

*The fact that the arts, like science, present special ways of making the world accessible does not need much explanation. It has always been so, and artists, their mediators and the audience can see the importance of this discovering of the world as an end in itself.*

*The private art collector forms a special species within this network. No small number of them tend to lose their enthusiastic and impulsive attitude quite abruptly as soon as they encounter the necessity of ordering and classifying their own archives, for the inventory and preservation of their treasured articles. For most collectors, transforming the passion for collecting and the urge of discovering into a sustained curiosity around the preservation and presentation of their collection is a challenge that should not be underestimated.*

*Mark Vanmoerkerke is aware of the voyeuristic potential of his "private institution" and creates his own style of audience, perhaps in parallel to the embattled public institutions. The self-portrayal on the collection's website modestly misleads visitors as to the actual spectrum of his collection: one reads simply that it contains "post-conceptual" European and American art. Doubtless, at the latest since the conceptual art of the sixties, the development of theories forms an integral part of the art business. Indeed, it is for this reason alone many private collections have actually come into being.*

*My aim while putting together this group exhibition "Pour Arno" is to show the increasing self-reflexivity of the arts as well as the deployment of artistic, sometimes privatistic research practices of the artists. I am interested in identifying the sideways, the yearning for the "logic of the illogical".*

*The Oostende-born chanson singer and musician Arno was my inspiration while doing research in the archives of the collection. It seems to me that obsessions hold a special place here in West Flanders.*

Nicolaus Schafhausen