

QUINTEN DE COENE

Portraits of people



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J. Noke
Quinton

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With contributions by

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Edge of reality: © Raf Verbeke

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Image p. 6 : "Self portrait", © Quinten De Coene

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p. 8: Quinten De Coene varnishing a drawing, © Ignace Buysschaert

p. 60 : Quinten De Coene at work in the studio, © Ignace Buysschaert

p. 98: The studio, © Raf Verbeke

p. 105: Quinten De Coene sketching, © Flavia Boxy

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Fig. 1
Jitske Vandesande, charcoal drawing

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Fig. 2
Self portrait, oil painting



FOREWORD

The face becomes a deluge that ebbs and revels. Criss-cross, borders are being erected through the sheet. They are lines that cut, eyes that disappear into an intoxication of charcoal. Here, recognition is only temporary. With a fleeting gesture, a face becomes expressed, temporarily drawn onto the paper. The image is then taken away. In this way, the artist appropriates the likeness which is invisible to our eye. The soul is indeed borrowed.

Sander Decock

In these eager lines which De Coene deliberately carves into his paper, one can often find much more than just the face of a casual passer-by. One finds an interpretation of the human soul.

Tim Vergote

p. 8
Quinten De Coene varnishing a drawing In the studio, 2024.
Photograph by Ignace Buysschaert.



AT THE STUDIO

Benedict Vandaele

Quinten De Coene's charcoal portraits are the result of a process that involves several steps. The observation begins with a few quick sketches in a small pocket book, often in pen or marker (fig. 1). In it, the artist goes in search of a composition. Recording the physiognomy is paramount. These sketches are then used as a memory aid in the studio. Without the presence of the model, De Coene sets to work with the sketches to abstract the face in charcoal. The goal is to capture the psychology of the model in the larger drawing (fig. 2). An image emerges that the artist has of the model as an individual, as well as a conception of humanity as a whole. The lonely creature in the globalizing society. With a quick hand, lines, smudges and spots appear on the leaf. De Coene composes the portrait by drawing the head and then erasing it again. Erasing the drawing becomes the basis of the creation.

The next drawing is then created over the erased lines, which in turn is erased. A process that is repeated so many times until the artist is satisfied, or gives up. Each portrait is thus the definition of the many attempts to capture the model. An impossible task according to De Coene. Rather than a representation of the appearance, he tries to capture his emotional reaction and interpretation of the model.

The result is a sketchy drawing that often feels more like part of a larger whole than a stand-alone work. This becomes more apparent when several portraits arise from an encounter with the model. Like different pieces of the puzzle, they together form a more complete picture of the person depicted. Important for Quinten De Coene is the tension that arises between the lines and the carrier. Every smudge and fingerprint that arises during drawing becomes part of the work.

The spots and lines often arise by chance and are preserved as part of the whole. The portrait thus becomes not only the representation of a head but an abstract drawing, a composition on the support. This is reminiscent of Francis Bacon's 'the accident'. Just like this great source of inspiration, it is important for De Coene to allow accidents and to use them in the next action. That is why charcoal is also the favorite material for this artist. Finding the boundary between figurative and abstract - or between the outer and inner - is the goal for him.

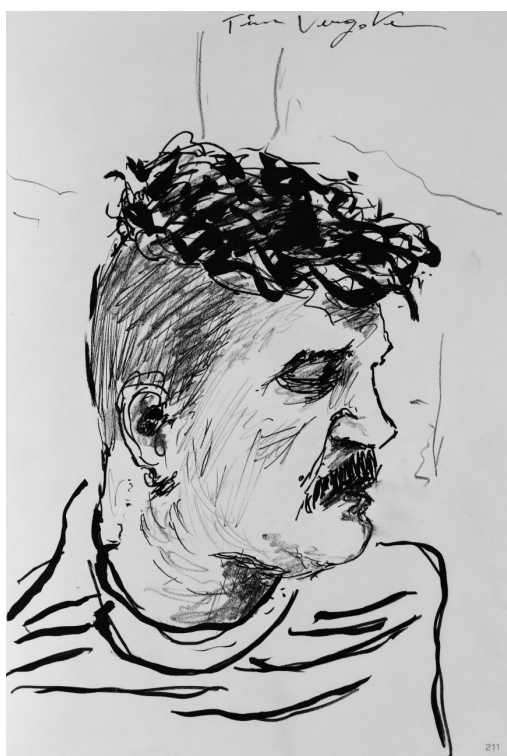


Fig. 3
Tim, sketchbook page



Fig. 4
Tim, charcoal drawing