

Achraf Touloub, Harm van den Dorpel, *Context Switch*

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The potential to feel united through human connections might be one of the most rewarding elements in life, as connections are shown to be one of the most important factors regarding longevity (Yang et. al., 2016). It was the ancient Greeks that identified change as the only constant in life, as everything evolves at all times in relation to each other. These forms of generative connections between humans and their surroundings are what Achraf Touloub and Harm van den Dorpel explore in their series.

Observation has always been of the highest sensory demand if one wants to recognize every subtlety. And yet this is impossible in one single glance. The vivid changes in colour and structure of Harm van den Dorpel's works make unchanging observation impossible simply by their design. Similarly to this is Achraf Touloub's repetitive concentration of form, in which one knows how to lose oneself and, in its density, can never fully be grasped. It requires constant movement and change in front of the artworks but one will ultimately fail to comprehend them in their entirety.

In his work, Achraf Touloub explores concepts of representation as a way to connect to primordial times by creating different figurative motifs to implement concepts of archaic and traditional arts into modern presentation schemes. Thinking about movements, the eternally lasting form repetitions seemingly detect their own expressions to reflect on how we are connected. In the age of digitisation, there seems to be no way of not being connected through some digital network. Being invisible nearly becomes impossible, yet one's anonymity remains. Harm van den Dorpel captures this aspect of digitization and connectivity by creating his visual language using different algorithms. He suggests a place out of time and space: to find not only one's personal story and viewpoint, but to initiate connections solely out of the mind.

To distinguish the digital from the supposedly tangible no longer seems contemporary, as they now seem to complement each other and merge almost seamlessly. The completion and perfection of an artwork are not defined by its material nature. The hierarchy of material-aesthetic reception is deliberately broken up and the work of art is recognized solely as such. What counts even more than the artwork itself is the intention behind it. One cannot only perceive the hapticity or pattern but far more the initial intention as a dematerialised concept – the flux of life.

*Nora Enning*