Hi Annie, how are you?
Hi Filippo, I am fine, it's Sunday and the sun is shining. My back and garden need a little caring after a short absence from home. How are you?
I’m fine too, thanks. Can you introduce yourself?
Of course. I am Annie Abrahams - that's my name, but when I am in hospital they call me Anna de Weille. I am an artist. You can find all kind of details about me on bram.org/info/aa, for regular updates you can subscribe to aabrahams.wordpress.com/feed/ or you can try to become my friend on facebook.
I've read you live in France since several years. Do you think it's a nice place for new media artists?
Filippo I am an artist. I don’t like to be called a new media artist - The use of that term leads to too many uninteresting discussions about what would be “new” and what are “media”. I like to say I am an artist who is interested in communication in general and more specific in the conditions and qualities of machine mediated communication.
I would like to live in a world without countries and borders.
I definitely agree with you. Do you think this approach to art - and whole world too - is typical of our times?
I am not sure what you mean by “this approach” Filippo, could you please explain?
With ‘this approach’ I mean: no borders between different fields, thoughts, techniques, human types. Do you think the internet has made it easier for this kind of thinking?
Maybe. Personally I especially see a diversity (and overload) of information. This makes the web fluid and dispersed. I like to think about our relations on the so-called social web as a foam. We are like bubbles migrating through constantly changing aggregations. But the Internet is also keeping traces of all these interactions and this could be (are) used to denature the foam and put us in cases, cages where we only meet “ourselves”.
Don’t you think there is a risk that everyone speaks and nobody listens? I mean: there are thousands and thousands of blogs, videos, photos and so on. I’m not pretty sure there are a real public for all this things. What do you think?
In 1997 I had up to 4 visitors a day who came to bram.org and I was very very happy with that, because it meant 120 visitors each month, the whole year long, which is more than an average exhibition gets. Four years ago I had more than a 1000 a day. Today I have around 200. Probably I had just one person a day visiting and reading, enjoying the site since the beginning. Nothing changed :) but,
but, the energetical overload, the wasted bits, the claim we are making on natural ressources is enormous and more and more problematic.

You obtained a doctorate in biology and then a degree from an art school. Do you think these two
I am a person who has difficulties living in a world she doesn’t understand, who always asks questions. You may say I started with looking for answers by studying biology. I learned a lot about the world around me and my bodily functions, but this didn’t teach me how to live and what to do in life, so I switched to art where I could more easily experiment with questions about myself and which brought me closer to an affective approach of life. I started with painting - did installation and video and finally became interested in the Internet. The Internet that allowed me to observe the behaviour of my fellow human beings, who I have also difficulties understanding, as if they were apes in a cage.

Your way of thinking reminds me something about Leonardo. Can I ask you if you know the reason you’re so curious about human being?

It’s nice you mention Leonardo. The first and long time only book I ever owned was a book about his work - it was a present that went with a subscription to a popular ladies magazine by my mother. So as an adolescent I spend quit some time musing about his work, maybe even admiring him.

As for the question Why am I so curious about the human being?

Objects, things are bordered, limited, you can meditate on them. If you study them well they may even become predictable. Human beings always escape you, are fluid, change and make you change. That’s what bothers and attracts me, what makes me to be afraid of and desire their presence at the same time.

Are you interested in psychology? I mean: “psychologist’s thoughts’?

I am interested in how the human brain works, in how and psychologist and neurologists and psychoanalysts write and talk about our behaviour. I have read some of their books, but I am not a scientist, I am an artist and lately the most revealing book on this subject was “Wittgenstein’s Mistress by David Markson. It is a book about a lady who finds herself all alone in a deserted world. It is also a book that never could have been written before the Internet.

What role has the Internet in your daily life?

The internet is my daily life.

How would you describe your approach to computers?

Computers are tools that lead me to you, that lead me to iteration, loops, information, that produce glitches, holes in a time space continuum. They are also machines that resist me and make connexions are fragile and unstable.

What do you think about social networks?

As answer I would like to cite a part of an article I wrote some time ago : “In her book “Alone Together” Sherry Turkle describes how we hide more and more behind technology, how intimate communications start being something to avoid rather than to look for, how smartphones help us to flee our fear for the other, how we learn to control our relations via interfaces and how we are adapting our behaviour to this new situation.

Facebook teaches us how to simulate intimacy, how to make relations easy, clean, and without danger. At the same time these relations also become superficial and makes us ask: Who are we when we don’t perform? Why can’t we show our vulnerable, messy sides? Why can’t I be boring and cherish solitude anymore?

In a society where authenticity and privacy become endangered it is important to find ways to access our vulnerabilities and doubts, to make them public, to cherish our messy side, to make place for the beast in the beauty, to go back to reality, to claim the human.” from Exercises in remote collaboration – Huis Clos / No Exit – (or “how cyberformance reveals intimacy” (aabrahams.wordpress.com/2011
What future is waiting for the Internet, in your own opinion? 
I might tell you some story now, imagine something? But in fact everything I would tell you would be anchored in the past, would be about the past.

I'm very interested in your projects. Can you tell us anything about your performances?

When we started this interview I told you my back was hurting. It didn’t ameliorate, so I have difficulties sitting in front of my computer. So I would like to end by asking your readers to be content with me saying: “My performances are made to reveal human behaviour, behaviour we mostly try to avoid.” and to ask them to visit my website if they want to know more. Sorry, I have to go moving on…

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