

beautiful distress

BEAUTIFUL DISTRESS ART EXHIBITION AND CONGRESS

September - October 2017, Amsterdam, the Netherlands // 2018 Brooklyn, New York

With its Art Exhibition and Congress Beautiful Distress wants to make mental suffering visible and openly discuss and fight prejudices regarding people with a psychiatric disorder. Our aim: More understanding and greater social acceptance.

Beautiful Distress and The Fifth Season organize an exhibition of work by artists who spent a period as artist in residence in psychiatric hospital Kings County Hospital, Brooklyn, New York and/or Altrecht, Den Dolder. The artists show their impressions of mental illness and create awareness with the public on the limitations brought about by mental illness.

Simultaneously with the exhibition debates and discussions will be organized with representatives of all interest groups: patients and their families, policy makers in health care and psychiatry, government, artists and the public. The views and observations of the artists, resulting from their intense experiences with patients and staff, will be bundled in an "Artists manifesto", which will be offered to all participants and form the starting point for the discussions.

The aim of the discussions is to come up with and formulate new ideas and recommendations to the policymakers in government and mental health care and the general public to create more understanding and compassion for those suffering from mental disorders, and their immediate environment.

Public support is urgently needed: one in every four people has to deal with with psychiatric problems, either personally or in his immediate vicinity. In big cities this number is growing to one in three. At the same time, the care for psychiatric patients is under ever increasing pressure. The consequences are insufficiently thought through.

IMPACT OF BEAUTIFUL DISTRESS art exhibition:

- Patients and their families find the courage to talk about their situation sooner. This helps soften their suffering and creates opportunities for improvement
- The connection between art and psychiatry creates a new perspective on people with a psychiatric disorder and leads to more public understanding
- Children's workshop: the idea of mental illness is discussed in workshops with children. Prejudices are discussed and contested
- Through the observations of the artists new and different ideas and solutions can be formulated and offered to policy makers in healthcare and government



Background:

Beautiful Distress Foundation collaborates with The Fifth Season. This foundation has been organizing artist-in-residency projects for over fifteen years in psychiatric hospital Altrecht, den Dolder, the Netherlands. Together with The Fifth Season Beautiful Distress organized as its first project an international artists exchange in Den Dolder. In 2014 Beautiful Distress and Kings County Hospital in Brooklyn, New York set up and started an artist-in-residency program at the hospital in Brooklyn. For her planned exhibition project Beautiful Distress will collaborate with artists they invited to the artist-in-residency program at Kings County Hospital. In addition, Beautiful Distress and The Fifth Season, also have a choice of the work of the artists who in the last fifteen years spent a residency period in Altrecht, Den Dolder.