

Arjan van Helmond  
*Vertical Thinking*

April 30 – June 4, 2022

Albada Jelgersma Gallery is pleased to invite you to *Vertical Thinking*, Arjan van Helmond's second solo exhibition at the gallery. The exhibition opens on Saturday April 30th from 5-7 pm and runs through June 4th.

On display are ten large and smaller paintings of trees, always painted from the same point of view. In contrast to his usual loose way of working, van Helmond created a series of works with the same motif. Yet the paintings are very different. Each work explores in an experimental way the different possibilities and options that color, light and form have to offer.

Van Helmond uses *vertical thinking*, which is regarded as the opposite of creative (or lateral) thinking. It describes a strict, linear thinking process, in which you rationally look at all options to arrive at the best result. In this series, van Helmond explores whether and how this way of thinking can be used in the creative process of painting.

Although as a viewer you view the paintings horizontally, it feels as if you are looking vertically 'into' the painting. There is a sense of looking up. If you look up at the trunk, you can see light shining through the foliage. Sometimes the light seems to come from the trunk itself. Or the light is reversed, as in a negative of a photograph. At times the trunk of the tree fills up half the image, but way up beyond the leaves, there is always an infinite amount of sky to look up to. Depending on the distance between you and the painting, the paintings can appear almost abstract.

We usually recognize a tree by its location, much more than by its specific appearance. As a source, van Helmond photographed trees in places that are meaningful to him. An oak tree near his home in Amsterdam. A beech tree in a park in Berlin. A palm tree in a garden in Dubai. Each of the trees have a physicality to it. With branches that twist and bend like arms. Exuberant or subdued. Although the trees are all painted from the same perspective, this makes each of the trees recognizable and unique.

Arjan van Helmond (1971) lives and works in Amsterdam. He graduated from the Rijksakademie in Amsterdam in 2004. Currently he has a solo exhibition at Museum MORE, through June 6, 2022. In October 2019 he created a public artwork in the NS Station of Leeuwarden, named Golfbrekers. In 2018 he received the Jeanne Oosting Prize. Solo exhibitions include: Kranenburgh Bergen (2018); De Nederlandsche Bank, Amsterdam (2017); Lucebert Huis, Bergen (2017); LUMC, Leiden (2010). Group exhibitions include *Arti et Amicitiae*, Amsterdam (2014); Dordrechts Museum, Dordrecht (2011); White Box, NY (2001). His work is part of the following collections: Museum MORE, the Saatchi Gallery, Museum Het Domein, De Nederlandsche Bank, Chadha Art Collection, Akzo Nobel Art Foundation, Heden, Schunck, The Schorr Family Collection, Rabo Art Collection.

For information and images please contact us at [info@albada-jelgersma.com](mailto:info@albada-jelgersma.com) or +31 20 261 93 66.

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