

Mikio Saito - Tongue-made sculpture

There are two characteristics of this performance. One is that the performance will be indistinguishable at first glance, and the other is that the work will be made from within the mouth, without the use of the hands. Performers can walk, go to shopping and take normal actions at any time of the day. However, they must chew a chewing gum in their mouths for a certain period of time (about 30 minutes) and make sculptures with that gum. It's important to imagine that they are doing the sculpting in their mouth while chewing it. They can swallow the finished sculpture without showing it to anyone. Or, if there is a table or something at a certain point, they can just put them there. Or they can hold it and show it from their hand. It is important to give an individual title to each sculpture, even if some are swallowed.

As for the chewing gum, I don't know what's going on in the Netherlands, but recently it seems that sales of chewing gum have been declining in Japan. It is said that more and more people spend their vacant time and relaxing time looking at smartphones instead of chewing gum. In order to prevent the infection of coronavirus, we have to reduce the opportunity to have face-to-face conversations with people as much as possible now. I think it is very interesting to see what kind of sculpture will be created by closing your mouth and concentrating on chewing gum to indulge in meditation.

Ieke Trink June 20, 2020, 7:26 to 7:56 AM

The market people are busy building up the weekly market that neighbours the Nieuwstraat. Passers-by greet me. In the Nieuwstraat there is hardly any traffic. It feels I'm misplaced, as if I'm beamed into this street with the wrong coordinates dialled in. There is no reason for me to be here in this early morning time. I notice how clean the Nieuwstraat is, and think of the big contrast between the market here and the African Market in Rotterdam. Here everything looks idyllic, old Dutch, and organised, while the African Market is a mixture of cultures and ethnicities, a bit chaotic. The Nieuwstraat almost feels unreal to me, as if it is cleaned to function as a façade for a film shoot. I walk the street up and down and chew for 30 minutes on one piece of gum. I realise I have difficulties controlling my chewing for the purpose of making sculptures. I have an image in my mind, and I use my mouth, teeth, and tongue to create this image with the gum. I have to sit down to really focus on my creation. I'm sitting next to Willem van Oranje for a period, while sculpting my gum. I make 8 different sculptures. Their titles are: Carpet, Gag, Bullet, Tongue, Bridge, Separation, Untitled, and Maria.

Safanja Bendeler

I never chew gum. So this was a real challenge. Firstly, to chew for such a long time and then to make something out of it. Funny how your mind plays tricks. While trying to make a sculpture, my tongue found every corner in my mouth to make something out of the gum.

I remembered a movie where a girl made a knot in a cherry stalk with her tongue...Don't remember which movie.

I made a snail and I was so proud that Nico Parlevliet made this picture:



Leonard Passchier

It took a lot of concentration and hard work. And you couldn't see that in the sculpture. And no one saw it. I loved it!

Malou van Doormaal

The sculpture I aimed to make turned out to be too complicated for the medium. I used different methods during 20 minutes. After that, I gave up.

Nico Parlevliet

I did chew chewing gum all day. For the first time in my life I did this in the awareness that I was sculpturing. A great experience.

Ienke Kastelein

Ever-changing elasticity.

Frans van Lent

I chewed gum for 30 minutes (with attention). I realised that making a sculpture is an act of creation. I experienced the chewing more as an act of destruction.

Like erasing sketches before they even become sculptures.

The sketches were erased before they had names.