

Rotterdam

“Portscapes”

MUSEUM BOIJMANS VAN BEUNINGEN

Museumpark 18-20

January 30–April 25

In February 2009, Jan Dibbets reenacted his groundbreaking Land-art film *12 Hours Tide Object with Correction of Perspective*, 1969, at the Maasvlakte—a part of Rotterdam's harbor area made with reclaimed ground. In the work, Dibbets creates a form in the sand that is washed away by seawater. The reenactment inaugurated “Portscapes,” a series of works commissioned in conjunction with the ongoing construction of Maasvlakte 2, which will significantly expand the city's port. Organized by Rotterdam's Port Authority and curated by the Barcelona-based curatorial team Latitudes along with Theo Tegelaers of Rotterdam's SKOR, the pieces, originally staged in public spaces, attempt to raise awareness, via both poetic and political artistic visions, of the social impact of landscape-changing enterprises. For example, Hans Schabus's *Europahaven, Rotterdam, 17 Juni 2009* is a photograph portraying the artist at sail on his makeshift boat, the *Forlorn*, and facing the terminal for cargo containers in Rotterdam's harbor; the work constitutes a reflection on the tension between an individual's fate and society's desiderata.

This exhibition, the final installment of the “Portscapes” project, brings together the works produced throughout 2009 for the series, adapting them to a museum setting. For example, Schabus's image, originally displayed on a billboard at different sites (including the Maasvlakte) and freely distributed as a postcard, is now on view alongside the *Forlorn* in a room dedicated to the artist. Elsewhere, the duo Bik Van der Pol's *Facts on the Ground*, 2009–2010, closes the circle that began Land art's ethical investigations. The artists first researched the aesthetic values and choices that led to Maasvlakte 2, conducting interviews with several of the decision makers involved. They then shot a video that evokes Robert Smithson's 1970 *Spiral Jetty*, recording from a helicopter the territory where Maasvlakte 2 will arise. An enchanted depiction of the future, with echoes from the past, this work reflects the artists' understanding of the cultural premises on which Maasvlakte 2 is based, thus fittingly summarizing the intellectual endeavor of “Portscapes” as a whole.



Hans Schabus, *Europahaven, Rotterdam, 17 Juni 2009*. Installation view.