaucratic jobs—the lines are quite direct!

I get a lot of money for my films, because I have a background of 10 years in the women's movement, and a lot of those women I knew from the women's movement, now have jobs in the Department of Education, or the Department of Art, Health and Culture, and things like that. Those unofficial lines are certainly—for those groups—fairly important.



Did you get an answer on your question?

edited transcript

very good relationships with euh— ah— political or decision-making people. And, there are, of course, official representations. But ah— there's bit— a big gap between ah— ah— the artists who are in those committees, and the com— and— and the the artists, let's say, on the street—they don't meet each other! There are very— there are— it are groups. The only thing that's really ah— changes a lot, and that's certainly true with homosexual and women ah— euhm— artist, that ah— because there is a homosexual movement and— ah— and a strong subculture, and also a— a strong lesbian subculture, and a women's subculture— they ah— And those people have also normal jobs, in ah— official, bureaucratic or official—ah, how do you call it?— political jobs or bureaucratic jobs. So the lines are quite direct! I get a lot of money for my films, because ah— I have a background of 10 years women's movement, and a lot of those women I euhm— knew from the ah, women's movement, now have jobs in ah— Department of Education, or Department of ah— Art, Health and euh— Culture, and things like that. Those inofficial lines are certainly for euh— those groups, fairly important.

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

[Return to the [TABLE OF CONTENTS.](#)]



Did you get an answer on your question?

[Return to the [TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.](#)]

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

CLOSING REMARKS (1986)

Roberta Beiser:

Well, on behalf of all of us here, I want to thank you very much for a most entertaining and enlightening presentation—I think you’ve given us a very good look at how a filmmaker functions in Holland.

And again, I encourage all of you, if you can, just spend a few minutes with Wilma. She’s a delightful person!

[Long applause from the audience.]



Marion Barling:

Thank you, Wilma. Thank you, Roberta.

I do have some very important announcements, so I would like you to just give me your attention before we break for lunch.

If you would like audio copies of the speakers or the entire conference, get in contact with David

01:03:02

Roberta Beiser:

Well, on behalf of all of us here, I want to thank you very much for a most entertaining and enlightening presentation—I think you’ve given us a very good look at how a filmmaker functions in— in Holland. And again, I encourage all of you, if you can, just spend a few minutes with Wilma. She’s a delightful person!

[Long applause from the audience.]



Marion Barling:

Thank you, Wilma. Thank you, Roberta. I do have some very important announcements. So I would like you to just give me your attention before we break for, um— lunch.

If you would like audio copies, audio copies of the speakers, then if you would ask or get in contact with David Madden—who is sitting beside the

Madden—who is sitting beside the booth and is the technician—before the end of today.

We do have the papers that we've been promising you all along. They cost slightly more than we had anticipated, so you will see the revised costs. How you get them is by going in at the back entrance of that balcony there, walking through, marking your name on the paper that you had written it on yesterday, and paying at the end. Only people who put their names on the list have papers. If you want papers, you can check at the end to see if we have any extras, or contact the League's office next week, at 681-1413.



A little purse was found—has anybody lost this little leather purse? I have it if you've lost it.

Now we're going to break for about an hour for lunch, and immediately after, Mona Hatoum will be starting her performance at 1:15 pm, and she will continue through until the end of the [conference.]



booth and is the technician—for copies, before the end of today. If you want audio copies of the speakers or the entire conference, please contact David Madden, before the end of this day.

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[Return to the [TABLE OF CONTENTS.](#)]

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[Tone.]

[Return to the [TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.](#)]

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)

CLOSING REMARKS (2023)

Thanks for reading. This was just one part of a multi-part project documenting *Strategies for Survival: State of the Arts / The Art of Alternatives: An International Conference for Artists*, organized by the Vancouver Artists' League in 1986—if you're following along, all of the transcripts and audio recordings are linked directly here, or can be found at unitpitt.ca

You may have noticed that, like most archives projects, this one is in progress. If you have any recollections or information that you'd like to share about the 1986 conference, or new thoughts in 2023, send us a message at info@unitpitt.ca



[\[Return to the TABLE OF CONTENTS.\]](#)

01:05:27

Francesca Bennett, project coordinator:

Thanks for listening. This was just one part of a multi-part project documenting *Strategies for Survival: State of the Arts / The Art of Alternatives: An International Conference for Artists*, organized by the Vancouver Artists' League in 1986—if you'd like to follow along, all of the transcripts and audio recordings are linked at unitpitt.ca, [directly here.]

And, you may have noticed that, like most archives projects, this one is in progress. If you have any recollections or information that you'd like to share about the 1986 conference, or new thoughts in 2023, send us a message at info@unitpitt.ca



[Tone.]

[\[Return to the TABLE OF TIMESTAMPS.\]](#)

edited transcript

textural transcript

13: Wilma De Jong (Netherlands)