



Carolee Schneemann, Fuses, 1964-1966. Collectie Van Abbemuseum.

title	Acts of Non-Aggression:
episode	Plug In #46
duration	from 4 October 2008
guestcurator	Shepherd Steiner
text by	Christiane Berndes

During the preparations for the Be(com)ing Dutch exhibition at the Van Abbemuseum in 2007, Canadian art historian and art theorist Shepherd Steiner held a workshop. Steiner is famed for his 'close reading', a method of reading an artwork by taking the object itself as starting point and guiding principle, and carrying out a meticulous visual analysis. Impressed by the results of this study method, the Van Abbemuseum invited him to make a presentation. Never having curated an exhibition before, Steiner was very interested in this experiment. 'Plug In #46 Acts of Non-Aggression' is the result.

Steiner wrote the text for his presentation in order to shed light on the theoretical and philosophical presuppositions that underpin his variable approach to individual artworks. This approach is expressed in the text as well as in the presentation itself, in the visual

similarities and dissimilarities between the works on display. As the information text has to be literally unfolded so, too, do the various relationships and levels of knowledge figuratively unfold in the composition of the text, into a central text, an appendix and footnotes. The books on the shelf literalize the presence of a theory on the act. The richness and the density of ideas and references are mirrored in the concentration of works in the gallery, with the bay window being given the function of appendix to the text. The longer you look, the more you see...

A full text by Shepherd Steiner is available on www.vanabbemuseum.nl under Plug In.

Art works

Morris Louis

Alpha Sigma, 1961

Paul McCarthy

Black and White Tapes, 1970-1975

Piet Mondriaan

Composition No.II, 1930

Larry Poons

Fliegender, 1967

Martha Rosler

A Budding Gourmet, 1974

Semiotics of the Kitchen, 1975

Carolee Schneemann

Fuses, 1964-1966

Water Light/Water Needle (Lake Ma Wah), 1966

Frank Stella

Tuxedo Junction, 1960

Lawrence Weiner

GREEN AS WELL AS BLUE AS WELL AS RED, 1976