

**Provisional Temple Of Semi-Failed  
Resistance Artist Fighter Dreamers  
Jeremiah Day  
12.11.—24.12.2022**



Ellen de Bruijne  
PROJECTS

In line of Jeremiah Day's interest in affirmative political examples, his new work brings together a long-term research investigation into the life and work of Willem Arondeus, a largely forgotten figure in the history of Amsterdam. *Provisional Temple Of Semi-Failed Resistance Artist Fighter Dreamers* attempts to transform the gallery space into an outpost for historical unearthing, a place in which to foreground forgotten stories and to reflect on how provisional and speculative the future has come to feel.

Willem Arondeus (22 August 1894 – 1 July 1943) was a Dutch artist and author who joined the Dutch anti-Nazi resistance movement during World War II. He participated in the bombing of the Amsterdam public records office to hinder the Nazi German effort to identify Dutch Jews and others wanted by the Gestapo. Arondeus was caught and executed soon after his arrest. Arondeus was inspired by artists who fought in the Paris Commune, and he believed that at some moments artists, even the dreamiest ones, have a unique capacity to step into politics. Indeed, the Amsterdam underground resistance contained many many artists of different kinds, and also a striking representation from the LGBTQI community, with Arondeus himself perhaps being best known for his last words: "Let it be known homosexuals are not cowards."

Jeremiah Day first researched the role of artists in the Dutch Resistance as part of the efforts to oppose the re-structuring of culture in the Netherlands in 2011, including his protest reading at the Van Gogh Museum with artist Rezi Van Lankveld





and others. The historic commitment of the Netherlands to support culture and artists—as distinct from the economic aspects—was indeed a reward in recognition for the role artists of all kinds played in the Dutch Resistance, and so the example of Arondeus has a place within the larger story that unfolds through Day’s work: the capacity of culture to have a role in public life.

The artists in the resistance had a magazine called the “Free Artist” (Frei Kunstenaar) which argued that artists needed to stay out of the official (funded) art scene of the occupation, and band together because the existence of art itself was threatened by the political moment. For Day, this argument re-frames what was at stake in the 2011 budget cuts in the Netherlands and the shift to the model of the “cultural entrepreneur” away from the principle of culture’s role in civil society.

With the collaboration of researcher Claire Schwarz, she and Day enact a shared reckoning of Arondeus’ decisions to act and how his struggles in the years before the war set the stage for what was to come. Arondeus elaborated on the idea that artists, dreamers, have a unique route towards political action in that they see the larger frame and potential meaning in events. This principle emerged in Schwarz’s research and was foundational to Day’s approach. Arondeus’ journal writings and memories of his friends become a soundtrack that frames other examples of camaraderie and struggle, through fragments of forgotten monuments, and traces of performances and encounters at the intersection between private and public. In the landscape of a city that continues to shift undeniably, the goal is to make the gallery space take up a civic role, even at the most intimate and modest scale. As Fred Dewey wrote about Day’s work: “where one’s heart and one’s mind might work together.”

**Jeremiah Day** (1974, USA), lives and works in Berlin. His practice interweaves photography, intensive research, and a moving/speaking performance method that takes site and political history as structures around which to improvise and speculate. Often working together with figures like dancer Simone Forti, musicians Bart de Kroon and Chicks on Speed, or thinkers and activists like Fred Dewey, Day's work with performance and installation mobilises voices and examples from past and present into an idiosyncratic narrative form. Originally from Los Angeles, Jeremiah came to Amsterdam as a resident at the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunst (2003-2004). In 2017 he received his doctorate in Artistic Research from the Vrije Universiteit, Amsterdam with the presentation of 'A Kind of Imagination that has Nothing to Do with Fiction: Art in Public Life.' His most recent publication is *If Its For The People, It Needs To Be Beautiful, She Said*, (2021) produced in collaboration with Will Holder and accompanying the 2020-21 travelling solo project presented at the Badischer Kunstverien, Centre d'art Le Lait, and Villa Romana.

Recent solo exhibitions include *Citoyenne Reprise, Jeremiah Day & collaborators*, Netwerk Aalst, BE (2021); *Jeremiah Day: But not knowing what to do isn't giving up, is it?*, Arcade, Brussels, BE (2021); the travelling project *If It's For The People, It Needs To Be Beautiful, She Said* at Villa Romana, Florence, IT, Centre d'Art Le Lait, Albi, FR, and Badische Kunstverein, Karlsruhe, DE (2020); *Walking From New Orleans / No More Words For You Spring ield*, Arcade, London, UK (2018); and *Jeremiah Day*, Museum of Modern Art, Warsaw, PL (2016). Selected group exhibitions include *Waste/d Pavilion, Episode 3*, State of Concept, Athens, GR (2022); *Project Palace, a cente-nary*, Bozar, Brussels, BE (2022), *Social Photography VIII*, Carriage Trade, New York City, USA (2020).

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**Gallery hours**

**Wed till Fri 11 – 18 h | Sat 13 – 18 h**