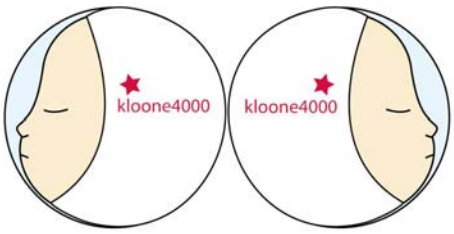

kloone4000

Amsterdam 1 September - 15 October 2005
research project, exhibition, lectures and films about cloning

A research project, group show and lectures / debates on cloning, in which artists and scientists collaborate.

1.a. Subject of the project

Cloning is a topic that appeals to the imagination, raises ethical questions and forces us to think about the future. This project emphasises the special relation between art, science (mainly the terrain of genomics: the large-scale research on heredity and genes, including cloning) and technology.
Artists who work with themes related to genomics contribute to the public debate and analysis of scientific knowledge in an uncommon way. Art has the ability to criticise genomics experiments and their results, visualise them and make genomics accessible for a broad public, without stereotyping. In many cases it is also about visualising a reality that is inconceivable with the naked eye (DNA, nano-particles), for which there is a great need from within science. Artists and scientists are closer related in their daily practice then assumed: both are working with research, hypotheses, the search for truth and both are familiar with the 'eureka' moment. When artists are interested in the results, methods and applications of genetic research, and scientists in the possibilities of imagination, then there is a basis for cooperation, reflection and cross fertilisation.
Scientists are bound by theory and the public is often guided by emotions when thinking about the future of cloning, while an artwork is more independent, doesn't have to be 'true' and is not judged in these terms. This provides an appealing freedom to explore future scenarios.

1.a.1 Topics in detail

The following topics are initiatives for projects within this research project, a kind of baggage:

The tragedy of beauty
Certain abnormalities will not have to exist in the future. The concepts of ugly, unwanted and deformity will change. Cloning is about assembling the perfect features - the best DNA - ultimately resulting in setting a new, much higher standard of beauty and health. But in this lies so much tragedy. The tragedy lies in the fact that we are not only wiping out malformations like congenital defects but at the same time are thinking about small inconveniences like an oversized nose. Taking away the parts we believe are ugly and unwanted will change our notions of aesthetics drastically. It is the combination of beauty and tragedy that is so appealing to artists and commonly used in their work. For many artists the ugliness itself has been an inspiration. The deviation is what makes something interesting, even beautiful.
Related artists: Anje Roosjen, Netty van Osch, Silvia B, Chrystl Rijkeboer, Wim Hardeman
Dates: lectures/discussions 16 and 17 September, research 19 to 23 September
16 September: lecture by Belgian artist Koen Vanmechelen about the Cosmopolitan Chicken project
17 September: lecture by dr. Ir. Martijntje Smits (philosopher, chemical technologist, Technical Univeristy of Eindhoven) about 'Monsterbezwering'.

Who is my father? Who is my mother?
What is the meaning of family and upbringing for the cloned human? How will sexual manners change when sperm is redundant and egg cells cleaned out before use? Will the urge to reproduce survive if everybody is sterile? The developments in the field of sperm donation, egg donation, intended parents, surrogate mothers and IVF can be seen as intermediate steps towards cloning. It changes the natural limits and allows people to reproduce when they are not capable of doing this in the 'traditional' way. This leads to ethical questions surrounding the right to reproduce. Is family definable in terms of DNA? What is it like to know nothing about your biological ancestors? If humans are cloned, who will decide who will be cloned, or what the standard should be? How will the cloned babies be created, will they eventually grow outside a woman's body?
Related artists: Lisa Holden, Lorene Bourguignon, Anje Roosjen, Shunji Hori
Dates: lectures/discussions 23 and 24 September, research 26 to 30 September, film: A.I.

Am I my twin?
Why are we fascinated by our mirror image and at the same time afraid of it? The doppelganger acts as a precursor of the feelings we have towards cloning humans. Does cloning mean large groups of identical people, both in phenotype and genotype? The impact is comparable with an army or a boarding school, a high level of uniformity, uncontrollable group dynamics and oppression, even elimination of what is deviant. How realistic are physically identical clones? Cloning pets proved that the first cloned cats had a different fur pattern to the original cat. Young children do not make a distinction between fantasy, dreaming and reality, An imaginary friend can be very vivid and convincing. How do children feel about cloning, not being troubled by social conventions?
Related artists: Anje Roosjen, Lisa Holden
Dates: lectures/discussions 30 September and 1 October, research 3 to 7 October, film: Boys from Brazil

Art as knowledge
Another approach for cooperation between artists and scientists is not merely using arts for their ability to visualise, but to see the benefits of a more holistic or alchemist's approach which is not appropriate within science but still allowed and practised in the arts.
Related artists: Roe Cerpac, Anje Roosjen
Dates: lectures/discussions 7 and 8 October, research 10 to14 October
8 October: lecture by prof. dr. Hub Zwart about 'Art as knowledge'

The relation between art and genomics: is an approach possible?
Dates: Closure, final presentation, lectures and closing debate 15 October

Period 1 September – 16 September: phase of getting started with the research project, all topics can be addressed, group show is being set up.
Opening 16 September: group show, lectures, presentation programme.

Artists, scientists and other participants are encouraged to send their ideas, reflections on the topics, proposals and dates of attendance via email. This will be published on the website, for others to respond to and to make interesting matches.

1.b. Context

Why does science need creation of images and exploration of future scenarios? Is this not the terrain of ethicists and philosophers, thus already taken care of within science?
Developments within science like globalisation, expanding economic interest in the natural sciences and technology and the enormous complexity and scale of research has necessitated a discussion on bio-ethics. This has caused the gap between the natural sciences and philosophers of science/ethicists to grow. New specialisations are being created on the frontiers of science, technology, culture, ethics and philosophy.
The need for ethics on matters like cloning, artificial intelligence and nanotechnology is urgent. Both for science (individual scientists have to morally support their work, even though they are only a cog in the machine) and for society (the introduction of new technologies might require new ethics).
The new developments in ethics is related to speculation about the future. Images have an important role in this, just like metaphors in language. The impact of science fiction underlines this point. Public debate about cloning is usually combined with warnings about Brave New World or Boys from Brazil (books you don't even have to have read in order to know they predict little good). Given this impact it is likely that scientists and artists might need each other in visualising the future.

Can artists contribute to an ethical debate? How is aesthetics related to ethics?
An aesthetical judgement (if something is beautiful for example) can not be proven empirically. Aesthetic judgements are neither true nor false. They are normative statements about what is desirable and not about what is factual. Aesthetic statements are like moral statements value judgements. It is important that these judgements are not misused in each others' place. It is possible to use an artwork to make an ethical statement under the guise of an aesthetic statement. Artists have a relative level of creative freedom allowed them by society, which allows them to make statements that seem crazy and against all the rules but make us step off the beaten track. With their visual images they also have a powerful tool to influence the opinions and emotions of the lay public, much more effectively than the numerical results of scientific research.

2. Activities

Besides a group exhibition there will be an installation in the entire project space, which will evolve during the six weeks, with input from the participating artists and scientists. Based on preparatory meetings and received proposals a programme will be formulated in which the artists and scientists can engage in temporary cooperative projects. These projects will be accessible to the public at all times. By mediation of the Arts and Genomics Centre[1] specific scientists can be invited to reflect on these projects, so they will be involved on more than just the level of lecturing.
On weekdays the project space functions as an open studio, where people are working while the public is allowed to watch and respond. On the weekend there will be more explicit public activities, including a lecture programme, which also contains discussion and debate and a film program (Gattaca, A.I., Boys from Brazil, Stepford Wives, Solaris). A part of the project space will be set up as an exhibition, as a starting point for the public to engage with the whole project.

3. Retort

Retort is an organisation with a project space, 34 ateliers and a guest studio hosted by the Gerrit van der Veen Foundation. It is located in the stadsdeel Oud-Zuid in Amsterdam.
The project space offers talented artists room for collaborative projects, exchanging of ideas, discussing contemporary art and involving the public in the 'art process'. It is a vivid spot for artists and visiting public. The project space serves as a workshop, platform, office and laboratory.
Retort aims to promote ‘work in progress’, in which multiple artists and art disciplines co-operate, stimulating interaction with the public, neighbours, the artwork and the artists. Experiments are welcomed.
Artists are given the opportunity to use the space (100 m2, big shop window at the Aalsmeerweg) to realize their proposal, conduct the research. Projects in Retort often have a substantial relation to the neighbourhood and/or artists are encouraged to involve neighbours in the projects, actively seeking public (lectures, inviting schools).
When a project has started in Retort, the space is guaranteed to be open for public at least two days a week: Friday 16:00-20:00 and Saturday 14:00-17:00.
Retort Aalsmeerweg 103, 1059 AG Amsterdam www.retortproject.nl

4.a. Participating artists

Wim Hardeman, Lorene Bourguignon, Silvia B, Lisa Holden, Anje Roosjen, Chrystl Rijkeboer, Netty van Osch, Roy Cerpac and Shunji Hori are the core group of artists for the research as well as the group show.

In the USA, UK and Australia the biogenetic art movement is more obvious than in Holland. The biogenetic artists work with living materials and alter DNA among other things. For the kloone4000 project artists have been selected who are fascinated by images of the future and the possibilities of technology and science, and use tools like computer manipulation and digital media, which were unknown to art until recently. The work consists of paintings, drawings, ceramics, installations, photography, design, industrial design, video and discussion.
The artists are related by topics like repetitions, transformations, identity and projection of identity, relation of the individual to the mass population, anonymity and changes in communication, perfecting the body and beauty standards, the power of visionary future images and the almost discreet application of modern media.

4.b. Participating scientists

The following persons have stated interest in the project and will participate. For recent updates check the website www.kloone.anjeroosjen.com.

- prof. dr. Inez de Beaufort (professor medical ethics, Erasmus University Rotterdam) will lecture.

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[1] The Arts and Genomics Centre is part of a broad multidisciplinary research programme, carried out at the Universities of Amsterdam, Leiden and Maastricht. The research programme, titled *New Representational Spaces: Investigations of Interactions between and Intersections of Art and Genomics*, primarily aims to describe and analyse the unique role that the visual arts can have in the critical evaluation and dissemination of the results of genomics research. Therefore they aim to bring together artists, genomics researchers and art historians to investigate the interactions between and intersections of arts and genomics.

- dr. Miriam van Rijsingen (Art History Institute, Faculty of Humanities, University of Amsterdam) will lecture.
- dr. ir. Martijntje Smits (philosopher, chemical technologist, working on several relevant research programs, Technical Univeristy of Eindhoven) will debate September 16 and lecture September 17.
- dr. Hubertus Beaumont (Evolutionary Genetics and Microbial Ecology, University of Auckland) will be present online with a weblog, presenting his reflections on current affairs and will answer your questions.
- prof. dr. Robert Zwijnenberg (professor of Art History in relation to Science and Technology, Faculty of Arts and Culture, University Maastricht and Faculty of Arts, University Leiden) wil lecture.
- drs. Frans Meulenberg (science journalist, working at department of philosophy, medical ethics and history of the Erasmus Medical Centre) will lecture.
- prof. dr. Jose van Dijck (professor Television, Media and Culture, department of Film- and Television sciences, University of Amsterdam) will lecture and debate on the ocassion of showing the film Gattaca.
- prof. dr. Hub Zwart (professor Department of Philosophy & Science Studies Radboud University Nijmegen, director Centre for Society & Genomics) will lecture on Art as Knowledge, October 7.

5. The Arts & Genomics Centre

By mediation of The Arts and Genomics Centre specific scientists can be invited to reflect on these projects, so they will be involved on more than just the level of lecturing.
The Arts and Genomics Centre was established to support the New Representational Spaces Research programme, which brings together artists, genomics researchers and art historians to investigate the interactions between and intersections of arts and genomics. The centre proposes to support the kloone4000 Project Proposal by Anje Roosjen by using its knowledge of the field and its network of interested people to supplement her studio work with speakers, discussion panels and the involvement of other artists.

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The Arts and Genomics Centre has the objective of stimulating, initiating and supervising meetings, discussions, collaborations and exchanges between international artists, scientific researchers and professionals from business and government organisations. As instruments for achieving its aim The Arts and Genomics Centre employs symposia, projects, exhibitions and publications that have the interactions between and intersections of art and genomics as leading theme. Moreover, The Arts and Genomics Centre stimulates and conducts artistic and (transdisciplinary) scientific research of the interactions between and intersections of art and genomics.
The point of departure of The Arts and Genomics Centre is the same as that of the overall research programme: art is vital for a broad cultural embedding of genomics. Because of its specific character, art can play a unique role in the critical evaluation and dissemination of knowledge and results from genomics research. Artists who focus in their work on genomics or who incorporate its scientific results (bio-genetic art), contribute to the public debate and to the dissemination of scientific knowledge in a completely different manner than is achieved by other means of debate and dissemination. Art, with its specific knowledge of visual signifiers is able not only to critically consider the experiments and results of genomics, but also to translate and represent them for a broad public, without reverting to stereotype images.

Contactperson: Helen Chandler, website www.artsgenomics.org