

Speech by Resi van der Ploeg at the opening of the Astrid in Old School exhibition

When I first spoke to Astrid a few weeks ago, she said "I actually started a new phase. This is just the beginning. "Astrid has worked with all kinds of materials and techniques for years and in recent years has noticed that making collages, which covered the load for a long time, was gradually becoming mainstream for her. It didn't fit her anymore. Recently she has removed all the books she had with pictures from which she cut and picked in the past, out the door and what she brought in is paper. That may seem the same, but it really is a lot different. Because nowadays she no longer makes collages, but she paints with paper.

After a long journey along various subjects; it was very often about others, about refugees, about other people, different qualities. And she said "actually I want those external stimuli, rather the energy that comes from within, from myself. I want to create space for myself and I want to start the experiment and I also look for work, I want to make the things that come up. "That's what she told me. Sometimes she also works with the headphones on her head. Listens to a podcast, an audiobook, has sorted all sorts of paper, glues portraits and interiors in a very intuitive way as she says. That was very funny again. She said, "I went from refugee embroidery to tents to interiors, but I actually thought they were too empty and now there are people again and those people are starting to look more and more like me," she said, I thought that was very beautiful and I could imagine because that is also true with what she said about that journey from within.

She will therefore work with color in layering, all pieces of paper that she then sticks over each other. She also uses oil paint that she produces transparently, sometimes including textiles. I think it is incredible to see someone who says they work so intuitively that there is quite a lot of technology in her work. And as far as I'm concerned, that betrays a very big talent and a very big skill. I've always known and seen that you can deal with color. Of the new work I also notice that all portraits have indeed become like Astrid. That there is also a nice shadow under the chin and a shadow on the side of the face. So although it works intuitively, there is a lot of expertise in the way it gets depth and what I find so clever. Because working with paper, painting with paper is also quite difficult in the sense that it can very quickly become a craft job. It is just a very special technique.

If you work with oil paints people may think Yes oil paint, I cannot do myself I never do. We can all work with colored paper at home, but you can make something out of it that no one here can just copy and that is really unique and that I find very special.



All new things, new phases. I know that Astrid has sought space in her own work, space for herself, and she will soon be going abroad. As an artist in residence, she will go abroad for half a year in 2020; to Serbia and Bulgaria. But first she is still active with a project during the Textile Festival.

Resi van der Ploeg, November 3, 2019