

#019

PERFORMANCE TITLE

MINIATURE

PERFORMANCE BY:

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DATE

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LEFTOVER:

VIDEO STILLS  
AND TEXT

The meeting-point is a café called Spelt on the Nieuwe Spiegelstraat in Amsterdam. It is a narrow but long space hardly lit by windows at the back and the front. You are the only customer. You have been personally invited to a project called Miniature. You had to sign up for a specific date and a specific time in a Google-calendar. It was not easy to understand this whole procedure. But now you are here. Ready. A rather nervous waiter offers you a coffee. You start to drink, while watching the traffic passing-by on the Nieuwe Spiegelstraat. A young woman enters. She walks straight towards you and calls you by your name. You leave the café together. The woman's name is Noha. You walk towards the building of de Appel. It's just a few 30 meters down the street. Here's the entrance-door. Noha has the key for the building. She opens the door and you enter together. Then she closes the door behind you. The place seems abandoned. Noha asks if you have had no trouble finding the meeting point. No trouble at all. You came with a taxi from Central Station because you were afraid to be late for the appointment. Taking a taxi in this city can be contra-productive but this time it went very smoothly. You wonder what kind of performance this will be or whether this is already the performance. Noha calls the elevator. She is talking about her day before coming here. You came by train from another city. You had a few things to do here in Amsterdam. One of them was to attend this performance. You both enter the elevator. Parts of its roof have either fallen down or have left their initial position. You feel too close to Noha in this tiny space. You are talking to each other. The elevator stops on the top floor. You step out, followed by Noha.

You stand in front of a wall, turn to the right and pass a mountain of trash on your right-hand-side. The space opens-up around you. You stand under the roof of the building. You blink a bit as you pass from the much darker corridor into the wide space, which is fully lit by the sun from outside. You walk on black, white and light beige squares. The space is emptied. You wander around this big space, observing every corner. Noha stays in the center. Waiting for you. There is a door. It seems to be a back-entrance. You pass the door. Noha follows. You stand at the top of a spiral staircase. Noha invites you to walk down. She is from Australia but she was born in Cairo. She came to Amsterdam four years ago to study choreography. Now she is graduating and wants to stay. She likes it here. You've been in Australia some time ago and share some thoughts with her about that country. You feel a little disturbed by the dynamic twist of the handrail along the staircase. The lower you get, the darker it becomes. You

continue talking. The staircase seems to narrow. You have to pass one behind the other. You want to stop in front of a door. You turn around and ask, whether you should enter. Noha nods. You enter into a small room. It is neon lit and painted in an electric green color. This used to be the library. You remember now. The green used to be partly hidden by the shelves. Now they have been removed. It is almost a pain to be here. You can see the entrance. You are on the first floor. It is nice to have some orientation again. You walk side-by-side in the former exhibition rooms. You know these rooms. You've been here before. You enter a wide darker space. A ray of light shines through a small opening in the false ceiling. You now enter a very white space with large windows towards the garden. You are still talking about Australia, about the people you met there and about the landscape. You pass through a series of rather wide spaces. Apparently there has been a party here some time ago - colored paper-streamer-rests and a few confetti. They all merge into a heap of dust that seems to have been left behind. These traces, you think, are a nice image for this building, slowly starting to forget what it used to be. Vanishing. You like that thought and share it with Noha. You turn around the corner and reach the main staircase leading to the second floor. Noha leads you to the second floor. You notice an ashtray on one of the radiators next to a window and you wonder silently whether it was forgotten there during the removal of the institution or whether it has been placed there purposely for the present event. Noha is now telling the story of the grandmother of a friend of hers who was an opera singer somewhere in Eastern Europe. She used to sing all day long with the windows of her apartment wide open. People would hear her from the street and come to visit her and just listen. That's how she met her last husband when she was more than 70 years old. You don't know why Noha is telling you that. Your own grandmother died a long time ago. You have met her as a child, but you don't have clear memories. She was not a singer. You are now walking through two similar rooms facing the street. You recognize a few folding chairs leaning on the wall - in De Appel they used to be everywhere in the building for visitors to sit on. You pass through a heavy glass door. The elevator again. You stop talking for a moment and hear the elevator arriving. It is the noise of a rather tired elevator. It is only now that you see the sign on its door: "out of order". You think: "Great!" You enter the elevator anyway. Noha has pushed the button "groundfloor". You reach the groundfloor. Noha asks you to follow her on the main staircase again. You follow her. She opens a hidden door on the right side and steps aside to let you pass. You had never noticed this door. In here the walls are made of wood. They seem to be very old. Everything appears more intimate and more representative at the same time. It must have been the offices of De Appel. You feel that the smell of bad machine-coffee must have impregnated the walls. There is a small kitchen on your left side. You enter a dark room, all in wood. You suddenly remember, having read somewhere that this building used to be some kind of a bank. You are touching the wooden surfaces around you

to get a more tactile impression of the place. You want to verify its materiality. You almost fall over a chair. You are a little annoyed as Noha keeps on talking. You are not listening. You would like to concentrate. You pass to the next room. It is similar, a little less spectacular, maybe. You wonder, what all these hidden doors, walls and panels might have been hiding. You leave the room. You are back in the corridor. Noha steps in front and you follow her. She leads you to the library again. You see the extinguisher. There is a heavy chain beside it on the floor. You did not notice it when you passed there for the first time. And the room has a very strange form anyway! You take the spiral staircase again, following Noha one floor up. It is a very dark room. You notice a chair. Noha doesn't give you the time to get used to another change of luminosity. She asks you to sit.

There is a videobeamer beside the chair. It is projecting a small dark image onto a corner of the room. You have the impression to be in a fold of the building. You have arrived. Noha: "Ok! This is the end of our walk. It was pleasure to meet you and to talk with you. Now, you will see a movie. It will last for around ten minutes. When it will be finished, you can find your way out." She walks towards a column. There is a computer. She presses a button. "Bye", she says. You answer: "Good bye!" She leaves and shuts the door behind her. You hear her walking down the staircase and then the sound of the door of the groundfloor at the end of the staircase. You hear another door very far. You are alone now. ...

You watch the movie.

...

You wait for a moment. The silence is very intense now. You need a while until you decide to break it with your own movements, leaving the chair. You know how to get out of this building: through the same spiral stairs and then down to the exit. You could decide to stay here or wander around the building a little longer. But you suspect your freedom of action to be merely conceptual. You decide not to test this. You walk down. You arrive downstairs. You pass the reception for the third time today. You are in front of the main glass-door. You see the traffic outside. You try to open the door. It opens. You feel a slight draught and hear the outside-noises clearly again. You are outside. You close the door behind you.

#### DAVID WEBER-KREBS

(1974, Liège, BE) is an artist developing ideas that find their realisation in performances, videos and installations. Lives and works in Amsterdam.

#### ALEXANDER SCHELLOW

(1974, Germany) artist. Lives and works in Berlin.



On 15 may 1940 the married couple committed suicide.

The Lipman, Rosenthal and Co. Bank was declared enemy property and was placed under German administration.

On 17 october 1941 the former Art trader 'Goudstikker' N.V., who was now managed by the German Alois Miedl bought a painting by Jacob de Wit.