MELLE DE BOER

My practice spans painting, printmaking, drawing, writing, and music. My recent work represents a shift, begun around 2018, when I set music to the side and devoted my time to painting. This has resulted in a new body of significantly different and confident work. Within these new paintings, I leave smudged traces, and do not allow myself to repeat successful compositions. By returning to paintings after some time, or working from a chaotic palette, surprising choices can emerge. While I aim for abstract forms, I also sometimes use text fragments, or ambiguous, reduced images, which disrupts the work's relationship with true abstraction. These shifting parameters enable me to circumvent the urge I have to seek approval in the viewer. Creating an atmosphere of the unexpected, I see every work as an opportunity to challenge the desire for control. During 2021 I compiled a 55000-word inventory of my life, Inventaris, as a way to methodically trace and understand these recent changes in my work. This invasive or even obscene exercise exposes every mundane, beautiful, and painful event that shapes self-perception and the resulting work I make. While Inventaris is a tool, which I use to develop my painting, it is also a work in itself. It helps me situate my other 'lives' as a writer and musician within my artistic practice, and also critically reflects on how the self can be constructed and narrativized. Inventaris has helped me recognize how I often sought external approval through the use of more explicit narrative and figurative elements, a tendency that lessens as I move towards increasingly autonomous paintings. In earlier work, the adoption of such strategies was usually an attempt to compensate for insecurity, in particular that my identity as an artist was somehow compromised by my identity as a songwriter. I was interested in hero myths, and the mechanism of idolization; due to the way such ideas present the chance to embody different identities. The fear of both being seen and being invisible is something I recognize strongly in myself, but also observe as a tension many other artists — and others in general — struggle with. I still find this a fascinating conflict, one that has a powerful impact on how artists, including myself, approach the working process. Within my own practice, I do not see these ideas as negative, but rather as generative. Acknowledging and investigating such tensions through my work has allowed me to critically engage with perc

WEBSITES

www.melledeboer.com

www.mowingclub.com

SOCIAL MEDIA

www.facebook.com/melle.deboer.714
www.instagram.com/melle_deboer/

MEMBER OF ARTISTS' INITIATIVE/COLLECTIVE/INCUBATOR

Billytown

EDUCATION

1995	tekenen/schilderen Rotterdam, Willem de Kooning Academie diploma

EXHIBITIONS

2026 Zonder Alles is er Niets Billytown Den Haag, Netherlands Solo show Schilderijen en Sculptuur. www.billytown.org
Solo

2025 One Way Or The Other Het Wilde Weten Curator en Deelnemer ism Nies Vooijs trendbeheer.com/2025/11/04/one-way-or-the-other-a-painting-show-het-wilde-weten/
Group

2024 Ohne Ende Billytown Den Haag, Netherlands Curator en Deelnemer. Met o.a. Jacqueline Peeters en Nies Vooijs www.billytown.org
Group

2024 Art Island Forteiland IJmuiden, Netherlands www.art-island.nl/
Group

2023 Not an Asshole Off Hook Groningen, Netherlands www.offhook.nl/
Solo

2022 8.Salon Hamburg, Germany
Solo

2021 M.Simons Amsterdam, Netherlands
Solo

2020 Not Cancelled (The Netherlands edition) online

2019 The Last Romantic Painter Billytown

2019 De Apotheek Amsterdam, Netherlands
Group

2019 Parallel Vienna Wenen, Austria
Group

2018 Parallel Vienna Wenen, Austria Den Haag
Group

2015 Museum van Bommel van Dam Venlo
Group

2011 Nest, Den Haag (Comic Site Of Art) Curator en deelnemer
Group

PROJECTS

2025 BinnenhofBuiten Den Haag, Netherlands Een vitrine vol hooi op de Lange Vijverberg in Den Haag

2016 Smetvis Stichting Brul Tekeningen bij project Smetvis

2015 Atelier route Jacobastraat Atelier route

2012 Zinder Stella Bouw Schommel

2010 Billytown Billytown

COMMISSIONS

2014 Museum voor Communicatie Den Haag Multi Media project

2012 Paard van Troje Den Haag Zeefruk aandeelhouders finished

SALES/WORKS IN COLLECTIONS

2012 Hoge School Rotterdam Meerdere werken op Papier

2004 Ministerie van Buitelandse zaken Meerdere weken op papier

2003 Museum van Bommel van Dam Venlo Meerdere werken op papier

PUBLICATIONS

2015 Melleville II Melle de Boer, Den Haag Catalogus

2012 Aanwinst Kunstcollectie Hogeschool Rotterdam Catalogus

2005 That seventies show Gallery Livingstone Catalogus

2003 True Heroes Museum van Bommel van Dam Catalogus

AWARDS AND GRANTS

2018 (sinds 2004) Stroom, Den Haag Den Haag, Netherlands Pro Onderzoek

2015 project subsidie Stroom

2002 Basisstipendium Fonds van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam

2000 Basisstipendium Fonds van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam

1997 Startstipendium Fonds van Beeldende Kunsten, Amsterdam

REPRESENTATION

-- M.Simons Gallery Amsterdam, Netherlands
https://www.michielsimons.com/

SECONDARY ART-RELATED ACTIVITIES

2000 - -- Smutfish/John Dear Mowing Club (www.mowingclub.com) On-going



twee golven, 2026



Zadel (Groen), 2025
oil on linnen, 30x40





Frogs Eat Butterflies, Snakes Eat Frogs, Hogs Eat Snakes, Men Eat Hogs, 2024
oil on linnen, 40x30



Georg Trakl, 2024
oil on linnen, 120x100 cm



R.R. , 2024

How to Find Relationships That Are Good for You and Avoid Those That Aren't. , 2023
Oil in linnen, 40x50 cm



P.G. Everything Must Be Doubted, 2022
oil in linnen, 100x120



Reality is not what is used to be, 2022
Oil on wood, 32x40cm



P.P. Boots, 2020
oil on linnen, 30x40cm

