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art au centre

Art au Centre is an art project with the aim of revitalizing the city center of Liège.

For the tenth edition of Art au Centre, from October 2 to February 30, 30 artists from Liège, Belgium and abroad present their works in 27 windows of empty stores. Painting, sculpture, installation, performance, photography, video... All current art forms are presented.

The exhibition map and the explanatory texts are available in french and english on the website www.artaucentre.be.

Art au Centre is an initiative of Mouvements Sans Titre and Liège Gestion Centre-Ville.



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Local trade has deserted the city center. The *consumactor* too: he orders his jacket in four different sizes, to pick the right one, the right color, (does the label scratch?), changes his mind and then returns the rest.

Carrefour Market, Proxy Delhaize, Okay and cie. are not in the same boat. They grow like mushrooms in the hypercentre and evolve with the codes of the convenience store. They become more compact and can then monopolize every corner of the block, every single segment of the city's main roads. However, even with fruits and vegetables that are delicately placed in wicker baskets, they remain supermarkets. And their bosses are not mistaken.

Unlike these upper-middle-class premium stores, the kings of low prices seem too dirty, too precarious, too vulgar, to use the "markets" format. It is impossible for discount food to play on the communication ground of the very private club of mini markets. *Avenir Market* can. *Avenir Market* embodies the future of local trade: real online and fake in real life.

250

Same again (A sign from Cyndi)

Mark Melvin, Bury (UK), 1979

from 2 February to 15 March 2023

Mark Melvin's artworks invite the viewer to reflect through sentences that remain in the head for a long time. They remain in our memory, release subjective memories, and take on different meanings according to the viewer's personal experiences.

In his installation *Same again (A sign from Cyndi)* he created in 2005, neon lights trace a text in a circle that lights up alternately in blue and pink. The words «Time after Time» turn constantly in a mechanical movement, a hypnotic game on the notion of repetition. The subtitle refers to Cyndi Lauper, a famous singer of the 1980s, and the memories that the artist keeps of her.

Kwame Photooo

Cornelius Annor, Accra (GH), 1990

du 15 mars au 30 avril 2023

Cornelius Annor is a figurative painter who depicts daily life and is often inspired by childhood memories and family history (weddings, baptisms, birthdays, etc.): looking at Cornelius Annor's work means turning the pages of a family album.

Inspired by the practice of British and Nigerian artist Yinka Shonibare, his unique method of fabric transfer – which involves placing the fabric on the canvas for several hours – leaves a faded remnant of the motif on the canvas, like the sign of a collective memory.

A man in a blue shirt holding a video camera stands on the right side of the composition. This is Mr. Kwame Amponsah, aka Kwame Photooo, a very well-known photographer in Accra who attends all family events during festive times and has become a guardian of lost moments.

Les indésirables**Olivier Bémer**, Paris (FR), 1989

A printer spits out a randomly generated poem every ten minutes from a long list of words and expressions that should not be used in an email to prevent them from ending up in the spam folder. These blacklists are provided by digital marketing agencies to train their clients in mailing techniques. Here, several of these lists have been combined to create a large database of words or expressions. A computer program then randomly selects three lines to compose a new random poem, every ten minutes, and then prints it.

Uncertain haikus, snatched from internet bins, spit out by an automaton printer that covers the floor of the exhibition with them until saturation.

Vered Ben-Kiki worked and lived in Antwerp. She presented her work in solo exhibitions at the Galerie Inexistent (Antwerp, 1990) and the Kanaal Art Foundation (Courtrai, 1993) and in group exhibitions at the Chagall House (Haifa, 1985), the Helen Rubinstein Pavilion (Tel Aviv, 1986), the Museum of Contemporary Art (Ghent, 1988), De Warande (Turnhout, 1989), the Container Gallery (Florence, 1989) and Witte de With (Rotterdam, 1994).

Soon after her death, the Shoobil Gallery in Antwerp organized an exhibition in tribute to this outstanding artist. In collaboration with [by'ro] desk for contemporary art, they make sure that Vered Ben-Kiki's work does not disappear into the darkness of art history.

Art au Centre is a first opportunity to (re)discover this work which has not lost its suggestive power over the years. A double presentation will then follow in March-April in the exhibition spaces of RHOK Etterbeek and Sint Pieters Woluwe.

You will explore her drawings, pastels, collages, and paintings in which she uses a naïve and almost childish language. She looks at our world with a playful, absurd, and poetic gaze and transforms it into sober images in which the text is thought-oriented but is also used purely/strictly as an image.

Her visual language is full of caricatural figures and playful (architectural) forms. The language specific to Dadaist drawings is also striking. Her work is inspired by the history of art as well as everyday objects and situations.

Vered Ben-Kiki's universe is both familiar and alienating.

Special thanks to Serena Baplu, Shoobil Gallery and Estate Vered Ben-Kiki.

Flaviu Cacoveanu presents himself as a *Con&Temporary* artist. Having a cross-disciplinary practice, his works develop at the edges of photography, video, installation and performative interventions.

His practice is a promenade in the everyday, most commonly within our urban spaces. Through seemingly nonchalant, yet sharp and humorous observations he highlights the traces left by unnoticed inhabitants of the city, often insects, discarded items of consumption which all compile a portrait of the artist – as a reflection of his environment.

Flaviu's practice often originates from within his phone, which he describes as an artist-run phone: a space where he takes notes and doodles ideas. His works are distinctive and intuitive.

By using language, playing with words and situations, his formal and conceptual ideas are a (self)reflection upon the current state of the world. Flaviu's works have been recently exhibited at Parliament Gallery in Paris, Ivan Gallery in Bucharest and at the Art Encounters Biennial 2021 in Timisoara.

Abandoned plants on the edges of sidewalks and roads, accompanied by waste and exhaust pipes: nettles implacably resist. More than just resisting, they clean up the soil. Present in all seasons as if they were outside of time. Lively and robust, they adapt, warriors of hostile times. *Mauvaises graines* extracts these plants called weeds to cultivate them, take care of them, understand their importance. Are they still wild? Metaphor of social struggles, can we cultivate our struggles?

Behind the window, *Mauvaises graines* gives interest, attention to these “weeds”. They are exhibited, fantasized, admired. Disrupting their status as weeds, they take their place as stars, influencing their symbolic, social and therefore political value. Yet locked up, in gestation, are they waiting to break the window? Or is it a culture, apparently illegal, of hopes of resistance?

“Resistance, as we can see, does not always take the form of a frontal struggle. There are discrete, subtle micro-resistances, which rely on strategies of infiltration or cracking, capable of responding to what Foucault calls a «microphysics of power»*. Julie Gaubert’s *Mauvaises graines* hence certainly have a poetic dimension, but they are also the expression of a biopolitics of marginal beings who claim their independence. The permaculture of wild grasses collected in the “third landscapes” of Roubaix, which form the image of all subordinate populations, act of a capacity to self-organize collectively, in a self-managed way, outside of any governmentality.” Florian Gaité

* He addresses this notion in *Surveiller et Punir* (Paris, Gallimard, 1975).

Machine chromatique

Jean-Paul Gaucher, Liège (BE), 1988

Jean-Paul Gaucher studied painting and visual arts at the Academy of Fine Arts of Liège. His work as a painter draws its inspiration from musical rhythms, the geometry of urban space and the atmosphere of cities.

His colorful geometric compositions resonate particularly with architecture and urban furniture (facades, bricks, windows, store shutters, etc.) that he enjoys photographing and compiling in his personal image collection to make them dialogue to create what he calls «urban poetry». These elements become directly or indirectly a source of inspiration for his paintings. He has been active on the graffiti scene for a few years, which makes his connection with the street even tighter.

Jean-Paul Gaucher works mainly with salvage elements, both in terms of materials (usually wooden panels) and colors which are often industrial paints.

For Jean-Paul Gaucher, painting is a game. The main thing for him is to have fun while working in his studio.

IN ICTV OCVLI**Thierry Hanse, Liège (BE), 1985**

Based on traditional representations of still life, vanities, and themes such as the memento mori and/or the macabre dance, the installation *IN ICTV OCVLI* (translated as “in the blink of an eye”) is intended to be a 3D «painting».

Its components are classic symbols connected to the subject (symbol of time, fragility of life, etc.) but they can also be tinged with personal symbolism, featuring classic or popular references and that can be read with different degrees of interpretation.

Fermé aujourd'hui

Petra Herzog, Aachen (DE), 1963

Petra Herzog mainly works in the field of painting; in addition to mostly small-format works on canvas and collages, she develops large, space-related wall and textile works. In their execution, she references interior, design, and decor, opening up new spaces in familiar everyday reference systems. This shift of layers, of expectations and understanding, is essential for all of her artworks.

Herzog's work *Fermé aujourd'hui* features a trompe-l'oeil created with tape on a storefront window. It functions as both a blind and a canvas, playing with abstraction and representational elements. The work references the stagnation and emptiness of stores that may never reopen. Herzog works with simple forms and materials and her works shine most, when almost overlooked. «fermé aujourd'hui» addresses the ambiguity and double entendre of emptiness and stillness, inviting the viewer to engage with these themes, right in front of an empty store window, in the center of Liège.

Romane Iskaria is an artist photographer who works in Brussels. Her approach to photography is both documentary and conceptual. She works on long-term photographic investigations to highlight the voices of forgotten people and tell their stories.

For Art au Centre, Romane Iskaria presents a sample of her work carried out for over two years around the Assyrian community, of which she has origins from her grandfather who left an Iranian Assyrian village to move to Marseille. These stateless people come from a region located between Iran, Iraq, and Turkey, they experienced a huge diaspora in more than 50 countries following a genocide that took place in 1915 and generated many territorial conflicts. Assyrians are Eastern Christians and speak a language called Suret. This community is very tightly knit and proud of its origins.

Romane Iskaria collects memories and evokes fantasy through photography, video, text, and sound to create installations of collective memory. Iskaria's work has recently taken on the aspect of installations that combine videos and sculptures and steer her reflection around an initiatory journey that evokes the memory of the diaspora.

The large-format photographs were taken during the «Parcours Migratoire Inversé» project in collaboration with the Brussels association La Tour de Babel supported by Erasmus+ in September 2022. For this project, a group of 30 young people travelled for the first time to their homeland in the Tur Abdin region of Turkey.

The photographer also self-published her first book on this project. Entitled *Assyrians*, this book invites the reader to explore the Assyrian community and its history, alternating between photographs, archive images and a collection of intimate objects, punctuated by testimonies. This book was designed with graphic designer Camille Carbonaro (Macaronibook). Romane Iskaria created *Assyrians* as part of her second year of master's degree in Photography at Ensav la Cambre, in Brussels.

Video of the book *Assyrians*: directed by Andrea Copetti from TipiBook Shop Bruxelles.

Artist selected as part of the call for projects
Text : Romane Iskaria

Benoit Jacquemin (winner of multiple prizes since 2019, including the *Macors* and *Out of the Box* prizes from *Médiatime 2022*, and exhibitor in multiple places and cities in Belgium and all over the world) here moves into Liège, his hometown, which still knows too little about the talent of this artist trained in Brussels.

A powerful stimulant of our imagination, the night has often inspired artists. It is no coincidence that Benoit Jacquemin moves into an empty window located in the passage Lemonnier, the oldest shopping mall in Belgium. The artwork designed in situ, in transparency, is integrated into this space – formerly a symbol of Liège luxury, nowadays sadly more and more deserted – to confront various realities and urban temporalities of our “*cité ardente*” (burning city). Different games of light and materials evoke the signage of a night shop.

The night shop: luminous Eldorado in the night when everything is closed for some. The night shop: aesthetic repellent to be eradicated from our streets for others (municipalities multiply taxes and restrictive measures on the installation of these local shops to «limit the nuisance to the local residents» or against the «negative image» such as in Antwerp).

This precious sculpture teases the common imagination of the observer. The artwork juxtaposes and synthesizes in one place the disparate experiences (temporal, economic, social and aesthetic) of a city, between carelessness and precariousness.

This collage work is reminiscent of the work of editing in the field of cinema, and more precisely the “urban symphonies”^{*} which sought to transcribe the simultaneity and diversity of urban life. Even if it teases a social reality of the city, the artwork remains nevertheless autonomous. All in rhythm, it is the setting for a rhythmic intrigue of colorful architecture and musicality.

^{*} Emerging at the beginning of the 20th century, when the city was at the center of concerns and artistic subjects (cinema, music, painting and photography in particular), they are cinematographic objects which successively show different shots of temporalities and geographies of the city.

What is night ?

Alicia Kremser, Solingen (DE), 1996

The installation is part of my ongoing research questioning safety through acts of care. I am particularly interested in how nocturnal conditions render senses of safety, associating with my own fears in a series of works. In (semi-)public urban spaces, passers-by are confronted with projected text statements that encourage interdependent acts of care to ensure other people's safety at night and bring upon a dialogue on the subject's own relationship to nocturnal safety. The works are site-determined by nature through their placing at locations that may be considered precarious for a vulnerable body to encounter alone at night.

The shift in visibility of the present installation's projection through natural and artificial light conditions highlights the virtue of the work's placing in this particular setting in harmony with its meaning: light, day, warmth and the inside (domestic) space can be considered as safe, innocent, comforting; whereas the opposing connotations night, darkness, cold, outside imply vulnerability.

Carole Louis plays on the absurd and the misunderstanding and reinvents in her practice a tragicomic world that constantly questions the relations of power, class, and economy. Her projects regularly run counter to the shackles imposed at all levels. The artist casts doubt in our mind and has fun distilling counterpoints to situations that seem determined to us, sometimes despite ourselves.

Filon is no exception to this desire to give a mischievous kick in the anthill. Particles intertwine to create an overlay of earth-like layers. A seam emerges from these strata of different natures. It weaves its way through the territory and attracts attention that instantly focuses on this precious filament. And what surrounds it suddenly turns out to be unimportant. The innocuous appearance of the environment is nonetheless only a decoy. The soil is almost imperceptibly enriched with multiple atoms that thrive and shape our daily lives.

Our gaze trapped in a woolen stocking, we try to dig the vein thus found without realizing that wealth is not always located where we expect it to be.

Poétique du silence

Hadrien Loumaye, Bruxelles (BE), 1999

The title of this artwork is inspired by Stefan Hertmans' book *Poétique du silence*, which deals with the different uses of silence in poetry. In this intervention, I wanted to test out the pictorial gesture, but in a form that integrates directly into architecture. That's why I chose to present a mural that goes beyond the traditional painting format. This decision is also motivated by the fact the exhibition space is a window, a place that is conducive to the promotion of goods, which is here inhabited by a painting that will only exist for the duration of an exhibition.

“Inside, it’s you.
Outside, it’s still you.
Wide, down to the smallest leaf”
Kathleen Lor

At the root of this project, an urban daydream: what if abandoned shop windows could be transformed into green spaces (*ESPACE VER{T}S*) ...? Could the transforming city, deeply fragmented, traversed by faults and empty interstices, welcome within its walls an additional soul that could revitalize it?

Is it wise to dream of “greener” cities? Should they be scattered with more “green spaces”? A resolutely modern expression in its formulation, the green space is lived on a plan much more than in 3D. Integral part of our current vocabulary, it evokes the perfection and neatness of a well-defined painted surface, and ultimately recalls very little of the profusion and generosity that are specific to biodiversity. The word “greening”, also used in the field of area planning, goes well with it. Together they are valuable teammates of urban mineralization, an elegant manner to speak of tarmac and concrete covers.

To regenerate the term *vert**, we experiment a cross with its cousin *vers***. *Vert + vers* would make *ver{t}s*. A *espace ver{t}s* could trigger doubt in the head of the person who reads and connects both words. Is this a typo? The associated brackets seem to indicate the opposite... The expression itself gains in ambiguity and openness in terms of interpretation. Here it is more overflowing than ever, less polished, without a doubt.

A true fruitful risk-taking hides perhaps behind this whimsical idea: opening the heart of the city to *espaces ver{t}s* also means accepting a part located beyond the agreed limits, an unplanned and unsecured part, a resolutely mysterious and lively part...

* the french word «vert» means *green*

** “vers” means *toward* and poetry is often written in verse – *vers* in french

My artistic practice mostly gravitates around painting and images. All the images I paint reflect my interest in connecting forms and interpretations. I always try to play with the different facets of a canvas and the hierarchy of the figures inside it without these figures featuring the evidence of human nature and without them being perfectly integrated into the environment which then oscillates between background sets and leading actor. I am usually interested in reflecting what is vague, indistinct, emerging or disappearing and subject to confusion or multiple interpretations.

The diorama thus appears as a device that enables to penetrate even more directly into these stakes since it is a matter of connecting the spectator to an atmosphere, a 3D reconstruction of a mysterious scene that I like to characterize as a «tragic farce». Thanks to the simplicity of the components, I invite the observer to enter freely into the interpretation and to play with opposing ideas: the sacred nature of the painting is counterbalanced by the playful aspect of the diorama and the presence of this silicone base which is used to showcase the nail art in the window. Between burlesque and melancholy, macabre scene or schoolboy humor, no meaning is fixed, no moral is brought out. This diorama, just like my work in general, presents itself as a crossroads of meaning and stories.

Staying here.
 Magnetized to the same place.
 Never stop smiling,
 until the light goes off.
 Always facing the same view,
 until someone accepts to move us.
 Being fiddled by plump fingers,
 slipping, falling, but always smiling.
 Until someone mislays us
 or locks us in a box.

But before that,
 without even knowing where we come from,
 who made us,
 we constantly wonder where we are going,
 how it will be,
 how we will be treated.

The worst part of it all,
 I speak in the third person
 while I'm all alone,
 locked up,
 waiting.

Prrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr
 Oh! Ok... take a deep breath...
 Prrrrrrrrrr... brrrrr... brrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrrr... chinqtttt, tching!
Brighten up your day with the (lonely) loving mediator

Hmm? "The loving mediator?", the magnet mediator?
 Magnet or loving?

"The new magnetic seam guide!"

Plafond

Luna Pittau, Brussels (BE), 1995

Camille Bleker, Brussels (BE), 1993

We rarely observe and touch this flat surface that overlooks our bodies. It can be adorned with moldings, sometimes made of glass, paneling, or covered with its replica, it is usually coated with plaster and painted a white that remains faithful to the walls. It closes off the room which becomes a shelter and hides the sky from us. A roof is hidden behind it, or perhaps the ground on which rests the bed of a sleeping stranger. As it is difficult to reach, we only approach it to (re)paint it or clean it, tickle it with the cobweb brush or massage it with the paint roller.

When fatigue and doubt invade our trained bodies, it's time to face it. We adopt a vulnerable position, we lay flat. Our eyes open and close at irregular intervals facing this inverted floor that guards and observes us. It acts as a limit to our thinking vision and sends it back to us brutally: the ceiling is a projection canvas and it is reflected in our eyes, our pupils turn pale.

Above our heads, there is a sheet of zinc around which we turn gradually and repeat our gestures in one direction then in the other. We are gradually altering this material which usually protects and covers roofs. Just like our bodies, sandpaper wears out and becomes more precise. Our determination makes us sweat and the zinc dust dissolved in the water drips onto our hands and onto the floor. The central zone of the sheet where our efforts are concentrated is gradually revealed. Absorbed by this transforming surface that we rub gently, time has disappeared into the ceiling.

Amazons, cyborgs, trolls, barbarians, mutants, fighters, Latino gangs, invaders, wrestlers, riders, zombies, etc. Pol-Edouard obsessively recycles all the B (even Z) series imagery of his youth into testosterone-boosted drawings. Hypertrophied muscles ooze, omnipresent weapons shine, light sources explode from everywhere, the brawl is never far away.

Pol-Edouard develops outrageous visuals without ever falling into an outdated mannerism. He pushes the limits of bad taste to the max, between hand-painted posters of Ghana and interpretations that are both naïve and hyper-mastered, while avoiding parody or frontal fan art. His work stands precisely in this in-between. A sincere and nostalgic rendition of pure American entertainment products, from fight and shotguns video games to badass action films, science fiction or heroic fantasy. But never devoid of second degree.

The ultra-referenced images of the 1980s and 1990s, and their fantasized and apocalyptic visions of the near future, resonate strangely with our era. Bodies, nature, architecture, and technology seem to be pushed to their limits, at the limit of the grotesque. The ironic discrepancy between these obsolete retro-futuristic worlds and ours may make you smile at first glance. We then realize that reality has surpassed fiction (or has fiction inspired reality?) on many levels and that the warrior metaphor remains more relevant than ever.

“I am in the great night dreams; because the now-already is night”

Clarice Lispector, *Água Viva*, 1973.

I handle a haptic drawing in which day and night impressions merge and where ageless gestures mingle with industrial sprays, where photography gets drawn and drawing is photographed.

The airbrush is one of my favorite tools. It enables me to work in layers of colors like so many layers of light-dust that gradually create effects between dog and wolf, dawn and dusk.

Drawing with and through light, seeing and grasping or starting and stopping gestures are all processes by which drawing lives, evolves, and develops a view of reality in its fragility and poetic possibilities.

I am particularly interested in the imprint as it is created between two surfaces and a gesture.

Plants are one of my main areas of research. At the crossroads of ornamentation and politics, and washed away by a Western history of representation, they can unfold poetically by crystallizing stakes of erudition and observation.

WILL YOU MISS ME WHEN IM GONE ?**Nina Robert**, Verviers (BE), 1996

WILL YOU MISS ME WHEN IM GONE? is a self-portrait and the grave of the modern, detestable and selfish human being, saturated by hyper-connectivity, overconsumption, individualism, loneliness, anguish, addiction, depression, the worship of success and personality.

The butterfly, free and fragile, is ironic. It tones down but recalls the ephemeral nature of life. LEDs romanticize, fantasize and eroticize. The sentences and texts that scroll on the cross are messages exchanged with different people/friends on social networks. Taken out of context, they are a sort of anchoring into reality through the virtual sphere. The Latin cross is above all symbolic and aesthetic, but it is also a satire of Judeo-Christian values and economic liberalism. The ubiquitous and invasive pharmacy cross reminds us of the ambiguity between consumer products and the need for moral and physical survival.

WILL YOU MISS ME WHEN IM GONE? wants to appear immersive, disturbing and inquisitive. Through the enticing and illusory window, the green lights blend into the street and the self-portrait tends towards the self-identification of gazes.

The relationship between commerce and desire is at its most evident and public in the layers of separation of the commercial vitrine. The objects and those that desire them are engaged in a performative dance mediated by only glass and good manners.

We aim to see within, to be entered into consumerist fantasies of owning the designer clothing, the new electronics, the lifestyle promised on the other side of the vitrine. We are exteriorised not only in our inability to consume, but in our inability to enter the spaces of consumption through the stories that they tell. Of elegance, newness or unattainable familial relationships.

In Spanish, we call the metal bars on the exteriors of residential and commercial windows *Barrotes*. They often take decorative and elegant shapes. However, the word is the same as for the divider of a jail cell.

The large scale vinyl decal presented here is inspired by such metal coverings. This symbol becomes an almost votive gesture of protection to the space within. A minimalist intrusion into the interior/exterior interaction with the window and a fragile reminder of how much social constructs themselves protect us and our objects, and not so much the windows or bars.

I live on transforming ruins...

In the dust, a heavy and thick smoke with the flavor of strawberry chewing gum emerges from the walls... In the mist, I walk slowly towards an efflorescence which, formerly and in the era of the Flemish primitives, could hide the sex of women.

I was born in an XX body, I aspire to a better life in an earthly paradise that only exists for brief moments. They are part of my memory and the fantasies of an image, product of my imagination...

I borrow the existence that imprints my journey. Land of treasures, I explore, discover, hatch and honor the celestial flame that cries out for death...

And suddenly, I touch this cold stone that resembles human skin, ribbed and veined which reminds me of its eternal power...

Narcissus-Narcissist, I see the image of Aristolochia, a plant from elsewhere: tropical, as if to eroticize myself for a moment...

Photography is this instantaneous medium that captures a part of reality in fragments to inscribe it on a support, in a file. From file to file, just like a digital archaeological dig, I travel through the sounds "click-clack plow-schkrougch..." of my keyboard which resonates under the high ceilings. The light of the screen itself dazzles me...

It's cold outside: 5 degrees, there's fog on the windows, the flow of water forms a new layer on the window of my bedroom, I'm wearing this thick sweater: Everlast, a boxing equipment brand.

I didn't invent anything, everything was already there, around me... In my own reality of which I share a fragment of impression with you...

Peach Tree, Ambiguous
Anouk van Klaveren, Kampen (NL), 1991

Peach Tree, Ambiguous is the auto generated brand name under which Anouk van Klaveren produces speculative design objects. According to the principle of form-follows-a-to-be-determined-function she creates a growing collection of luxury gadgets, hovering between trinkets, jewels, utensils, sculptures or accidental decoration.

Peach Tree, Ambiguous manifests itself as a brand with a deliberate 'yes-man' work-ethos. Embracing the deranged logic of today's marketing- and communications cultus, the brand fully outsources its products' raison d'être by hiring an international team of content creators, ghostwriters, logo generators and e-commerce models. Doused within the realm of commercialized daydreams, Van Klaveren portrays the absurdities of today's value production industries and its inherent consumer myths. Simulating a tribalized department-store, the work shows a wide range of purposefully advertized objects, all blurring the thin line between need and wanting; cause and effect; the voyeur and the exhibitionist. *Peach Tree, Ambiguous'* products explore the thin line between physical presence and transcendent value: the moment where value becomes a product and products become their value.

Art au Centre marks Anouk van Klaveren's fourth *Peach Tree, Ambiguous* installment in her continuous inquiry about functionality, desire and ceremonial performance. The showroom first opened its doors at the Dutch Design Week in Eindhoven. Ever since it has appeared in Utrecht, The Hague and Liège. The project has received generous support by Creative Industries Fund NL and Stroom Den Haag.

Shop 24/7 online at www.peachtreeambiguous.com.

The work of Jan Wittoeck can easily be regarded as assemblage art. However, this description is too simple and dishonors the stratification of the works.

Jan does more than “assemble objects”. He takes the time to collect industrially produced pieces, arranges them and stores them (sometimes for years) stripped off emotion and utility value. Like the continuous returning lightbulbs that have reached their end date of performance and are admitted to his mausoleum of cherishment.

When the time is right, Jan sets to work with these treasures. Like a composer, he chooses the notes, the chords and creates an arrangement.

The composed parts either contradict each other in a rebellious disharmony but can just as well melt together in a whimsical dance. All interacts intuitively in Jan’s creative brain.

Is Jan playfully dangerous, dangerously playful or a Dadaist pur-sang?

Stuwland

Lola Daels, Jette (BE), 1990

Sebastiaan Willemen, Bonheiden (BE), 1990

The landscape feels familiar, yet something wriggles in our subconscious. The bare shores and sloping forests plunging abruptly into the water tell us this scene is artificial. A dam flooded the valley and condemned the river to a new reality. One in which the houses disappeared, and the ecosystem was renewed. A sudden human intervention reset nature. Out of nowhere the lives of all organisms depending on the river were disrupted.

Still, we treasure them. Providing us with the sight of fresh water, protection against floods and recreation, we honor them in postcards and books. They became cultural heritage and popular travel destinations.

Sculptures of the Anthropocene, dams are the billboard of human's illusion that nature can be dominated. Over the second part of the last century, the exponential increase of dams has blocked more than half of the world's large rivers. In Belgium, no rivers are left untouched.

Global change and years of poor management has exposed our fragile relationship with water. The first conflicts are imminent, and already several cities around the globe are experiencing real water shortages in summer. But also in our own region climate change has consequences. In 2021, the valley of the Vesdre flooded, destroying homes and sometimes even lives. Even Liège only barely escaped an historic tragedy..

But what if the dam would have failed?

Do we continue to live on in the illusion that we can control nature?

For the last year we have been researching the lost landscapes of Belgians dams in the framework of Veldwerk II. A project supported by Kunstenplatform Plan B.

In our vitrine we show a lenticular image, continuously wandering in between the valley and the lake.

Following the visit of the previous edition, the 18 students in the first year of master's degree in Visual and Graphic Communication from ESA Saint-Luc Liège decide to react to the call for projects for the 11th edition of Art au Centre and to sign up for this artistic and cultural event in the city of their school and their studies. The desire to be represented there in the role of graphic designer emerges. That function remains so little known and yet omnipresent in most of our productions and human activities.

They create an installation that represents their daily work environment, a 3D transposition of various iconographic elements and tools of the graphic design/er.

The endless and hypnotic download wheel.

The pipette, which enables to extract and inoculate the styles and properties of any form of "vi(e)-sual".

The color chart, color palette of the computer-assisted painter.

The cut lines, spotted for the pitiless guillotine of the printer.

Typography, Comics or not, Serif or not, readable by ordinary mortals.

The folders, uncountable parents of the knotty tree structure of untraceable files, despite the nomenclature system.

The rectangle, where to insert the low-quality element that the sponsor is slow to send us.

The check pattern, moving and transparent background, at the root of any project.

*Vanwarbeek Babette, Vincent Colin, Bastin Davon, Ahn Elaine, Klontz Eva, Samson Eve, Guerin Jason, Guyot Joachim, Eloy Julie, Delgado Fonseca Kelly, Minguet Laura, Schieske Laurent, Impellizzeri Léa, Breuillot Lilou, Lejeune Louise, André Manon, Fourchard Marcel, Fontaine Martin

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