



**First book presenting an overview of the work of Hans Broek: 'Turbulent painting and guilty architecture'**

# HANS BROEK

In recent years, Hans Broek (b. 1965) has immersed himself in the Netherlands' slavery past, a bitter history which has largely escaped attention for a bafflingly long time. He visited slave forts on the Atlantic Ocean, worked in places such as Ghana and Senegal, conducted research in Suriname and devoured publications by historians and sociologists.

This eventually led to an extensive series of paintings on this emotionally charged subject. Under the title *The Things I Used To Do*, De Pont Museum displayed this series for the first time in 2020. These are confrontational paintings in which dungeons, cell doors and plantation houses act as silent witnesses to what happened under Dutch rule. At the same time, they symbolise human failings.

Twenty-five years ago, when Hans Broek left the Netherlands for America, he created panoramic paintings of cities on America's West Coast: rolling hills with stuccoed villas gleaming under a carefree blue sky. With these surprising interpretations of what he saw around him, he breathed new life into the landscape genre in the mid-1990s. The canvases have a cinematic and also slightly surreal quality: although there are no humans to be seen, you sense how the culture has the environment under control.

Work by Hans Broek will be exhibited in ROOF-A in Rotterdam from November 2023.

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