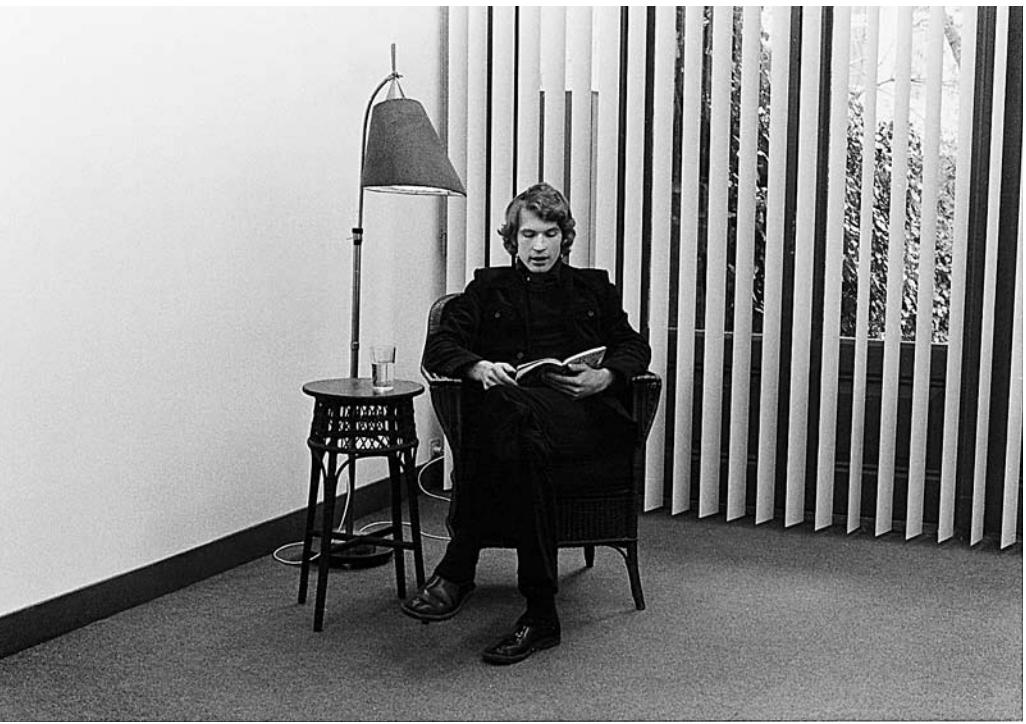


Bass Jans Aders  
 Zēns, kurš iekrita Niagāras  
 ūdenskritumā  
 16 mm filma /  
 Bas Jan Ader  
*The Boy Who Fell Over Niagara Falls*  
 16 mm film  
 1972  
 Foto no publicitātes materiāliem /  
 Publicity photos  
 Pateicība / Courtesy of the Museo d'Arte Moderna  
 di Bologna, Bas Jan Ader Estate, Mary Sue Ader  
 Andersen and Patric Painter Editions



## Meklējumi ikvienā virzienā Searchin' every which way

Bass Jans Aders. "Starp divām pasaulem" / Bas Jan Ader. *Tra due mondi*  
 24.01.–17.03.2013. Mambo, Rožu villa, Boloņa / Mambo, Villa delle Rose, Bologna

Barbara Feslere / Barbara Fässler  
 Māksliniece / Artist

Kas gan ir tas dzinulis, kurš liek trīsdesmit trīs gadus gadus vecam  
 puisim mēroties spēkiem ar Māti Dabu – vienam, burtiski plikām  
 rokām –, turklāt vietā, kur tai ir visa vara un teikšana? Prātā nāk ar  
 arhetipiska šausmu aina – laiva kā skaidiņa sakultās bangās svaidās  
 šurpu turpu, līdz dasveras un apgāžas, un to aprij bezgalīgais okeāns,  
 vienīgais uzvarētājs šai cīņā. Varam tikai iztēloties absurdo ainu  
 nākamajā dienā – idille, ūdens joms līdzens kā spogulis, spīd saule, it  
 kā nelkas nebūtu noticis...

Tie, kas pazina Basu Janu Aderu (*Bas Jan Ader*), raksturo viņu kā  
 vientuligu un apcerīgu puisi. Viņam nepatīk doties izklaidēs ar draugiem – viņi pārāk daudz dzer un pīpē. Jauno mākslinieku kaut kas  
 urda, viņš vienmēr kaut kur traucas, iekšēja nemiera dzīts, viņš  
 mūžīgi kaut ko meklē.

Dzimis 1942. gadā Winschotenē (Nīderlandē), viņš ir "grūts", dum-  
 pīgs pusaudzis. Viņš pamet pusratā studijas Amsterdamas *Gerrit*  
*Rietveld Academie*, kur pusgadu nostrādāja pie vienas lapas, nemī-  
 tīgi skicējot, dzēšot un pārziņējot. Deviņpadsmit gadu vecumā aiz-  
 stopē uz Maroku un kāpj uz Nīla Takera Bērčeta (*Neil Tucker Bur- chet*) jahtas *Felicidad*<sup>1</sup>, un pēc vienpadsmīt mēnešiem izsēžas Kalifor-  
 nijas krastos. Vispirms viņš apmeklē *Otis College of Art and Design*

What is the drive that makes a thirty-three year old man try out his powers against Mother Nature – alone, practically with naked hands – besides nature at its most powerful? An archetypical horror scene comes to mind – the boat like a small sliver of wood is thrown back and forth in the crashing waves, until it tilts and topples over, devoured by the infinite ocean, the only winner in this struggle. We can only imagine the absurd scene on the following day – an idyll, the expanse of water as smooth as the glass of a mirror, the sun is shining, as if nothing at all had happened...

Those who knew Bas Jan Ader in person speak of him as a reclusive and contemplative person. He was not much into going out with friends – they drank and smoked too much. Something always urged the young artist on, he was always speeding towards something, and driven by an internal inquietude he was always in search of something.

Born in 1942 in Winschoten (the Netherlands), he was a "difficult", rebellious teenager. He abandoned his studies at the Gerrit Rietveld Academie in Amsterdam, where he had spent half a year working on a single sheet of paper, continuously sketching, erasing and re-drawing. At the age of nineteen he hitchhiked to Morocco,



Bass Jans Aders. Atvadas no draugiem tālumā. Digitāldruka /  
Bas Jan Ader. Farewell to Faraway Friends. Digitalprint  
49.5x56.5 cm. 1971

Foto no publicitātes materiāliem / Publicity photos



Bass Jans Aders. Celā uz jauno neoplasticismu, Vestkapelle, Holande. Digitāldruka /  
Bas Jan Ader. On the Road To a New Neo-Plasticism, Westkapelle, Holland  
Digitalprint  
30x30 cm. 1971

Foto no publicitāties materiāliem / Publicity photos  
Pateicība / Courtesy of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam



Bass Jans Aders. Bez nosaukuma (Vestkapelle, Niderlande). Digitāldruka /  
Bas Jan Ader. Untitled (Westkapelle, The Netherlands). Digitalprint  
40.6x40.6 cm. 1971, 2003

Foto no publicitāties materiāliem / Publicity photos  
Pateicība / Courtesy of the Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Bas Jan Ader Estate,  
Mary Sue Ader Andersen and Patric Painter Edition



Losandželosā, pēc tam *Claremont Graduate School*, ko pabeidz ar bakalaura un maģistra grādu mākslā. No 1967. līdz 1969. gadam turpat Klermontā studē universitātē filozofiju, ipaši interesējas par Hēgeli un Vitgenšteinu. 1965. gadā Lasvegasā apprečas ar Mēriju Sjū Andersenu (*Mary Sue Andersen*).

Basa Jana Adera mākslinieka darbi tapuši Kalifornijas sešdesmito gadu gaisotnē, kad radās rietumkrasta konceptuālā māksla, kurā savu lomu spēlēja gan lingvistiskā analize, gan ironija. Bet no cītiem tālaikā māksliniekim Aderu atšķir viņa hepeningu eksistenciālisms, kas aizēno pirmajā acu uzmetienā pamānāmo komiskumu. Holandiešu izcelsmes Kalifornijas mākslinieku uzskata par vienu no "romantiskā konceptuālisma" pamatlīcējiem – šis termins pieder *Frieze Magazine* kritiķa Jerga Heizeru (*Jörg Heiser*) spalvai, un šādi tika nodēvēta arī izstāde, kas 2007. gadā bija aplūkojama Nirnbergas Mākslas muzejā: tas ir virziens, kas apvieno konceptuālo mākslu ar romantismu, domas ar jūtām, ideju ar sentimentu. Apmēram 35 darbi, kurus Bass Jans Aders radīja nepilnos desmit gados, ir fotogrāfijas, filmas vai videoieraksti, proti – dokumenti par viņa performancēm vai instalācijām. Tajos jūtama ne viena vien atsauce uz romantismu, melanoliju, kā arī uz mākslas vēsturi.

Krāsainajā fotogrāfijā "Atvadas no draugiem tālumā" (*Farewell to Faraway Friends*, 1971) redzam sīciņu mākslinieka siluetu stāvam tālumā ūdens malā pret gaismu un vērojam pasakainu saulrietu. Kompozīcija, novietojums un proporcijas atgādina raksturīgu romantisma virziena gleznu, Kaspara Dāvida Frīdriha darbu "Mūks jūras krastā" (1808–1810).

Darbā "Mākslinieks – pēdējā mierinājuma patēriņtājs" (*The Artist as Consumer of Extreme Comfort*, 1968) mākslinieks, ērti apsēdies krēslā, atbalstījis zodu uz delnas, skatās uz iedegtu pavardu, virs kura redzams attēls – jūras vidū peldošs kuģis. Pie kājām viņam saritinājies suns. Telpā mirdz vāra stāvlampa gaisma. Fotogrāfija ir melnbalta un neapšaubāmi citē slaveno Albrehta Dīrera gravīru

boarded Neil Tucker Burchet's yacht *Felicidad*<sup>1</sup> and eleven months later stepped out on the California coast. He first enrolled at Otis College of Art and Design in Los Angeles, and then he attended the Claremont Graduate School, obtaining a Bachelor's and Master's degree in art. From 1967 to 1969 he studied philosophy at the university in Claremont, and took a special interest in the philosophers Hegel and Wittgenstein. He married Mary Sue Andersen in 1965 in Las Vegas.

Bas Jan Ader's works were created in the atmosphere of 1960s California, when West Coast conceptual art was born, with both linguistic analysis and irony having their own role. But Ader is different from other artists of the time with the existentialism of his happenings, which overshadows the comicality that might be observed at first sight. The Dutch Californian artist is considered to be one of the forerunners of Romantic Conceptualism – this term was coined by the art critic Jörg Heiser, and this is also the name of a 2007 exhibition at the Nuremberg Art Museum. Romantic Conceptualism is a movement that fuses conceptual art which Romanticism, thoughts with feelings, ideas with sentiment. What we have today of the approximately 35 works that Bas Jan Ader created in almost ten years are photographs, films or video recordings: they document his performances or installations. In them we can perceive quite a number of references to Romanticism, melancholy, and to the history of art as well.

The colour photograph *Farewell to Faraway Friends* (1971) shows a tiny silhouette of the artist standing in the distance, at the edge of the sea and watching a magnificent sunset. The composition, placement and proportions are reminiscent of Caspar David Friedrich's painting *The Monk by the Sea* (1808–1810).

In the work *The Artist as Consumer of Extreme Comfort* (1968) the artist is comfortably seated in a chair, his chin resting on his hand, looking at the fire burning in the fireplace, and above it hangs a photo of a ship in the middle of the sea. There is a dog sprawled on

"Melanholijs" (1514), kurā ir līdzīgi motīvi. Domīgs enģelis, atstātējis galvu pret roku, raugās tālumā uz jūru, bet visapkārt viņam mētājas zinātniski instrumenti, ko neviens neliek lietā. Tāpat kā Basa Jana Adera fotogrāfijā, arī pie enģeļa kājām dus suns, grūtsirdības simbols. Renesansē melanoliju uzskatīja par ligu, no kurās galvenokārt cieš intelektuāļi, kas ir īpaši noskaņoti uz apcerīgumu. No cītiem temperamenta tipiem – sangvinikumi, holērikiem un flegmatiķiem –, kurus pazīstam kopš antīkās pasaules laikiem, tieši melanolikis tika uzskatīts par vissarežītāko, ar ko vajadzēja vien sadzīvot, maksājot par to dārgu cenu, reizēm kā Dīrera enģelim nespējot piedalīties racionālās vai intelektuālās nodarbēs, kad uznāk nepārvaramas skumjās.

Vairumā darbu Bass Jans Aders ir gan autors, gan dalībnieks. Viņš nolieks uz skatuves sevi pašu kā heroisku figūru, kas atgādina romantismā kultivēto mākslinieka tēlu, kuru uzskata gan par gēniju, gan nekaunīgu dendiju. Adera slavenākajā darbā "Esmu pārāk bēdīgs, lai stāstītu" (*I'm Too Sad To Tell You*, 1971) priekšplānā redzama viņa seja, kas kameru priekšā nemītējas liet gaužas asaras. Kā jau rāda nosaukums, mākslinieks ir pārāk bēdīgs, lai atklātu mums, par ko viņš tā raud, un, patiesību sakot, stāstišķā arī neko nedos – asaras runā pašas par sevi: atkailināts un tiešs jūtu pauđums. No šī videodarba nāk vesels atdarinājumu vilnis līdz pat mūsdienām, izraisot tādu kā 20. gadsimta beigu "Vertera efektu". Ir tapuši neskaitāmi rimeiki – video, multiplikācijas filmas, fotogrāfijas. Basa Jana Adera mājaslapā ([basjanader.com](http://basjanader.com)) ievietoti dažādi paraugi: Džankarlo Norezes (*Giancarlo Norese*) "Sākas ar S" (*Starting With S*, 2006), Meganas Dālderes (*Megan Daalder*) "Esmu pārāk nogurusi, lai stāstītu" (*I'm Too Tired To Tell You*, 2007), kā arī video kopīgošanas vietnē *vimeo* Pola Bogmana (*Paul Baughmann*) animācijas filma "Esmu pārāk bēdīgs, lai stāstītu".

Arī frāzes, ko Bass Jans Aders raksta uz instalāciju sienām, ir emocionāli piesātinātas. "Lūdzu, nepamet mani" (*Please Don't Leave*

the floor at his feet. There is a faint light emitted by the floor lamp in the room. The photograph is black and white, and it is an undisputed interpretation of the famous etching by Albrecht Dürer *Melancholia I* (1514) which has similar motives. A brooding angel, head resting in his hand, looking at the sea in the distance, and a number of scientific instruments, not needed by anyone, are scattered at his feet. Just like in Bas Jan Ader's photograph, in the etching there is a dog – a symbol of melancholy – sprawled at the feet of the angel. During the Renaissance, melancholy was considered to be an ailment which contemplative intellectuals were especially prone to. From the four types of temperament known since the time of the ancient world – sanguine, choleric, melancholic and phlegmatic – melancholic in particular was considered to be the most complex type which one had to live with and pay a high price for having that temperament type, similar to Dürer's angel, at times not being able to partake in rational or intellectual activities when insurmountable sadness took over.

In the majority of his works Bas Jan Ader is both author and participant. He places himself on the stage as a heroic figure, reminiscent of the artist-persona cultivated in Romanticism who was at the same time considered a genius and an impudent dandy. In his most popular work *I'm Too Sad To Tell You* (1971) we see the face of the artist in the foreground, incessantly shedding tears. As is evident in the title, the artist is too sad to divulge why he is weeping so bitterly, and truthfully, saying it would not change anything – the tears speak for themselves: a naked and direct expression of feelings. This video work has spawned a wave of imitations up until the present day, creating a sort of Werther effect of the late 20th century. There have been numerous remakes – video, cartoons and photographs. On Bas Jan Ader's website ([basjanader.com](http://basjanader.com)) there are several samples: Giancarlo Norese's *Starting With S*, (2006), Megan Daalder's *I'm Too Tired To Tell You* (2007), in addition the video-sharing website *vimeo* has Paul Baughmann's animated film *I'm Too Sad To Tell You*.

*Me*, 1969), ko apgaismo virs kāpnēm piekārts lukturis, atgādina mums Žaka Brela *Ne me quitte pas* (1969). Sirdi plososais kliedziens lieliem burtiem uz sienas vispārcilvēciski pauž vienas no pamatīgakajām bailēm, ko pazīstam kopš visagrākās bērnības, - bailes tikt pamestiem, kuras, kā uzsver Freids, cēlušās no dzimšanas laikā radītās mātes un bērna šķiršanās traumas. Šī frāze kā dūres blieziens pa aci uzbūr nenoskārstas bailes no tukšuma, no pamestības vai atsauc baisas sajūtas atmiņā ikvienam, kas to ir izbaudījis uz savas ādas.

"Nepateiktās un tad aizmirstās domas" (*Thoughts Unsaid, Then Forgotten*) atgādina mums, cik grūti reizēm ir atrast štos vārdus, cik ļoti mēs ciešam, līdz spējam tos bilst. Cik daudzkārt mūsu vēsts mījoto sasniez vien domās, cik daudzas vēstules mēs prātā apceram, bet tā arī nepaužam vārdos, neizliekam uz papīra un tā arī ne nosūtām! 1973. gadā tapušo instalāciju veido pastelē un eļļā uz sienas rakstīti vārdi *Thoughts Unsaid, Then Forgotten*, uz trijkāja uzlikts lukturis, kas slīpi met gaismu uz šiem vārdiem, un zemē nolikta vāze ar apkaltušiem ziediem. Vītums savā ziņā simbolizē aizmiršanas procesu, tas attēlo nepateikto domu izzušanu, izkūpešanu, saplūšanu ar fonu. Arī šī instalācija – neraugoties uz konceptuālo uzstādījuma "gramatiku" – tieši citē romantisma tradīciju, piemēram, Frančesko Ajeca (*Francesco Hayez*) renesances stilā tapušo gleznu "Melanolīja" (1841), kurā apvītušas puķes uzsver jaunas sievietes bezgalīgās skumjas, ko pauž arī tukšumā vērstais skatiens. Nepateiktās domas sasaucas ar aizmirstības tēmu, bet to adresāts tā arī paliek, neuzzinājis par tām. Tikai mirstošie ziedi apliecina nekad neištenotos nodomus, tie ir kā pēdas, ko atstājis virtuāls, aprises tā arī neieguvis žests. Katra nepateiktā doma ir lemta nāvei, sažuvušās puķes atgādina puvušos augļus 17. gadsimta klusajās dabās un līdz ar tiem arī *vanitas*, lietu nīcību un mūsu mīstīgumu. Smaga mūsu esībā ir jūtu pasaules pinekļu un neveiksmju nasta, bet beigās savas nepateiktās domas mums nāksies paņemt līdzi kapā.

Nedomāju, ka tā ir sagadišanās, ka pirmā Basa Jana Adera retrospekcija Itālijā, kas notika Rožu villā (*Villa delle Rose*), Boloņas Modernās mākslas muzeja (*Mambo*) filiālē, Arte Fiera festivāla atklāšanas pirmajās dienās izraisīja tādu furoru: jūsmīgas runas par to skanēja visās malās. Vērsos pie Džankarlu Norēzes, un viņa komentārs līdztekus atzinumam, ka Basa Jana Adera un viņa paša darbi runā vienā valodā, kā vienmēr bija ūss un kodoligs: "Sakāves estētika." Kā vēlāk redzēsim, sakāve (*to fail*) nudien ir tāds kā sarkanais dzīpars, vadmotīvs, kas iet cauri visai Adera dzīvei. Jauno mākslinieku īpaši pievelk iespēja ciest sakāvi, un viņš apcer visus iespējamos sakāves scenārijus, kā arī šā vārda lietojumu un nozīmes dažādās valodās. Angļu valodā tas skaniski atgādina citu darbības vārdu (*to fall* – krist) un liek viņam pētīt krišanas principu dažnedažādās situācijās. Starp citu, viņu intriģē Vitgensteina "Traktāta" pirmais teikums "Pasaule ir viss, kas iekrīt"<sup>2</sup> (*Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist*), kas pasauli savieno ar faktiem, kuri iekrīt, var atgadīties un varbūt ir aprakstāmi ar valodas starpniecību, kā arī savieno pasauli ar priekšmetisko esību kā tādu un tādējādi pašvītro visas esības akcidentālitāti, nejaušību. Vēl viens piemērs tam, kā Bass Jans Aders rotājās ar vārdiem, ir viņa parādīšanās kāzās ar kruķiem, jo viņš bija *fallen in love*, burtiski – "iekritis mīlestībā". Amsterdamas Art & Project Gallery un Brēmerhafenes Kabinett für aktuelle Kunst viņš publiski lasa dramatisku stāstu no Reader's Digest populārās grāmatiņas *The Boy Who Fell Over Niagara Falls*<sup>3</sup>, ik pa laikam iepauzēdams, lai iedzertu ūdens malku no glāzes.

The phrases that Bas Jan Ader writes on the walls of his installations are also emotionally charged. *Please Don't Leave Me* (1969), which is illuminated by a light bulb hung at the top of a ladder, reminds us of Jacques Brel's *Ne me quitte pas* (1969). The heart-tearing cry splashed across the wall in big letters expresses one of the universal fears that we are familiar with since earliest childhood: the fear of abandonment which, according to Freud, begins at the moment of birth when the child experiences the trauma of being separated from its mother. This fear is like a punch in the face and it conjures up unsuspected fears of emptiness, of abandonment, or it brings back terrifying feelings in anyone who has actually experienced abandonment.

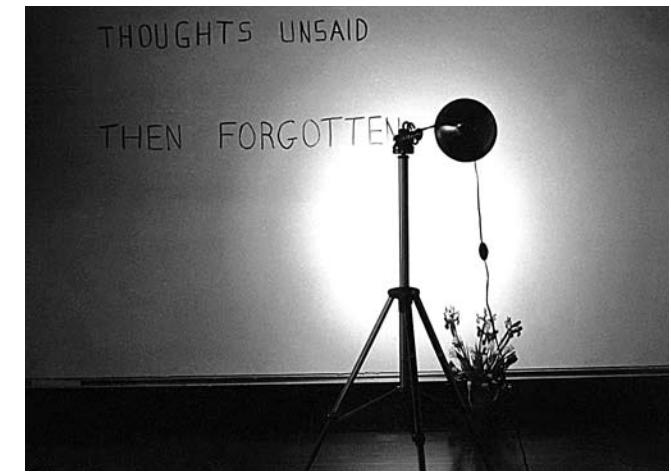
*Thoughts Unsaid, Then Forgotten* reminds us of how difficult it is at times to find the right words, how much we suffer until we are able to utter those words. How many times our message reaches our loved one only in our thoughts, how many letters we mull over but never put down on paper and never mail them! The installation-performance made in 1973 consists of the words written on the wall in oil and pastel *Thoughts Unsaid, Then Forgotten*, illuminated by a lamp attached to a tripod, and on the floor there is a vase with wilted flowers. The state of withering in a way symbolizes the process of forgetting, how the unsaid thoughts vanish, go up in smoke and merge with the background. Despite the "grammar" of the conceptual idea present in this installation, it also directly quotes from historic Romanticism, for example, the painting by Francesco Hayez *Melancholy* (1841), where half-wilted flowers emphasize the infinite sadness of a young woman, also evident in her gaze fixed into the emptiness. The unsaid thoughts chime with the theme of oblivion, but the object of the thoughts remains oblivious to them. Only the dying flowers testify to unfulfilled intentions; they are like footprints left by a virtual gesture that has never taken form. Each unsaid thought is destined to die, and the wilted flowers are reminiscent of the decaying fruit in 17th century still lifes and also speak of *vanitas*, the transience of things and our own mortality. The burden of failures and the tangle of our emotional world is heavy, but in the end we will have no choice but to take our unsaid thoughts with us to the grave.

I do not think it is a coincidence that the first retrospective of Bas Jan Ader's work caused such an uproar and ecstatic reviews. The works were presented at the branch of the Bologna Museum of Modern Art in Villa delle Rose during the opening days of the Arte Fiera festival. Giancarlo Norese comments, next to the acknowledgment, that Bas Jan Ader's and his own works speak the same language, were always short and to the point: "the aesthetics of failure". As we will later see, failure is like a red thread, a leading motif that goes through all of Ader's life. The young artist is especially attracted by the possibility of experiencing failure, he mused over all the possible scenarios of failure, as well as the use of the word and its meaning in different languages. In English the word is phonemically similar to the verb 'to fall' and it makes him research the principle of falling in various situations. By the way, Ader is intrigued by the introductory sentence of Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*, which in German is as follows: "*Die Welt ist alles, was der Fall ist*". It is generally translated into English as "The world is everything that is the case", however, the German verb 'fallen' is the direct translation of the English verb 'to fall', which in this case connects the world to things that 'fall' into it, happen by chance and might be described by the means of the languages. These things that fall to us also connect the world with



Bass Jans Aders. Lūdzu, nepamet mani. Instalācija  
Bas Jan Ader. *Please Don't Leave Me*. Installation  
28x35.5 cm. 1969

Foto no publicitātes materiāliem / Publicity photos  
Pateicība / Courtesy of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam



Bass Jans Aders. Nepateiktās un tad aizmirstās domas. Instalācija  
Bas Jan Ader. *Thoughts Unsaid, Then Forgotten*. Installation  
1973

Foto no publicitātes materiāliem / Publicity photos  
Pateicība / Courtesy of the Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna, Bas Jan Ader Estate,  
Mary Sue Ader Andersen and Patric Painter Edition



Bass Jans Aders. Esmu pārāk bēdīgs, lai stāstītu. 16 mm filma /  
Bas Jan Ader. *I'm Too Sad To Tell You*. 16 mm film  
3'34". 1971

Foto no publicitātes materiāliem / Publicity photos  
Pateicība / Courtesy of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam



Bass Jans Aders. Krēsla. 16 mm filma /  
Bas Jan Ader. *Nightfall*. 16 mm film  
4'16". 1971

Foto no publicitātes materiāliem / Publicity photos  
Pateicība / Courtesy of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam



Bass Jans Aders. Apturētais kritiens (ģeometrisks), Vestkapelle, Holande  
16 mm filma /  
**Bas Jan Ader.** *Broken Fall (Geometric)*, Westkapelle, Holland. 16 mm film  
1'49". 1971  
*Foto no publicitātes materiāliem / Publicity photos*  
*Pateicība / Courtesy of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam*

Bass Jans Aders. Apturētais kritiens (organisks), Amsterdama mežs, Holande  
16 mm filma /  
**Bas Jan Ader.** *Broken Fall (Organic)*, Amsterdamse Bos, Holland. 16 mm film  
1'49". 1971  
*Foto no publicitātes materiāliem / Publicity photos*  
*Pateicība / Courtesy of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam*

Stāsts apspēlē vienu no daudzajām angļu vārda *fall* nozīmēm, šeit arī ‘ūdenskritums’, un vēsta par traģēdiju, zēnam iekrītot tajā. Laijums beidzas, kad tiek iztukšots pēdējais ūdens malks no glāzes. Filmā “Krēsls” (*Nightfall*, 1971) “krit” nakts, kad mākslinieks sasit divas uz zemes noliktas lampas, uzmetot tām virsū betona kluci...

Basa Jana Adera sakāves principa pētījumi neaprobežojas tikai ar individuāliem, bet kalpo par pamatu veselai virknei darbu, ar kuriem viņš atbild savam tautietim Pītam Mondrianam, atsaucoties uz modernitātes projektu kopumā, – kā zināms, *De Stijl*<sup>4</sup> mākslinieku uzskaņa par tipisku modernitātes pārstāvi. Četri darbi 1971. gadā top tieši pie slavenās Vestkapelles bākas, ko Mondrians laikposmā no 1910. līdz 1920. gadam vairākkārt gleznojis, līdz nonācis pie ģeometriskā risinājuma, kur nav vairs nedz diagonālu, nedz krāsu nianšu, vien melnais, kā arī pamatkrāsas (sarkans, zils un dzeltens). Visas pārējās krāsas un līnijas neoplastiku pūristu skatījumā bija liekvārdība.

Diptihā “Bez nosaukuma (Vestkapelle, Nīderlande)” (*Untitled (Westkapelle, The Netherlands)*) redzam Aderu ar kapuci galvā, viscaur melnā tērptu: vienā fotogrāfijā viņš stāv, bet otrā ir nokritis deviņdesmit grādu leņķī attiecībā pret pozīciju pirmajā fotogrāfijā. Abi ķermenē vērsumi norāda uz Mondriana darbu melnajām statiskajām un līmeniskajām līnijām. Galvā uzmauktā kapuce savukārt

its physical existence as such and emphasize the accidental nature of all existence. One more example of how Bas Jan Ader liked to play with words was the fact that he showed up at his wedding on crutches, because he had “fallen in love” literally. At Amsterdam’s Art & Project Gallery and Bremerhaven’s Kabinett für aktuelle Kunst he had a public reading of a dramatic story from a popular Reader’s Digest book, *The Boy who Fell Over Niagara Falls*<sup>3</sup>, from time to time pausing to take a sip of water from a glass. The story plays with one of the many meanings of the verb “to fall”, here also forming part of the word “waterfall”, and speaks of the tragedy when the boy falls into it. The reading finishes with the last sip of water from the glass. In the film *Nightfall* (1971), the night *falls* when the artist breaks two lamps placed on the ground by throwing a concrete block on top of them...

Bas Jan Ader’s research of the process of failure is not limited to individual destinies only, but they are the basis for a range of works which serve as a reaction to his compatriot Piet Mondrian, making references to the project of modernity in general – as we know, *De Stijl*<sup>4</sup> considers the artist to be a typical representative of Modernism. Four of Bas Jan Ader’s works created in 1971 were made at the famous lighthouse in Westkapelle, the same one that Mondrian painted several times between 1910 and 1920 until he found a geometrical solution where there were no more diagonals or colour nu-



Bass Jans Aders. Kritiens I, Losandželosa. 16 mm filma /  
**Bas Jan Ader.** *Fall I, Los Angeles*. 16 mm film  
24". 1970  
*Foto no publicitātes materiāliem / Publicity photos*  
*Pateicība / Courtesy of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam*



Bass Jans Aders. Kritiens II, Amsterdama. 16 mm filma /  
**Bas Jan Ader.** *Fall II, Amsterdam*. 16 mm film. 19"  
1970  
*Foto no publicitātes materiāliem / Publicity photos*  
*Pateicība / Courtesy of the Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam*

atgādina divus notikumus: vispirms to, ka nacisti nošāva Basa Jana Adera tēvu, mācītāju, kad topošajam māksliniekam bija tikai divi gadi; tad arī Renē Magrita gleznu “Mīlākie” (*Les amants*), ko gleznotājs rādījis par piemiņu mātei, pašnāvnieci, kura noslicinājās un tika atrasta ar plastmasas maisiņu galvā.

Arī pārējie trīs darbi ar Vestkapelles fonu izmanto to pašu ainavu: taciņu, kam gar malu aug krūmi. Krāsainajā fotogrāfijā ar simbolisku nosaukumu “Ceļā uz jauno neoplasticismu, Vestkapelle, Holande” (*On The Road To a New Neo-Plasticism, Westkapelle, Holland*) mākslinieks guļ zemē, kreisā roka ir izstiepta horizontāli, kreisā kāja taisna, labā kāja saliekta 90 grādu leņķī. Katrā nākamajā attēlā pievienots kāds priekšmets, ievērojot tās pašas *De Stijl* mākslinieka lietotās pamatkrāsas: zila sega, dzeltena benzīna kanna un avārijas trijstūris sarkanā kastē. Tātad atrodamies ceļā (*on the road*) uz jaunu, cilvēcisku neoplasticisma interpretāciju. Mākslinieka apģērbtais ķermenis attēlo melnās horizontālās un vertikālās līnijas, bet krāsainie priekšmeti atgādina “racionālisma tēva” slaveņos vienkrāsainos laukumus. Otrais darbā, kas tapis tai pašā vietā, nosaukums “Slazds ceļā uz jauno neoplasticismu, Vestkapelle, Holande” (*Pitfall On The Way To a New Neo-Plasticism, Westkapelle, Holland*) norāda uz pirmo šķērsli, kas var mūs “paklupināt” šai ceļā uz jauno neoplasticismu: redzam mākslinieku nokritušu zemē un

ances, and all that remained was black and the primary colours (red, blue and yellow). According to purists of the Neo-Plasticism movement, all the other colours and lines were redundant.

The first photograph in the diptych *Untitled (Westkapelle, The Netherlands)* shows Ader wearing a hood over his face, all dressed in black: he is standing in the first photograph, but in the second one he has fallen down and lies at a ninety degree angle to his position in the first photograph. Both positions are references to Mondrian’s black vertical and horizontal lines. The hood over his head reminds us of two events: firstly, the fact that the Nazis shot Bas Jan Ader’s father, a pastor, when the future artist was only two years old; secondly, René Magritte’s painting *Les Amants*, which the artist created in the memory of his mother who drowned herself and was found with a cloth wrapped around her face.

The other three works created in Westkapelle also use the same landscape: a path with bushes on both sides of it. The colour photograph with its symbolic name *On the Road To a New Neo-Plasticism, Westkapelle, Holland* shows the artist lying on the ground; his left hand is stretched out horizontally, the left leg is straight, and the right leg is bent at a ninety degree angle. Every next image has another object added to the composition, using the same primary colours approved by the *De Stijl* artists: a blue blanket, a yellow gasoline can



Bass Jans Aders  
Visas manas drēbes  
Fotogrāfija /  
**Bas Jan Ader**  
*All My Clothes*  
Photography  
28x35.5 cm  
1970

Foto no publicitātes materiāliem /  
Publicity photos  
Pateicība / Courtesy of the Museum Boijmans  
Van Beuningen, Rotterdam

51. lpp. / p. 51  
**Bass Jans Aders**  
Primārais laiks /  
**Bas Jan Ader**  
Primary Time  
Video. 26'  
1974

Foto no publicitātes materiāliem /  
Publicity photos  
Pateicība / Courtesy of the Museum Boijmans  
Van Beuningen, Rotterdam

turam rokā tos pašus priekšmetus, kas viņam bija jau iepriekšējā darbā. Man radās pārdomas, vai tikai vārdā *pitfall* (slazds) nav apspēlēts *Piet-fall*, proti, Pīta (Mondriana) krišana. Pēdējo darbu šai sērijā sauc "Apturētais kritiens (ģeometriski), Vestkapelle, Holande" (*Broken Fall (Geometric), Westkapelle, Holland*), tas pastāv gan kā fotogrāfija, gan arī melnbaltas filmas formā. Tajā mākslinieka ķermenis ir izstiepies, sastindzis un krīt uz sāniem uz zilā krāsā nokrāsota krāgīša. Stāvais tēls sašķiebjas aizvien vairāk, līdz tas kļūst diagonāls (Mondriana noraidītā diagonāle) un nokrīt garšļaukus (līmeniski, gar zemi). Fotoversijā redzam mākslinieka ķermenī diagonālā pozīcijā, kas ir nestabila un pāriet neapturamā kritienā, jo šādi nav iespējams ilgi noturēties...

1974. gadā top virkne svarīgu darbu, kuros makēnīt jaušama arī ironija par holandiešu meistarū: astoņas lapas, kas izkrāsotas sarkanas, dzeltenas, zilas un melnas, un skice instalācijai ar neonu (īstenota jau pēc mākslinieka nāves), kuru iedvesmojuši vārdi, ko teicis Dalī, kuram riebās Mondriana stingri ģeometriskie principi: *PIET NIET* ("Pītam – nē"). Darbā "Bez nosaukuma (Puķu kompozīcija)" (*Untitled (Flowerwork)*), kas ir septiņu fotogrāfiju sērija, atkal redzam Aderu pievēršamies ziediem. Mākslinieks izjauc un pārkārto jauktu buketi pa krāsām, saliekot vienkopus zilo, sarkanu un dzelteno, lai dabūtu trīs vienkāršainus pušķus neoplastiku lietotajās pamatkrāsās.

Tomēr darbi, kas vislabāk izsaka sakāves un krišanas nojēgumu,

and an emergency triangle in a red box. Evidently we are on the road to a new human interpretation of Neo-Plasticism. The artist's black-clad body depicts the black horizontal and vertical lines, but the colour objects remind us of the famous colour squares of the "father of rationalism". In the second work, *Pitfall On The Way To a New Neo-Plasticism, Westkapelle, Holland* which was created in the exact same place, we see the artist fallen to the ground and holding the same objects that we have seen in the previous work. I have wondered whether the word 'pitfall' might also be an oblique reference to 'Piet-fall', the fall of Piet Mondrian. The last work in this series is named *Broken Fall (Geometric), Westkapelle, Holland* and it exists both as a photograph and in the form of a black-and-white video. In this work, the artist's body is stretched and rigid, and it falls to the side onto a blue trestle. The body which is in a vertical position skews more and more until it reaches a diagonal position (the diagonal rejected by Mondrian) and falls down flat on the earth: a horizontal position. In the photo version we see the artist's body in a diagonal position which is unstable and inevitably turns into an unstoppable fall, because it is impossible to stay like that for a long time...

In 1974 Bas Jan Ader created a sequence of important works which give a slight impression of irony directed at the Dutch master. There are eight sheets of paper coloured in red, yellow, blue and black, and a sketch for an installation with neon lights (implemented after the death of the artist) inspired by the words said by Dali:



**PIET NIET** ("No to Piet"), who hated Mondrian's strictly geometrical principles. The work *Untitled (Flowerwork)* is a series of seven photographs, and here we see the artist turning to flowers again. The artist takes apart and reorganizes a mixed flower arrangement until he ends up with three bouquets of flowers in blue, red and yellow – the primary colours of Neo-Plasticism.

Darbā "Apturētais kritiens (organisks), Amsterdamas mežs<sup>5</sup>, Holande" (*Broken Fall (Organic), Amsterdamse Bos, Holland*, 1971) Bass Jans Aders karājas virs kanāla koka zarā. Melnbaltajā filmā redzam viņu atlaižam rokas un iekrītam kanālā. Darbā "Kritiens I, Losandželosa" (*Fall I, Los Angeles*) mākslinieks sēž uz krēsla jumta korē un tad lēni noripo ar visu krēslu lejā. Filmā "Kritiens II, Amsterdam" (*Fall II, Amsterdam*) (abi darbi tapuši 1970. gadā) redzam viņu piebraucam pie kanāla ar riteni. Viņam rokās ir puķes, tāpēc viņš nespēj noturēt stūri un pārbrauc pār kanti, ielidojot kanālā... Krišanas tēma tomēr iziet ārpus farsa komisma robežām un nav tikai neveiksmes vai sakāves metafora. Viņa gadījumā kritienā vienmēr ir arī kaut kas metafīzisks, tā ir teju vai "iekrišana" telpā, kurā smaguma spēka likumības ir atceltas, kur cilvēks planē ūdenī vai plašās ārēs, nonāk murgu pasaulē, un galu galā nozīmē arī bailes no beigām.

Basa Jana mākslinieka pasauli nudien ir ietekmējusi ar refleksija par nāvi. Šeit galvenokārt jāpiemin nacistu nošautā tēva, mākslinieka bērniņas traumas, sublimācija mākslā, konkrēti divās krāsainajās fotogrāfijās "Bez nosaukuma (zviedru kritiens)" (*Untitled (Swedish Fall)*, 1971). Tajās redzams mežs, tālumā starp divām dižpriedēm vienīgi kā sakrālu mākslu. Ja "relīģija" būtu pozitīvs vārds, es to lietotu." Adera gājumā un dailīradē atrodama ne viena vien atsauce

Džankarlo Norēze ir teicis: "Basa Jana Adera mākslu var definēt vienīgi kā sakrālu mākslu. Ja "relīģija" būtu pozitīvs vārds, es to lietotu." Adera gājumā un dailīradē atrodama ne viena vien atsauce

However, the works which Bas Jan Ader is famous for and which best express the concepts of failure and fall, the core motivating factors for the artist – a conceptual romantic – are the performances with staged falls. It is almost superfluous to point out the concept of the fall of Adam and Eve in Paradise, or the fallen angels. In these works Bas Jan Ader refers not only to the existential dimension, but to the artist's calling in general – it is much easier to fall in this metier, to fall out of circulation, to descend into decadence than to gain success and make a decent living with the fruit of one's work. There is no need to overemphasize the well-known truth that only a small proportion of artists are able to survive without additional employment, for example, as teachers, graphic artists or in other in supplementary jobs.

In his work *Broken Fall, (Organic), Amsterdamse Bos, Holland* (1971) Bas Jan Ader is hanging by a tree branch over a stream. In the black-and-white video we see him unable to hold onto the branch and fall into the water. In the work *Fall I, Los Angeles* the artist is seated on a chair on a rooftop and then slowly topples off the roof, complete with chair. In the video *Fall II, Amsterdam* (both works were made in 1970) we see him approaching a canal on his bicycle. He is holding flowers in his hands, so is unable to hold onto the handlebars and "goes over the edge" into the canal... The theme of falling, however, goes beyond the comicality of farce and is not just a metaphor of failure or defeat. In Ader's case there is always something metaphysical in a fall, it is almost like falling into a space where the laws of gravity have been cancelled, where the human being glides over the water or in wide open spaces, ends up in a world of nightmares, and after all it is also a fear of the end.

Bas Jan Ader's art was indeed influenced by reflections on death. The main work to be mentioned in this regard is the series of two colour photographs *Untitled (Swedish Fall)*, 1971, which is a

uz reliģiju. Viņa tēvs bija mācītājs, un vienā jaukā dienā mākslinieks izlēma braukt ar velosipēdu uz Jeruzālemi. Šo celamērķi dramatiski aizēno itāļu mākslinieces Pipas Bakas (*Pippa Bacca*), Pjero Manconi (*Piero Manzoni*) māsicas, ceļojums-performance – 2008. gadā, gērbusies līgavas kleitā, viņa centās noklūt Jeruzālemē ar stopiem, bet tā arī galā nenonāca...<sup>6</sup> Pipai bija trīsdesmit trīs gadi – kā Jēzum, kurš mira krusta nāvē, un kā Basam Janam Aderam, kurš devās savā pēdējā braucienā. Mākslinieks mēģināja ne tikai uzstādīt jaunu pasules rekordu, viens pats visu laiku vismazākajā laivinā Ocean Wave (garums – četri metri) šķērsojot okeānu, bet meklēja kaut ko lielāku. Viņš meklēja zudušo laiku, absolūtu, bezgalīgo. Sevi un jūru. Sevi un pārvarīgo jūru.

Bass Jans Aders izbrauca okeānā 1975. gada 9. jūlijā no Masčūsetsas Kodas raga (*Cape Cod*), lai pabeigtu triptihu "Brīnumaino meklējot" (*In Search of The Miraculous*). Pirmajā triptiha daļā "Kāda nakts Losandželosā" (*One Night in Los Angeles*) astoņpadsmit melnbaltu fotogrāfiju sērijā Aders redzams naktī šķērsojam Losandželosu, lai rīta gaismā tiktu okeāna krasītā. Uz katras fotogrāfijas ar roku uzrakstīta frāze no grupas *Coasters* dziesmas *Searchin'*. Pirms izbraukšanas koris noskandināja jūrnieku dziesmas, un uz Losandželosas *Claire S. Copley Gallery* sienām rotājās vārdi *A life on the ocean wave*. Laivā Bass Jans Aders bija paņemis līdzi Hēgelā "Gara fenomenoloģiju", kurā gars iejet sevī, kad ir dialektiski izgājis cauri dabai, kur valda nejaušais...

"Sveicieni no brīnišķīgajiem Adera [ūdens]kritumiem;  
Viss krīt;  
Un ieripo svāigi izraktā kapā;  
Manas domas iet cauri sienām;  
Krastā izskalota vesela gūzma fotogrāfiju par mironi okeānā;  
Mans augums praktizē slikonibū;  
Jūra, zeme, mākslinieks dzīlās skumjās ir uzzinājuši, ka arī  
viņiem pienāks reiz gals."<sup>7</sup>  
(No Basa Jana Adera piezīmēm.)

No itāļu valodas tulkojis Dens Dīmiņš

1 "Laime" (spāņu val.). – *Tulk. piez.*

2 Latviešu tulkojumā ir šāds variants: "Pasaule ir viss, kas iekrīt." Sk.: Vitgenšteins, Ludvigs. *Filozfiski loģisks traktāts*. Rīga: Liepnieks un Rītups, 2006, 17. lpp. Manis piedāvātais variants būtu tuvāks krišanas metaforai, kur 'iekrist' lietots sarunvalodas nozīmē – 'sagadīties', 'trāpīties'. – *Tulk. piez.*

3 Divdomīgs nosaukums, kur *fall over* ir gan 'pārkrist pāri', gan 'iemīlēties', 'iekerties'. – *Tulk. piez.*

4 *De Stijl* ('stils' – niderlandiešu mākslinieku kustība, kam dots 1917. gadā Leidenē dibināta žurnāla vārds. Svarīgākie *De Stijl* pārstāvji bija Teo van Dūsburgs (*Theo van Doesburg*), Piets Mondrians (*Piet Mondrian*), Vilmos Huszár (*Vilmos Huszár*), Barts van der Leks (*Bart van der Leck*), Herrits Rietfelds (*Gerrit Rietveld*) un citi. Pēc Teo van Dūburga nāves 1931. gadā kustības darbība apsīka, bet ieteicme turpinājās, it īpaši arhitektūrā. – *Tulk. piez.*

5 Parks uz DR no Amsterdamas starp Shipholas apkārtceļu un Amstelvēni (*Amstelveen*). – *Tulk. piez.*

6 2008. gada 31. martā viņa tika izvarota un noslepavota Gebzes pilsētā Turcijā. – *Tulk. piez.*

7 Piezīme Adera bloknotā, ko piemin Breds Spens (*Brad Spence*) izstādes katalogā, kura no 1999. gada 25. februāra līdz 20. martam bija apskatāma Art Gallery Kalifornijas Universitātē Ērvīnā. – Ader, Bas Jan. Please don't leave me. In: *Catalogo Mambo, Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna*. Bologna: Comune di Bologna, 2012, p. 21.

sublimation in art of the artist's childhood trauma, namely, his father being shot by the Nazis. In this series we see a forest, and in the background between two great pines there is a black-clad figure (Ader). In the second photograph, taken from the exact same spot and with the exact same composition, we see that the distant figure has fallen to the ground.

Giancarlo Norese has said: "Bas Jan Ader's art can be defined only as sacred art. If the word "religion" were a positive word, I would use it." There is quite an abundance of references to religion in Ader's creative work. His father was a pastor, and the artist one day decided to go to Jerusalem by bicycle. This destination was dramatically overshadowed in 2008 by the journey-performance of the Italian artist Pippa Bacca, a cousin of Piero Manzoni, who, dressed in a wedding dress, tried to hitchhike to Jerusalem but didn't get there...<sup>5</sup> Pippa was thirty-three years old – as was Jesus when he died on the Cross and Bas Jan Ader when he took off on his final voyage. The artist was not only seeking to set a new world record by single-handedly sailing across the ocean in the smallest boat ever, the *Ocean Wave* (length of boat – four metres), but he was searching for something bigger. He was searching for lost time, the absolute, the infinite. Himself and the sea. Himself and the almighty ocean.

Bas Jan Ader set sail from Cape Cod, Massachusetts, on 9 July, 1975 in order to finish his triptych *In Search of The Miraculous*. The first part of the triptych *One Night in Los Angeles* is a series of eighteen black-and-white photographs, where Ader is seen crossing Los Angeles at night so that he would reach the coast of the ocean by dawn. Scribbled in hand at the bottom of each photograph is a line from the Coasters song *Searchin'*. Before he set off, a choir performed sea shanties and the walls of the Los Angeles gallery were adorned with the words: *A life on the ocean wave*. Ader took with him on board the boat Hegel's 'Phenomenology of Spirit', in which the spirit finds itself when it has dialectically travelled through the whole of nature, where the inadvertent rules ...

*Greetings from beautiful Ader Falls;*

*All is Falling;*

*Rolling into a freshly dug grave;*

*I can think around the corners;*

*Whole series of photographs on dead in ocean, being washed ashore;*

*My body practicing having been drowned; The sea, the land, the artist has with great sadness known they too will be no more.<sup>6</sup>*

(From Bas Jan Ader's notes.)

Translator into English: Vita Limanoviča

1 Happiness (Spanish).

2 The translation offered by the author with the verb 'to fall' is closer to the metaphor of falling, and in colloquial language it may also mean: "to happen by chance".

3 An ambiguous title, where 'to fall over' can mean both 'to fall over the edge' or 'to fall in love'.

4 *De Stijl* (literally 'The Style' in Dutch) – a Dutch artists' movement named after the magazine founded in Leiden 1917. The key representatives of De Stijl were Theo van Doesburg, Piet Mondrian, Vilmos Huszár, Bart van der Leck, Gerrit Rietveld and others. After Theo van Doesburg's death in 1931 the activities of the movement dwindled, but its influence continued, especially in architecture.

5 She was raped and killed on 31 March, 2008 in Gebze, Turkey.

6 Bas Jan Ader. "Please don't leave me". *Catalogo Mambo, Museo d'Arte Moderna di Bologna*, was published by *Comune di Bologna*, page 21: a note from Ader's notebook which was mentioned by Brad Spence in the exhibition catalogue, which was open to public from 25 February to 20 March of 1999 at the Art Gallery, University of California, Irvine.