

# Epilogue

---

Now that I've started writing the epilogue of my thesis, which means it's nearing its end, I feel tremendous relief. It's almost done! Everything is written down. I've made a test print that looked great, I did some last grammar checks, finished the visual essay...now I just need to finish this epilogue and with that, the work has been done. I can't actually believe it yet.

The last 1,5 to 2 years have been dominated by metamodernism. I was reading about it, I was writing about it, I was thinking about it almost constantly, I was breathing it; it was everywhere. I actually can't even imagine anymore how my life was before I knew about metamodernism. For me metamodernism is extremely important for many reasons, all of which I've tried to explain in the course of my thesis. Hopefully I've succeeded in that. It was hard sometimes to put my thoughts into words and write a smoothly-running story, but in the end I think I've managed to make myself (and metamodernism) clear enough.

I'm hoping I've also succeeded in explaining the metamodern paradigm in relation to my own work. Which was a really difficult thing to do, probably the most difficult part of all. Nevertheless I believe I've succeeded reasonably well and I sincerely hope you agree. Nonetheless I wish I could've added more to the clarification and deepening of the concept of metamodernism. Unfortunately, in my view, I've succeeded in this insufficiently, simply because my time was too limited. However, although I've finished my thesis my research into metamodernism did not come to an end yet. My search will

continue, also after I've graduated. There are still so many things that are worth researching, I just have to continue. In addition I'll, off course, continue to paint as well and that, in its own way, will also be an addition to metamodernism.

Nevertheless, my thesis is finished and I'm glad it is. Metamodernism is real and it's here to stay. Not everyone will call it metamodernism; in the end metamodernism is only just a name, but what metamodernism entails is widespread. Metamodernism quite accurately captures the shift in our collective awareness that's happening right now. We'll slowly move from a postmodern society to a metamodern one (or whatever you'd like to call it). And like many great ideas metamodernism also started with an artistic tendency and will eventually take on social and political change.

I can honestly say I'm very happy this shift is happening. I worry a lot about the (moral) state of our society, even more since I became a mother 2 years ago. Climate change, inequality, economic instability, political tension, these are all real dangers and a significant change of direction is needed to ever come to serious solutions. Postmodernism is *not* the right mind-set to instigate such a change of direction and open up towards new possibilities. Metamodernism seems much better able to do this. So, for now I'm hopeful about the future of the world and us, humans, in it. However, let's not pretend we don't have work to do. Humanity faces big challenges in solving our contemporary, complex issues. This is a collective endeavour, in which everyone, from all layers of the population, will have to make a contribution.

I can only hope the metamodern structure of feeling will not take too long to change our direction. Time is running out and before you know it, any change will be too late. As an artist, a mother and a human being, I'll do everything within my power

to prevent this from happening. Somewhere in my thesis I wrote that painting feels like a mission to me, but I wasn't quite sure yet what this mission actually entailed. Now I know.

Melissa Couzijn, 2018

Melissa Couzijn. Graduation thesis, 2018  
Royal Academy of Art, The Hague