

Uomo Analyticus

Exhibition in the Sculpture Garden of AVL Mundo organised in collaboration with the Science Gallery

‘Uomo Analyticus’ can both mean ‘the analyzing human’ and ‘a human analyzed’. How do we live? How are we made? How do we process and get processed? This exhibition, organised by AVL Mundo in collaboration with the Science Gallery, focusses on the core theme of Atelier Van Lieshout’s practice: dissecting systems, be it society as a whole or the human body.

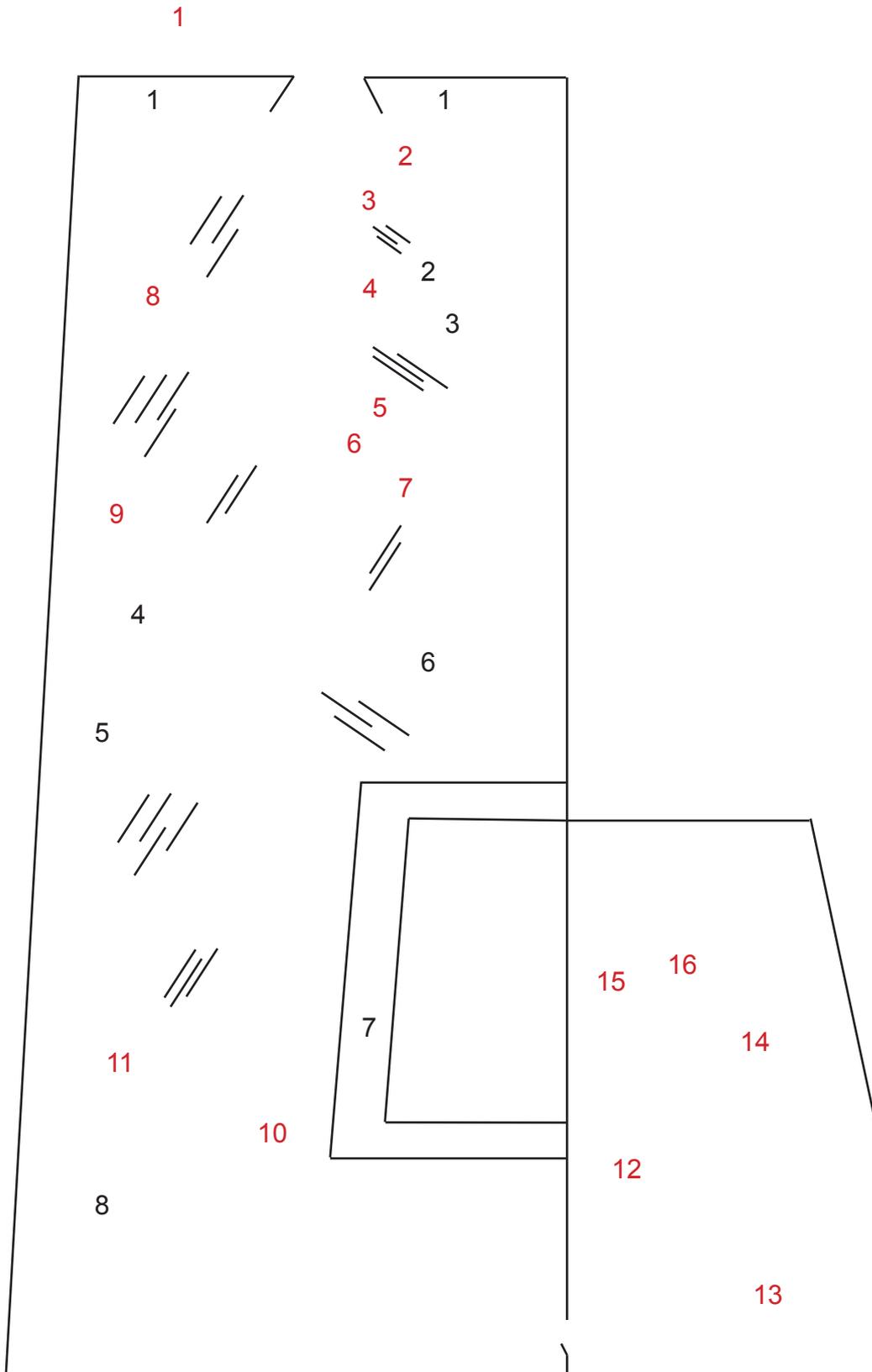
Atelier Van Lieshout looks at the human body as the ultimate system and an everlasting source of inspiration. It is a well-oiled machine, every organ working together like cogs in an engine. And at its turn, a human is only a cog in the larger system of society.

In the works on show Van Lieshout turns the inside out and shows the mechanisms that make that humanity can think, talk, digest, have sex, reproduce, organise and revolutionize.

Different large and extra large organs are placed throughout the garden, paired with groups of sculpted figures, piled together in different ways. Rational thinking and romanticism try to find a balance, whether it is as a silence room hidden in a pile of dead bodies, a skull-sauna or a bar in a rectal system.

Red: *Uomo Analyticus*

Black: Permanent collection display



1. *Wellness Skull*, 2007

Fiberglass/Polyester



Healthy minds live in healthy bodies. *Wellness Skull* is a large human skull, and has, just like wellness centers, a few places to relax. In the neck of the skull is a small bath. The head of the skull contains a sauna. When it is working the hot steam pears out of the eye sockets. *Wellness Skull* lets one unwind in a shape that is literally the physical shell of the mind, yet also the shape that has become the symbol for death and toxicity.

2. *The Invisible Hand*, 2012

Fiberglass



The title *Invisible Hand* refers to Adam Smith's theory that the pursuit of individual interest results in social and economic benefit for all. This sculpture talks about systems and how humanity is controlled by it. It offers a comment on how the economy directs society and how, according to Van Lieshout, "money rules the world".



3. *Womb (small)*, 2003

Polyurethane Foam,
Fiberglass/Polyester

Womb (small), *Penis Medium* and *Penis XL* and *Kidney Bladder Combination* are part of a series of colourful fibreglass sculptures that Atelier Van Lieshout produced in the early 00's: a complete series of human internal organs.

For Van Lieshout, the 'Organ' series were a way to take a step away from design, and to focus on the pure functionality of systems and materials instead. By taking away design choices and faring on either rationale or that which nature has given us, Van Lieshout researched what the hand of the artist actually means. These works are a stylized representation of the interior of the human body, almost perfect anatomical renditions of the organs that keep us going, the artist turned inside-out. In that sense 'Organ' series can also be seen as an attempt of the artist to get a grip on the mysterious but incredibly well-functioning system of the human body.

4. *Tree of Life*, 2016

Fiberglass



Tree of Life embodies all the stages of life. Like strange fruits, babies seem to be growing from the tree, or are those corpses hanging from the branches? *Tree of Life* is a monument for life, without making it any prettier than life actually is.



5. *Penis XL*, 2003

6. *Penis Medium*, 2004

Fiberglass/Polyester

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7. *Kidney Bladder Combination, 2003*

Fiberglass

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8. *BarRectum*, 2005

Fiberglass/Polyester



BarRectum, *Arsch Bar*, *Asshole Bar*, *Bar Anus*. While the translations sound different, the form is universally recognizable. The bar takes its shape from the human digestive system: starting with the tongue, continuing to the stomach, moving through the small and the large intestines and exiting through the anus. While *BarRectum* is anatomically correct, the last part of the large intestine has been inflated to a humongous size to hold as many drinking customers at the bar as possible. The anus itself is part of a large door that doubles as an emergency exit.

9. *Darwin*, 2008

Fiberglass



This large purple sperm is blown up to an extreme proportion. The head of the sperm can be entered, inside a bed and a small desk are placed. *Darwin* implies power, status, expansion and reproduction. It reflects social Darwinism ideas and the need for survival in all aspects of our lives, whether biological or corporate.



10. *Weltmeister*, 2010

**Fiberglass/Polyester
Polyurethane,
Foam Styrofoam**

Weltmeister looks from a distance like a knot of worms. When one comes closer it however starts to resemble a pile of human victims. *Weltmeister* is a sculpture as well as a piece of furniture. It invites the spectator to crawl into the ball in order to contemplate life with a little distance to the world. Yet, this calmness is found while being surrounded by victims, which gives the intimacy of this sculpture a dark and austere aftertaste. This ball of dead bodies represents the dystopian future world view of 'Cradle to Cradle'. From this perspective, *Weltmeister* is not a place to commemorate but a pile of food or raw material.



11. *The Grinder*, 2009

Fiberglass/Polyester
Styrofoam
Japanese rice paper

The Grinder is an installation from 'Cradle to Cradle' (2009), a series of works which is based on the concept that waste is food. This principle is taken to the extreme in AVL's installation, a machine built to recycle people. In a model of efficiency, the organs are used for transplants, while the flesh, fluids, fat and bones are processed into meat in this grinder. The remainder is used to harvest energy. Atelier van Lieshout offers an extremely provocative answer to the world's problems of overpopulation and depleted energy supplies.



12. *Exploded View Organs,* 2009

**Polyurea
Steel
Fiberglass**

Joep van Lieshout is obsessed by systems. All systems have a good side and a bad side, possibilities and restrictions. An individual can depend on a system, profit from it or be enslaved by it. Human systems, like those created by the internal human organs, add an aesthetic dimension: how organs work and how they look is magnificent. Who is the designer? The artist or our own body?

13. *Uomo Analyticus*, 2009

Aluminium



Uomo Analyticus shows a partially boned human body; both an anatomical lesson and a body that is about to be harvested. The sculpture presents the human body as the system it is, whilst at the same time portraying its constrained and difficult position as a human being in the imagined, dystopian society of 'Slave City'.



14. *The Beginning of Everything*, 2016

Mixed Media

The Beginning of Everything (2016), represents glucose ($C_6H_{12}O_6$), the primary source of energy for human life. It is created by plants during photosynthesis, a reaction which is reversed by the human body. During this process, the energy which powers human life is released. Energy is the vital force which drives our world, brings it its color, its joy, its vibrancy, its life. It is literally 'the beginning of everything'.

15. *Insect Farm*, 2012

Aluminium



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



16. *Operating Table*, 1984

Wood
Copper
Iron

Operating table was one of the very first functional objects made by Joep van Lieshout. It is an object made to cure people, but it looks like a worn out butcher's block, customized for obscure pleasures. *Operating Table* speaks about the everlasting research and balance between science, perversion and ethics. Death and destruction in exchange for knowledge. This object already contains the play with the borders of rationality, ethics and impulses that later became one of the distinctive themes in the works of Atelier Van Lieshout.



1. *Pioneer Set*, 1999

Wood
Steel
Corrugated Iron

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



2. *Big Boiler*, 2018

Steel

Big Boiler is a sculpture based on a 'temazcal': a type of sweat lodge which originated with pre-Hispanic Indigenous peoples in Mesoamerica. In ancient Mesoamerica the lodge was used as part of a curative ceremony thought to purify the body after exertion such as after a battle or a ceremonial ball game. It was also used for healing the sick, improving health, and for women to give birth. To complete the Atelier van Lieshout 'Wellness' treatment, we have added a hot tub and an adjoining ice bath, for some cooling down after the ritual cleansing.

3. *Laocoon*, 2003

**Fiberglass/Polyester
Styrofoam**



A group people that are huddled together. But are we looking at a group of people embracing, leaning on each other, or is it just a large orgy?

4. *Endless Column*, 2015

Galvanized steel



Endless Column is an ever-repeating totem of modernist, minimalist forms in perpetual motion. These forms are rational, cubic and mathematical. It also follows the logical engineering of nature, of bones and tissues, where nothing exists without reason, and combines two seemingly opposed values – ratio and intuition.



5. *Hagioscoop*, 2012

Fiberglass/Polyester
Polyurethane Foam
Styrofoam

Atelier Van Lieshout's *Hagioscoop* is part of a large project "The New Tribal Labyrinth series" in which the recurring themes of work organization, power structures and revolution are mixed up with autarky, proposing a new tribal organization. *Hagioscoop* is an farm, a large cross-shaped diorama set in the imaginary date of "year zero". It consists of four parts: an large Adobe style kitchen, cave-like sleeping quarters, a deconstructivist carpenters workshop and a rough stable. The farm can be entered on the inside, but also viewed from the outside through small openings - comparable to the small windows which can be found in some churches, which enabled outcasts to witness the celebration of mass from outside – the so-called *Hagioscoop*.



6. *Steam Hammer*, 2014

Fiberglass/Polyester
Styrofoam
Wood

Atelier Van Lieshout has created a series of Monuments to Machines, large scale artworks in brightly colored composite that pay homage to production, like totems, objects of worship even. *The Steam Hammer House*, once an example of technological achievement, is now a stark reminder of obsolescence. The work is a monument for the industries of days gone by, a massive, tactile, almost humanized sculpture. It serves as a dwelling, extended with a toilet and kitchen, housing the peoples of a new tribe in a post-industrial world. By appropriating its bowels, humans will literally become one with the machine.

7. *Waterwagon*, 2007

Fiberglass



The Waterwagon is a work from the *Slave City*-series. It shows a group of people dragging and pushing a waterwagon in order to water the land. *Slave City* is a future where there is no war, no hunger, no diseases and no unemployment. Perfect, don't you think? But there is a dark side to this utopia. It also means that people give up their freedom to become a slave of the system. Free spirits, anarchists and handicapped people are thrown in a large grinder to become an energy source for the rest of the world. Not the most pleasant of thoughts. The economic model was checked by the Erasmus University, in Rotterdam, and the outcome was that it is possible to create such a world. The question remains whether we should strive for it...



8. *WW II (Canon)*, 2010

PolyUrea Coating
Polyurethane Foam

WWII (Canon) is the second canon made in a series of three, a stylized canon as a production of the post industrial era. This series of three monumental canons shows different techniques developed throughout the past century. Ranging from the artisan look of the WWI canon to the stylized WWIII canon. These monumental heroic works indirectly refer to Joep's depiction of a terrifying vision of the future with food scarcity, war and epidemics.