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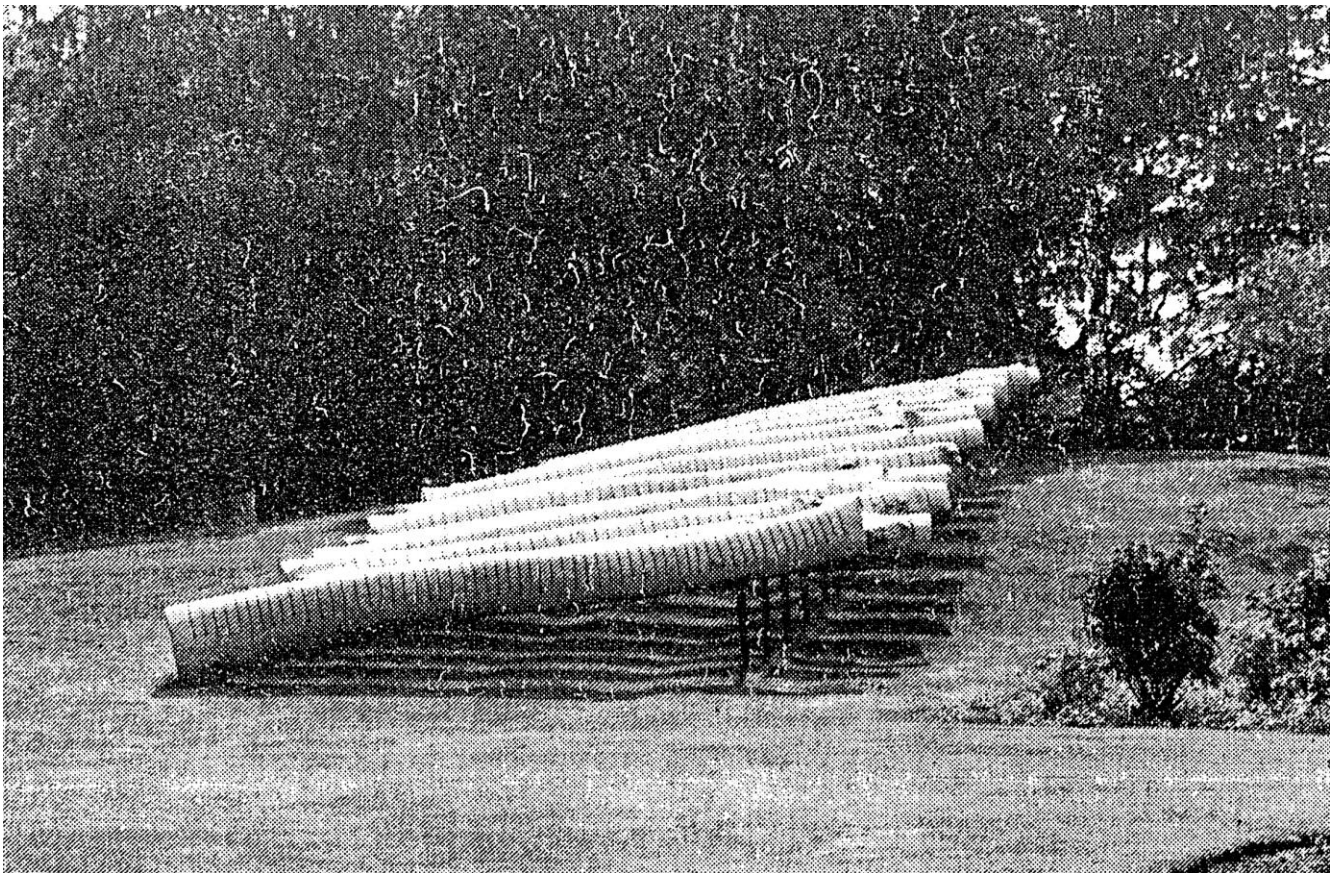
Deventer



Dagblad

Sculpture exhibition emphasizes the combination of art and nature

Wageningen puts 'Images on the Mountain' for sixth time



Installation by Kazuo Kadohara from Japan

Photo • Nicole ter Maten

(By Henk Meutgeert)

Is an art exhibition in a park still possible? "Hardly", says Valerie Smith, the composer of Sonsbeek '93, given the attitude of the latest crop of artists. She mainly went into the city of Arnhem with them. Yes, says the Images on the Mountain Foundation, which made a sculpture exhibition in Wageningen for the sixth time.

Against the oppression, because the Ministry of

WVC saw little in the Wageningen plans. Other sources were therefore used to finance the project. The foundation once again chose the 'museum' Belmonte as an exhibition site, an arboretum that was set up in the early 1950s. The exhibition immediately celebrates the 75th anniversary of the Agricultural University.

Yet this time the foundation has not opted for the road: placing works of art in the decor of a park. This is already evident from the title that the exhibition

was given: 'Musée des Beaux Arts, Musée des Beaux Arbres'. So here is also a concept. Art and nature are given an equal position and the vast majority of the seventeen participating artists have translated this in turn into works that match the environment in terms of choice of materials, but here and there also in terms of content. So a lot of wood.

Tradition

Despite this underlying idea, the sixth Images on the Mountain has nevertheless become a traditional sculpture exhibition and thus ties in with the previous edition of the Sonsbeek exhibition. On the other hand, the exhibition clearly shows that an exhibition in a park is not an outdated idea, it depends on who you invite to it. It is striking that Wageningen is looking for it in a generation that is slightly older than the up and coming young guard in Arnhem. Even Guiseppe Penone, prominently present at Sonsbeek 86, is now popping up in Wageningen again.

Penone, who combines natural materials and shapes in his work, allows a number of bronze strands to follow the shape of a tree branch in the sculpture that he placed in Wageningen and placed the sculpture aside a narrow path. He proves once again to be great in the combination of nature and culture and is the one who goes the most in this exhibition. He works much more subtly than Balduin Romberg, who simply crowns a sawn-off tree stump with a massive icerun plate.

The work of the Japanese Kazuo Kadohara also has a special quality, who placed fifteen stripped poplars in a row and sawed them halfway, always at the same distance. This creates a rhythmic whole that offers an exciting appearance from many sides and changes due to the weather conditions. His compatriot Kimio Tsuchiya placed a large number of twisted h-beams vertically in the ground on the north-south axis like an artificial, withered and burned piece of forest.

Cottage

Marinus Boezem, who has been working with trees for a long time, made eight granite discs, like sawn-off tree discs, polished from above, with the name of a tree engraved on them. A little further on, hidden in a bush and next to a number of piles of coppice wood, stands the scented, massive wooden house

that Anne and Patrick Poirier (pear tree, nice name for this exhibition) made. You can crawl through a low door to see pieces of the forest through a number of lenses.

And in the middle, under glass, is a couple brain. Its shape is reflected in the shape of the hut, which has been given the name 'room for dreams and memories'. The addition of that brain gives the house a somewhat too explicit meaning, they could well have been left out.

Impressive, but substantively sparse, is the work / The valley of the blue flowers' by NilsUdo. He 'raised' a round piece of land with a considerable diameter by means of a plinth, which has been given the shape of a valley surrounded by mountains. In that valley, which can be reached via a staircase 'over the mountains', the blue flowers bloom.

It is very reminiscent of the large black and white 'garden', in which you can also walk, by Jean Dubuffet in the Kröller Müllermuseum. Why the arboretum decided to give this work a permanent status is a mystery, or it must be because Nils-Udo's work is considered more of an attraction.

The most conceptual work on display in Wageningen is that of Ian Hamilton Finlay, the man behind the imposing row of guillotines on the penultimate Documenta in Kassel. The artist, who grew up in Scotland, placed a simple wooden sign indicating the way to Vincennes, near Paris, on a hill near the place where the Wageningse Berg makes a sharp descent towards the Rhine. The place where Diderot was once imprisoned and where Rousseau went to visit him.

Tradition

The sixth Beelden op de Berg seeks a comparison between looking at art and at trees. 'Looking at art will influence looking at trees, and vice versa. The architecture of trees, their shape and the texture of their leaves can be experienced as those of works of art (..) '.

The latter seems to me to be a much too forced search for an underlying idea behind these Images on the Mountain and a too forced justification for placing art in this place. This attitude may have arisen after all the criticism that has been made on the female sculpture garden in recent years. A somewhat more varied choice of artists and materials would have made the exhibition more interesting.