

Elisabeth Brun 12 januari 2024.m4a

Janneke Roijers [00:01:52] Yeah. I have to admit, I am actually quite nervous about this. So.

Elisabeth Brun [00:01:57] Oh, why. Oh, no, you don't have to. I mean, I'm so sorry, that it has been a difficult , a bumpy road to to get here, but.

Janneke Roijers [00:02:07] Yeah, that's. Yeah. Yeah. Understandable. Absolutely. So I'm very glad that you still are interested in, joining me in this , part of my research. Um. I wrote you a small, introduction about myself. So I think if I can skip that a little, I'm just a master student. In Holland in an, University of Arts, applied arts. And this is my master study in arts education. My background is actually , television and all kind of broadcasting things. Not really the, the fiction film, but a little bit of documentary , TV programs. I was mainly an editor there. So video editing is my core business. And I'm also teaching this in art schools. So that's my background. I'm not really the filmmaker as the one that thinks it's or. But then in the art I am trying to explore for myself a new way of creating things for myself from out of myself. You know, I've always been working in assignments with other people, trying to somehow, contribute to their dreams. You know, what they want to have as the image they're editing. I was applying, you know.

Elisabeth Brun [00:03:34] Yeah.

Janneke Roijers [00:03:35] So this is really , a big exercise of returning to what is me, to what I am and to what I want and what I can, and everything I've actually in, in this personal part of filmmaking. I think it stopped when I graduated, and that's 24 years ago. So, the, the approach to my research , starts there. As a filmmaker, it's a big word for me, but I think it applies somehow. How can you start from nothing if you have all these expectations within and without other people's expectations? And I've been trying to figure out what a good way of creating could be as a starting point. And I came to the self-portrait. The filmic self-portrait, of course. As an experimental space. And with only looking at yourself. I think that's quite easily finished with that. So for me, it becomes more interesting when the essay jumps in when you're actually, trying to present yourself and your context and your view on the world. I think that makes a real self-portrait, because it's you're never alone. You're always in your context. You're always with your subjectivity, the way you look at the world. And with my meandering around what is there in the filmic essay world, I came across you. And I joined in the Entanglements last year, December. And that's where I got to know about your film, Your Three Shapes of Home. And that's what I also wrote in my email. I think it could be interesting for me to also, I'm trying different approaches to the filmic self-portraits, and one of them could be three shapes of myself, for example. So what I am really interested in in your work, in the way you approach things, is you've also taken three approaches within the three shapes. You have one, really based on the topography, like the sediments , the, the the fixed camera position or, you know, all the superimposition, not linear, but together. And I like these approaches. So I have quite a few questions and I hope you can. Yeah. Tell me how you came to these ideas and how they worked for you in the process. Because I'm very interested in the process, the experimental place. That's where I like to reside. So I think I'll just go through the questions. Is that okay with you?

Elisabeth Brun [00:06:31] Yeah. Yeah, absolutely.

Janneke Roijers [00:06:32] Okay.

Janneke Roijers [00:06:33] Um. Maybe just at the beginning. From which starting point did you start this video, this film, and maybe more in general, is there always some kind of starting points in which you think "this should be a film"?

Elisabeth Brun [00:06:53] Okay. first of all , everything that you said initially makes sense to me. So I will get , very clear. And I totally understand this urge of finding , your voice. So you know who you are in this creative process , which , resonates with me. And I think I had a similar motivation when I did, although I have been a director, I've been in the television industry and there were many agencies in that industry. So who was I in all of that?

Janneke Roijers [00:07:25] Exactly. Yeah.

Elisabeth Brun [00:07:27] So, um. Yeah. So how did I, you know, at what point did I think this was going to be a film, quite late in the process because I, I, uh oh, you know, I'm trained in, almost subconsciously thinking about how to communicate to an audience or to a viewer because I've made things for many, many years, so. And, yeah. So I, I think , that the awareness that it's sometimes some place should be or could be showed to others was in the back of my mind all the time. So the choice of which places I chose or which structures I chose to examine in my whole village was influenced by what I thought. What kind of structures could communicate, what places like the ocean or the mountains. Right. So I use very universal structures that others can relate to. I could also have taken very personal and private things that others would not relate to. So I was trying to say something about something more human and universal or something that could be recognised by others. But I did not hope to think, you know, dare to think that it could be a film because I was trying to deviate from how I previously had been thinking and previously as a television director, I had been thinking my goal had been to, um, make something that would entertain people or inform or, give an experience. That was the goal. And everything I did towards that goal was to meet the end goal. But I read a philosopher, John Dewey, and he says that, if you're going to break a habit of mind because I understood that if I am to use, the tool of filming as research as to gain some new knowledge about something, you have to break that habit of mine, which is true. And then Dewey says that you have in order to break a habit and like, you have to find a new end goal. And then you have to design a step by step process towards that goal. With that new goal in mind. So my new question was then how can the moving image be, give me knowledge? How can I find new knowledge with a moving image? It was not entertainment. It was having new knowledge about something. Okay, so then the next question is knowledge about what? What is it that I want to to research. And I was, I knew that I wanted to to research what place means. How does place impact thinking. How does place impact. Why is place so central in film. What is place in film and how does it impact thinking. And then I researched theories that, you know, could resonate with how I related to place. And at the same time, I had, you know, the need to examine my, my home village with a camera and, and, because the village was changing and, I had a need to kind of almost hold it or to capture it before, you know the place I knew would disappear. So I took this personal little art project, and I said, okay, so what if I combine my research project with this personal little art project? Putting it in, it obviously comes from the same place within. Um, and so it felt like a very daring thing to do, but I, but I think so. [00:11:29] So then these little experiments, three experiments became experiments for me to think with these tools of filming. So I, I was researching what place was and how the moving image or the camera can research place. So it was two layers of research. And for me, the experiments were tools for thinking. So I, I filmed these places. I did, you know, I had

some impulses of how to, you know, how can I give myself and experience of this place in a new way? And then I analysed what kind of responses it gave me. You know, and I understood, you know, and first I have this, this impulse of layering images, on top of each other, these images of different places. And it was very poetic. So, um okay. Why is it poetic? Why do I get this poetic response? And then I read philosophers and I got some, you know, reflections on that. That I included and it progressed my thinking. And next time I went up north, I had another artistic impulse, another need. And that was, for instance, to juxtapose and make tensions and that, okay, that's another strategy, a new way of knowledge, a new way of thinking. So why do I get that need, you know, and what does this juxtaposition do with my relation to this place or these static images that I, that I was making in the first part. So, the, you know, the experiments became a part of my, my process, my personal process of thinking about how this place had impacted me, throughout. And, and, um. Yeah. So so it wasn't until towards the, you know, end of the process that I understood that I needed to put it together and give it a voice over in order for others to be able to relate to it. [146.0s]

Janneke Roijers [00:13:55] Yeah, exactly. Yeah.

Elisabeth Brun [00:13:57] The images were so private, they only made sense to me.

Janneke Roijers [00:14:01] That's where I'm struggling at various experiments. Like, for me, it has value already. And sometimes I make things and I think this is only for me. And other things have to communicate because I think they're worth communicating.

Elisabeth Brun [00:14:17] [00:14:17] Yeah. So if you if you're using yourself or if you, if you mediate what these experiments does, for you, that might be a way to communicate to others what these experiments mean is because then they experience these experiments through you. [19.3s]

Janneke Roijers [00:14:37] Yeah, exactly. But then I don't like explaining everything. So I also kind of...

Elisabeth Brun [00:14:42] Yeah true. So maybe not explaining everything. That one, just a few. Sometimes people just need a few cues or just that, like direction or enough.

Janneke Roijers [00:14:52] Only a title could be enough. Yeah, I am actually...

Elisabeth Brun [00:14:56] Yeah. In a self-portrait could be, if you're calling it that because I, I felt also that I made a self-portrait, with three shapes of home, in a way. But I mean, a self-portrait could be... To what extent do you need to explain a self-portrait? I don't know, but, um.

Janneke Roijers [00:15:16] Yeah, my conclusions somehow are going in the direction of a self-portrait is more about how you see the world. I think that, that's what I'm making visible. And that's exactly what I recognised in your film. That's how you see this world of yours, back then back now. I am very curious about your third approach, the algorithmic approach. Can you tell me how this actually worked? Practically? Did you, how did you. Yeah. What was the algorithm in the selection of the images? And or was it somewhere else?

Elisabeth Brun [00:15:50] Know that the algorithm was, um, like, a GSR algorithm that I found on the internet, which was for free. And then you could, you could take a piece of

the earth and you could make a circle within that, place, and the algorithm would plot the random. I would randomly plot a place within this circle. So you would have, you would, of course, have some agency in, uh, in you know, choosing the circle on this earth, this place, which was my village. But within that, you could have a random plot. And so that decided for me where I was going to stand with my camera. And then I had some fixed rules for myself. I was, you know, at every point I should face the camera to the north, to the south, to the east, to the west. And I should point up and I should point down. Um. So there was some fixed rules and some randomness. Um, you know, in this. So I what I experimented was, you know, what kind of images do you get if you move further away from the personal agency. Because when I in the first chapter, I am very much, you know, very effective in the way I choose my images and my places. So I choose places that mean a lot to me. And and I frame the places so they, you know, they're beautiful and looking nice and so aesthetically pleasing and everything. So the kind of images that we put on the postcard and send off to people. Yeah. So, but the algorithmic images are not that. They are like randomly framed and it doesn't look nice necessarily. And it's, you have to perhaps go out with a boat to somewhere because you can't walk there. So, so for me, that was interesting. And it kind of called for other kind of reflections in terms of how that impacts, how we make meaning out of things. Um. yeah. Yeah, I don't know if that makes sense.

Janneke Roijers [00:18:07] It does, because I also read on your website, that you wanted to go beyond subjectivity, and I think this would be an exercise exactly, to get there. You know, the starting point is subjective. You choose the circle and that's it, and you let it go. Um. Yeah. We are already almost running out of time. You just referred to that your Three Shapes of Home is actually a sort of self-portrait, which was also my conclusion somehow. Can you, maybe. Um. What are your ideas? You just said, like, we can have several ideas about what the filmic self-portraits could be. If you would make one, or if you would have the idea "this could be a self-portrait". Could you maybe fantasise about some idea what you would be doing?

Elisabeth Brun [00:19:05] [00:19:05] Um. Well, I need to start with how Three Shapes of Home is a self-portrait. It's a portrait of the inner landscapes, right, How outer landscapes have impacted your inner structures and inner worlds and how the, the metaphors that we use and the images that when, you know, when you're making images, you're also creating or shaping your inner landscape. [26.0s]

Janneke Roijers [00:19:32] Wow, I like that. Yeah.

Elisabeth Brun [00:19:35] [00:19:35] You are changing it by making things. So. So that is according to the view that, uh. That, you know, memory is not something that resides in your head, but is something that you actively create. With photography and with film and, you know, so you're shaping as you're making. So, a filmic self-portrait is a kind of self portrait of a self in the making. Yeah, I'd say um. So "the self" is not something that is fixed. But I mean, so it's interesting to to experiment with, uh, how different techniques shape yourself in different ways, right? [47.8s]

Janneke Roijers [00:20:24] Yeah yeah yeah.

Elisabeth Brun [00:20:26] [00:20:26] And and other techniques that you have been using, how it has shaped yourself, the fact that you've been an editor. How has that impacted who you are? [10.9s]

Janneke Roijers [00:20:38] Very much.

Elisabeth Brun [00:20:39] [00:20:39] And how can you show that through editing? [0.1s]

Janneke Roijers [00:20:42] Now that's a big question. And sometimes I have the idea with some smaller... I call it sketches because they're never really filmed for me, but several sketches. I thought, this is really what hits me in the heart at the moment. And then maybe two weeks later I would make something completely different, which all it also really strikes me. So it is.

Elisabeth Brun [00:21:04] [00:21:04] That's super interesting. That's really interesting. It would be very interesting to perhaps try, that you are trying to find the red thread through those, you know. What is or what is that thread. That thread is you obviously, and what is, where this does this interest come from. You know, these cases, when you find it a common thing or, what kind of. Yeah. So this process of trying to sew these fragments together is also an interesting process that could be documented or researched. [33.3s]

Janneke Roijers [00:21:40] Maybe it is like what you describe that you actually went to do a certain exercise then came back. Thought about it, really reflected and then went out again with a different approach. Is actually, mine is a bit less elaborate. And also compact, more compact in time.

Elisabeth Brun [00:22:00] Yeah. Would you, would you like to have my thesis and read it?

Janneke Roijers [00:22:04] Absolutely. Yeah. Yeah. I don't know if it's.

Elisabeth Brun [00:22:09] I'm reworking it into a book. Um.

Janneke Roijers [00:22:11] Oh. And um.

Elisabeth Brun [00:22:16] Sure. Um. And. Yeah. So if you if you're using it, please refer to it, but um.

Janneke Roijers [00:22:23] Of course.

Elisabeth Brun [00:22:25] That would be just happy to show it.

Janneke Roijers [00:22:28] That'd be great because I've found some writings and interviews with you about you and everything, but then actually the core of it, I would be very interested in reading. Yeah, that would be great!

Elisabeth Brun [00:22:40] Yeah. And if you have the time, I would be very happy to have a very tiny feedback on what you find to be useful, because that helps me in the process of my book.

Janneke Roijers [00:22:52] Okay.

Elisabeth Brun [00:22:52] To understand what is useful for others.

Janneke Roijers [00:22:58] Yeah. What are you communicating?

Elisabeth Brun [00:23:00] Yeah, but very short. Just , you don't have to, like, give a full feedback. I think I'm just, um. I need a feedback as well.

Janneke Roijers [00:23:10] Yeah. Aren't we all? I think I should always keep learning. Yeah. Okay. Yeah. Are you sending it by email or is it online somewhere or.

Elisabeth Brun [00:23:21] No, I'm going to send it by email. So I will do it right now.

Janneke Roijers [00:23:26] Yeah. Great. Thank you very much for your time and your openness. I really appreciate it.

Elisabeth Brun [00:23:35] I think your your work sounds really exciting, and , I hope I get to see some of it sometime.

Janneke Roijers [00:23:43] You never know. I might , I might be proud enough to show it's. Yeah.

Elisabeth Brun [00:23:48] Yeah. Okay.

Janneke Roijers [00:23:49] Okay. Thank you very much, Elizabeth. Have a nice day.

Elisabeth Brun [00:23:52] You, too.

Janneke Roijers [00:23:53] Thank you.

Elisabeth Brun [00:23:53] Bye.

Janneke Roijers [00:23:54] Bye bye.