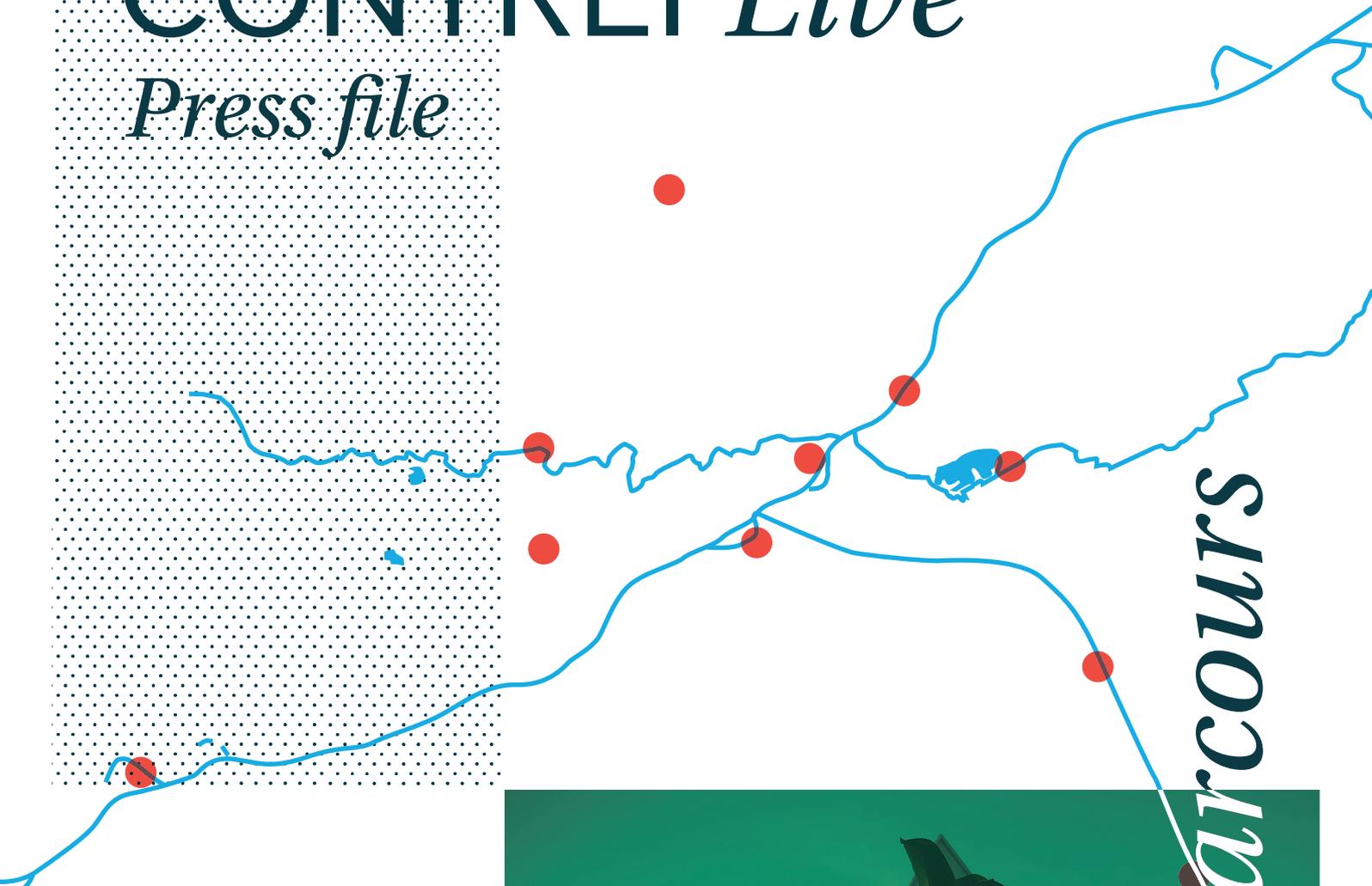


# CONTREI *Live*

*Press file*



*kunstenparcours*



*09.07-  
26.10.2020*



# Contrei Live: art runs thicker than water



*Intermunicipal organisation Leiedal – the regional developer for South West Flanders – has just turned 60 and wants to share this special occasion by putting its territory in a festive spotlight, involving locals as well as visitors. Marking its anniversary, Leiedal sets the stage for Contrei Live, an arts trail on and off the water throughout the region's 13 towns and cities. Sixteen national and international artists, architects and designers invite people on a meandering trail of artistic discovery to reflect on water in a landscape theatre and to engage into dialogue on the importance of water as an ever more precious commodity. Contrei Live takes to the water with made-to-measure art interventions from 9 July to 26 October and is free to visit.*

## A REGION WITH A VIEW

At the very core of Leiedal is the dynamic and durable development of the region towards an attractive area for work, life and leisure. In 2018, Leiedal launched Contrei, a spatial vision for the Lys and Scheldt region. Contrei – with the support of local and supra-local authorities and loosely translated as 'country' – pictures a sustainable vision of the future of the region, tackling important challenges such as water systems, dropping groundwater levels, climate and energy, mobility in tune with spatial development, open spaces and how to reinforce them, etc. Contrei Live now makes that vision visible on the field. Through the arts trail, Leiedal sets out to bedazzle and to connect, to instil awareness and to invite citizens to enter a discourse on the importance of water in the landscape. Rivers, canals, brooks, creeks and ditches course through our region as our lifelines. Cities are rediscovering the appeal of water and welcome it back into their hearts. Water entices, given the system is made more durable and viable. Climate change forces us to change course if we are going to absorb both floods and drought sensibly, in cities as well as in the countryside. Creating basins, facilitating transport by water or embracing nature and recreation are but some of those sensible ways to go. Contrei Live keenly points out the proverbial rapids in a region in full transitional swing.

211 ENTRIES, 13 MUNICIPALITIES,

16 ARTISTIC INTERVENTIONS, 3 BICYCLE LOOPS

In February of 2019, Leiedal made an open call to artists and designers all around, suggesting a number

of outstanding places with a clear link to water. Through Kortrijk Design Region, the city of Kortrijk has been part of the UNESCO Creative Cities Network since 2017, which accordingly contributed to no less than 211 entries from artists and designers from over 35 countries worldwide. A panel of experts selected a number of them for Leiedal to check their practical, logistic and financial viability. As a result, at least one work of art will be shown in each of the 13 Leiedal municipalities. The grand total of 16 artistic interventions makes up an intriguing mix of land art, landscape architecture, sound art and kinetic installations. The interventions are tailored to the specifications of their particular site in the landscape or public space, fortifying the aquatic acquaintance with the story of water. Visitors are welcome to enjoy the works of international top-notch artists Hans Peter Kuhn, Matthijs la Roi, LANDLAB, Kevin Trappeniers, Michel Desvigne, OMGEVING, Esther Kokmeijer, Niels Albers, Willem Boel, Jan Detavernier, Patrick Ceyskens, Rick Abelen, Žilvinas Stasiulevičius, Marco Barotti, Zeli Bauwens and Adrien Tirtiaux. Contrei Live also provides wind at the back for bicycle tourism in South West Flanders, with partners Toerisme Leiestreek and Westtoer helping to open up the arts trail by putting together three bicycle loops. For each municipality, partner in all things health Logo Leieland has outlined a walk to discover the installations in 10,000 steps.

## (RE)DISCOVERY AS AN ART

Leiedal and its stakeholders would like to invite all locals and visitors near and far to tap into Contrei

Live and be marvelled and carried by the region with water guiding the way. A user-friendly mobile website, a free cycling map and (payable) visitors' guide will pilot you along three cycling loops boasting some delightful deviations and stimulating stops. At various easily accessible locations, a total of 120 bikes may be shared, courtesy of Donkey Republic, free and easy to book with an app. Students at Howest Digital Arts and Entertainment, meanwhile, have rendered Contrei Live in a game available in app stores or to be played online. Educational packages will be made for schools. Contrei is all about connecting and inviting young and old to come and discover their own country. After an exceptional time of equally exceptional measures, we are all looking forward to summer, so we might go and explore the arts trail freely, in line of course with the distancing rules. Rather than a mass event, Contrei Live is a cultural happening inviting you to discover some surprising spots whilst adding a meaningful and artistic dimension to it, the three bicycle loops even motivating people to keep moving.

#### EN ROUTE WITH VARIOUS PARTNERS

As for the organisation and realisation of the arts trail, Leiedal can rely on the joint support of various complementary partners. Some interventions are co-financed by Europe through the Interreg project DESIGN'IN supporting design methods for public space. Lining up with Kortrijk Design Region, we can go all in for creativity and international appeal. The Interreg project SHARE-North offers the framework for providing shared bikes. On a Flemish level, Contrei Live can look to considerable back-up, both logistically and financially, by De Vlaamse Waterweg (Flemish Waterways). Westtoer and Toerisme Leiestreek are also firmly on board with a strong added value in the field of recreational tourism know-how. The 13 local authorities will be backing the projects chiefly in logistics and communications. In-house health partner Logo Leieland steps up with walking loops, while culture organisation zuidwest looks for links with local cultural events. True to its strong affinity with arts, Belgian bank Belfius did not hesitate to sponsor Contrei Live.

#### FOLLOW THE ARTS TRAIL

 [www.facebook.com/contreilive](https://www.facebook.com/contreilive)  
 [www.instagram.com/contreilive\\_kunstenparcours/](https://www.instagram.com/contreilive_kunstenparcours/)

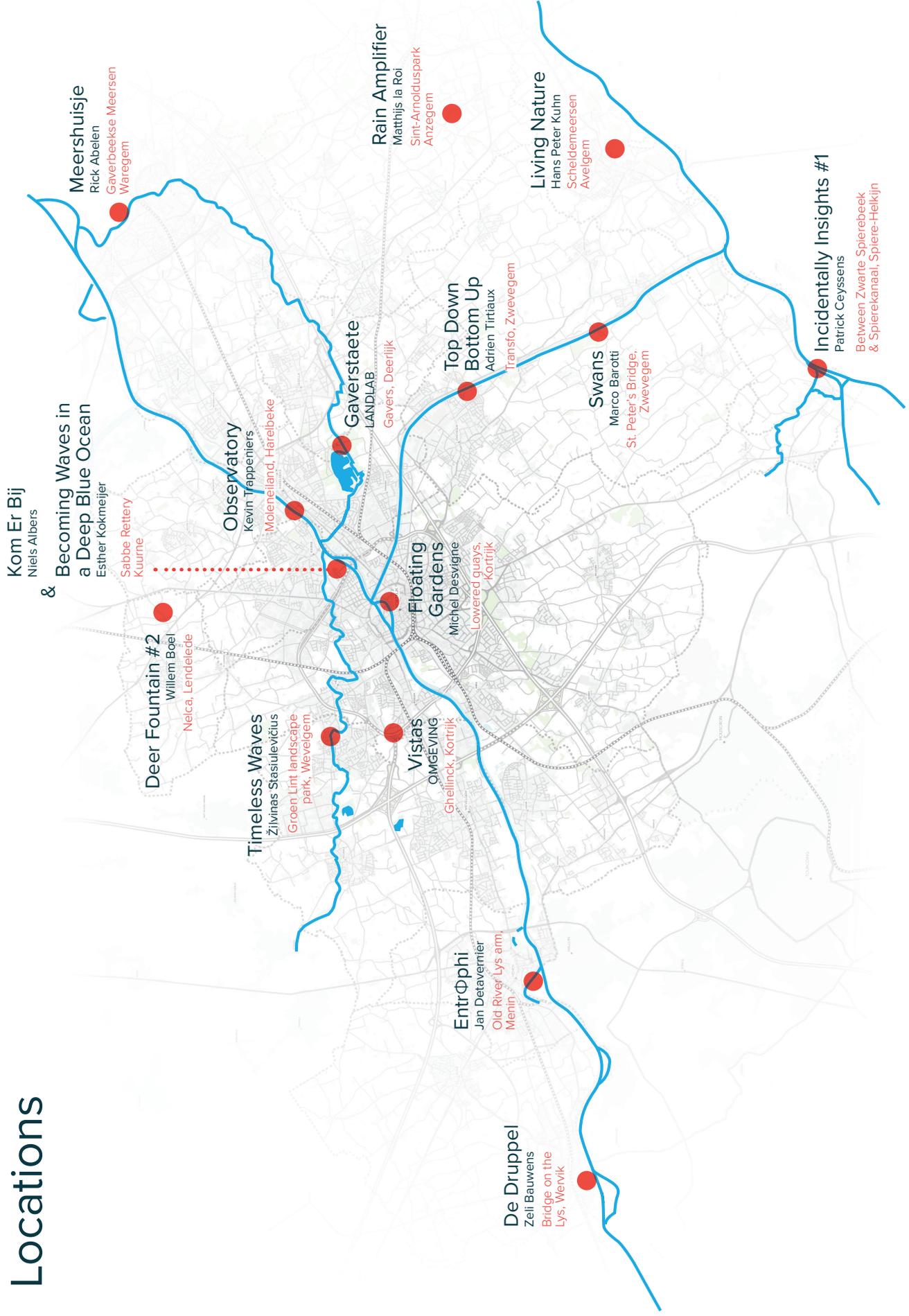
#### WANT TO KNOW MORE?

 [www.contreilive.be](http://www.contreilive.be) and [info@contreilive.be](mailto:info@contreilive.be)  
 phone 0032 56 24 16 16

Contrei Live arts trail is an initiative by intermunicipal organisation Leiedal, but would not be possible without the co-operation of the many partners. Thank you!



# Locations



# Rain Amplifier

Matthijs la Roi



*Rain Amplifier* is a cedar-clad rain sculpture and stage, situated in the forest environment of Sint-Arnolduspark. Geometrically, the sculpture resembles a half dome with an intricate and expressive ornamental interior. Within the dome an artificial rain shower is produced through a system of interconnected tubes and nozzles. These will be invisible, however visitors can touch the sculpture and the water, thus affecting the sound of the artificial rain. The amplification of the sound of the water is a result of the dome form, creating a dynamic soundscape to be experienced in its environs. *Rain Amplifier* is a sculpture that provides the space to reflect on rain and our relation to it. It reminds us of its historical-culture significance and the importance of addressing contemporary challenges related to climate change. It is a place to celebrate rain through the means of musical or theatrical performance.

## LOCATION

Sint-Arnolduspark was established in Anzegem at the end of the 19th Century, after the occurrence of several miraculous healings attributed to the natural water spring. The park sanctuary is named after Arnold,

a Flemish saint born in Tiegem in around 1040. In this divine light, many historical objects were built, including a fountain, a chapel, artificial grottoes and ponds. *Rain Amplifier* finds itself amidst this eclectic amalgamation of follies and water elements. Located on a hill that acts as a natural amphitheatre, the sculpture will host a series of performances throughout the summer of 2020. The park has a cafeteria and playground.

## ARTIST

Dutch architect Matthijs la Roi is founder of the international architecture and design studio by his own name based in London. La Roi has worked on a wide range of design projects throughout his career, including buildings, ships, products and public artworks. The studio has won numerous architectural and public-art competitions. Matthijs la Roi is interested in the use of generative processes to create immersive architectural and urban experiences pertaining to the use of sound, light and movement.



● Sint-Arnolduspark, Anzegem



[www.matthijslaroi.com](http://www.matthijslaroi.com)

# Living Nature

Hans Peter Kuhn



The installation *Living Nature* creates an artificial nature within the remains of the existing one. It consists of 24 loudspeakers buried along a walking path: invisible to the eye, unmistakable to the ear. The installation is based on the opposition of *Naturkunst* versus *Kunstnatur*, taking up this contradiction to demystify the human perception of nature in a playful way, without a didactic ulterior motive, but rather with a kind of tongue-in-cheek approach. Visitors will be met with an auditory trompe l'oeil of natural sound recordings of animals, wind, water, etc, but also with sounds that do not seem to belong in the natural habitat, leading the listener to confusion and doubt, emphasising the visual improbability of the created landscape.

## LOCATION

When the river Scheldt was last straightened in the previous century, a number of cut-offs were created with still or slow water. In the still meander water, fish, plants and other organisms keep up a delicate balance. The main natural attraction of the Scheldemeersen ('Scheldt marshes') lies in the watery meadows in the backlands and cut-off river bends. The marshes consist of extensive grasslands marked with a dense pattern of

drainage canals. The marshes boast many waterloving plants, making them the ideal habitat for amphibians, dragonflies, butterflies and water birds. The river cut-offs are islands of tranquility, teeming with widely diverse still-water life.

## ARTIST

Internationally acclaimed composer and artist Hans Peter Kuhn lives and works in Berlin and Japan. His light and sound installations are exhibited in many museums and galleries or on public sites worldwide, among others at the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston. In 1993, the installation *Memory Loss* by Robert Wilson and Hans Peter Kuhn was awarded with the Golden Lion in Venice. Kuhn worked for theatre, composed music for dances and is perhaps best known for the music and sound environments he created in his long-term collaboration with the same Robert Wilson. Hearing and listening are the themes of his performances. Since 2012 he is a guest professor for Sound Studies at the Universität der Künste Berlin.



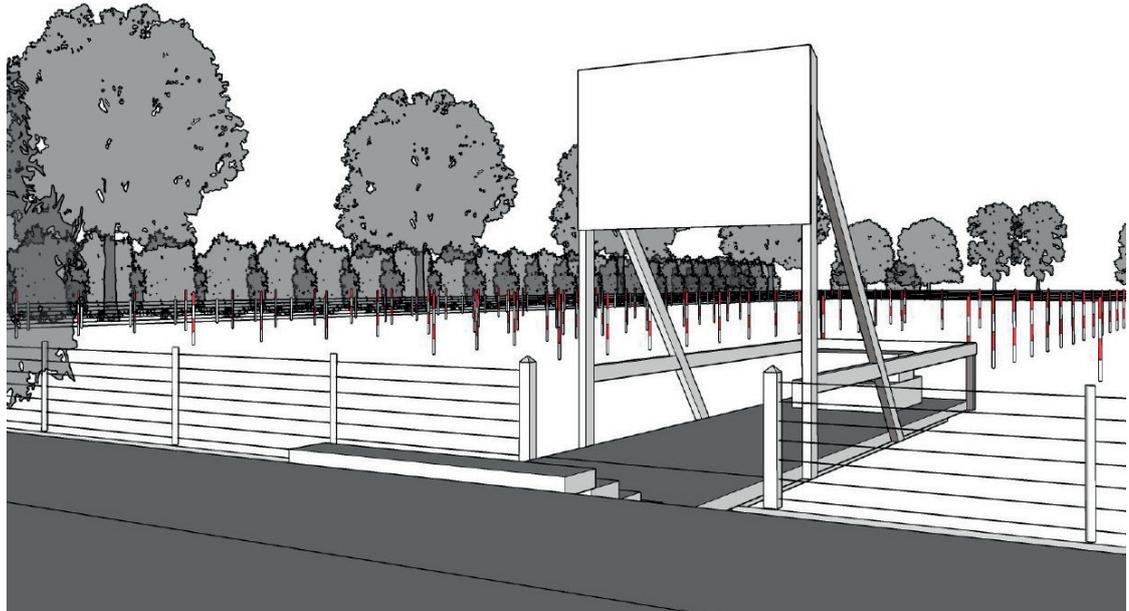
● Scheldemeersen, Avelgem



[www.hanspeterkuhn.com](http://www.hanspeterkuhn.com)

# Gaverstaete

LANDLAB



What if the idyllic veridicality of nature reserve De Gavers were brutally disrupted? This intervention shows us the misleading power of images and points out the value of our landscape. Is it real or just an illusion? A construction sign in front of a meadow suggests building works are at hand in this vulnerable piece of nature. It is a double window: the sign mounted on a wooden viewing deck offers a view to the gorgeous green present, but also to a grid of range rods in the field. Are they marking the planned development? Stepping onto the deck immediately arouses interest and sharpens awareness. A QR code on the sign leads visitors to the realtor's website where they can show interest. Is it real or fake? Because they will not be fooled. Or will they? Just click and see what happens then... This simple, accessible installation entices people. It brings them together to enjoy the view and at the same time discuss the value of our environment and the importance of nature conservation. It is a pamphlet against unbridled construction developments in our landscape we value so highly.

## LOCATION

De Gavers nature reserve is known for its unspoiled natural beauty with its large pond and unique biotopes such as a bird sanctuary and butterfly and hay pastures rich with insects. For the construction of the nearby European motorway, fill sand was needed that was found

in the marshes. By the end of 1970, 140 cubic feet of sand had been gushed out and the original landscape gave way to a jagged 153-acre body of water. De Gavers is now a green oasis in a built-up area as well as a place for adventure with water sports, playgrounds, an aerial course... This intervention makes us pause at the value of our priceless landscape.

## ARTIST

Ed Joosting Bunk: BA Architectural Design and Monumental Art. With a background in horticulture, actively taking a practical approach to projects



balancing between public space and art. Never runs out of new ideas. Bram Breedveld: MA Landscape Architecture, with over 30 years of professional experience, an analytical thinker and supervisor. Together they form LANDLAB. An advocate of green cities, LANDLAB follows simple steps, though never in a straight line. It is a matter of exploring sites, digging through (soil) archives, respecting the past, looking to the future, organising and simplifying. Their designs aim to balance all interests involved – economical, ecological and social. LANDLAB won the Belgian Public Space Prize in 2011 for their design of the Turnhout market square.

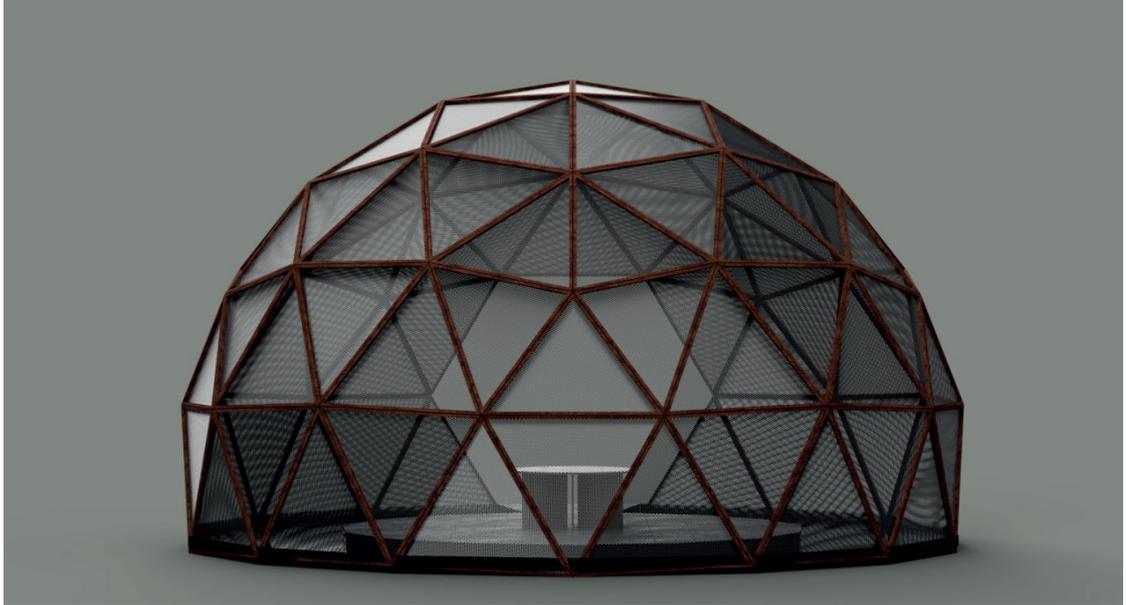
● Gavers, Deerlijk



[www.landlab.nl](http://www.landlab.nl)

# Observatory

Kevin Trappeniers



The minimal installation *Observatory* is a 'silent object', a geodesic dome on a small island, inviting you to reflect on the fragile coherence between man and his environment. A geodesic dome is a strong, thin-shelled hemisphere, a remarkably rigid structure of interlinked triangles, first designed as part of a planetarium. Later on it was popularised for industrial purposes and as a venue for exhibitions. Historically, the dome as a shape is often seen in Christian and Persian architecture, as it would hearten the mystical experience. *Observatory* is a play on all of these functionalities. The silent dome is a place of retreat. It embraces you as you observe the landscape as if through a lens. Inside, minimal architectural elements engage into dialogue with the surroundings. A low water basin may overflow brimming with rain, or, contrastingly, leave an arid impression for want of rain. A subtle and very local exploration of the ecological impact of man on water and vice versa. For the duration of the arts trail, the dome materials are subject to the elements. This installation questions our connection to our natural and constructed daily surroundings. Just how mindful are we in a landscape of artificial interventions? How do we model our natural and urban landscapes and how do they form us? It is a symbolic space in between city and nature seeking tranquillity.

## LOCATION

With flying colours, the city of Harelbeke has managed to put itself back on the map as a quintessentially aquatic stronghold. All along its course, the Lys is undergoing major water works to improve navigability and connect the rivers Seine and Scheldt to the entire Benelux inland waterway network. Harelbeke did not miss that boat and should be proud of its fresh

face by the river. *Observatory* can be seen as an island within the island of Moleneiland ('molen' or mill referring to the former flour mills still standing tall), accessible by bike or on foot by a striking swing bridge. Moleneiland is centred around a barrage and has had a marvellous makeover with plenty of space to walk, cycle or just relax and enjoy the sights on the smart viewing platform. The renovated weir portal now functions as a proud monument. The old river arm has been reconnected and a newly constructed fish ladder will have fish swimming up and down the river free and unobstructed. All of which may be admired from an elegant walkway above. With plenty of attention to river remediation, nature, recreation and sustainability, the Lys is looking lovelier and livelier than ever.

## ARTIST

Belgian artist Kevin Trappeniers (°1985) is a Louvain scholar of Cultural Studies. In his own words, Trappeniers develops 'a stilled, visual, physical and often wordless artistic language in detailed, sensate work at the intersection of performing arts and visual arts, moving freely between disciplines and mixing them together in interdisciplinary work, in theatres and more recently also in the public space.' His works focus on human presence and absence, identity and spatiality, and connections between people in society. His non-profit association Stray Light serves as a catalyst for Trappeniers to create his own visual art and to collaborate with other artists and professionals from all manner of fields. This production saw the co-operation of C-TAKT, a platform for transdisciplinary young talent.



● Moleneiland, Harelbeke



[www.kevintrappeniers.be](http://www.kevintrappeniers.be)

# Floating Gardens

Michel Desvigne



The river Lys has been subject to large-scale redevelopment in the region. In Kortrijk, apart from the transformation and lowering of the quays, the idea was uttered to construct floating green islands. Contrei Live offered the frame to make that idea a reality. *Floating Gardens* evokes a natural aquatic landscape, a floating island paradise to reflect on and off the water. Small, simple and repetitive structures reproduce the natural riverbank planting, stressing the crossing of the seasons in their natural transience. From the quays, one can admire the floating gardens front row, and wonder at the process of creating new forms of urban nature. The plants, who are endemic to the Lys shores, take root in the water, supported by the floating ecosystem without any soil. This is a method similar to hydroculture. The ambition is to extend the number of islands in the future, making the intervention sustainable in its watery nature.

## LOCATION

In the centre of Kortrijk, by the bold Broel Towers, the two redesigned quays broaden into a kind of amphitheatre, suggesting a square, partially paved and part aquatic. This piece of public space sets the perfect scene for re-evaluation and repurposing of the open river space. Walkers are lured to the water by the wide and lowered river banks, while the river itself becomes the

ideal platform for new activities and uses. As a biological corridor in the blue-green network, the Lys is quite artificial in the city in terms of bird migration and water organisms. So why not give shoreplants of old a chance to grow back anew?

## ARTIST

Michel Desvigne is a French landscape architect, internationally acclaimed for his rigorous and contemporary work and research. His projects encompass more than 25

countries. With a different view, he tries to understand the mechanics that make a landscape and then apply those mechanics to transform the very landscape in a meaningful way. In 2000, he was awarded the Médaille de l'Académie d'Architecture and in 2011 the Grand Prix de l'Urbanisme. Since 2003, he is a knight in the French order of Arts and Literature. Desvigne has lectured at numerous institutions around the world. As a geographer and botanist, he works on a large scale. He loves the city because of its bountiful public space, and because a well-planned city with all its streets, squares and parks also shapes a society.



● Lowered quays, Kortrijk



[micheldesvignepaysagiste.com](http://micheldesvignepaysagiste.com)

# Vistas

OMGEVING



*Vistas* brings scenic lines of sight temporarily back to light. The intervention underscores - figuratively and quite literally - the wide views over the field and towards the farm at Ghellinck. Over time, panoramic lines of sight are impoverished by desoiling and mowing. This artistic intervention now highlights the historic linear play by marking the lines with white sand. During the arts trail, the sightlines are pure white, the landscape gradually absorbing them with natural vegetation. Temporary by nature, *Vistas* brings nature conservation into scope, quite in line with the natural process of it all.

## LOCATION

Ghellinck is a 22-acre open area in Bissegem by Kortrijk. Originally designed for housing, it was largely repurposed as a peri-urban green space some ten years ago. That means building is prohibited, making this a fully-fledged green lung for the community to catch its breath. Five years ago, almost half of the area was bought by nature conservation organisation Natuurpunt for the purpose of an urban nature project. Historically, the site is set in an open landscape with the listed Armengoed farm still proudly centre stage. Even now, the *genius loci*, the soul of the place, is in the vastness of the field and the prominent position of the farm. The

vistas over the field and towards the farm are inextricably intertwined, being the basic elements for the design and development of Ghellinck as a green area and, consequently, for this artistic intervention.

## ARTIST

Belgian design co-operative OMGEVING (viz. 'environment' in the sense of surroundings) takes on inspiring projects in the field of



landscape architecture and urban planning. Horizontally structured based on dialogue, co-operation and cross-pollination, OMGEVING aims to spearhead unique projects on different scales: from spatial strategies for viable cities to infrastructural designs for sustainable mobility and the development of resilient open spaces and street furniture. For this artistic intervention, OMGEVING set out from the existing landscape design, with an understanding of the scenic context of the site. *Vistas* landmarks the agency's strong mind for research, identity and result and its focus on innovation, sustainability, co-creation and quality.

● Ghellinck, Kortrijk



[www.omgeving.be](http://www.omgeving.be)

# Kom Er Bij

Niels Albers



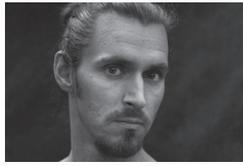
Rather than a flight of steps, Albers' installation is a slope inviting you to the roof of Sabbe retery, where one can enjoy the full blue splendour of Esther Kokmeijer's cornflower intervention. The inspiration for this work came out of nature and the sheer shape of the building, its chamfered edges resembling a honeycomb. The hexagon - having six angles and six sides - is one of the few geometrical shapes to be found in nature. As a construction form, it is superefficient and strong. The walkway appears to consist of loose columns with six angles and six even sides. The columns, varying in height, create a sort of stairway in an organised jumble. There is no one way up. Visitors need to find their own sort of way to the roof of the retery, pausing and taking in the views at several vantage points. Once on top, they are treated with the most phenomenal view. On the roof, the honeycomb pattern runs as a path towards several seating objects, all of them in the same hexagonal shape. To descend, one can choose another route. For all the climbing up and down, taking some stairs is no longer something you do automatically without thinking. It becomes a conscious, indeed sentient act. An art.

## LOCATION

The Valley of the Golden River conjures up images of a blissful, dreamlike past, yet this part of Flanders is where the linen trade was a very industrious reality. As a vanguard and very active witness of this Golden Age, Leo Sabbe's retery in Kurne produced flax since 1882. In the 1970s, however, the textile curtain fell and production grinded to a halt. Now, even though Sabbe retery may look somewhat forlorn or even neglected, it is one of the best preserved and most authentic reteries left of its kind. In 2005, the site, building, steam engine and chimney were listed as protected heritage. The retery itself is a monolithic concrete structure with 18 chambers running around two boiler rooms. Light enters through metal and glass domes in the roof, where cold and warm water was stored in tanks. In 2018, regional developer Leiedal and the Kurne council bought the site with a fresh mind to restore the monument to its former glory by giving it a new purpose. This was a huge step towards the development of Vlaspark, which connects the site to the town centre and lures Kurne back to the river. And so once more a beautiful new future is being woven for this golden gem of old.

## ARTIST

Dutch artist and designer Niels Albers lives and works in Amsterdam. A product of the Gerrit Rietveld Academy and Sandberg Institute - the famed Amsterdam school for visual arts and home of innovative thinkers from all over the globe - he achieved a bachelor's degree of Fine Arts in 2010 and graduated as a master of Interior Design in



2018. Albers is one of the founders of Fabulous Future: "a collective of seven and an ongoing project, binding together research, development and the construction of spaces, events and situations." Genuinely worried by our impact on the planet's ecosystem, he studies the relationship between man and animals, forever fascinated by origin, play, maps, plans and routes. His are anthropocentric concerns mixed with an architectural fetish.

● [Sabbe Rettery, Kuurne](#)

# Becoming Waves in a Deep Blue Ocean

Esther Kokmeijer



With its bright blue heart, the starlike cornflower is one of the most noticeable flowers in our landscape. *Centaurea cyanus* used to abound in cornfields as a weed, germinating and flourishing together with the corn. The striking blue flower, contrasting with the golden corn, has become a symbol of loyalty and lastingness. Seemingly fragile, it can withstand the forces of nature and thrives in areas where many plants won't. Such as here. It is not resistant, however, to man. Intensive agriculture and excessive use of herbicides have made the cornflower all but extinct. It is a connection between nature and culture made visible by the withering wildflower. *Becoming Waves* brings it back to full bountiful bloom on a field by an old retery bordering the Lys. Millions of cornflower seeds were sown on one acre, the amount of land that, historically, could be ploughed in one day by one ox. Visitors are treated with a field of marvellous waving stars, a cornucopia of cornflower heads sweeping in the wind as waves in a deep blue ocean under a steel Flemish sky.

## LOCATION

The retery and cornflower field are set by the all-new Vlaspark (flax park), an open area of 74 acres that reconnects the built-up town of Kuurne with the river Lys and its rich history of flax, supplying oxygen and restoring Kuurne's face by the banks of the Golden River. R&R, heritage, agriculture and nature converge harmoniously in this lovely, pristine parkland hidden

between the tip, the presbytery and Leiemeers tavern. The Heulebeek creek meanders through the domain, dotted with walking paths, picnic tables, benches and a natural playground. The old pastures where flax used to be dried in chapels lie as silent witnesses around the historic retery. *Becoming Waves in a Deep Blue Ocean* adds deep colour to this green oasis, paying tribute to a past of blue and gold.

## ARTIST

Esther Kokmeijer (born 1977) is a Dutch artist, photographer and explorer. A graphic designer, she set up her own design studio in 2001. Kokmeijer has worked as a (travel) photographer for many magazines and papers and, since 2008, performs as a visual artist for artistic research projects. Her work is exhibited and published around the world. Since 2013, she has been an expedition photographer in the Arctic and Antarctic. As an artist, she focuses mainly on the Global Commons, i.e. Earth's shared natural sources, the oceans, the atmosphere, the universe and Antarctica. Her visual art is created largely on her travels, the trip itself often being an essential part of her works of art. She is interested in the origins of nature, the formation of landscapes and the role nature plays in modern life and vice versa.



● Sabbe Rettery, Kuurne



[www.estherkokmeijer.nl](http://www.estherkokmeijer.nl)

# Deer Fountain #2

Willem Boel



Seven converted wheelbarrows are mounted on top of a structure of scaffolding poles and boards. The barrows are filled with water when suddenly, in a seemingly uncontrolled rhythm, they tilt forward and pour their contents down. And so the water goes back from whence it came. The well-balanced wheelbarrows do exactly what they were made for: to be filled and emptied. The scaffolding also does what it was built for: to support a load high up. The tilting-barrows installation is a fountain, an ornamental folly embellishing the neighbourhood, bringing a fresh new dynamism with its sheer movement. Brilliant in utter futility, as any fountain. The unrelenting, unpredictable tilting of the barrows is ruthless yet poetic. The title of the installation is a play on words. *Deer Fountain* can be interpreted as 'dear fountain', but at the same time refers to the small Japanese bamboo fountains adorning many a garden. Their original use was to repel deer so they wouldn't eat the garden vegetation: hence 'deer' fountain. It is a double meaning that fills the wheelbarrows with more substance than the mere water they carry.

## LOCATION

Former carpet giant Nelca is woven into the heart and history of Lendelede. Since it went out of business in 2007, however, the grounds remained deserted and neglected, turning the once so proud Nelca into a local eyesore. That's why in 2011, regional developer Leiedal stepped up to the plate and bought the terrain

for radical redevelopment purposes. A bold move, faced with problems of contaminated soil, asbestos, terrain relief, drainage and water buffering. The 25-acre plot near the town centre will be repurposed for mixed use with space for small and medium-sized enterprises, a new connecting road, biking and hiking paths, a multifunctional square, reservoirs and around 40 new streetside dwellings. Being of great strategic importance, Nelca breathes history and yet again offers oxygen for work, life and leisure.

## ARTIST

Willem Boel is a Belgian artist born in 1983 and working and living in Ghent. A master of Visual Arts, he taps into various media with his multidisciplinary body of



work: video, in-situ installations, performance and two-dimensional work. His focus meanwhile lies on three-dimensional, pre-eminently monumental installations, more often than not based on a steel or iron skeleton. They are open structures, harking back to an industrial era. They carry the traces of hard labour and repetitive movement. Boel often delivers series of works, such as *Sancho Don't Care*. He regularly exhibits at home and abroad and was awarded, a.o., first prize at the prestigious Salon de Montrouge in 2015.

● [Nelca site, Lendelede](#)



[www.willemboel.be](http://www.willemboel.be)

# EntrΦphi

Jan Detavernier



Nature is a master of organisation, allowing anomalies in its quest for order, for progress can only come from evolution. Nature's ingenuity can be the basis for finding solutions to the challenges facing our planet. *EntrΦphi* emphasises the universal human need for utopian imagination. Translated through geometry, with experience as the main objective. *EntrΦphi* is a self-contained biotope on the water. An air treatment station we would not want to depend on for clean air. Oxygen is produced by moss and plants which purify the polluted air, with fountains spouting a torus of water in fixed, short bursts. The beauty and the power of this aquatic installation is in the geometry of the 64-tetrahedron grid. The tetrahedron – a triangular pyramid – is a geometric figure and elementary building block, symbolising the cosmos, its origins and connection to Earth. The water jets represent the energy lines and force field of that building block. Endlessly switchable in any direction, the ecosystem takes us to the core of our existence. The flora seemingly trivialises nature's ingenuity at directing its structures, growth processes and patterns, yet the intelligence behind it can only be understood through mathematical algorithms and constants such as the Golden Ratio. Yet again a master of organisation, nature does only what is needed. This work is a visual representation of one of nature's fundamental building blocks, designed to rediscover our natural connection.

## LOCATION

In 1920, the river Lys in Menin saw a new arm excavated and a system of locks installed. Seventy years

on, the course of the Lys was altered again, creating an islet between the old and the new riverbed. The small island is largely on French soil and now boasts a lovely little park, accessible by the bridge over the sluice gates. The building materials of the locks – individual bricks rather than concrete - reveal their old age. The 1920 river works were designed to make the Lys navigable for barges up to 300 tonnes. Now, it carries vessels four times heavier. As of 2005, the lock complex is a protected monument. Here, the artistic intervention is conceived as a means to rekindle our link with nature.

## ARTIST

Belgian artist Jan Detavernier finds himself in awe of the wondrous works and laws of nature. The way nature builds organic structures through geometric and mathematical patterns, instilled in Detavernier a hunger for understanding this morphology, which he then integrates in his own structures. In nature, everything is already invented, yet the lack of knowledge to read nature and its building blocks, inspired the engineer and perception designer to venture into research. His achievements are frozen fascinations of his research into how everything snaps together, is repeated, differs and looks for solidity. Spatial events and concepts told in one single tale revolving around experience and meaning. The perception of systems and the power of imagination go hand in hand in his designs. His artistic



focus is on land art with geometric patterns as a basis for activist architecture. The artist co-founded Bamboostic, an ecological building co-operative in Brazil, and is the founder of Baboom and Tree Time, both businesses

focusing on using natural materials and innovative construction techniques.

- Old River Lys arm, Menin

# Incidentally Insights #1

Patrick Ceysens



A corten steel grid image (4.5 by 2.2 metres) amalgamating memories of a landscape with the present natural beauty. We see references to a prehistoric settlement, to a stream that gave the town of Spiere its name, to findings from different periods... Many romanticised recollections adorn our walls as pictures or paintings, yet the combination of memory and present evokes so much more. This hybrid, transparent image is always moving, fluctuating between seasons, day and night, time and memory. Incoming impressions are organised by our consciousness into other mental pictures and concepts. How remote is the visible from the conceivable? Distance, meaning and perspective fuse with the remembrance of one's image. Registering the grid differently than the naked eye, a camera should make the combined image picture-perfect. The image differs from every position, on any given moment, presenting the onlooker with a unique view: an insight inspiring the most individual interpretation of a layered image. He now becomes the artist.

## LOCATION

The river Scheldt and the Spiere Canal border the town of Spierre-Helkijn (Espierres-Helchin), both streams marking the border with Wallonia. The canal was excavated in 1839 in the valley of the heavily meandering Zwarte Spierebeek, to connect the Scheldt

with the Deûle in France. The canal is 8.4 kilometres long, 16 metres wide and 1.8 metres deep at most. The canal was mainly used for coal transport to France, yet the downfall of the coal industry signalled the waterway's demise. In 1983, the last barge passed. The locks were blocked and shipping became impossible. Between 2008 and 2011, the canal was restored for tourists to navigate it once more. It is an idyllic setting with past and present flowing into each other.

## ARTIST

Belgian artist Patrick Ceysens masters the art of making the subdermal function of images tangible. His body of work is intertwined with



two connecting threads. On the one hand, Ceysens broaches the memory theme and its deceptive enchantment. On the other hand, his work is never quite lost in melancholy and romance, as it will always present a disruption or breach, making the workings of the image no longer separable from memory function. The mind becomes our only canvas. Patrick Ceysens exhibits internationally and teaches visual arts and image analysis at various institutions.

● between Zwarte Spierebeek & Spierekanaal, Spiere-Helkijn



[www.patrickceysens.com](http://www.patrickceysens.com)

# Meershuisje

Rick Abelen



*Marsh House* ('Meershuisje') holds the landscape of the Gaverbeek moors in a special spotlight. As a look-out and a place of contemplation, the house is an unparalleled room with a view on the Gaverbeek, its pristine pastures and biodiversity. A periscope through the roof offers a bird's-eye view on the meandering landscape. *Marsh House* presents itself as an archetypal house, quite literally adding a physical and recognisable address to the hard-to-get-at reserve. With nature and experience at the forefront, the installation is a simple plated timber frame coated in white. The house offers a new perspective on spatial quality, with an understanding of the past and a glance at the future. Thanks to its remarkable presentation, the hut stands as a recognisable accent within all of the green splendour. It is a physical place to experience and discover nature at its best, a roof for man, art, landscape and nature to live under in terrific harmony.

## LOCATION

Nature reserve Gaverbeekse Meersen extends along the lower reaches of the Gaverbeek creek in Zulte and Waregem. The marshes are still an important flood zone and nature acquisition area, where nature can be sustained without affecting agriculture, forestry or recreation all too severely. An old railway embankment

cuts through the very heart of this area of natural beauty with its lovely meadows and hayfields. The hut, in the middle of the open green, overlooking the Meersen moors and verging on hiking and cycling trails, may be accessed via this obsolete embankment. The area is particularly proud to call the viviparous lizard – one of the few reptiles that give birth to live offspring and don't lay eggs – a rare and remarkable resident.

## ARTIST

Dutch architect Rick Abelen wanted to draw houses ever since his early school days. He is intrigued by the built world

and all its complexity, and especially so by the relationship between large and small scales, architecture and feasibility. The influence that architecture has on man and vice versa presents him with an interesting field of tension. Abelen works for an architectural agency. He also realises his own projects and has been a writer for an architecture magazine. Day after day, the artist finds himself tremendously satisfied and utterly energised by his interest in the built environment and man.



# De Druppel

Zeli Bauwens



*De Druppel* (meaning 'Droplet') is an interactive installation consisting of 165 buckets. The buckets are stacked over nine layers in the shape of a pyramid. Only the highest bucket on top of the pyramid is filled to the brim with water. There is, however, no pump for the water to flow continuously. The intervention is therefore dependent on the weather and kicks into action only when it rains. Rain will make the brimming top bucket overflow and suddenly turn the entire installation into a fountain. Visitors are invited to admire this work in classic Belgian showery weather.

## LOCATION

In Wervik, between the lofty Saint Medard Church and the new bridge on the river Lys, a five-metre wide strip slopes gently from the centre to the river. Emphasising the movement towards the water, this slanting little square is also the stage for this installation. The vegetation further models and colours the flow towards the water and serves as a green background for the artistic intervention. The new bridge, far more than a symbolic connection between Flanders and France, spans the gap towards a robust water system and a blue-green future. *De Druppel* is situated in close proximity to Balokken landscape park, a fairly recent 89-acre recreational island between two river arms that

came about when a river bend was straightened in 1990. It is the consummate place to dream away thanks to its walkways, a swamp deck path, sitting corners, gentle undulations, a cafeteria, hiker's cabins and camper site. Here, Wervik has water, green, art and movement all flowing fondly and fabulously together.

## ARTIST

Ghent-based Belgian artist Zeli Bauwens (\*1992) graduated with a bachelor's degree in Textiles and as a master of Sculptural Art.



Having focused mainly on everyday objects and their function during her training, the Ostend-born artist has since then zeroed in on nature and landscapes. Her body of work consists mainly of installations, sculptures and land art. Bauwens looks for connections and seeks to link objects, occurrences and actions from our daily life and out of nature. She considers herself a conceptual artist due to the deep line of thinking that runs through her work, mostly tucked underneath a layer of surreal humour. Her works are individual stories that, somehow, still need to converge. With each story, she tries to impart something to think over, something to contemplate or fantasise about.

● Bridge on the Lys, Wervik



[www.zelibauwens.com](http://www.zelibauwens.com)

# Timeless Waves

Žilvinas Stasiulevičius



*Timeless Waves* playfully restores the relationship between man, landscape, past and present. Blowing in the wind, the meadows and flax fields of Flanders resemble oceans churning and roaring with timeless swells. Five large stainless metal swings are placed next to each other in the landscape. The canvases in which visitors can swing, are made of weatherproof textile, as a waving tribute to the region's golden age of linen and to the sails of the many merchant vessels that used to sail the river Lys. The rocking of the barges and the flowing of the river contributed to the idea of the swings. The swings themselves bring back joyful childhood memories. The surrealistic image of *Timeless Waves* transforms the landscape into a dynamic place with as little intervention as possible. It should be considered more as a creation of theatrical atmosphere and collective activity rather than a mere design object. The swings will tempt you, timelessly rocking on waves of land and water, history and nature.

## LOCATION

The Heulebeek is a creek that remained hidden for a long time behind high green ribbons. Now, however, with its flood zones, banks and meanders it is the backbone of Groen Lint landscape park. This stretched-out 11-acre green area follows the winding waterway over a length of 600 metres, making the park inextricably bound up with the creek's ecosystem. Bridges, decks, a wadi,

pool and islet bring out the best of this prime piece of watery nature. In an urban context, the park constitutes an important link, boasting a perfectly safe bicycle and walking path along the creek to the city of Kortrijk, and offering many opportunities for playing and meeting. The image of *Timeless Waves* reinforces human contact with this blue-green oasis.

## ARTIST

Žilvinas Stasiulevičius was born in Kaunas, Lithuania, in 1991. Having grown up next to the interwar period architectural buildings and near the Nemunas river, his



love of the outdoors grew tremendously. Throughout his life, Stasiulevičius has been fascinated by art, drawing, forms of nature, images and how the world is perceived through the eyes of others. In his designs, he aims for a collaboration between the artist and the particular site, seeing the many opportunities in the artistic exchange between the land and the architect. Dreams don't work unless you do, is his adage. He is currently working as an architect with NG Architects in Vilnius, specialising in exclusive-quality modern residential design. His many award-winning proposals have been exhibited in Tokyo, Brussels, Tallinn, London etc.

● Groen Lint landscape park, Wevelgem

# Top Down Bottom Up

Adrien Tirtiaux



At Transfo, faced with poor access, Adrien Tirtiaux has built a pedestrian bridge connecting the canal directly to the main industrial buildings, south of the actual entrance. This new access radically changes the perception of the site by creating a spectacular dramaturgy: going down through a pit full of wild vegetation, the visitor passes an existing door and arrives at the scintillating heart of Transfo, confronted with the buildings in their rough monumentality. As often in Tirtiaux' works, the construction principle translates the tensions at stake into structural elements. Hanging from a massive, sculptural concrete beam cast on the spot, the bridge itself is an open wooden structure including a stairway and a ramp to push one's bicycle. It is built so as to touch the vegetation underneath as little as possible, letting the trees and plants grow up and through it. A closer look at the wooden structure of the footbridge reveals its kinship with the beam it hangs from: visitors actually walk on the formwork that was used to cast the 20m-long concrete beam. The contradictory dynamics between the top-down structural system and nature growing bottom-up underneath the bridge echo the classical dichotomy in recent urban planning theory. Tirtiaux' footbridge reflects poetically on this context. Top-down approaches – decided and ordered by an authority, supported by investors – are distinguished from bottom-up movements, in which local communities are at the origin of change and participate in the design

process. *Top Down Bottom Up* proposes a permanent infrastructure, enabling you to access the site and leave this particular place in its original state.

## LOCATION

Transfo is the sizzling name of a former power plant along the Bossuit-Kortrijk Canal, once looming large over Zwevegem and still commanding the skyline. Coal used to be transformed here into electricity and steam on a massive scale. Energy is in the DNA of the site, that is now being redeveloped into a cutting-edge knowledge and experience centre sparking adventure, business, culture, sustainable energy and education. A powerful sample of conservation through development Leiedal, Zwevegem and the Province positively energise. The plant was constructed in 1911 to provide Zwevegem with electricity. Almost a century later, the plug was pulled and a reconversion plan was drawn up with the utmost respect for the electrifying atmosphere of this imposing national treasure. The majestic engine room boasts a unique collection of turbines and generators, often the jaw-dropping backdrop for functions, events and even television recordings. The tourist info point will tell you all about the heritage, the reconversion project and sights to see. In full transformation, Transfo will once again be buzzing with activity, bridging the gap between past and future.

#### ARTIST

Adrien Tirtiaux (Brussels, °1980) lives and works in Antwerp. Trained as an engineer-architect, he studied sculpture and performance at the Vienna Academy for Visual Arts. His interventions, in buildings or in the public space, have one common denominator:



the redefinition of space. Tirtiaux observes the world and experiments with it. Through his installations and constructions, he tries to capture and transform our relationship with our surroundings, inconspicuously questioning the symbolic socialisation processes that go along with it. He likes to call his interventions 'contextual works'. Here, he has built a bridge from a single point to explore: a metaphor for the development of any new idea or plan.

● Transfo, Zwevegem  
 [www.adrientirtiaux.eu](http://www.adrientirtiaux.eu)

# Swans

Marco Barotti



*Swans* seems like a rather harmless and naive name for this radical yet subtle intervention in nature. There is a lot of irony in this installation, made from eight satellite dishes, seven white ones and one black. As waste elements of our society, the dishes represent the power of mainstream TV and mass media. Brought to life by sound, wind and water, these swans peacefully bob up and down on the canal, seamlessly blending in with the surrounding nature. Speakers installed on the discarded dishes serve as the animals' heads. Two layers of sound design – bass frequencies and human breath passing through brass instruments – provide them with voice and motion. Eight individual audio channels are used to transport the sound through the birds, bringing them to life so they might remodel the landscape. The image is dual: it provokes both a sense of revulsion and an intimate feeling of familiarity. The swans act as a hack of the natural environment while challenging the audience as hybrids of tech waste and wildlife. The omnipresent hand of man as a kind of god is unmistakable, in much the same way mankind relates to nature.

## LOCATION

Historically and idyllically, the small St. Peter's Bridge in Moen is picture-perfect. A quirky textbook example of what a canal looked like in the 19th Century, it spans a blind arm of the Kortrijk-Bossuit Canal. That channel connecting the rivers Scheldt and Lys was first excavated in 1861. For three years, as many as 1,200 navvies dug away at the 15.4-kilometre-long waterway, obviously by hand. 18 bridges were built, one of them being St. Peter's. Seemingly quite narrow by today's standards,

the historic dimensions of the old canal arm are correct. The original fairway carried barges up to 300 tonnes. Contrastingly, the current canal that was broadened in the eighties sees vessels up to 1,350 tonnes. St. Peter's Bridge is rather rare, too, as not many 19th Century iron lift bridges are left. That is why Flemish Waterways was only too keen to restore this piece of history recently. The bridgmaster still raises it by hand by turning a wheel, a less than strenuous effort thanks to the counterweights and gear transmission. The bridge has served faithfully for more than a hundred years: a respectable record deserving all honours. It now bridges past and present, art and nature.

## ARTIST

Marco Barotti is a media artist based in Berlin. Following his music studies, he began merging sound



with visual art. Barotti seeks to invent and master an artistic language in which a fictional post-futuristic era is expressed through kinetic sound interventions in natural and urban environments. His installations merge audio technology, consumer objects and waste into moving sculptures triggered entirely by sound. The primary focus of his art is to create a 'tech ecosystem' that plays with resemblances to animals. These artworks serve as a metaphor for the anthropogenic impact on the planet and the environment. His work has been exhibited internationally, as in the London Saatchi Gallery.

● St. Peter's Bridge, Zwevegem



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