



Monika Auch

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Biography

Monika Auch (1955) moved from Germany to Amsterdam where she studied medicine and practised as an M.D. before studying textile design and silkscreen printing at the Gerrit Rietveld Academy.

Her visual work and practised based research focusses on 'The intelligence of the hand'.

Her combination of digital and traditional methods reflects a unique hybrid creativity, i.e. a scientific way of thinking and an intuitive drive to make work. Auch has exhibited widely, gained scholarships, her artists' book received an international award.

She is actively involved in artist's and designer's organisations, is editor of Dutch 'kM journal', lectures and teaches in Holland and abroad.

Illustrated Talk

STITCH_MY_BRAIN

The combined history of printing and anatomy, i.e. the reproduction of scientific medical knowledge mirrors the human self image and the relation to our body. What position have craftsmanship, dexterity and tactility in the modern world of digital tools? What is the intelligence of the hand in creating printed Art work?

1. Throughout the ages the image making about the human body – and animal morphology – has been tied to the progress of innovative medical techniques. Printing serves as a way of reproducing and of laying a public claim to scientific discoveries, starting discussions in a specific discipline. The exchange of prints between Dutch anatomist Jan Swammerdam and English anatomist Hooke illustrates this proces; they were 17th century bloggers. Contemporary anatomical, medical image making involves MRI scans and other ways of registration which are material for artist's reflections. From the 17th century to the 21st century the self-portrait and body-identity has been dependant on the image making of scientists in collaboration with the craftsman or artist who reproduces and communicates this image to a wider public.

2. In my artistic practice based research about 'The intelligence of the hand' I explore the importance of tactility, dexterity and material based making in our contemporary culture dominated by digital tools. Will there be new neuronal pathways if manufacturing changes to using a mouse or a tablet? Are visual stimuli more important than tactile one's? Does our body have a memory? In collaboration with the Netherlands Institute of Neuroscience in Amsterdam I collected registrations of specific tactile stimuli in the brain. The project 'Stich my brain' is no valid scientific research but an artistic exploration and reflection on the themes of hand-brain cooperation and the reproduction of anatomical images in contemporary printing techniques. 'Stitch my brain' strives to be a continuation of the combined history in anatomy and printmaking.