



ING and Art: Discovering New Horizons



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ABSTRACT

Arts and banking often seem worlds apart. ING, however, has been a passionate supporter of the arts for a long time. Art is an inextricable part of ING and is strongly embedded in ING's identity: innovative, enterprising and modern, with a focus on progress and sustainability.

Why?

In recent years the connection between business and the arts has become closer, and more relevant than ever. And this will only increase in the coming years.

As for many businesses, banking has become very digital and very commoditized, Art remains as one of the few differentiating factors that enable truly game-changing innovations.

In these fast times of widespread efficiency, measurements and digitization, art is more important than ever before. The personality of a work of art strikes a balance by creating a shared experience, a place to meet and a creative environment.

One of the challenges for a bank is to show agility and innovation, and it requires creativity, attention to detail, and imagination to do that. That is where art and artists come in! The use of new technologies by an artist can raise new questions within the society in which they are active. Even though the development of new technologies have opened up possibilities across the world, the questions that are raised are often connected to human rights, man versus machine and the responsible use of technology. Art can in this

way ask attention for the questions of tomorrow. ING sees artists all over the world as true frontrunners and innovators of our time. Their insightful views on the world, transferred into their artworks, help everyone to reflect upon important matters. Art is key to reaching this goal.

Collection and her history

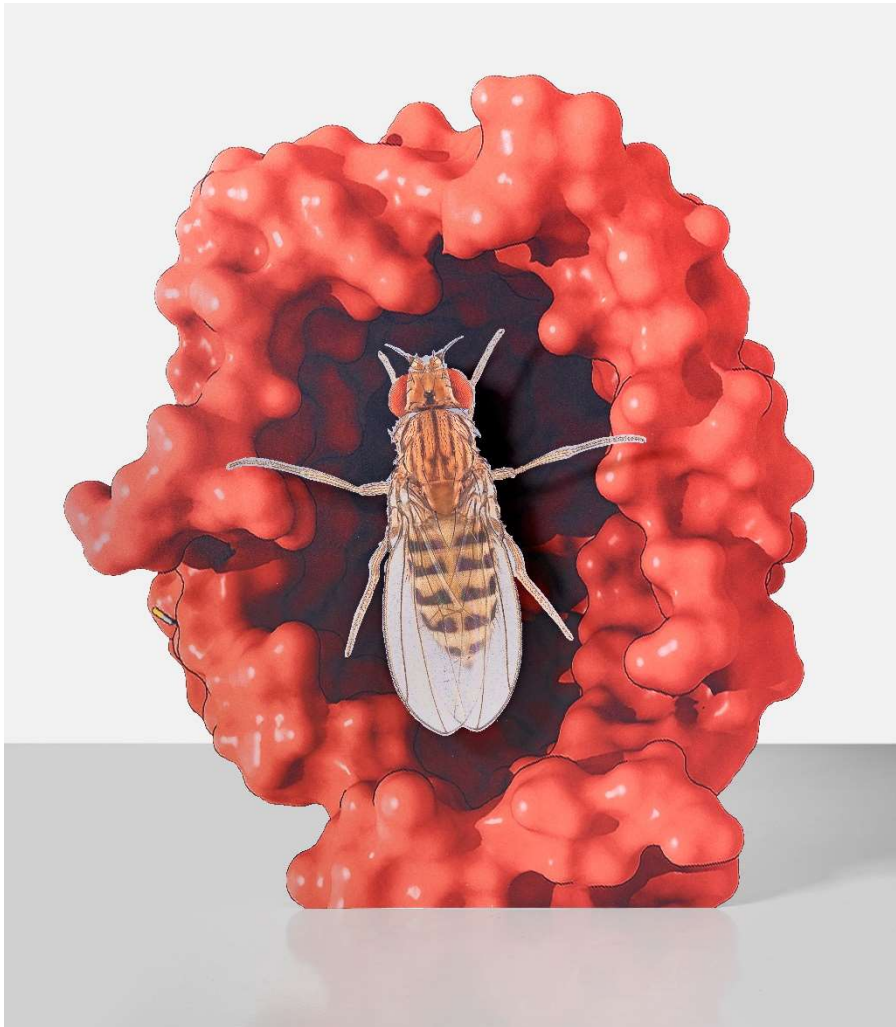
The ING Collection is a dynamic contemporary art collection, encompassing some 6.000 artworks. It is a place where questions are asked which are relevant for everyone. The collection represents a current approach that points towards a future: a future of a corporate collection, which is motivated by the desire to stay relevant, adapt, and contribute to the growth of the employees and the society in which it functions.

ING does not only collect with its collection. Art brings its own dynamic, also among employees, and makes it possible to raise alternative and ethical questions that otherwise do not have a place in the company. Questions such as how you perceive the world around you through the artwork. Viewing art means allowing emotions and questions to be evoked. It is not a passive event, even if it may seem that way. For a moment you become a part of the artwork's meaning. Marcel Duchamp believes that a painting can be made by the viewer just as much as by the artist. The ING collection creates a moment in which this is possible. It pushes borders and changes mindsets. It stands for quality, experimentation and innovation; it reflects topics and themes that are relevant to ING.



***Fragmented circle 5* - Tjebbe Hein
2018, ING Collection**

The ING Collection has always stood strong within constant changes in society. In the 1970's, ING – still NMB back then – was one of the first companies in the Netherlands to start collecting art. The basis for the collection was laid in 1974, followed by some mergers with the Barings Bank, Bank Bruxelles Lambert and Bank Śląski. These collections from the United Kingdom, Belgium and Poland which originally dated from the 1920s, 1960s and 1990s respectively, became part of the ING Group Collection. It therefore is an organically established reflection of national and international movements. The collection has grown along with ING's international aspirations. This opens doors and provides new opportunities for presenting and sharing the collection and organizing activities. Nowadays, it has become an extensive, international corporate collection, one which is always in motion.



Approximation – Katja Novitskova
2017, ING Collection



Hence the central importance given to art at ING – a tradition which is still going strong after more than 45 years. ING attaches great importance to the collection's public function. The works of art are seen daily by thousands of people both inside and outside of ING and both in real life and online. Besides being enjoyed by staff, who may select an artwork for their office or become an ambassador for a particular piece, the works of art are also on display outside ING. One chief objective is to share this cultural heritage with a broad audience.

ING has an exhibition space in Brussels. With more than 60 exhibitions gathering 3.000.000 visitors since the launch in 1986 the ING Art Center is an active cultural partner in Brussels. Currently dedicated to modern and contemporary art, the ING Art Center is hosting temporary exhibitions dedicated to artists such as James Ensor, Peter Kogler or more recently Christo and Jeanne-Claude as well as thematic exhibitions such as *Pop Art in Belgium*, *Guggenheim. Full Abstraction* and *Revolutions. Records and Rebels 1966-1970* in collaboration with the Victoria & Albert Museum in London. The ING Art Center is more than just an exhibition space with its top floor transformed into an incubator for cultural and creative industries. It's also a place open for fashion, design and music.

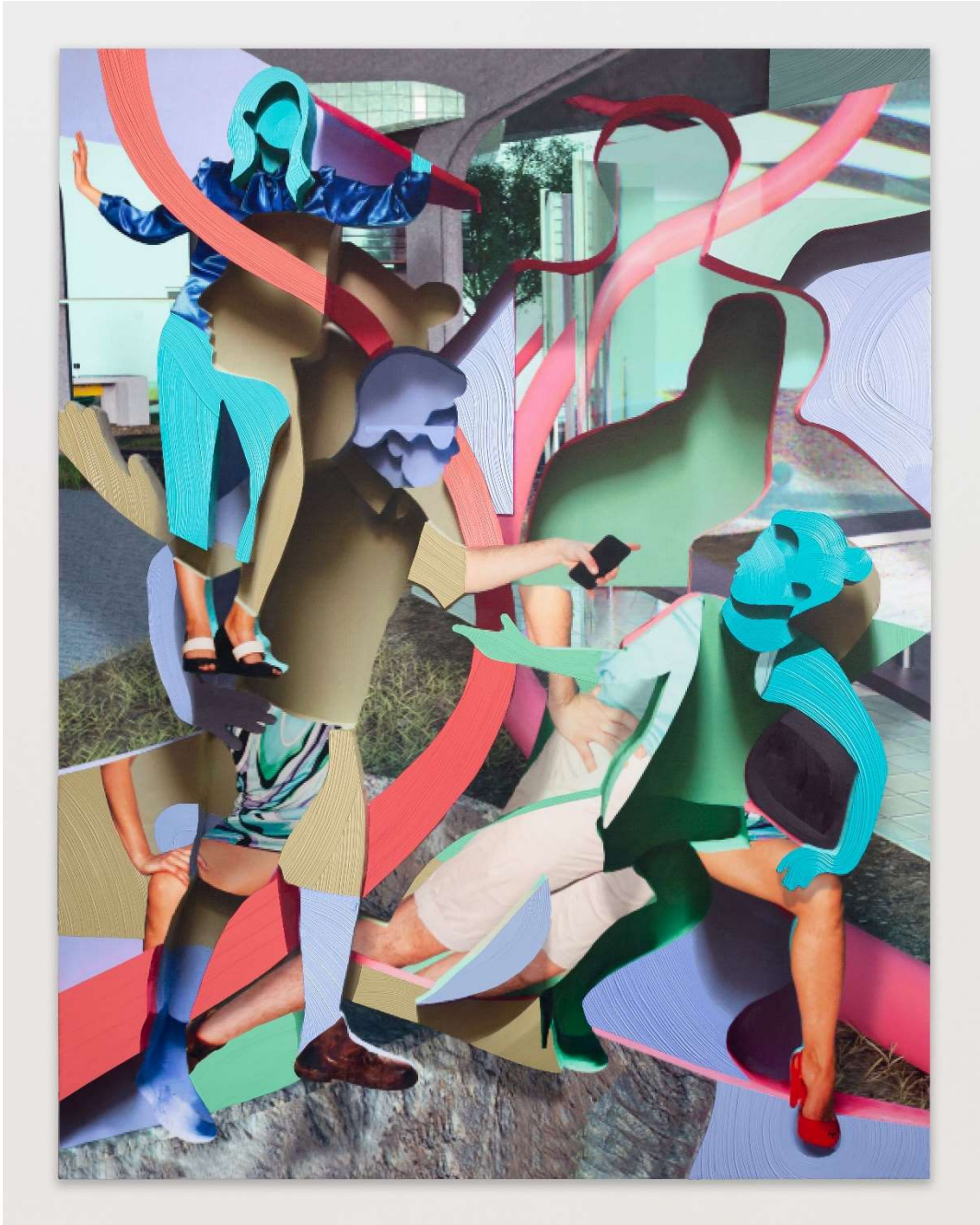
The next exhibition entitled *Love. Hate. Debate. Start a Conversation with the ING Collection* will reflect in an innovative way the Group's commitment to art, its embeddedness in current society and its desire to help make art accessible to everyone. This exhibition will feature works from the ING collection and will question the special relationship that individuals can have with a work of art. It's also an invitation to move beyond first impressions and engage in a conversation with the work of art, yourself and the world around you.

ING also regularly lends works to museums worldwide. The collection was amongst others on exhibit at the Pushkin Museum in Moscow, The Cobra Museum in Amstelveen and the MoA in Seoul. A variety of catalogues has also been published in recent years, such as *RE: Society*, *Art in the Office*, *Natuurlijk*, *The Collection of the ING Polish Art Foundation*, *The Art of ING Barings* and *BBL De Kunstverzameling*. In addition, more and more of the ING Collection can be accessed online so that everyone, young and old, can enjoy it.

The main purpose of the collection, however, is to bring in a culture of innovation and change. Therefore, it concentrates on giving a stage for young, talented, international artists. ING does this by empowering and kick-starting artists' careers through commissions and providing them with a platform to display their work. The support of young talent is an important mission for ING.

The ING Unseen Talent Award is a prime example of empowering young talent by sharing knowledge and expertise. It enables ING to engage with society and to make a link between arts, culture and society. In recent years, the connection to society has become

increasingly important as ING seeks out constructive collaboration through an increasingly cross-disciplinary approach.



Behavioral Surplus capture – Pieter Schoolwerth
2019, ING Collection
(photography Anders Sune Berg)



Several years ago, in the middle of the recession, ING started thinking about what they could do to empower young artists. While art awards are not uncommon, they wanted to do something more than just give them financial support. Young artists often miss the tools or experience to make a living out of their craft and to build a career as a professional artist after their graduation. Even though they might be very talented, they do not know how to make a name for themselves. Whether it is finding the right gallery to represent them, or the way in which they present themselves in the media, they simply do not have this expertise. Precisely those aspects are crucial for an artist's career, especially right after graduation. This is where ING wanted to use their expertise to offer them support. In collaboration with Unseen the ING Unseen Talent Award was developed. It enables new photography talent to kick start their career. The award provides more than just a monetary prize. It gives young artists what they really need: a platform, networking experience and hands-on coaching!

Since the beginning of this award in 2013 35 young photographers have truly developed themselves and grown as artists through this support. What started as a Dutch initiative with Dutch finalists has today grown into a European award with an international platform. Around the artists, a great network of international photography professionals, from the scouts to the jury-members, has been created. The finalists have been coached by internationally established photographers, such as Desiree Dolron, Rineke Dijkstra, Todd Hido, Nadav Kander, Isaac Julien and Adam Broomberg received workshops on presenting themselves in front of the media, their portfolios have been reviewed, and they have been given a platform through numerous exhibitions and publications.

To conclude: new developments have changed the way corporate collections are perceived. The motives for corporate collecting (often) go beyond pure beautification of blank walls. Its power lies in reflection, inspiration and connection, while bringing – by means of the art - additional values in the corporate structure and today's society. For ING its unique power lies in the ability to connect the arts with the outside world, to reach out to a new audience and to create room for hybrid and interactive experiences of art.