

Uomo Analyticus

Uomo Analyticus, an exhibition organised in collaboration with the Science Gallery Rotterdam, is presented in the Sculpture Garden of AVL Mundo, which is currently open to the public, as well as some additional sculptures in AVL's Cathedral (which is temporarily closed to respect codes of Covid 19).

Uomo Analyticus can mean both 'analyzing human' or 'human analyzed'. How do we live? How are we made? How do we process and get processed? This exhibition focuses on the core theme of Atelier Van Lieshout's practice: dissecting systems, be it society as a whole or the human body.

Joep Van Lieshout views the human body as "the ultimate system", a well-oiled machine with every organ working together like gears in an engine, and the human just a cog in the larger system of society.

With these sculptures, Van Lieshout turns the body inside out and reveals the mechanisms that comprise or define humanity: our ability to think, to talk, to digest, to have sex, to reproduce, to organise and to revolutionise.

Large and XXL sculptures, stylized, colourful, almost perfect anatomical representations of the interior of the human body, are placed throughout the park alongside additional works in exhibition and permanent collection celebrating togetherness, and man's interconnectedness to machines and industry.

1. *Wellness Skull, 2007*

Fiberglass



The large skull integrates elements for relaxation and restoration, based on the belief that healthy minds live in healthy bodies. The neck of the skull hosts a small bath to soak in before traveling to the head containing a sauna, which when activated, pumps steam out of the eye sockets. The work addresses contemporary society's obsession with self-experiences and indulgence, as wellness has become a new religion.



2. Kidney Bladder Combination, 2003

Fiberglass

Van Lieshout's colourful and oversized internal organs - womb (small), penis (medium), penis (L), and kidney /bladder combination - are part of the artist's ongoing series begun in 2003. Stylized representations of the interior of the human body, almost perfect anatomical renditions of essential organs, are turned inside-out, and celebrate our taboos, wishes, and the mysterious inner workings of what Van Lieshout refers to as 'divine architecture'.

3. *The Invisible Hand*, 2007-2012

Fiberglass



The gallow-like dark purple sculpture features a human figure dangling from an oversized hand. The individual is caught in a system, in which his freedom and interests are not in his control, but in the hand of private corporations and systems that value profit over all else. The title references Adam Smith's contested theory that the pursuit of individual interest results in social and economic benefit for all, and continues the artist's interest in "probing our dependence on economy and how money rules the world... our development from animal species to a 'rational' lifestyle society."

4. *Laocoon*, 2003

Fiberglass



AVL's sculpture brings together a group of human forms, gathered in a huddle, intertwined, limbs merging and morphing, in a celebration of friendship and togetherness. The work takes its title from the myth of Laocoon, the Trojan priest who warned of the Horse delivered by the Greeks and attempted to destroy it, and was punished by Gods, who blinded him and sent snakes to attack Laocoon and his two sons.

5. *Tree of Life*, 2016

Fiberglass



Trees are typically seen as monumental symbols of strength and stages of life, but Van Lieshout's tree exudes a slightly foreboding and eerie essence. Ambiguous forms emerging from the tree offer dual interpretation: as strange shaped fruit representing new life, or alternatively representing ritualistic death, with figures symmetrically hanging from each of the branches.

6. *BarRectum*, 2005

Fiberglass



BarRectum, *ArschBar*, *AssholeBar*, *BarAnus*. With a play on words, as well as function, the large-scale sculpture 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 ending with the anus. Anatomically correct, with form following function, the last part of the large intestine has been inflated to a humongous size and serves as a bar for socializing, drawing a parallel between the digestive system and the culture of overconsumption. With the artist's signature humor, the anus itself is part of a large door that doubles as an emergency exit.



7. *Penis XL*, 2003

8. *Penis Medium*, 2004

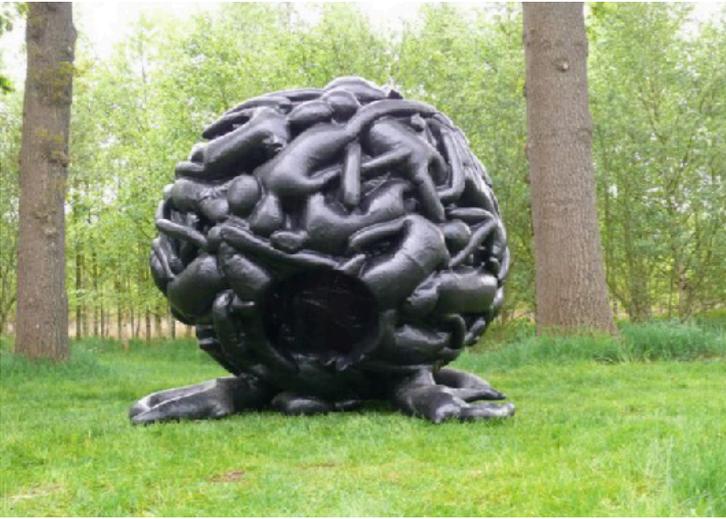
Fiberglass

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Van Lieshout's penis sculptures represent sexuality, power, taboo, reproduction, love and obscenity. Symbolizing the most essential biological function of the species, to reproduce to survive, the sculptures also comment on macho compulsion to penetrate society. Created in various sizes, from small to extra-large, a reference to Rem Koolhaas seminal design publication "S, M, L, ", the works also humorously reference society's obsession with size. The truck-size XL has still to be produced!

9. *Weltmeister*, 2010

Fiberglass



Weltmeister is a sculpted ball of entwined dead bodies, a German word that translates to “world champion”. This sculpture was designed for interaction with an opening that invites the spectator to crawl inside and escape the world for a few moments of intimate contemplation on the body, human interconnection, and the world when looking up to the sky through the Pantheon-inspired opening at the top of the sculpture. Exuding a dark and sinister nature, the work juxtaposes the rational and irrational, referencing ideas of facism and totalitarianism .

10. Darwin, 2008

Fiberglass



Darwin is a large purple sperm, blown up to extreme proportions, enabling visitors to enter. The concept of habitat is explored through the interior objects of a bed, small desk, counter, and eyes that open to serve as a bar window. The artwork merges aesthetics, sculpture, architecture, design, with form following function.

While the title implies power, status, expansion and reproduction, it equally references social Darwinism ideas and the need for survival in all aspects of our lives, whether biological, corporate or national. The work points to the fragile balance of nature, human ingenuity and humanitarianism, and fascist tendencies.

11. *The Grinder*, 2009

Fiberglass



The Grinder is an installation from *Slave-City*, a series of works based on the concept of reuse and turning waste into food. This concept is visualized by AVL's machine built to recycle people - those underperforming and deemed useless for society. In a model of efficiency, the organs are used for transplants, while the flesh, fluids, fat and bones are processed into meat to be consumed in this grinder. The remainder is used to harvest energy or make compost. Atelier van Lieshout offers an extremely provocative solution to the world's problems of overpopulation and depleted energy supplies.

12. *Insect Farm*, 2012

Aluminium



Insect Farm is a sleek modernist sculpture and a component of a high tech model of a futuristic farm reconnecting with its primitive nature. It is designed to breed insects for consumption, as a high protein and low carbon footprint food alternative, one that is already consumed by the majority of the non-western world. The project is both utopian and pragmatic, seeking a solution for feeding the increasing world population. It is part of the artist's *New Tribal Labyrinth* series, connecting the past, present and future, and man and machine with basic materials of life.



1. *Pioneer Set*, 1999

Wood
Steel
Corrugated Iron

With *Pioneer Set*, Atelier van Lieshout has created a mobile prefabricated farm and settlement enabling individuals or groups to self-sufficiently travel the world, setting up home wherever land is available. The set consists of a farmhouse, a stable, a chicken coop, a rabbit hutch, a pig pen, tools, equipment, fencing, and a shipping container for transport. Agriculture and food production are recurrent themes in AVL's work, and the artist believes the DIY farm is created for the nostalgic and romantic, those longing to escape the constraints of our over-regulated society, and return to the freedom of nature.

2. *The Autocomposter, 2003*

Fiberglass



The Autocomposter, part of the installations *The Technocrat* and *Slave-City*, is a closed circuit of food, alcohol, excrement and energy. In this system, the human is reduced to the biological cogwheel that generates enough raw material to produce not only valuable biogas used for cooking food, but also distilling alcohol to keep the humans subdued and functioning in this efficient yet depraved system, and create compost from the waste of the bodies to feed to the plants.

3. *The Monument*, 2015

Bronze



The sculpture is a monument to a future war, following the revolution of an impatient, spoiled population and the collapse of society. Subverting the classically styled monument, erected in praise of political and military conquests, this sculpture is infused with the violence and aggression of war and revolution that is never memorialized.

The symbolism of the equestrian conquering hero is re-evaluated; here, in the dystopian society, the horse is again the mode of transportation as well as the weapon, and the rider is the murderer, grotesquely holding a head - as prize or weapon - along with fragmented bodies of those trampled and sacrificed. *The Monument* questions the cultural expression of heroism and its social implications of rulers and those ruled.



4. *Big Boiler*, 2018

Steel

Big Boiler is based on a 'temazcal', a type of sweat lodge which originated with pre-Hispanic Indigenous peoples in Mesoamerica. The lodge was used as part of a curative ceremony thought to purify the body after exertion such as a battle or a ceremonial ball game, as well as general healing.

In Atelier Van Lieshout's alternative energy spa, part of the Wellness treatment series, the sweat lodge/sauna has been updated with a hot tub and an adjoining ice bath. Like the rituals of extreme hot and cold inherent in rejuvenating cures, celebrating the cycles of the end of everything leading to the beginning of everything, here the cleansing will be fueled by the humongous diesel engines of the large scale installation *Disco Inferno* that is being produced at this moment. This sculpture could also be used to cook humans.



5. *Steam Hammer*, 2014

Fiberglass

Steam Hammer House is part of Atelier Van Lieshout's *Monuments to Machines* series of large-scale artworks that pay homage to production and the industrial age. *The Steam Hammer*, once an example of technological achievement, is now a stark reminder of obsolescence. The sculpture reconnects man with the machine, merging into one. The interior contains the elements for a dwelling, with a kitchen, an office, a bathroom and toilet in the legs, and a bar, which serves as a hub for social gatherings at AVL Mundo.



6. *Excrementus* *Megalomanus*, 2019

Fiberglass
Steel

The towering architectural sculpture is a place for the human to leave all his waste - feeding the machine and becoming one with it - a body snatcher. The core of the work is the compost toilet, reached by climbing a spiral staircase, allowing one to relieve himself with a view. It is surrounded at the base with male and female urinals, a vomitory, a sink, and an ejaculatory.

Excrementus Megalomanus is the artist's latest and grandest foray into the toilet, continuing a fascination with functionality, the body, systems, and the interconnectedness of it all - themes AVL has explored throughout his career. The toilet as an extension of the human body!



7. *Le Foot, 2015*

Marble Cast

The classically carved giant foot merges the influences of ancient Roman sculpture with modernist materials and cubist forms. The sculpture, poised in a position of balancing or running, conveys a sense of speed and movement, referring to the colossus of Constantine, the Greek god Hermus, and moving forward to the future.

8. *Hagioscoop*, 2012

Fiberglass



Hagioscoop is a farmhouse set in the imaginary date of “year zero.” The title comes from the Greek words meaning *hagio* (holy or “saint”) - *scope* (viewing instrument or peephole) and it’s built in the form of a cross, consisting of four parts that interconnect: a large Adobe style kitchen, cave-like sleeping quarters, a carpenters workshop, and a stable.

The structure can be entered, but also viewed from the outside through small openings, called *hagioscoops* or leper windows - an architectural element built into some churches that enable lepers, prostitutes and outcasts to witness the celebration of mass from outside. *Hagioscoop* is part of an ongoing series, *The New Tribal Labyrinth* that envisions a return to simpler and self-sufficient times, in which humans and animals live together in essential, perhaps even sacred, harmony with nature.

9. *Endless Column, 2015*

Galvanized Steel



The sculpture is both contemporary and utopian, primitive and archaic, a tribal object mixed with modernism. Some forms are cubic and mathematical, others irrational and intuitive, and follow the logical engineering of the body's bones and tissues, all connected with reason and purpose. With reference to a world of rites and rituals, the totem embraces the optimism of construction and new energy, the emergence of a new world order, rejecting old order, and the artist's embrace of the industrial revolution, art, and science, to create Neo-futurist symbols connected to the ruins of the past.

10. *Waterwagon*, 2007

Fiberglass



Waterwagon is a work from the *Slave City*-series, a debatable utopian or dystopian future society in which humans surrender their freedom to become a slave and live in a place where there is no war, no hunger, no disease, and no unemployment. The sculpture depicts a group of people in the throes of manual labor, pushing and pulling a water wagon - the tedious backbreaking trade-off for autocracy and eschewing technology. The backstory is even darker. To maintain order and fuel society, humans are recycled and reused - with unsuitable, under producing or bad tasting people being the first to be thrown into a large grinder, becoming an energy source and compost for the rest of society.



11. *WW II (Canon)*, 2010

Polyurethane

AVL created three monumental canons, reflecting the mechanical production and design of weapons for three world wars - WWI, WWII, and a future WWIII. *WWI (Canon)* is a tribute to Austrian design with respect for the weapon, sleek and beautifully detailed and engineered, with an evident love of the industrial design. *WWII (Canon)*, on view here, has a completely different brute aesthetic with a utilitarian focus on Soviet production, favoring speed over form, to create as many killing machines as quickly as possible.

The futuristic *WWIII (Canon)* is a modernist and rational design in a minimal contemporary style, created for the inevitable next world war. The canons are examples of the artist's passion for machines and the industrial revolution, and serve as a precursor for his series *Monuments To Machines*.