

## OTTOKAJI IROKE

### SUGGESTIONAL TRANSFORMATION THROUGH THE MATERIALITY

First, I write about myself and my work in the third person to objectify myself with the appropriated concept of 'Moksha' from Buddhism; emancipation from my soul; decentralised self. In this regard, I consider myself a flying dot. Ottokaji creates artworks and scenarios out of combinations of objects and materials that are taken from his daily life. He appropriates the language of painting and sport for suggestional transformation. He grew up with Confucianism and Buddhism. In his teens, what he studied were mostly westernised perspectives which conflicted with his traditions. He thought that many things in his country were ironic, and this background made him realise the synergy from the contrasts. He trains in combat martial arts because he was a crybaby. When you trace back his life, there is a clue why his current interests are about power and violence. He had been exposed to violence in Korean society many times in school and in the army. It made him learn self-defence instead of suffering from his traumatic experience. When he came to the Netherlands, a new lifestyle opened up in front of him: A new dilemma arose "How can I survive here as a not-so-tall man? Admiration for the athleticism and the height of dutch guys hurt him. When he felt inferior, then it was frustrating. He keeps looking to switch this energy into creation so the negativity will not be there anymore. His eyes are on how to retransform the inner energy outward with the form of arts. Through this process, he heals the wound in his heart. He is the type of person who gets scared easily. For this reason, shocking moments with impacts catch his attention, such as when someone outbursts their opinions or a punch lands on a human's face. He faces those moments to challenge himself as a target he should overcome so he can redirect it.

### WEBSITES

He creates a diverse body of artworks, performances and scenarios out of combinations of objects and materials that are taken from his daily life. He appropriates the language of painting and sport for suggestional transformation to explore urban tensions.

[www.ottokaji.com](http://www.ottokaji.com)

### SOCIAL MEDIA

[www.instagram.com/iroke\\_studio/](https://www.instagram.com/iroke_studio/)

### EDUCATION

- 2018 - Painting M.F.A Groningen, Frank Mohr
- 2020 Instituut diploma
- 2009 - visual communication design & painting
- 2017 B.F.A Hongik University diploma

### EXHIBITIONS

- 2022 "Equidistance" AFSLAG BLV, Museum Belvédère Heerenveen, Netherlands Three young artists, partly educated and living in Groningen, took the concept of equidistance as the starting point for this exhibition. In mathematics, a point is said to be equidistant from a set of objects if the distances between that point and each object in the set are equal.' [www.museumbelvedere.nl/en/afslag-blv/Group](http://www.museumbelvedere.nl/en/afslag-blv/Group)
- 2022 "With bye", Host... W139 Amsterdam, Netherlands Ottokaji Iroke presented his installation 'With bye' at W139 as a programme of 'Host...' in March. This work shows the ironic gap between reality and the individual artist. [w139.nl/en/hosts2022-2/Group](http://w139.nl/en/hosts2022-2/Group)
- 2022 With Permission From the Officer PUNT WG Amsterdam, Netherlands Ottokaji participated in a show curated by Àngels Miralda as part of a show, 'With permission From the officer'. It was a relay painting project with other artists such as Salim Bayri, Jorge Luis Barragán Castaño, Clementine Edwards, Lucy Cordes Engelman, Kimball Holth, Ottokaji Iroke, Nokukhanya Langa, Donglai Meng and Rotem Stern. It was about VISA permission for international artists who wanted or want to stay in the Netherlands, which restricted them within national borders for a period of time. [puntwg.nl/en/with-permission-from-the-officer/Group](http://puntwg.nl/en/with-permission-from-the-officer/Group)

- 2021 Lucht Kunstpunt Groningen, Netherlands The corona measures have hit the art sector enormously. Exhibitions and art grants have been canceled or postponed. It is an uncertain time for many artists. With the Lucht project, Kunstpunt Groningen wants to support artists and designers from the municipality of Groningen. 87 Groningen artists have received a stipend as part of this project with which they have created new work. On their page you can read more about the work they have created. With a billboard exhibition from September 27 to October 17, we present all artists spread throughout the city of Groningen. Ottokaji presented his work 'Dream droppings' which was inspired by bird-droppings in the Netherlands. [www.kunstpuntgroningen.nl/en/lucht/Group](http://www.kunstpuntgroningen.nl/en/lucht/Group)
- 2021 Leisure love Het resort Groningen, Netherlands During the past corona year we have all been recreating like crazy in the outdoor public space. We saw people fighting boredom, social isolation and growing corona bellies by racing bikes through the forest, balancing on surfboards in the canals and throwing balls around in the park. The perfect time to create new leisure activities. Het resort organises 'Leisure Love' to help people stay fit, amused and healthy by having artists invent new sporting activities. Activities that revolve around shadow play, playing god and sinking boats, among others. During the work period, Jiskefet and their English Sports were mentioned. On the one hand, it seems a recognisable game, a certain (sports) language is imitated, but the longer one looks, the stranger it becomes. Suits, attributes and playing fields play a major role in this. Under the supervision of Philippe Wolthuis (former resort resident of S01E01) they made props and instructions for the activities. LEISURE LOVERS: Eirik Jahnsen, ENT, Hannelore van Balkom, Lee McDonald, Ottokaji Iroke, Philippe Wolthuis [www.hetresort.nl/leisurelove.html](http://www.hetresort.nl/leisurelove.html) Group
- 2021 Kunstsalon IJL Galerie Noord Groningen, Netherlands The world is under the spell of corona, the pandemic that affects us all and that puts our society on edge. The virus itself is invisible, elusive, thin as the atmosphere. Corona is an unclear concept for artists. The virus puts arts on hold, negative incomes and opportunities to expose its practice. consequences of the virus interesting. The tightness, the adjustment, the distance, the worry, the sadness, the fear. But also the space, the possibilities, the changes, the necessity. Does the virus stimulate creativity or is it paralyzing? Do concrete images emerge or does the elusiveness lead to abstraction? Is there urgency experienced from every perspective? How thin is the atmosphere? [www.galerienoord.nl/expo/kunstsalonijl/Group](http://www.galerienoord.nl/expo/kunstsalonijl/Group)
- 2021 Art away Art away, Herestraat 72 Groningen, Netherlands The project will take place on the 23rd and 24th of April in the old 'Men at Work' building in the Herestraat 72 in the city centre of Groningen.

Art Away is building on the 'memory' of a shop that comes with the location in order to test a new approach to being professionally active as a creative in the times of Corona. Art Away is a project from Groningen - for Groningen and has been created as a direct reaction to the Corona crisis and its major impact on the creative sector; It's major impact on our personal professional lives. The stages and audience that our work needs to become alive have been locked down and space to exhibit works has become scarce. The project uses the unusual circumstances to create a new format aiming away from the individual and researches a new approach to the shared experience of art. It enables and encourages to create - to meet fellow professionals and see each other beyond competition.

[www.kunstpuntgroningen.nl/en/agenda/art-away/Group](http://www.kunstpuntgroningen.nl/en/agenda/art-away/Group)

2020 Tales of unseen Re;search Gallery (NP3) Groningen, Netherlands Ottokaji had a duo show with Vanina Tsvetkova. He presented his paintings and installation work named 'plastic mountain'  
[www.youtube.com/watch?v=go8hXMeapJU](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=go8hXMeapJU)  
Duo

2019 The way we work KINK, Drents Museum Assen, Netherlands It was his first exhibition in the Netherlands as a part of Frank Mohr Instituut. He presented his painting installation.  
Group

## INTERNATIONAL EXCHANGES/RESIDENCIES

2023 EKWC - European Ceramic Workcenter, Oisterwijk, NL Oisterwijks, Netherlands Resident artist from Jan 26th - April 19th 2023, [ekwc.nl/](http://ekwc.nl/)

## SALES/WORKS IN COLLECTIONS

2021 The Underworld Private collection from Amsterdam Groningen, Nederland I sold 3 paintings at Art fair; Art away.

## PUBLICATIONS

2022 Equidistance Poster Museum Belvédère Limi Kwon & Dongseok Min Heerenveen, Netherlands  
[www.instagram.com/p/CeZoLxWlbyx/?utm\\_source=ig\\_web\\_copy\\_link](http://www.instagram.com/p/CeZoLxWlbyx/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link)  
Designer Limi Kwon & Dongseok Min studied at Gerrit Rietvelt, and currently based in Amsterdam. They made a poster and a book will be launched in a month.

2021 Leisure love Book Maaïke Knibbe Maaïke Knibbe Groningen, Netherlands  
[www.hetresort.nl/leisurelove.html](http://www.hetresort.nl/leisurelove.html)  
Maaïke Knibbe is an artist and also a writer from Groningen. She is researching social studies in Gent currently. She interviewed participating

## REVIEWS

2022 Kunst-stukjes Blog/Vlog Jurjen K. van der Hoek Heerenveen, Netherlands  
[jurjenkvanderhoek.tumblr.com/post/689498166474752blv-hervormt-in-tentoonstelling](http://jurjenkvanderhoek.tumblr.com/post/689498166474752blv-hervormt-in-tentoonstelling) He wrote a review about my show 'equidistance' with two other artists, Karina Puufin and Celina Bermudez.

2020 JEGENS & TEVENS, Interview, Cooking Art - a conversation with Ottokaji & Melle Aussems Aussemson with Ottokaji & Melle Aussems Magazine Jegens en Tevens, Michiel Teeuw Groningen, Netherlands  
[jegensentevens.nl/2020/08/cooking-art-a-conversation-with-ottokaji-melle-aussems/](http://jegensentevens.nl/2020/08/cooking-art-a-conversation-with-ottokaji-melle-aussems/)  
Frank Mohr-alumni Melle Aussems and Ottokaji just finished their Master studies. Our new Northerly correspondent Michiel

artists for Leisure love which was held by Het resort. Based on that interview she wrote about this project.

Teeuw talked with them about working, bird droppings, (in)stability, potatoes and ambiguity.

2020 "Enjoying uncertainty, beyond the border" Book Frank Mohr Instituut, Groningen Ottokaji Iroke Groningen, Netherlands It was Ottokaji's dissertation. Contents are about his background and thoughts with graphics, photos, poets and a diary with references.

## AWARDS AND GRANTS

2021 Lucht Kunstpunt Groningen I received € 2,000 from Kunstpunt, it was for a billboard group show in Groningen.

2021 Corona bridging Grant Mondriaan fonds, Amsterdam Amsterdam, Netherlands It was € 14,000 from Mondriaan fonds for the artists who had cancelled shows.

2019 Hanze Scholarship Hanze University of Applied Sciences, Groningen Groningen, Netherlands Hanze University finances this scholarship. The scholarship amounts to € 5,000. I received this in the second year of my study at Frank Mohr Instituut. It was for a good international student.

2018 Holland Scholarship Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science together with Dutch research universities and universities of applied sciences, Groningen, Netherlands This scholarship is financed by the Dutch Ministry of Education, Culture and Science as well as several Dutch research universities and universities of applied sciences. The scholarship amounts to € 5,000. I received this in the first year of my study at Frank Mohr Instituut. It was for the promising student.



The Greek goddess of victory is fat today, 2023  
Ceramic, 15 x 11 x 8 (cm)



Don't be too late, 2023  
Ceramic, 16 x 7 x 5 (cm)



Universal passport, 2023  
Ceramic, 25 x 17 x 1.8 (cm)



Identity politics bible, 2023  
Ceramic, 29 x 20 x 4.5 (cm)



I said a tower, 2023  
Ceramic on a MIC stand, 21 x 20 x 16 (cm)



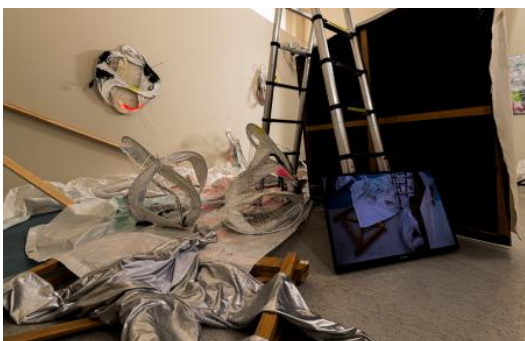
No title, 2022  
Acrylic and spray on football net, 81 × 78 × 62 cm (H × W × D)



No title, 2022  
Acrylic and spray on football net, 103 × 95 × 65 cm (H × W × D)



No title, 2022  
Acrylic and spray on football net, 117 × 69 × 17 cm (H × W × D)



Where you at, 2022

Site-specific video installation, Variable dimensions



With bye, 2022

Video installation, Variable dimensions