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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 twelfth edition of Art au Centre, from October 5 to December 31, 27 artists from Liège, Belgium and abroad present their works in 24 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](http://www.artaucentre.be).

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



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# #13

## Onsite Website : The Official Emoji Shop

Éloïse Alliguié, Lyon (FR), 1997

Onsite Website : The Official Emoji Shop uses the space of the window as the metaphor of a computer screen. It specifically embodies an e-commerce site called “webshop” where all products are also inspired by digital objects : emojis. These icons, commonly used in our so-called “online” interactions, seem to dominate our environment and our own existence. These sculptures are here presented as functional objects and blur the boundaries of the recurring opposition between digital and physical.

The objects exhibited at 29 rue de L'Université are taken from *The Apple Pie*, a video produced by Éloïse Alliguié in 2022. In this cooking tutorial coming from a world where digital representations are more familiar to us than physical objects, the main character prepares an apple pie using only tools and ingredients that are available in Apple's emojis catalog. The embodied icons come to life and dialogue materially in an absurd sequence where reality and simulations combine.

Yasmina Assbane questions the dominant perception of the female body as an object of decoration and visual consumption. Her artistic approach is strongly anchored in everyday worldliness and in the material life of familiar objects that are essentially attributed to women. These objects are emptied of their primary function by strategies of dismantling and symbolic reconfiguration. According to the artist, “although not all women are artists or writers, all women have control over objects and stewardship.” The know-how acquired by women through the “art of display” and the “arrangement of things” in the domestic space is therefore an important characteristic of her work. She transfigures it, in her vision, into an “aesthetics of withdrawal” : confinement in space and the materiality of these objects as a defensive strategy. “In a gendered everyday life, I test the capacity of certain elements of material life to enter into a process of artistic research. Their plasticity as well as their tension and/or balance are questioned in close connection with the question of the arrangement. What I am aiming for is a tipping point which, in a double movement of disinvestment and re-seizure, will bring about a change of vision through symbolic production.”

When the headlights of a car disturb the darkness, we see behind the window a multitude of glowing eyes, all focused on the street. Distressing and fleeting glances that disappear once the light fades away.

*WELCOMCOM* offers an absurd and ambiguous story where the window becomes the scene of a silent party. The characters, a group of strange humanoids, seem to be awaiting, motionless, the arrival of a passerby. In their fixed smile, their intention remains ambiguous. Is it an invitation to join them or a well-designed trap? The title *WELCOMCOM* refers as much to a welcome message as to an invitation to participate in their “ComCom” (the “communauté de commune” refers in France to the alliance of towns or villages in an approach of solidarity regrouping, often nicknamed “ComComs”). The window then becomes a portal to an unknown elsewhere and plunges us into a village party with bare houses where the moon and the lamppost merge.

A game of gaze is created with passers-by, who find themselves observed by the occupants of the shop window and disturbs the usual one-sided gaze of the window space.

Ondine Bertin displays a composite plastic universe in the form of hybrid spaces in which past, present and future intertwine and where reality and dreams coexist. Through absurd archaeology, she combines oneirism with contemporary art. This 2021 Brest Beaux Arts graduate develops a multidisciplinary practice at the crossroads of painting, sculpture and installation.

**Double exposition****Bertrand Cavalier**, Tarbes (FR), 1989**Fabien Silvestre Suzor**, Montpellier (FR), 1991

Bertrand Cavalier and Fabien Silvestre Suzor are two Brussels-based artists. Initially interested in photography and moving images, they quickly developed an interest in architecture and design. Through their various collaborations and personal exhibitions, they have always attached special importance to scenography and the connection between artworks and the exhibition space that hosts them.

For Art au Centre, the duo starts from *Untitled 1*, a video by Cavalier in which we observe a tarpaulin that undulates on the monumental structure of a building in the suburbs of Amsterdam. Its continuous movement reveals the structure on which it rests and then suggests connections between positive and negative images. This notion of presence and absence is at the heart of this installation. Also inspired by architectural concrete, Cavalier and Silvestre Suzor apply principles of doubling and addition of shapes to emphasize the physical occupation of the elements that are already present in the window. These new non-structural objects hence take an important place in questioning our relationship to volume and architecture. The physical and sensory nature of the installation consequently makes it possible to evoke a common experience of space while initiating a process of mental and real images.

Tamuna Chabashvili's personal practice centers around the theme of archives and traces. Integrating personal stories, memories and questions into visual and tactile narratives is her own way of interpreting and questioning the legacy of the past and finding ways thanks to which "counter-memories" or "counter-stories" can embody the space of silence.

Each new project is an opportunity for the artist to work closely with vulnerable groups who very often remain under-represented or neglected. Textile proves to be the ideal space to recount these personal and collective stories that metamorphose into deliberately simple signs on the fibers. The distillation of these stories, rather than their accumulation, has only one purpose : the pursuit of the essence.

Based in Tbilisi and Amsterdam, Tamuna Chabashvili carried out her very first research project on gender-based violence against women in Georgia (*Supra of Her Own*) with anthropologist Agnieszka Dudrak in 2014. In 2018, her work *The Book of Patterns* (exhibited at the europalia georgia festival from October 14 to December 16 at Les Drapiers in Liège), focused on representations of women's daily lives and was part of the Biennial of Contemporary Textile Art in Portugal. In 2019, she presented another project around historical archives at "The Corridors of Conflict. Abkhazia 1989-1995", an exhibition organized by the International Committee of the Red Cross in Georgia.



## **Carpeaux**

**Patrick Corillon**, Knokke (BE), 1959

5 October to 15 November 2023

Patrick Corillon's words are ex-votos that he places at the feet of artists (belonging to the field of painting, sculpture or literature) in gratitude for drawing inspiration from their works. He thus makes these artists do things that never really existed but help to embellish their legend.

Electric wires, which are usually hidden, here appear in broad daylight to clearly affirm that the first energy that illuminates and rewarms our daily lives comes from those who open our imagination with their artworks.

*J.-B. Carpeaux (Valenciennes, 1827 – Courbevoie, 1875) erected a “Saint Francis whispering to birds” in Carrara marble. Every week, he used to place a small bag of seeds on the palms of the statue’s outstretched hands.*

*On the day of Carpeaux's death, the saint's forearms fell down, eaten away by birds droppings.*

## **Chapeau Melon**

**René Magritte**, Lessines (BE), 1898 — Schaerbeek (BE), 1967

15 November to 31 December 2023

René Magritte, one of the best-known surrealist painters, will try to demonstrate that we only glimpse the mystery of reality if we leave our usual and routine logic. His artworks often play on the discrepancy between an object and its representation.

***No, no ! Only as fast as possible without stress***  
Jan Duerinck, Brussels (BE), 1991

*No, no ! Only as fast as possible without stress* plays on the conventional distinctions between art and utility. It features a hanging lamp, seemingly hand-drawn but computer-aided, casting light on its own fabricated elements. Paired with a non-functional bench held together by knee mats and F-clamps, it challenges the concept of comfort and transience. The enigmatic title, derived from a text message, prompts reflection on the elusive nature of rest in current times.

Two paintings of a wing mirror without reflection evoke the absence of looking back, focusing on the mirror as an object. This mirror symbolizes safety and control, probing the viewer's role as a motorist, highlighting themes central to the artist's work. 'No, no ! Only as fast as possible without stress' beckons you to contemplate the paradoxes of comfort, the impermanence of rest, and power dynamics ingrained in the fabric of our modern world.

The memory of a disrupted summer when snow fell in the middle of a solar month. Like a photographic shot, these sculptures made up of natural materials, wax or macramé are brutally stopped in their movement. During a freeze frame, we see that the sunflowers are stopped from reaching the sun. Did the sun burn them to the point that their petals melted ?

Is this scene the demonstration of an ecological upheaval where the seasons, disrupted in their yearly cycle, show that snow has fallen in the middle of summer ?

I combine photography and sculpture in my work to fantasize about the possibility of reliving the photographic memory while standing inside the image. As an omniscient spectator, I would come to move through the captured scene and analyze what might have escaped me previously. Of the memories of my childhood, only vague snippets, fragments and very few photographs remain. To revisit this summer which has haunted me for several years, I decided to rebuild the scenery and accept approximations.

The weeping willow is made of a macramé weave that reminds me of childhood gestures, from scoobies to sailor bracelets. In the knotting process, this cotton swirl metamorphoses into a net.

**Étendue 02****Elisa Florimond**, Cayenne (GF), 1995

Archeology museums often feature an ancient sculpture of a human body, of which only the feet remain, still anchored in a carved stone base.

*Étendue 02* is a realization of the special attention I pay to the scenography of history and natural science museums. Behind a window in a street of Liège, the installation takes up this museographic code of simultaneously highlighting and distancing the “precious”.

Collecting and assembling are emblematic approaches of my artistic practice. My installations consist of meticulously decided associations between the shapes I model and the objects and images I collect.

*Étendue 02* draws its main source of inspiration from the systems of presentation of the collections at the National Archaeological Museum of Athens. The forms that make up the installation are adapted and modified (by changing scale or materials) reproductions of ancient sculptures and their presentation in this natural history museum.

**Figure****Bruce Formanoie, Köln (DE), 1990**

Visual artist Bruce Formanoie, a 2016 Beaux-Arts graduate, explores the codes of illustration and comics, plays with the limits of perspective and the status of shapes and objects.

In *Figure*, the artist uses in situ the optical powers of color (monochrome and gradation) to create several possible points of view in the artwork. To do so, he covers the entire interior of the window and the objects inside with a color and its different nuances.

Depending on the spectator's movements in front of this anamorphosis, the viewer will question the consistency of the world, hidden behind sensitive appearances. Solitary daydream or collective hallucination, intimate mental space or public room, the installation, made up of objects, seems to shift towards the unreal, between optical illusion and geometric prowess.

Between abstract still life and surrealism, the *trompe-l'oeil* scene, resulting from various artistic disciplines (sculpture, drawing, painting, installation) deconstructs shapes and reproduces a permanent surprise.

## ***Always Stuff, Four Blue Office Chairs***

Gilles Hellemans, Lier (BE), 1996

*Always Stuff* began as a title when I was wandering through Brussels with my scenographer friend Merle, scouring the city for furniture, paint, and other items to decorate her new apartment. We both share an intense obsession for interiors, colors, and how they culminate in objects. We soon realized that our *modus operandi*, like a curse, is always stuff. Later, I read *Real Estate* by Deborah Levy and was drawn to her descriptions of desires for places and objects. The always stuff mode of being got encoded in my artistic practice and became a mechanism for dealing with my heavy desire for objects. A large part of this practice is the reintroduction of painting into my work. I love the slow process of transferring the shapes and colors of an object or place onto the canvas, allowing me to spend more time with the things that attracted me in the first place.

For Art au Centre, I'm combining paintings, architectural models, and video work for the first time. The format of the vitrine intensifies the layerings of *Always stuff*. The pieces will act as a dialogue on what it means to yearn for a place or object but not own it, yet still take ownership by claiming it in your own terms.

This edition of *Always Stuff* showcases a set of simple blue office chairs. I first encountered them stacked at a flea market, and later discovered that my workplace had four of these chairs. I rearranged them in various configurations to create other narratives. One of them eventually broke, but my boss was generous and gifted it to me. Now, it has found its place in my studio as a cherished part of the *Always stuff* archive.

Axel Janssen is a painter but also a sculptor. He has just graduated from the Académie royale des beaux-arts de Liège where he was noticed by his teachers and me, kindly invited, from his very first jury. We immediately detected in his work a maturity that would make his fellow classmates envious. There is a lot of commitment and strength, it is a very physical painting. The guy is big, his paintings too ! He has recently ventured into the hereafter. Good luck to *L(o)ui(s)* (him) ! Chin up above all !

I was won over by his *Cathédrale* when I discovered it at the Georges Collignon Prize which he won while he was still a student. A flourishing start that he will now have to confirm. Good luck again ! This massive painting, bordering on sculpture, presented up high, pleasantly subjugated me. For Art au Centre #13, the painting is hung almost identically, imposing, except that this time the artwork has something in front of itself to compete with... the Palace of the Prince-Bishops, located on the other side of the street.

«This painting embodies the impression of almost mountainous hugeness that the view of Köln Cathedral left on me. I made it from a picture taken at the foot of its highest tower.

Part of my work revolves around formal questions that are connected to certain feelings that architecture leaves on me. How do we get to such forms, such aesthetics ? To what extent does our environment condition these structures and where can we find it ? We are the only species that modifies its environment so much. It currently resembles who we are more than its original state. Are we trapped in a loop that is doomed to become more and more impoverished ?

For me, Köln Cathedral embodies one of the human scale structures that most clearly highlights the gap between our original environment and ourselves. Many architectures surpass it, by far, but in my opinion, they are beyond our humanity and refer to the picture of our mechanical and digital era.» Axel Janssen

## **Du béton du métal dont sont faites vos parois**

Anaïs Lapel, Verdun (FR), 1993

“To build our house, let’s choose a hill. The Japanese have always built at the foot of mountains or at the bottom of valleys. They like low places.

- It’s true, dad. You’re right. It’s true that in the pictures, the foreigners’ houses are always high up. However, those of the Japanese are less visible.

- There is a reason for that. Japan experiences earthquakes and typhoons. Wooden houses would not withstand winds and tremors. This is why they are built in places that are less exposed to these risks. But it is not the only reason. The Japanese, you know, prefer soft clarity to bright light. They curl up in the darkness. They like to live in contact with nature. This is why they could never get used to stone houses.

- I understand. I don’t like stone houses either. It’s cold. I do not like.

- Yes, but we need to qualify a bit. The wooden house certainly suits the Japanese. But when an entire people adopt it, it can make us weak and fickle. The character and strength of foreigners are nourished by stones, iron and concrete of which their homes are made.”

Excerpt of a dialogue from the movie *Dodes’ka-den*, Akira Kurosawa, 1970.

*Du béton du métal dont sont faites vos parois* is an installation specifically designed for Art au Centre. It highlights the specter of a tertiary service agency which, at a time of international division of labor, has experienced its greatest growth in so-called developed countries, too busy selling what was produced elsewhere, but suddenly become moribund, fossil, suspension of itself. Behind the bay windows unfolds a communication that no longer provides, finally freed from a commercial imperative.



**An Enchanted Break****Cristina Lavosi**, Sassari (IT), 1993

Inviting to look though a lifeless, sterile reproduction of a dry-stone wall, the work offers a glimpse of a magic-realist scene set in an uncanny community kitchen. Three characters cooking cheese together, with odd tools and eccentric clothing, appear not to belong to a precise time. These otherworldly images hint at a proposed strategy for refusing capitalist production systems and challenging neoliberal isolation. Home-cheesemaking transforms into a collective practice of resistance, fostering communalisation of everyday production work. Looking at cooking as a quotidian labour of production and at eating as an act of breaking the boundaries between human and more-than-human world, the work wants to articulate the urgency of overcoming the separation between political practice and the acts of production of life. A metaphorical boundary is also quite literally broken by cutting a hole into the dry-stone wall, a structure used, particularly in the Mediterranean area, to delimit private property. The installation aims at suggesting the role that conviviality and work-sharing—as opposed to isolation and private property—must have in the construction of a desirable common future. A collective endeavour in which the more-than-human, like cheese and its bacteria, becomes an active agent for multiplicity and contamination. Milk flows through political life, its technological processing an emblem of modern ideas of separation and purity, ultimately mirroring visions on how we ought to live with one another.

The production of the artwork unfolded through a series of collaborations with : Chongjin Chen for the dry-stone wall, Cristiana Vignatelli Bruni for ceramic props, Esther van der Heijden for costumes, Lu Lin, Yusser Salih, and Ulufer Çelik for the performance.

For Art au Centre, Camille Lemille carries out a project that started from encounters made this summer in Detroit (USA), a complex city that recovers slowly from economic and social bankruptcy and several crises. The artist questions a space in transition, that of cities and our habitats, urban centers metamorphosed into places of speculation, functional spaces, tight flows “and not places that we appropriate, where we stop, where we hang out, where we live” .

Camille Lemille combines texts and images, testimonies and preconceived ideas and brings a disturbance, an inner storm. It is a swirling gesture that interrupts the graphic and textual compositions of the screen prints on tiles. A storm that spreads beyond borders and brings to Liège another example of the failure of capitalism and industrialization and the very concrete consequences that this failure has on all citizens. Camille Lemille uses fragments of words and images to disturb the received testimonies and to test the elements of language that seem so familiar to us and yet totally inaudible. A collaboration with Detroit-based artist Paul Johnson emerged from her interactions with local artists. The collab takes the form of an animation that announces, through drawing and movement, the present and future precariousness within our living spaces.

Camille Lemille displays property ads in the window and shifts the cursor of investment and the commodification of housing towards its current crisis and its out-of-control evolution. The artist gives voice to shared experiences, establishes a picture of absurd, precarious or unlivable situations, like the reproducibility of the medium that exhausts its source until it disappears.

\*Mona Chollet, *Chez Soi, Une Odyssée de l'espace domestique*, 2015, Paris, Editions de la Découverte, p. 66.

**Ambient, Aberrant****Sonia Mangiapane, Melbourne / Naarm (AU), 1978**

Sonia Mangiapane is a photomedia artist working with processes defined primarily by their interaction with light, as opposed to the exclusive use of the camera. Employing a range of camera-based and cameraless methods her practice takes the form of photographic prints and hybrid works on paper. She explores concepts relating to travel, Nature and notions of photographic time. Sonia's artistic interests are multi-layered; her approach discursive, process-oriented and experimental.

The colour darkroom is a core site of her practice. It's a space in which she makes, rather than takes a photograph; pushing the boundaries of the photographic by undertaking conceptual and technical approaches which diverge from the photographic snapshot.

In the context of Art Au Centre, Sonia presents *Ambient, Aberrant* which calls into question the authenticity of the image, of Nature, of any mediated experience. It starts from the premise that the photographic gaze and the tourist gaze emerged at the same time (around 1840) and have been inextricably linked ever since. The landscape is a representation of the idea of nature; yet it is tamed, domesticated, managed. *There is no nature here*. The work speaks about the artifice of sightseeing, chasing the sublime, our relationship to Nature (or what we think it is). It comments on the way we experience places through our (phone) cameras.

**Gravats****Lucile Marsaux**, Toulouse (FR), 1994**Théo Philippot**, Evry (FR), 2000

What if we put a whole life into a box. Two or three even.

Facing all that remains, we would try to organize chaos into a secure whole. We would methodically classify objects, clothes and books. We would look carefully at the content before closing each box, in an attempt to create a memory. We would note down some inscriptions on the rough cardboard. For later. We would then know where to look for a precise object, where to collect a specific memory.

Everything is ready.

We would build small towns in cellars and attics. Sets of buildings or subdivisions where we would all gather.

The same way we arrange a bookcase, we would stick one whole against another. We would imagine secret and immobile conversations. Morse code conversations between the thin walls of the boxes.

Over time, new stories would surely emerge. We can't tell the past without modifying some bits and pieces. What we had left far from our eyes would gradually take on a new rhythm. A new place to tell stories, far from the whirlwind, on the fringes of present times. These confabulations would yet only be the joyful proof that life still wanders somewhere in these deserted streets.

Last piece of tape.

Memories already wander and break through the walls in which they had been walled up. The memory resurfaces. Light.

## **Midnight Leaves**

**Bettina Marx**, Bonn (DE), 1981

At night, eyes and ears paint their own landscape in blue, pink and purple shades. Bettina Marx captures these landscapes on fabrics, paper and wood, materials that form volumes but are nevertheless mobile. As a painter, she first moves across a surface, a surface on which she stacks up tiny elements. She paints abstract details that become denser and cover the entire surface. She discovers these fragments in the nocturnal landscape that surrounds her and transports them into the space through which the observers move. From abstract elements and surface details, autonomous vegetation emerges, a thicket of structures gets formed.

Bettina Marx accentuates the fragility of things and highlights the vulnerability of our world : in *Midnight Leaves*, fragility is the main subject. She knows how to poetically balance the minutiae of fragments to create a harmonious unity. In doing so, she is not only interested in the coherence of small elements in her pictorial installations but also in the broader interaction of all elements, whether concretely in the urban landscape or abstractly in our society. The work of the artist is an allegory of the connections and relationships that our world reflects in all its complexity and beauty.

Pierre-Alain Poirier's work centers on gestures of preservation, boxing or concealment, but also on the practice of regular writing. The artist aims to restore a narrative nature to the objects he produces while questioning the potential of the story, an intimate, common and fictional tale in the exhibition space. Oscillation between what is seen, promised, said and believed.

POP figures, beloved artists or writers and loved ones are summoned on the same level and enable him, like "distant stars", to bring them into dialogue and build a personal sky which is anchored in our world. It is a matter of multiplying the interlockings or the productions : love, drama, idleness, rupture, fatigue, unproduction, through writing and the constitution of the semblance of a room, an empty scene which replays its signs : bed, headrest, curtains, pillows made of medicines or flowers. Setting or theater of a possible reconciliation between the space of writing and sculpture, that of the intimate and the display.

## ***A Fragile Relationship In A Sturdy Façade***

**Jeannette Slütter**, Den Haag (NL), 1988

The reflection of the time that's been past inside of this window, while the facade remained the same. Shopping hours that've been stretched and closed. Glass broken and repaired, graffiti tags written and removed, artworks installed and taken down. All these actions only get meaning if the audience is passing by. Without them the graffiti tag makes no sense, the shopping hours are useless, the broken windows can't show their act of rebellion, or just clumsiness – and artworks can't reflect on the time that's been past inside of this window. Either way it remains a fragile relationship in a sturdy facade.

Baby Palindrome pukes onto the carpet, again. I sigh, “Didn’t I tell you before ? If you need anything, you should just ask.” Still bent over, she looks up at me. “Don’t you understand ? That’s what I’m doing here,” she says, expecting me to come closer. I shake my head, “No, no, not again, you do this every time, I’m no-,” but before I can eject myself from the scene, she has fully wrapped her body around my leg, locking me in place. “Please look,” she says and signs with her head towards the puddle, “I just need to know if you’re real.”

We share the same DNA, but not the same concerns, which is reason enough for her to keep testing my humanity. I look down to inspect Baby’s projected content, which appears to contain slightly digested pasta letters. “Where did you get those ?” I ask. “Cupboard. It holds everything, including this canned alphabet soup.” There’s a pause. I read, the letters spell out her name. “You wrote your name,” I say. “Yes,” she nods, “correct.”

“You can let me go now,” I mutter as I twist my leg, “I managed to read what your vomit spelled out there,” but Baby Palindrome is not loosening her grip. I can feel our sped-up heartbeats synchronize. “I need you to sign a contract,” her voice muffled by pressing her face against my calf. “Why, what contract ?” As I frown down on her, she pulls a pen from behind her ear, which is connected to the inside of her ear canal by a metal chain. “Just, sign here,” she says as she taps with one finger on her forehead while her other hand holds up the pen for me. My hand accepts the pen, tightening the chain. “But what does the contract stand for ?” I ask again. She smacks her lips, “It’s a contract that forbids you to take this pen from me.”



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## **Wafel de Liège**

**Jannes Lambrecht**, Bergen (NO), 1994

**Mirthe Vermunicht**, Leuven (BE), 1999

Mirthe Vermunicht and Jannes Lambrecht came together to craft a unique and interactive homage to the centuries-old Liège waffle tradition. Their creation invites passers-by to participate in a tactile experience by pouring golden syrup over a waffle with their own hands, forging a tangible link to the rich history of this beloved delicacy. This fusion of art and gastronomy serves as a testament to their creative synergy and inventive spirit.

As a creator, Jannes Lambrecht (also known as Blikschade) focuses on immersive visuals and exploring the realms of retro and new technology. His diverse portfolio spans from captivating installations showcased at events like the Light Festival Ghent to crafting visuals for venues like Vooruit and Chinastraat, along with web development and numerous smaller projects. Jannes is also part of the Jean-Jacques Collective, mostly known for organising collaborative projects.

Mirthe Vermunicht is a visual artist with a background in graphic design, illustration, ceramics, and scenography. In her personal practice, she uses kitschiness, humour and memories to build worlds and tell stories. She likes to cross the border between art and handicraft.

Their different backgrounds make for an interesting and fruitful collaboration. Together, Mirthe and Jannes have crafted an immersive experience that not only pays homage to a culinary tradition but also exemplifies their dedication to artistry and innovation.

The scene takes place in the Land of Eternal Spring.

Barbie Manicure, Stéphi the Polly Pocket, and Nelly the Little Pony gathered for a picnic at the “Grande Prairie aux Fleurs”. They have rolled out a large pink and white gingham tablecloth and are enjoying strawberry cupcakes.

- So Stephi, what's up ? Still creating your total artwork ? asks Barbie Manicure.

- Yes. I just finished my scrapbooking album and now I'm starting a new project. I want to build a large cathedral of bric-a-brac, of colorful pieces that would go in all directions...

- Oh ! Is that why I saw you in the distance in the wasteland yesterday ? Nellie asked.

- Yes, I was looking for wooden jumble to pick up, replied Stéphi.

- I love walking around there, we always find a lot of interesting things among the trash, it always gives me ideas, said Barbie Manicure, thoughtful.

- And then the path to get there is magnificent, the path lined with roses and tulips is splendid ! adds Nelly.

- I wonder if I'm not going to decorate my pieces of wood with floral patterns, said Stéphi.

- Excellent idea, replied Nelly. Everyone loves flowers.

- Yes, for sure, said Barbie Manicure. Yesterday, I bought an orchid which I placed on the living room counter. All my clients are delighted : they tell me that it brings a real breath of freshness and serenity.

- I should go get my hooves manicured ! Nellie said.

- Yes of course ! I'm sure the folk daisy model would suit you perfectly, replied Barbie Manicure.

A light breeze came to stir the daisies that shone in the sun.

- Ah ! Spring is truly my favorite season ! Stéphi concluded.

## **Cristina Mirabilis** Académie des Beaux-Arts de Catane (IT)

Christine was never beatified by the Catholic Church but she is venerated as : a saint in Belgium in Limburg and Flemish Brabant; spiritual guide of the most important men of her time and consequently controlled by the Inquisition; refuge and comfort for persecuted women; protagonist of miracles and marvelous events, hence the name-attribute of Mirabilis; inspiration for Dante Alighieri – see his poem *Divina Commedia* (the *Divine Comedy*) – and Nick Cave – see the song *Christina The Astonishing*.

Christina of Sint-Truiden is the protagonist who inspired the artists of the Academy of Fine Arts of Catania for this edition of Art au Centre. Her feminism is the same feminism of the early days, that of Hildegard of Bingen, for example, who lived at the same era in neighboring Germany. From the Amazonian civilization of history and mythology through the experiences of all these women who built sharing and protecting communities, Christina's relationship with the Beguin convent emerges, another entirely feminine experience that characterized the communities of northern Europe, particularly Belgium.

Our window is a tribute to the figure of Christina and the mission that God assigned to her : redeeming the sins of humanity through personal sacrifice and suffering.

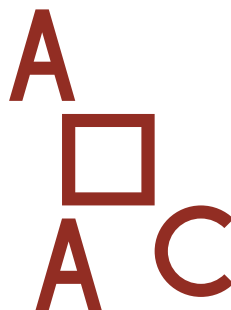


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# art au centre

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