

Text by Fabian Schöneich in Offspring 2020: Zigzag catalogue

ELEYE BOERENKAMPS

Born 1994, Netherlands

Eleye Boerenkamps works with everyday materials such as wood, fabric, plaster and objects from her past, including photographs, furniture and memories. This results in works that at first glance seem straightforward yet are disturbingly critical. They evoke a picture of a seemingly broken family, where people curse and argue and, finally, live in separation. The materiality of the works emphasises this first impression: the simplicity, warmth and familiarity of materials that can also be found in the household.

It is possible to talk about family and trauma, about vulnerability and Sigmund Freud, and at the same time talk about power and feminism. However, what if we take a moment and avoid the assumption that the work is feminist just because of Boerenkamps' gender or, similarly, that the work is therapeutic only due to the simplistic nature of the materials or the chosen topic of the 'family'. What happens then?

The artist presents a series of representations in which she reflects on her own life; she uses her past as if it were another material. The depicted confrontations, bodies or words become shells that allow us to not only look inside the artist, but also allow us to break down a social structure that can be more general than one might think at first glance. Her work is produced in quasi-emotionally charged stages during which she feels that something is on her mind that she wants to channel or erase. In the film *De Eetkamertafel (The Dining Table)* 2020 we follow the artist as she tries to convince her mother to give up the old family dining table. *Dad's arm* (2020) is a photo showing the tattooed upper arm of her father cut-out on a foam sandwich plate, supported by a wooden beam and a brick, materials from a housing construction. The tattoo is of two intertwined dolphins, reminding us of Yin and Yang. Her father and mother each got the tattoo on their shoulder at the same time; today they live in separation. *Loor is geboren naast dit nachtkastje (Loor was born next to this nightstand)* (2020) shows her parents' old nightstand where the birth of Loriën Boerenkamps is announced both on one of the photographs that is presented to the viewer as well as in the handwritten text. As we look closer, we can also discover other representations of him. Letterings made of different types of wood depict swear words that her father used regularly. The works are social sculptures and political pieces that talk about, very subliminally, people, the artist and the society they live in.