

**Works**

*Into the Water (In his Leather Breeches)*, 2008  
Fish leather, cotton thread, maple buttons  
60 x 110 cm

*For a spring abrim with songs of love is constantly reborn*, 2008

Wooden barrel, 1 copper-plated hoop, interior coated with bees wax, wooden spigot, filled with water from an unnamed spring, found glass cup  
36 cm diameter x 58 cm, 68 l

*We both step and do not step in the same rivers (with Heraclitean bench)*, 2008

16mm film, sound, branch construction  
Dimensions variable.  
Film duration: 9 minutes, looped

*Incised into a softer stone (in a buried wetland)*, 2008

Photographic print from 35mm slide, unframed  
60 x 39 cm

**Publication**

*As a Wild Boar Passes Water: excerpts from the writings of Viktor Schaubberger (1885–1958)*

Compiled by: Gareth Moore

Edited by: Zoë Gray & Monika Szewczyk

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**Events:**

Wednesday 2 April

6 p.m. Exhibition opening

7 p.m. Gareth Moore and Geoffrey Farmer in conversation with Jesse Birch (artist, curator and current participant of the Curatorial Training Programme at de Appel, Amsterdam)

**Curated by**

Nicolaus Schafhausen, Zoë Gray

**Text by**

Zoë Gray

(This text is printed on unbleached paper.)

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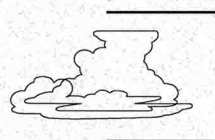
Canadian Embassy, The Hague

**Subsequent artists whose work will be exhibited within Liam Gillick's meta-structure:**

Claire Fontaine (10 May – 8 Jun)

Annette Kelm (13 Jun – 24 Aug)

See [www.wdw.nl](http://www.wdw.nl) for details.

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Open Tue – Sun, 11 – 6 p.m.

# Gareth Moore

3 APR – 4 MAY 2008

As a Wild Boar Passes Water

**Artist's biography**

Gareth Moore (b. 1975, Matsqui, British Columbia, Canada; lives and works in Vancouver) studied at the Emily Carr Institute, Vancouver (2001 – 2004) and the Ontario College of Art and Design, Toronto (1999 – 2000). He has a forthcoming solo exhibition at the CCA Wattis Institute of Contemporary Arts, San Francisco (also as part of the group show *Wizard of Oz*, 2008). Recent solo exhibitions include *St. George Marsh Denaturalized*, Belkin Satellite, Vancouver (2007); *Art Perform*, Art Basel Miami Beach (2006); Charles H. Scott Gallery, Vancouver (2005).

Group exhibitions include *The Museum*, Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin (forthcoming 2009); *The Theater of Life*, Galleria Civica di Arte Contemporanea, Trento; *Door Slamming Festival*, Berlin; *KölnShow 2*, Gallery Daniel Buchholz, Cologne (all 2007). Moore's work was presented in 2006 at Witte de With as part of the group exhibition *Street: Behind the cliché*.

Nature is, and will always be, the best and the cheapest teacher<sup>1</sup> Viktor Schaubberger

Gareth Moore's exhibition *As a Wild Boar Passes Water* features new works inspired by the ideas of Viktor Schaubberger (1885 – 1958), a self-taught naturalist, philosopher and inventor, who developed his theories through the close study of the woods and rivers of his native Austria. "Even in my earliest youth," he writes, "my fondest desire was to understand Nature and through such understanding to come closer to truth; a truth I was unable to discover either at school or in church. In this quest I was thus drawn time and time again into the forest"<sup>2</sup>. A very human scientist, with a great sense of wonder, Schaubberger sought for rational explanations to the extraordinary phenomena that he witnessed.

For Schaubberger, empirical observation was key: "Nature moves everything and creates this movement through various differences in temperature and potential. Where these intersect, the primordial life-force is born. There are only a very few people who really know how to observe Nature and to notice these small and almost imperceptible differences in motion, temperature, tension and potential"<sup>3</sup>. Gareth Moore is one of these few people, attuned to notice the small details of the world that are usually overlooked. As he puts it, "I like having a very fragmented art practice... of art that exists in a more dissipated or invisible manner". In his approach, there is a certain playfulness and choreographed quirkiness. He often instigates projects in which he can learn something and interact with other communities outside the domain of contemporary art. For example, as part of his year-long traveling project *Uncertain Pilgrimage* (2006–7)<sup>4</sup>, he worked with a baker in Trento, devising unusually shaped breads that were presented in the bakery each morn-

ing; and previously, with his friend Jacob Gleeson, he ran a convenience store/museum/gallery that sold everything from outsider art to gobstoppers, ice cream and tins of tuna (*St. George Marsh*, 2005–2006).

Moore is often drawn to historical figures who stand outside the mainstream. For example, an earlier work was titled *Please send this meteorite back in time to Christiaan Huygens and ask him to send it further back in time to Giordano Bruno and please tell him that he was right and that I have made a small monument to him* (2006). With the current project, Moore focuses our attention on the writings and discoveries of a thinker whose work was never fully accepted by the scientific establishment, indeed whose ideas were censored, denigrated and even stolen. With his titles, Moore also sends us off on trails of references that lead to figures such as Heraclitus (the Weeping Philosopher of the 5<sup>th</sup> century BC), who wrote a treatise in which he defined change as the central quality of nature; or to Goethe, whose poetic approach to science was much admired by Schaubberger.

Today, Schaubberger's interest in flux and flow appear before their time, and his ecological concerns seem somewhat prophetic. In an apocalyptic description of the future, written in the 1930s, Schaubberger writes of the dire consequences of continuing to treat the earth purely as a resource for industry, foreseeing that "Hardship and hardship alone will increase"<sup>5</sup>. Some twenty years later, he wrote in a letter to a friend "If humanity does not come to its senses at this final hour, then the very next generation will have to dig for water as hitherto has been dug for gold. The same applies to the realm of energy resources."<sup>6</sup> Despite the direness of his warnings and his frustration at the lack of attention paid to them by his contemporaries, Schaubberger also

displayed a dry sense of humor: "They call me deranged. The hope is that they are right! It is of no greater or lesser import for yet another fool to wander this Earth. But if I am right and science is wrong, then may the Lord God have mercy on mankind!"<sup>7</sup>.

Moore's works center around Schaubberger's belief that water is the source of all life and an active, living element whose energy must be harnessed rather than destroyed. The latter was convinced of the dangers of purifying water with chemicals, and gleefully damned all those who disagreed with him: "When they become ill, let those who continue to believe that water is a lifeless substance to be controlled by mathematical formulae alone, then summon a mathematical genius to their sickbed instead of a doctor. Their fellow men will then be rid of such narrow-minded thinkers as fast as possible"<sup>8</sup>. Moore has shipped to Rotterdam a barrel containing water collected from a small, natural spring in western Canada, from which exhibition visitors may drink.

Moore's photograph *Incised into a softer stone (in a buried wetland)* is a bathetic homage to the Tabula Smaragdina described by Schaubberger, an emerald from ancient Egypt into which was carved a text describing the elements that held the world together. Moore has carved an extract from Schaubberger's text into a modest sandstone, dumped by the city of Vancouver onto what he discovered to be a buried wetland, now a wasteland on the way to his studio. At once magical and mundane, the stone is placed at a point where several buried streams emerge through the ground, suggesting the way in which even buried knowledge can seep into the present.

A small booklet has been produced by the artist as a way of bringing a selection of Schaubberger's observations and apocryphal warnings into the body of the exhibition. These writings also reach beyond the

confines of the gallery walls, extending into the pages of the local paper *de Havenloods* (the appropriately titled "Harbor pilot" or "warehouse"). Published weekly during the run of the exhibition<sup>9</sup>, they can be collected and inserted into the booklet.

Having read accounts of Schaubberger wading into the water to solve a scientific argument, and of his observations of fish behavior, Moore has made a pair of trousers from dried fish leather. Finally, Moore's 16mm film of a flowing river recalls Schaubberger's contemplation of water as his way to allow his consciousness to drift freely into a better understanding of his surroundings. To reach the film, the visitor must first navigate a structure made from interlocking twigs, which also form a bench upon which to sit. This structure also acts as an organic counterpoint to the highly manufactured screens by Liam Gillick that frame the exhibition space.

At Witte de With, Moore's works are presented within the remains of Gillick's solo exhibition, which imposed an architectural meta-structure onto the gallery spaces. This designated which rooms were to be used for the presentation of Gillick's own work (including the vitrine of Gillick's designs and printed materials) and which were to be seen as "institutional zones", to be programmed by the curatorial team. Witte de With chose to present here the work of other artists, first Manon de Boer, then Keren Cyttar and now Gareth Moore.

1 Schaubberger, "From the Earthworm Sanatorium", 1945

2 Schaubberger, "Let the upheaval begin!", 1933

3 Schaubberger, "Nature as Teacher", 1936.

4 Elements of which were presented in Witte de With's 2006 group exhibition *Street: Behind the Cliché*

5 Schaubberger, "The first doubts", 1933

6 Schaubberger, "Excerpts from Letter no. 3 to Josef Brunnader", 1956

7 Schaubberger, "The Odsee Rumbles", 1936.

8 Schaubberger, "Our Senseless Toil – conclusion", undated

9 These texts will appear in *de Havenloods* on April 4, 11, 18, 25 and 30