

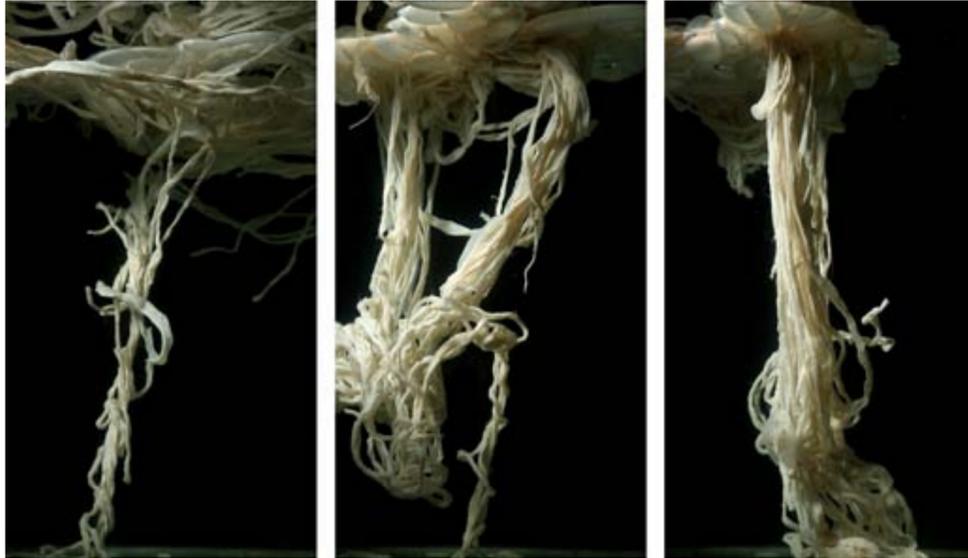
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With Pulp: Dominique Edwards' 'Buikspraak/Gutspeak'

By **Tim Leibbrandt**

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If removed from their tightly compacted spot in the stomach, human intestines unfold to a total length of between six and eight-and-a-half metres. It goes without saying that if one were to spill one's guts — literally rather than metaphorically— the task of returning this garbled mess to its prior state would be no mean feat. Besides being a nifty factoid about human biology, the idea of the discrepancy between neatly wound and expansive, unruly tangle mimics the viewer's experience of Dominique Edwards' 'Buikspraak/Gutspeak.' It is a great exhibition and key to its success is the excellent use of Commune.1's winding, multi-levelled gallery space which unexpectedly takes the viewer on an ever-shifting journey.

This is not instantly apparent from the first room. Things begin straightforwardly enough with meticulously arranged sheets of paper made from pulped mops, *lappies* fashioned from tumble dryer lint and two large rotating mops suspended from the ceiling. Introducing the ideas of cycles and recycles which are central to 'Buikspraak/Gutspeak,' the room resembles a typical art-on-paper show with rows of sheets of paper arranged into grids. It feels a bit like a complete exhibition unto itself.



Dominique Edwards, 'Buikspraak/Gutspeak', 2015. Installation view: Commune.1

It is when the viewer crosses over into the concrete space that the exhibition unfolds from these neatly constrained beginnings. Functioning as a physical bridge between the two sections of the gallery, this concrete space also metaphorically serves as a bridge into the quirkier side of the exhibition. The room features multiple video screens and projections, depicting the *lappies* and mops of the previous room

being submerged underwater. While *Untitled* initially appears to center on a mop, the noodly subject of the video is in fact cows' intestines instead. This sly visual juxtaposition sets the tone for the next phase of the exhibition which becomes focused on tangled masses of things (primarily packaging material), beginning with a similarly intestinal installation of duct tape on the wall as one leaves the concrete bridge. In *Turn-Re-Turn-I* and *II* Edwards seemingly attempts to restore unrolled duct tape to its previous form.

One of the exhibition's particular strengths is the way in which the works seamlessly transition into each other. For example: pulped mops to mops proper to a video of submerged mops to a video of submerged intestines to duct tape intestines to duct tape rolls. A tribute to the careful planning and layout of the exhibition, it is only once you take a moment to reflect on what you've seen that it appears almost incongruous to where it started.

There is a substantial amount of work on the show and needless to say, some are more effective than others. For instance, while I understand the connections to imperfect loops and cycles, a pair of video works depicting spinning tires and a car doing donuts in a parking lot feel a bit alienated from the visual language of the exhibition's broader dialogue. The same is true of some of the framed assemblages of various building materials. In an exhibition of this scope however, not everything can have equal appeal and these are by no means detrimental to the exhibition as a whole. Ultimately 'Buikspraak/Gutspeak' is an expansive and inventive exhibition which makes full use of the idiosyncrasies of Commune.1's space. Edwards seems to indulge in throwing curveballs at the viewer while also finding time to pepper in a number of striking and poetic moments.



Dominique Edwards, *Turn-Re-Turn-I*, 2015. Duct tape, 31.5 x 22 cm.

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