

JUAN USLÉ WOUT VERCAMMEN CAR MELO ZAGARI JACQUES MONORY JEF VERHEYEN LEE KIT DAVID CUMMINGS ANDREAS SLOMINSKI GUY DECOBERT MARCEL YSEWIJN GEORGE ZONGOPOULOS HAROLD ANGART NINA CANELL ANNI VERONICA JANSSENS ALICHIERO BOETTI MARIE CLOUQUET ADRIANI CHEMIE JANI FABRE SILVIA

S . M . A . K .

16.3-29.9.2019

Highlights  
for  
a Future  
The Collection (1)

GRUPA ANINA FRITSCH ANTOINE MORTIER EUGÈNE DODELE MARC NGOTZAAM VAN DER HAERS GERHARD RICHTER KALIN SERAPIONOV JACOB LAWRENCE URBAIN MULKERS ALBIN BRUNOVIĆ PAUL PORTUGAL KIRIL PRASHKOV JAC CHAROUX JOËLLE TUERLINGX ORLA BARRY HEIDE

HINRICHS PHILIPPE MOREL GIL SHACHAR RONALD DEMEULEMEESTER JOHAN DESCHUYMER MEKHITAR GARABEDIAN JÜRGEN VOORDECKERS HANS HARTUNG LUC PEIRE NORBERT RADERMACHER DAVID NEIRINGS BARBARA HEPWORTH CRISTINA IOLESIAS GASTON DE MEY MARCEL MAEYER VITO ACCONCI BERT COOLENS

This visitor's guide is published on the occasion of the exhibition *The Collection (I)* *Highlights for a Future* 16.03-29.09.2019 S.M.A.K., Gent

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## Additional programme

*The Collection (I)*, *Highlights for a Future*  
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- ARTISTIC PROGRAMME  
Lectures, artist talks... and immerse yourself in a variety of themes such as the collection and collecting.
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Till 12 May 2019  
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Published with the support of



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## La Collection (I), Highlights for a Future

On the occasion of its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary, S.M.A.K. is presenting *The Collection (I), Highlights for a Future*, a selection of about 150 artworks from the museum's collection. Like the first S.M.A.K. exhibition ever held in this building – 'The Opening' in 1999 – it will once again occupy the entire museum.

S.M.A.K. is taking this opportunity, after its 20-year history, to look ahead: from the present to the future. Although the exhibition will not explicitly look back at the past, nor will it be forgotten. This exhibition is not arranged chronologically. But art history and the DNA specific to the S.M.A.K. collection have served as an undercurrent by which to gauge the position occupied by museums and art in our current cultural and societal reality. Familiar classics, major new works and recent acquisitions are shown not only for their possible iconic worth, but can also be seen alongside some surprising, less well-known works from the collection. This will reveal fresh, new connections and enable new associations to develop.

*The Collection (I), Highlights for a Future* is founded quite explicitly on the observation that it is now no longer possible still to encapsulate our society and art world in a single linear narrative or overarching idea. For this reason, the exhibition consists of seven sub-presentations, each filling a wing of the museum and partly merging into the next. Each part focuses on a few distinct recent societal or artistic trends. Apart from this, the exhibition is intended to be a generous invitation to explore the labyrinth of contemporary art and also to discover connections within it.

Lastly, *The Collection (I), Highlights for a Future* is a necessary appeal for a new museum of contemporary art in Ghent where the collection can be shown and stored in the best possible conditions. It is with this in mind that the Museum of Fine Arts, which housed the predecessor of S.M.A.K. from 1975 to 1999, is, as part of this exhibition, showing three key works from the S.M.A.K. collection in the setting for which they were created or where they were first shown: Panamarenko's 'The Aeromodeller', Joseph Beuys' 'Wirtschaftswerte' and Daniel Buren's 'Le Décor et son Double'. In this way, *The Collection (I), Highlights for a Future* forms a bridge from the present museum and the past to a future fully-functional home for the present and prospective highlights of the collection.

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# NOCTURNES

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Under the title *Back & forth* – a project that was initiated in 2017 to explore the interconnectedness of MSK Ghent and S.M.A.K – three key works from the S.M.A.K. collection are temporarily returned to the MSK, to the place for which they were created and/or first exhibited: *Wirtschaftswerte* by Joseph Beuys, *Le Décor et son Double* by Daniel Buren (public part) and *The Aeromodeller* by Panamarenko.

Open from Tue to Fri from 9.30 am to 5.30 pm  
weekends & public holidays from 10.00 am to 6.00 pm

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## HERBERT FOUNDATION

The private part of Daniel Buren's *Le Décor et son Double*, which is part of the Herbert Foundation collection, is open one Thursday a month during the exhibition.

When: once a month on a Thursday: 28 March, 25 April, 23 May, 27 June, 25 July, 29 August and 26 September 2019, always at 2 pm and at 3 pm. Entrance: on presentation of a valid entrance ticket for *The Collection* (1), *Highlights for a Future* and with pre-registration via [reservation@herbertfoundation.org](mailto:reservation@herbertfoundation.org) or +32 9 269 0300. These visits are accompanied by a guide from the Herbert Foundation and are limited to max. 10 people per group.

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## Allora & Calzadilla

Jennifer Allora: b. 1974, Philadelphia, USA / Guillermo Calzadilla: b. 1971, Havana, Cuba; live and work in San Juan, Puerto Rico

Jennifer Allora and Guillermo Calzadilla have been working together as an artistic duo since 1995. Their creative output spans sculpture, photography, performance, sound and video art. In their distinctly socially and politically inspired work, they bring issues relevant to globalization into the spotlight for critical evaluation, although they themselves do not regard their art as anti-globalistic. They do, however, strive for another concept of globalization that solicits a new way of looking at and dealing with the world. With humour, the artists try to make the seriousness of the theme more palatable for us, without too much emphasis on putting things into perspective.

### Amphibious (Login-Logout), 2005

digital betacam transferred to DVD (colour, sound), 6 min 17 sec

Allora & Calzadilla clearly highlight their social and political commitment in this video. The short film is set at the mouth of the Pearl River in China and consists of two separate visual frames: life on the river delta and a scene in which six turtles balance on a piece of wood floating on the river. Images of the daily routine of workers on the industrial cargo ships and of children playing in the polluted river, with a heavily urbanized landscape in the background, are gradually communicating with images of a much simpler life: that of the six turtles, attempting literally to remain afloat on this busy waterway. They are a subtle metaphor for capitalistic world trade, in which products are wrenched from their natural habitat for purely economic reasons.

## Francis Alÿs

b. 1959, Antwerp, Belgium; lives and works in Mexico-City, Mexico

Francis Alÿs is the pseudonym of the Belgian artist Francis De Smedt, who has lived and worked in Mexico City since 1989. His work is situated in the grey area between art and social practice, and is not limited to a single medium. Alÿs is predominantly known for his performance-like actions, in which walking and in transit play a prominent role. His 'walks' often have a socio-social and political undertone.

### Without An Ending There Is No Beginning, 2017

mixed media

This recent work is the physical result, in installation form, of the Kopeika Project, an action by the artist during Manifesta 10 in 2014, in Saint Petersburg. Alÿs described the action as follows: "When we were young, my brother and I shared a Lada Riva from 1981. One day we decided to escape from our bourgeois Belgian society and drove to Leningrad. But our car gave up and soon after our lives went in different directions. Thirty years later I invited my brother to drive from Belgium to Saint Petersburg, this time in a Lada Kopeika from 1977. When we arrived we would let the car crash into a tree on the courtyard of the Winter Palace, together with the illusions of our youth. Without an ending there is no beginning." On the table lies documentation related to the project. With the installation Alÿs suggests that ultimate freedom is an illusion and that we continue to be subjected to a controlling 'government apparatus'. By allowing the car to crash, the artist ends the illusion of freedom to conquer a new freedom – a new beginning.

## Harold Ancart

b. 1980, Brussels, Belgium; lives and works in New York, USA

In a short time Harold Ancart rose to international recognition. It started with a line of soot high on a wall, like the mark left by a fire. Ancart draws, paints, manipulates photographs of tropical paradises with passion and makes sculptures. But the focus of his artistry is drawing and painting. In this, exoticism, escapism and romanticism are a common thread, perhaps with a dark nuance. The dream seems to hold sway and yet it is undermined.

### Untitled, 2017

oil pastel and pencil on canvas

donation Yusaku Maezawa Collection, Chiba, Japan

Abstract or not? It is not too difficult in this large painting to recognize a sea view with its high horizon. Dark clouds of a bizarre pale green hang in the air. The red strip at the bottom looks like a scorching hot beach where a sun mat and a towel are lying. A strip, a rectangle and a square. Geometric shapes. Finely defined areas of colour, often with irregular contours, slot together in a way that resembles a collage. They are reminiscent of the American 'colourfield' style of painting and the abstract expressionism of, among others, Robert Motherwell and Clyfford Still. In this work Harold Ancart approached the landscape, beach and seascape applying traditional painting genres. The painting looks like a snapshot, taken during a road trip along a coast, from which the artist recalls details such as a plant or a sailboat. Distinctive colours, discordant hues and jet-black create an alienating atmosphere. What might seem like a dream spot at first sight, appears to be rather ominous as we dig a little deeper.

## Carl Andre

b. 1935, Quincy, USA; lives and works in New York, USA

Sculptor Carl Andre was one of the pioneers of American minimalism. This art movement from the 1960s was a response to American abstract expressionism, which placed the expressiveness of brush strokes and the use of colour at its core. Andre and his colleagues considered their works quite simply as objects. They eliminated any personal traces – the hand of the artist – in their work by having it produced industrially and sometimes in series. Minimalism denied any sense of the meaning of art and focused on the relationship of a piece with itself, the space and the viewer. Andre creates his sculptures from industrial materials and often positions them directly on the floor in a geometric composition.

### Sixty Seventh Copper Cardinal, 1974

copper

donation

The 67 copper tiles of this piece lie in a straight line on the ground. The line could serve as a connection between two spaces, or as a marker of a certain place, and defines the space without dominating or affecting it. Andre compares his ribbon-shaped floor sculptures to roads. The title also subtly refers to the street numbering in his home of Manhattan. In Andre's view a road functions according to multiple perspectives. The space around the road changes constantly. Only when you follow a road do you obtain a view of the different visual angles. Andre also invites his audience to walk besides or around the sculpture, to fully experience and investigate the constantly changing space around the piece.

A

**Giovanni Anselmo**

b. 1934, Borgofranco d'Ivrea, Italy; lives and works in Turin and Stromboli, Italy

Giovanni Anselmo was one of the pioneers of Arte Povera. This Italian art movement of the late 1960s reacted to the use of precious materials in art by creating installations and sculptures using simple materials. Anselmo's artistic quest focuses primarily on the question of how art can enable us to experience such immaterial phenomena as energy and gravity. The artist sees himself as an intermediary: he provides the optimal conditions in which an artwork can lead a life of its own while exposed to external forces and subject to the properties of the material it is made of.

**Torsione, 1968**

metal, cotton

A strip of cotton cloth is anchored in the wall by means of a metal ring. A metal bar is inserted through the U-shaped opening at the bottom. Two assistants then turn the bar in the same direction as long as they can. In this way, the twisted cotton is imbued with a counterforce equal to the maximum manpower the two assistants were able to exert on the metal bar. Anselmo created an invisible charge of energy by means of the physical properties of the material, gravity and the manpower applied by the assistants. According to the artist, as soon as this energy is removed, the sculptural 'raison d'être' of the work would also be terminated and it would return to its role as 'ordinary', everyday material.

**Art & Language**

(founded in 1968, British-American artists' collective whose leading figures were Michael Baldwin and Mel Ramsden)

Art & Language is the name of a group of British and American artists united by the publication 'Art-Language'. They not only created artworks, but also developed their own art theory.

**Picasso's Guernica in the Style of Jackson Pollock, 1980**

oil paint on paper

"We wondered whether we could transpose the highly-charged historical dimension of Picasso's 'Guernica' into a painting in the Pollock style, specifically his renowned black and white Düsseldorf style". This painting was the first artwork in their oeuvre that they actually considered to be a painting. Unlike earlier works it is not composed of colour photocopies, but, like Jackson Pollock's 'drippings', is done by hand using oil paint. The Art & Language version of 'Guernica' looks like Pollock's abstract expressionist paintings, but sticks closely to the composition of Picasso's original figurative version. This work raises a series of pertinent questions. How accurate or misleading are the meanings we attach to a particular style? What is the difference between an original artwork and a reproduction of it? How important to an artwork are personal expression and the hand of the artist? And how individual is an artist's personal style?

A

**Richard Artschwager**

b. 1923, Washington DC, USA; d. 2013, Albany, USA

"Sculpture is for the touch, painting is for the eye. I wanted to make a sculpture for the eye and a painting for the touch". This mix-up is typical of Artschwager's oeuvre, to which such labels as Pop Art, Minimal Art and Conceptual Art do not do justice. None of these terms adequately describes his artistic intentions, where several levels of visual and conceptual deception operate. For instance, he made use of Formica because it is both an industrial product and a 'false' representation of another material, in this case wood. In the 1960s and 1970s, Artschwager created works that 'could be furniture, sculpture or the representation of both'. As from the 1990s, he made his 'Splatter Pieces', which he squeezed into the corners of exhibition spaces so that they remained midway between a three-dimensional painting and a two-dimensional sculpture.

**Splatter Table, 1992**

laminated, wood and aluminum  
donation

'Splatter' is a word that Artschwager invented to combine 'spatter' and 'splash'. 'Splatter Table' links two important aspects of his earlier oeuvre: his furniture sculptures and his interest in the relationship between two and three dimensions. He emphasised this duality by partly painting the work. But it is above all the positioning of the fragmented 'table' that makes 'Splatter Table' hard to grasp. Like the title of the work, Artschwager's modifications to this ordinary piece of furniture can be interpreted as a reference to the absurd humour of Surrealism and Pop Art.

**Korakrit Arunanondchai**

b. 1986, Bangkok, Thailand; lives and works in New York, USA and Bangkok, Thailand

Just like Joseph Beuys, Korakrit Arunanondchai is convinced that anyone can become an artist and that art can bring people together. Arunanondchai's life between different cultures flows on naturally into the way he combines a variety of artistic disciplines: from performance through video and painting to installation. Influenced by the digital world and both Eastern and Western mythology, religion, economics, fashion, film and current events, Arunanondchai has created a monumental cross-cultural Gesamtkunstwerk intended to offer us an all-encompassing and chastening experience.

**Letters to Chantri #1 The lady at the door /**

**The gift that keeps on giving (feat. boychild), 2014**

video and digital projection (colour, sound), mixed media  
donation

This installation ensues from Arunanondchai's study of Dhammakaya, Thailand's fastest growing, but notorious Buddhist movement. It cultivates a specific aesthetic: every visitor to a temple is subject to a strict dress code – 'white' – and the architecture of its temples is reminiscent of such spaceships as 'Death Star' in Star Wars. The accusation of corruption made against the movement has drawn abundant media attention. To develop this installation, the artist established an imaginary partnership with a brand name related to Dhammakaya. The result is midway between a Buddhist temple and a futuristic luxury shop where religion and consumption commit themselves to a new ritual centred on cleansing, redemption and salvation.

## A

### Salam Atta Sabri

b. 1953, Baghdad, Iraq; lives and works in Baghdad, Iraq

Salam Atta Sabri is one of the most important Iraqi artists of his generation. He trained as a ceramist, but also makes sculptures, paintings and drawings. He lived in the United States for sixteen years, studying at the California State University in Los Angeles while there, before moving to Jordan. When he returned to his native city of Baghdad in 2005, the situation there was dreadfully precarious: conflicts between militias, extreme violence, political instability, corruption and chaos. Lacking the basic material for ceramics, Atta Sabri started drawing. His visual idiom comprises both modernist elements and motifs from the ancient civilisations between the Tigris and Euphrates.

#### Letters from Baghdad, 2010-12

mixed media on paper

These drawings from the S.M.A.K. collection form part of 'Letters from Baghdad', a series which, like a diary, tells the story of the tragedy of the artist's return to Baghdad. Each work seems permeated with Atta Sabri's search for identity. He writes down the names of cities he has been to (Los Angeles, London, Erbil and Baghdad, for example) and his forms refer to the art history he is very familiar with, so we can interpret these works as a drawn biography. In these drawings, the problems experienced by a country merge with those of an artist who lives and works in an environment that hinders creativity. This is drawing as a form of grieving, as consolation, looking for a way out.

### Kader Attia

b. 1970, Seine-Saint-Denis, France; lives and works in Berlin, Germany en Algiers, Algeria

One of the eye-catchers in Kader Attia's installation 'Scarification, Self Skin's Architecture' is an anonymous, medium-sized figure originating from the Mahafaly, a tribe that lives in the far south of Madagascar. This human sculpture immediately attracts the attention. Not least because of the expressive vertical cracks in the wood. The improvised table next to the sculpture contains documentation the artist has collected: among other things old photos of African women with decorative scars; printing plates for illustrations in 'Le petit journal', a popular 19<sup>th</sup>-century French newspaper; and hand-carved wooden blocks from Kashmir and Bombay used to make patterns on textiles.

#### Scarification, Self Skin's Architecture, 2015

mixed media

loan Friends of S.M.A.K.

Attia's 'Scarification, Self Skin's Architecture' is an artistic study of cultural customs in the West, Africa and Asia. Taking such notions as 'wound' and 'trauma' as its guide, this installation shows how the image of the body exerts influence in such societal processes as social integration. But the French-Algerian Attia sets himself a higher goal: rather than wanting only to emphasise differences, in this installation he wants to give shape to a new representation of man. He considers it essential to develop a dynamic conceptual model that would make it possible to enter into intercultural dialogue without hierarchy or discrimination.

## A

### Sven Augustijnen

b. 1970, Mechelen, Belgium; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

In his multi-layered films and projects, which are both ambiguous and razor-sharp, Sven Augustijnen analyses cultural and historical places, events and people. He explores the way in which historiography can shape and warp reality: "History is invariably written and so always a kind of fiction." Since 2005, Augustijnen has been working in several phases on his project 'Spectres', in which he scrutinises European colonial history and searches for the ghosts from the past that continue to affect the way we think and act.

#### AWB 082-3317 7922, 2012

mixed media

For the TRACK exhibition in 2012, Augustijnen searched in vain for the tree against which Patrice Lumumba was executed. It was most probably felled to make charcoal. The work consists of a bicycle (a 'typical' Congolese means of transport) loaded with bags of charcoal (an essential source of income for residents of Katanga, but also a symbolic remnant of Lumumba's tree). The bicycle was originally positioned in the Citadelpark, opposite the 'Moorken'. This black statue is a controversial monument from 1888 that depicts the Congolese boy Sakala, who was brought to Belgium as an exhibit in 1884. He died in Congo shortly afterwards. 'AWB 082-3317 7922' is an allusion to the bike's air freight reference number. The work not only recalls the dark past, but also links in with the contemporary post-colonial debate.

## B

### Francis Bacon

b. 1909, Dublin, Ireland; d. 1992, Madrid, Spain

Francis Bacon, a self-taught artist, is one of the most important post-war painters. Bacon personally called himself a 'personal realist', who, out of his own dark state of mind expressed his version of reality through an ephemeral and flamboyant style. Bacon ended up on the streets at a young age and was forced into years of wandering through England and France. When he saw Nicolas Poussin's 'Le Massacre des innocents' in Chantilly, he resolved to become a painter. Picasso's biomorphic figures also became defining for his art. Images of the internally torn man in a rough style made way for more personal portraits using a finer and more realistic technique and a softer colour palette in his twilight years.

#### Figure Sitting, 1955

oil paint on canvas

'Figure Sitting' is one of the famous series of portraits of Pope Innocent X, made by Bacon in the 1950s. The series is based on the portrait of the pope by the Spanish baroque painter Diego Velázquez. Velázquez had depicted the pope as an insecure and doubtful person through whom, according to Bacon, he had achieved the ultimate goal of painting: the rendering of a subdued state of mind by means of paint on canvas. Bacon tried to analyze his weaknesses in a series of preliminary studies and paintings of the pope, in each of which he became more explicitly portrayed, resulting in more than fifteen portraits. 'Figure Sitting' is not a portrait of a pope, as such, but a representation of general psychic suffering, raw and direct.

**B****Nairy Baghramian**

b. 1971, Isfahan, Iran; lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Nairy Baghramian employs styles and motifs taken from the history of sculpture. In addition, she draws on a wide spectrum, from design through fashion to anatomy. Her installations display a keen sense of such traditional artistic challenges as: how do you, as a sculptor, handle material or volume? By blurring the differences between decorative and functional objects, industrial and handmade products and everyday merchandise and luxury articles, Baghramian questions the position and function of art.

**Fluffing the Pillows B (Mooring), 2012**

painted aluminum

The 'Fluffing the Pillows' series consists of abstractions of maritime utility objects. This installation, which is one of this series, includes 'Silos', a 'Gurney' and a 'Mooring'. The 'Silos' share their name with the storage containers for bulk goods such as grain and sand. Baghramian made their seemingly soft but strong shape out of canvas, rubber and imitation leather. The 'Gurney', a chrome-plated tube, is used to support shapeless sacks when they are transported. A 'Gurney' is a stretcher. The 'Mooring' refers to the hooks and bollards to which ships are tied when they moor. The shape derives from that of the hooks on harbour cranes. The casual arrangement of the sculptures in the room reminds us of things washed up on a beach. Baghramian raises questions about the impact of the architecture of exhibition spaces on the way we look at art and, more generally, about the way museums also determine the value of art.

**John Baldessari**

b. 1931, National City, USA; lives and works in Santa Monica & Venice, USA

John Baldessari is one of the major drivers in American conceptual art. This movement, which came into vogue in the early '60s, put forward the idea of concept as the major aspect of a work of art. The creator and kind of material involved in a work were of incidental importance. Language became a crucial element in conveying the meaning. In his prints, films, videos, installations, photo collages and sculptures that had a conceptual slant, Baldessari explores the relationship between the narrative power of images and the associative potential of language.

**Arms & Legs (Specif. Elbows & Knees), etc.:****Arm and Plaid Jacket, 2007**

inkjet printing on photo paper on wood

loan private collection

Baldessari acquired global fame from the late '80s with these kinds of monumental photo collages. He combined existing images from photography and cinema, and additionally sometimes from text, into recognizable yet simultaneously surprising and illogical entreties. By painting over the images or adding text, Baldessari removed them from their original context. In one respect the artist encouraged us to form our own interpretation of his images, while on the other hand he hindered our doing so by deliberately painting over certain parts of his collages. He wants us to realize that we should not limit ourselves to looking at purely aesthetically attractive and inspirational images but, in a pseudo-playful way, points to the fact that photos and other images can potentially mislead us.

**B****Miroslaw Balka**

b. 1958, Otwock, Poland; lives and works in Warsaw and Otwock, Poland

Poland's dark past and the artist's personal history are interwoven into the sculptures, videos and austere, almost architectural installations of Miroslaw Balka. His work is characterised by a minimalistic visual language and a symbolic use of materials, and always concerns humans and humanity.

**This Is How People Sculpted, When I Was Born, 2000-01**

brass

The title of this work makes it crystal clear that it contains an autobiographical element. Miroslaw Balka grew up in Otwock, a small town near Warsaw that was profoundly affected by the Holocaust during the Second World War. In the early 1990s, he started working with material left in the house and garden of his parental home, which became his artist's studio. For his 2001 solo exhibition at S.M.A.K., Balka twisted this long cable around the handrail of one of the museum's staircases. It acted as a kind of outsized 'hyphen' between his work downstairs and the pieces displayed in the upper room, which included a life-sized reconstruction of his parental home/studio in the form of a hermetically sealed structure coated with ash. When we use the handrail, the artwork hinders our progress. It is reminiscent of rolls of barbed wire. But we can also see the sweeping line as a drawing in the space, a random scribble that whispers something to us about the birth of sculpture. And this is inextricably linked to everyday life, to the handrail.

**Artur Barrio**

b. 1945, Porto, Portugal; lives and works in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

Artur Barrio is a key figure in contemporary art and occupies a central position in recent Brazilian art history. He takes a strong stand against the artwork as an object in favour of the importance of experience, reality and the moment. His practice is linked to Situationism and Fluxus. Barrio's oeuvre consists of temporary, intuitive and immersive installations that appeal to several of our senses at the same time. The artist uses perishable and everyday materials such as coffee, bread and wine in his work. Text also plays a prominent role in Barrio's oeuvre.

**Interminável, 2005**

mixed media

'Interminável' is an installation that fills the space. The title is Portuguese for interminable. This work was realised by Artur Barrio for the exhibition 'Barrio-Beuys' in S.M.A.K. (2005), a dialogue between the work of Artur Barrio and Joseph Beuys. 'Interminável' was purchased by S.M.A.K. as an ephemeral installation, a work that can only be realised by the artist himself at a given moment, and which cannot be continued after his death. The installation is a situation, a moment that is experienced as bringing reality and art closer together. This exhibition is the third time that Artur Barrio has realised 'Interminável'. The space becomes a poetically charged vault that contains all the usual elements that characterise Barrio's universe. With his work, Barrio moves the notion of the artwork to something that cannot be saved or traded, while drawing attention to being an artist as an attitude.



## Massimo Bartolini

b. 1962, Cecina, Italy; lives and works in Cecina, Italy

Massimo Bartolini makes, amongst other things, sculptures, performances, videos and photographs, but is best known for his large-scale, experiential installations or 'animated architecture'. He manipulates objects and architectural elements and invalidates their functions and meanings. In this way, Bartolini destabilises or confuses our perceptions and experiences. He subtly plays with light, smell and sound. Bartolini's often sensual work creates space for illusion, fantasy, utopia and nostalgia in a poetic and sometimes playful way. It invites us to reflect, in a manner that verges on the meditative, upon expectations, (im)mutability and the way in which we observe things.

### Concrete Work, 2019

gilded metal on paper  
donation

The minimalist 'Concrete Work' consists of a small, curved gold wire attached to a sheet of white paper. With specific lighting, the shadow of the wire falls onto the page and a stylistic silhouette becomes visible: a man with a bowed head. As a sketch or materialised idea, this work offers an insight into Bartolini's poetic imagination. It also highlights his working methods, whereby he makes indefinite ideas more concrete in his studio through the elaboration of modest, impulsive, and sometimes meditative 'studio work'.

## Gaston Bertrand

b. 1910, Wonck, Belgium; d. 1994, Uccle, Belgium

In 1932, Gaston Bertrand was admitted to the military hospitals of Liège and Brussels. His fascination with the grand architecture of these buildings sowed the seeds for his later abstract work, which uses architecture and interior design as its starting point. Just prior to the Second World War, Bertrand founded the artists' group 'La Route Libre'. His works were initially figurative and expressionistic in style. In the late 1940s he evolved from animism – a movement which, unlike expressionism, focused more on the introspective – to his own form of geometric abstraction. After the war, with the groups 'Apport' and 'La Jeune Peinture Belge', Bertrand continued to advocate for painting that was as autonomous as possible. However, his work from this period was still predominately figurative. In the early 1950s, Bertrand gained international recognition with exhibitions in São Paulo and New York. His oeuvre occupies a key position within the genesis of Belgian post-war lyrical abstraction.

### Composition ("L'escalier jaune"), 1946

oil paint on canvas

This painting dates from shortly after the foundation of 'La Jeune Peinture Belge'. The staircase construction, which runs diagonally through the composition, was used by Bernard as a starting point from which to unfold a more imaginary surrounding space. We see the artist experimenting with the use of various spatial planes, which he inserts into the composition as more or less equivalent. He did this without relinquishing the link with reality. The intimate atmosphere of the work is heightened by the subtle white, grey and ochre tones. 'Composition (The yellow staircase)' is a clear example of the gradual evolution from figuration to abstraction in post-war Belgian art.

## Joseph Beuys

b. 1921, Krefeld, Germany; d. 1986, Düsseldorf, Germany

Joseph Beuys only embarked on his artistic career after his service with the German Air Force during WWII. In 1946 he pursued sculpture at the Düsseldorf Academy, where he became a teacher himself in the early 1960s. This position proved crucial for Beuys. He found the passing on of ideas at least as important as actually creating works of art. Beuys, however, made conceptual work and also engaged in performances in which he explained his view on art and the world. He combined his ideas and theories under the term 'Soziale Plastik' (social sculpture). In this context, Beuys' famous statement is also befitting: "Jeder ist ein Künstler." ("Everybody is an artist.").

### Wirtschaftswerte, 1980

mixed media

'Wirtschaftswerte' (or 'economic values') is a 'social sculpture' that Beuys made for Jan Hoet's 1980 exhibition 'Art in Europe after '68'. The work consists of metal racks on which food from former East Germany is displayed, 19th-century paintings and a block of plaster. The arrangement confronts us with the partition between communist East and capitalist West Germany of the time. The faded packages stand in stark contrast to the brightly coloured packages we know in the West. The 19th-century bourgeois paintings that line the shelves reinforce the contrast between the 'rich' West and the 'poor' East. There is a massive block of plaster in front of the racks (in Beuys' oeuvre this symbolizes 'rational thought'). The corners of it became damaged and were 'restored' by the artist with soft butter (or in the symbolism of the oeuvre 'intuitively' so).

In the Museum of Fine Arts Ghent. For more information, see at the front of this visitor's guide under 'off-site'.

## Guillaume Bijl

b. 1946, Antwerp, Belgium; lives and works in Berchem, Belgium

The administrative professions Guillaume Bijl practised in the seventies to earn a living proved to be more important than the art courses he started in the 1960s, but never completed. This 'university of life' in the lower middle-class circuit he travelled made Bijl realize that art - even if it is conceptual - should represent a reality that is as broad as possible. For more than thirty years Bijl has been building a consistent oeuvre, which he regards as "realistic testimonies to visually account for my time". As a kind of European adherent of appropriation art, an American art movement that emerged in the early 1980s with artists like Jeff Koons and Cindy Sherman, Bijl reproduces existing images from everyday life almost literally with the aim of "revealing ourselves by removing the codes used by our consumer society as image clichés".

### Lustrerie Média, 1984

mixed media

Bijl showed 'Lustrerie Média' for the first time in 1984 at the well-known art fair in Basel, Switzerland. The work consists of a typical art fair stand with white walls filled from top to bottom with standing and hanging lamps. It is an exact copy of the kind of stand we find at trade fairs, but then rather at construction and decoration fairs than art fairs. In this way, Bijl indicated that an art fair is not about art and even less about creativity, but above all about trade and money. In this work he magnified reality to such an extent that it could be interpreted as a 'false' mirror image. In so doing he exposed the underlying stereotypical codes and literally 'exhibited' them.

## B

**Johanna Billing**

b. 1973, Jönköping, Sweden; lives and works in Stockholm, Sweden

Johanna Billing is one of the most important Swedish video artists of recent years and one of the most influential video artists of her generation. Her conceptual oeuvre, exploiting photography and video as key media, poses questions about our society and its ever-increasing rate of change. Many of Billing's films focus on young people who engage in group actions that are highly metaphorical and are usually explicitly staged by the artist. Billing uses the interaction between the individual and the collective, between committed participation and apathy, to raise questions about human interaction within a socio-political context.

**Magical World, 2005**

digibeta transferred to DVD (colour, sound), 6 min 12 sec

For this video, Billing worked with children from a music class in Dubrava, a suburb of Zagreb. In a dilapidated cultural centre, the children rehearse the melancholy 'Magical World', a 1968 protest pop song by singer-songwriter Sidney Barnes. The theme of the lyrics – change – symbolizes the changing Croatia which, as a relatively young member state, tries to adapt to the demands and norms of the European Union, while at the same time seeking to develop a (still fragile) national identity. This struggle is portrayed metaphorically by the children, who have visible difficulty to grasp the English text.

**Dara Birnbaum**

b. 1946, New York, US; lives and works in New York, USA

Dara Birnbaum is one of the most important representatives of early American video art. Since the Seventies, TV has played an ever-greater role in our life, a trend that Birnbaum critically examines. Existing TV images and typical formats such as quizzes, soaps and sports programmes form the basis for this. One technique the artist often uses is to repeat television images whose natural flow is interrupted by fragments of music and text. Birnbaum criticises the medium of television by staying very close to it and analysing it based on its stereotypes. Topics such as femininity and gender equality form a common theme in her work.

**Technology/Transformation: Wonder Woman, 1978**

digibeta transferred to DVD, 7 min

'Technology/Transformation: Wonder Woman' is the first video Birnbaum produced that was based on television codes. The artist used images from the then popular 'Wonder Woman' series. Birnbaum creates an endless loop of the moment at which the main character changes into a heroine and sets it to a disco soundtrack. By repeating slowed-down images from the commercial TV series, she provides a critical comment on the fast, fleeting TV images. This video caused quite a stir when it was first shown and signified the beginning of Birnbaum's career as a video artist.

**Tiananmen Square: Break-in transmission, 1990**

video installation: U-matic transferred to DVD (colour, sound)

This is a typical example of the large-scale video installations Birnbaum created as of the late Eighties. The piece focuses on the student protests on Tiananmen Square in Peking (Beijing) in the summer of 1989, which were violently crushed by the Chinese authorities. Foreign press was banned and media reporting was strictly controlled. Four small LCD monitors show images of crucial moments during the protests, such as the cutting off of CNN's satellite transmissions and the students' attempts to continue to send information out into the world using alternative channels such as by fax. The fifth, larger monitor in the middle shows a selection of images from the four smaller monitors, in a random manner and at a hellish pace. Thus Birnbaum confronts the hysterical attempts by major TV channels to constantly generate a news flow with the more efficient communication attempts by the students, who do still succeed in disseminating news. Birnbaum offers us no footing whatsoever in this chaotic stream of images, which makes the message even more powerful.

**Pierre Bismuth**

b. 1963, Neuilly-sur-Seine, France; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium and New York, USA

Like his postmodern contemporaries, Pierre Bismuth goes back to the basic principles of film and photography as a reaction against mass culture and its avalanche of images, sounds and information. In his installations, photos, collages, videos and scenarios, he destabilises the established codes dictated by mass culture. In this way he compels us to distance ourselves critically from our ingrained perceptions. With a certain irony, he has claimed that he is 'not really into film'. He sees the use of cinematographic codes merely as a means of opening our eyes to the perceptions that he himself has pre-programmed. His most striking joint project took place in 2004, when, at the request of the director Michel Gondry, he wrote the scenario for the cult classic 'Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind'. For this film, as someone whose purpose was to constantly upset mainstream cinema, Bismuth actually won an Oscar for the 'best scenario'!

**Following the Right Hand of Doris Day in 'A Young Man with a Horn', 2008**

black and white photo on paper, felt pen on Perspex

In each of the series entitled 'Following the Right Hand of...', Bismuth kept to the same procedure: he chose a scene from a classic film, focused on the equally iconic actress in the leading part, and followed the movements of her right hand using a black felt pen on Perspex. He then put a film still from the relevant scene behind the Pollock-like drawings. In this way he sabotaged the 'aesthetic' film image and in a literal sense exposed the hidden codes of classic Hollywood films.

**B**

**Marinus Boezem**

b. 1934, Leerdam, The Netherlands; lives and works in Middelburg, The Netherlands

Marinus Boezem is an important figure in Dutch conceptual art. His early work was characterized by the link between Marcel Duchamp's ready-made art and the land art. From 1960 Boezem, like Sol LeWitt, sold works of art that were simply an idea on paper. He strove to bring the visual arts outside the confines of museums. From the mid-'70s, Boezem began to develop his conceptual ideas sculpturally. He combined light, air, sound and movement with a formally refined, minimalistic visual language. In the '80s landscapes were once again featured in Boezem's work.

**Statement Het Jaar 2000, 1967**

flat printing on paper  
donation

This 'Statement' is the only remnant of Boezem's 'air-filled plastics' that he made for 'Het Jaar 2000', an exhibition that was held in 1967 at the RAI in Amsterdam. The 'air-filled plastics' were sculptures consisting of a flexible rubber casing, such as tyres, inflatable mattresses and life-jackets. These were filled with air to their maximum and painted in a vivid colour. After a while the air escaped and the sculptures shrank back to their original shape. As can be seen from this 'Statement', for Boezem air symbolized freedom and purification: "In the year 2000, air will be an important creative factor in the world. Air will become the building block of a new form of architecture. [...] The 'aero-cushion' will be the means of transport for this air era and a serene silence will descend over the cities. People will play with aerial objects that balloon up and come to life in the wind."

**Michaël Borremans**

b. 1963, Geraardsbergen, Belgium; lives and works in Ghent, Belgium

Michaël Borremans is one of Belgium's most important artists today. In his paintings, drawings and films, he immerses us in the difficult to grasp beauty of strange-versus-familiar situations that are essentially illogical. The characters present in his work are trapped in an indeterminate time and space. Oblivion or institutional suppression seems to be their lot. The radical preference for inexplicable alienation and confusing beauty makes Borremans relevant in international contemporary figurative painting, in which the desire for strictly defined semiotics and conceptualization still prevails.

**The House of Opportunity (the Chance of a Lifetime), 2003**

mixed media on cardboard

'The House of Opportunity' is a series of drawings in which Borremans flirts with the visual language of magical realism, a movement active in the '20s and '30s that sought out the tension between reality and dream. The house, usually a symbol of a familiar environment, appears to be a scale model. It is seen as an intriguing, strange object with an overriding intangible, alienating atmosphere. The house turns out to be an unreal structure, where its inherent potential remains unattainable. In one of the works from the series, the house is depicted as a work of art, displayed in one of the halls in the S.M.A.K. museum. The house is out of proportion to the space in which it is displayed and assumes a varying scale in relation to the museum visitors. The subtitle of the drawing is a playful commentary on how the artist perceives his position within society.

**B**

**Charbel-joseph H. Boutros**

b. 1981, Bickfaya, Lebanon; lives and works in Beirut, Lebanon and Paris, France

Charbel-joseph H. Boutros was born during the Lebanese civil war. The political history of his homeland and disquietude with today's society resonate in his work, in which personal and political musings are entwined. His melancholic oeuvre extends from installations through sculptures to video work.

**Dead Drawing, 2011**

mixed media

The installation 'Dead Drawing' is minimalistic. A simple graphite pen rests on two nails in a wall. Drawn above it are two lines, produced with the same graphite pen. Together they form an equilateral triangle. Visually, work by Charbel-joseph H. Boutros is very simple whilst simultaneously being evocative. Its meaning is not explicit and is open to conjecture, leaving room to add stories with a personal context. Boutros' work is conceptual but is often derived from a romantic notion, such as catching the light from the sun or the moon. His poetic installations play with the boundary between the visible and the invisible. They balance on the verge of disappearance. 'Dead Drawing' shows traces of an action. The act itself is irrevocably terminated.

**Ricardo Brey**

b. 1955, Havana, Cuba; lives and works in Ghent, Belgium

Ricardo Brey is one of the most important contemporary Cuban artists. He moved to Belgium following his participation in Documenta IX in 1990. He takes inspiration for his hybrid conceptual work from the wealth of Afro-Cuban culture, personal memories and the myths, legends and stories of various cultures. Although his roots lie in Cuba, he sees himself as a Flemish artist who takes the European art tradition as his starting point.

**Zonder titel, 1991**

mixed media

donation

An electric fan stands on a quilt stained with pigment, and two dirty pillows. Two chicken legs and strips of fabric hang from the fan, moving in the draught it produces. Brey stimulates our imagination with this mysterious combination of found objects and invites us to make associations. He describes the objects as 'mythical readymades', everyday things that are given a meaning. They also appear frequently in the Afro-Cuban Santeria religion, a hybrid of the Catholic and traditional African worship of saints. Brey thus sees the movement of air caused by the fan as a metaphor for displacement, something to which every non-Westerner has been (and still is) prey in the Western world.

## B

**Marcel Broodthaers**

b. 1924, Brussels, Belgium; d. 1976, Cologne, Germany

Marcel Broodthaers was one of the most influential figures in 20<sup>th</sup>-century art. As soon as you think you have grasped his work, a new twist presents itself. This gives his oeuvre an inexhaustible depth. Even during his lifetime, the impact of his artistic practice was felt beyond the borders of his own country. He soon made his international breakthrough with work that forms a lasting legacy. It would be hard to overrate his role when it comes to thinking about art, its function and its history. His oeuvre provides the perfect means for reflection on the meaning of art and the institutions (including museums) in which it functions. These are the reasons why S.M.A.K. has given this artist a permanent space in the museum.

**Broodthaerskabinet, since 2018**

The 'Broodthaerskabinet' presents works, editions, books, archive pieces and other items from the S.M.A.K. collection. The room is on the ground floor at the rear of the museum. A separate visitor guide has been written about the works you can see there, available in the room itself. You will learn more about this many-sided artist's playful and yet subtly poetic approach. The 'Broodthaerskabinet' was realised in close collaboration with Maria Gilissen-Broodthaers.

**stanley brouwn**

b. 1935, Paramaribo, Suriname; d. 2017, Amsterdam, The Netherlands

stanley brouwn is the most well-known representative of Dutch conceptual art. The underlying idea of his works always takes precedence over their formally austere aesthetics. brouwn as an artist was an autodidact and was initially - similar to the artists of the Zero movement - a proponent of monochrome geometrical abstraction. But brouwn outgrew the specific Zero aesthetics quickly. From 1960 he built a particularly personal and consistent oeuvre, in which he investigated the interplay between movement and distance. He used his body as a measurement of all things and thereby formulated his own unique measurement system (the sb-foot, the sb-el and the sb-step). On the basis of this scale, the artist investigated the field of tension between the subjective experience of distance and the objective recording of it.

**Seven Objects Each 1 Ell, 1997**

mixed media

loan Collection Flemish Community

On this table the artist has brought together different objects, each with the length of 1 ell, an old measurement system based upon the length of the human arm between the elbow and the hand. This work is an example of brouwn's 'scale objects', with which in the 1990s he not only presented his research into the relationship between subjectively and objectively measuring distance on paper, but additionally used sculptural presentation as well. The length of an ell varies between countries: a Flemish ell is 27 inches long, a Scottish 37 and an English 45. None of these 'official' ells corresponds to the actual length of these objects, which is 47 inches, or the 'stanley brouwn-ell', for which the artist's body served as a standard.

## B

**Daniel Buren**

b. 1938, Boulogne-Billancourt, France; lives and works in Paris, France

Daniel Buren is both a representative and a critic of 'institutional critique', a branch of conceptual art that emerged at the end of the 1960s. His work can be recognised from the well-known stripe motif: strips of exactly 8.7 cm wide, which the artist has been describing as his 'outil visuel' (visual tool) since 1965. Buren not only integrates this 'visual tool' into places where art is exhibited, but also into the streetscape, for example on buildings, in shop windows, on buses and advertising hoardings. He thus deliberately dissolves the boundaries between the studio, the gallery, the museum and the outside world. As an 'institutionally critical' artist, Buren continues to stubbornly resist the codes, norms and values of the art world.

**'Le Décor et son Double', 1986/2011**

mixed media

collection S.M.A.K./Flemish Community

In response to Jan Hoet's controversial extramural exhibition 'Chambres d'Amis' (1986), Buren applied his well-known motif to the guest room of Annick and Anton Herbert. 'Le Décor et son Double' was conceived as a work in two parts. Buren had in fact also provided a reconstruction of the room to exhibit in the museum. With this conceptual démarche, Buren posed explicit questions around Jan Hoet's idea of exhibiting contemporary art in private homes, which is how the 'Chambres d'Amis' exhibition was structured. With 'Le Décor et son Double' Buren also questions the relationship between a 'model' and a 'copy'. The Herberts have preserved this intervention in their guest room. The copy for the museum was not retained, but the public half of the work was reconstructed in S.M.A.K. in 2011 and incorporated into the museum's collection.

In the Museum of Fine Arts Ghent and at Herbert Foundation.

This Foundation includes the Collection and the Archives of Anton and Annick Herbert. For more information, see at the front of this visitor's guide under 'off-site'.

**Kathe Burkhart**

b. 1958, Martinsburg, USA; lives and works in New York, USA

Kathe Burkhart makes videos, collages, photos, performances and paintings. She teaches at various art schools and also writes haikus, novels and art criticism. Her practice is influenced by popular culture, conceptual art and the artistic strategies of appropriation. Burkhart is a pivotal figure in the 'bad girl' art movement and has focused on the female image since the early 1980s. In the wake of the first feminist media and art criticism, she deals with themes like sexuality and gender identity. In so doing, she mixes fiction with non-fiction, word with image, and political subjects with personal themes. This is partly why her oeuvre contains so many allusions and intimate autobiographical elements.

**Dick, 1987**

collage, acrylic paint, gouache and felt-tip pen on paper

Burkhart is best known for her 'Liz Taylor Series', which she began in 1982. This body of work now includes over three hundred semi-autobiographical paintings of her doppelganger, the British-American actor Liz Taylor. The artist bases her work on film stills and paparazzi shots, amongst other things. She appropriates this material and incorporates it into portraits of Taylor, which are executed in a pop art style. She depicts the actress as Wonder Woman, a femme fatale or as a lady who has fallen on hard times - female stereotypes that were constructed by the popular media culture. Burkhart combines these images with swear words and other strong language, allusions to the language of resistance, and to the 'loudmouth bitch' type. In this way, she undermines the role that is ascribed to women by society. The 'Liz Taylor Series', to which 'Dick' belongs, not only symbolises Burkhart's personal experiences, but also encourages opposition and emancipation. Furthermore, it invites the viewer to think about forms of repression.

## C

**Nina Canell**

b. 1979, Växjö, Zweden; lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Nina Canell's sculptures are anything but static or finished. Instead, they explore the dynamic and inexhaustible potential of the materials from which they are made. Canell's visual world consists of combinations of concrete objects and immaterial substances, which tend to be altered by unseen energetic forces. Her sculptures change colour, evolve and/or become mobile under the influence of processes such as heating, evaporation, electrical impulses, magnetism and exposure to fluctuations in temperature or moisture. Canell's work is often described as a kind of contemporary alchemy. Aesthetically, it corresponds with Arte Povera, Minimalism, and the pseudo-scientific pleasure in experimentation taken by artists such as Marcel Duchamp.

**Perpetuum Mobile (25 kg), 2009**

mixed media

This kinetic sculpture attests to Canell's fascination with precariousness. The work links the material to the immaterial through an apparatus that emits ultrasonic sounds, or sounds that are too high for us to hear. The sound waves evaporate the water in the bowl, which creates the steam that moistens the cement in the paper bag and causes it to harden. The title 'Perpetuum Mobile' alludes to constructions that are permanently in motion thanks to the laws of thermodynamics. There are a number of different versions of this sculpture: ranging from 10 kg, 25 kg, 40 kg and 2400 kg to 283 stone. Each version is aesthetically unique: the more kilograms of loose material contained in the installation, the greater the variety of elements that are added to the work.

**Chuck Close**

b. 1940, Monroe, USA; lives and works in New York, USA

The American Chuck Close is one of the pioneers of photorealism. This art movement, which became popular in the late Sixties, used photography as the basis to create hyperrealistic images in other media, including painting and graphic media. Close became known for his larger than life portraits and self-portraits created using the most diverse techniques. In each case he began dividing up the photograph by means of a grid, which served as the starting point. He subsequently reproduced an enlarged format of the image square by square on the canvas. The grid gradually disappeared over the course of the creative process. The resulting portraits are 'more than realistic' and virtually indistinguishable from photographic portraits.

**Keith, 1972**

intaglio on paper

'Keith' is a key work in the oeuvre of Chuck Close. In 1972 the artist created this first enlarged, etched portrait of his good friend Keith. Due to the limitations of the technique Close had to use several etching plates side by side, which meant the grid remained visible and largely determines the composition of the portrait. After creating this piece Close deliberately left the grids visible in his graphic and painted portraits. As a result he enhances his figurative work with an abstract quality.

## C

**Leo Copers**

b. 1947, Ghent, Belgium; lives and works in Wetteren, Belgium

"A new idea every day." With this pronouncement, made towards the end of the 1960s, Leo Copers distanced himself from his conceptual contemporaries. For Copers it is not the consistency of ideas that is central, but rather their unpredictable volatility. In contrast to conceptual artists, he does not believe that the creation of an artwork ends with the discovery of a new idea. He regards its material elaboration as essential. Copers is known for his critical and often ironic commentary on the art world. Assemblages of everyday objects are a common thread running throughout his oeuvre. By combining these in a surprising way and barely altering their context, Copers engenders an alienating effect and creates new, provocative meanings.

**Geen gezeik iedereen rijk, 2001**

polyester and sheet metal

'Geen gezeik iedereen rijk' (or 'No fuss, everyone's flush') is a cube-shaped sculpture made of gold bars stacked on top of one another. Every bar has a serial number and a stamp. It goes without saying that these bars are not really gold; they are fashioned from gold-plated polyester. The gilding of this low-value basic material suggests that the artist is trying to demonstrate the banality of wealth and luxury. Copers blinds you with a social illusion of material prosperity, whilst simultaneously questioning the values and norms of our society.

## D

**N. Dash**

b. 1980, Miami Beach, USA; lives and works in New York, USA

The oeuvre of the photographer and sculpture-painter N. Dash is based on the daily repetition of a kind of ritual. For over ten years she has been photographing pieces of cloth, which she always carries around with her and continuously caresses, rips and kneads as if it is an obsession of sorts. This endless contact transforms the pieces into a tangle of loose ends and knots, resembling 'unstable, changing sculptures'. By producing greatly enlarged photographs of them, independent artworks emerge from this continuous 'creative process'. In her arte povera-related 'sculpture-paintings' Dash also handles pre-industrial, organic materials such as jute, linen, rope, graphite, pigment and loam in an almost ritualistic manner. She 'kneads' them 'into' their carrier, e.g. linen painter's canvas, until geometric-abstract sculptures form.

**Untitled, 2017**

mixed media

This monumental 'sculpture-painting' consists of a strict geometric grid into which Dash has inserted organic materials. The layered material appears to embody depth and density. Indeed, as a result of Dash's method it seems as though the materials possess an emotional, even existential character and act in a free, almost animistic manner within the tight grid structure. This work conjures up associations with the overwhelming, minimalistic canvases of Mark Rothko.

**D**

**Franky D.C**

b. 1957, Izegem, Belgium; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium  
 Franky D.C does not create new images but instead recovers and edits existing images. With this approach he not only brings into question the unique authorship, but also the originality of the artwork. D.C's probing takes place principally during his daily city walks, a kind of quest through neighbourhoods in constant change. He captures this rumination process in photographic and film material and stores it in an archive.

**<<AUTO-LOGIC COLOR VACCIN>> Samples 1990/1994  
 'De schoenen van de buurman', 2000**

mixed media  
 Starting in 1990, Franky D.C began to selectively collect 'Dingen Die Oranje Zijn' (D.D.O.Z.) ('Things That Are Orange'), which involved all kinds of objects that he found in flea markets and in his immediate surroundings. He subsequently condensed his collection retaining the items that interested him most. After months scrutinizing the collection, he added orange accents to certain pieces. He called this 'injection' the 'auto-logic colour vaccine', the 'self-directing colour vaccine'. By constantly rearranging his collection with orange as catalyst, new combinations and patterns emerge that shed a different light on reality.

**Berlinde De Bruyckere**

b. 1964, Ghent, Belgium; lives and works in Ghent, Belgium  
 Berlinde De Bruyckere's work is figurative and therefore very recognisable, but underneath this first layer lies a powerful, poetic visual language. In search of a translation of the vulnerable moment when two beings are one, De Bruyckere unites opposites such as life and death, love and suffering, and cruelty and tenderness within one image. Her vocabulary includes blankets, equine anatomy, distorted bodies and antlers in wax. The shapes and materials with which she works have been consistently chosen for their metaphorical power. Berlinde De Bruyckere is a key figure within the contemporary art landscape in Belgium but has also achieved international recognition for her unique oeuvre.

**Aan-één, 2009**

mixed media  
 In a wooden, open display case, we see the torn apart and tattered bodies of two intertwined horses. This terrifying image is a metaphor for impermanence and death. With 'Aan-één' ('To-one'), as with her other works, De Bruyckere reminds us of our vulnerability and the transient nature of our existence.

**Uit elkaar gegroeid, 1997-98**

pencil and watercolor on paper  
 Drawings are an essential part of De Bruyckere's oeuvre. She makes them in series and they enrich her sculptures with their variations and nuances. Although De Bruyckere's three-dimensional work is better known than her drawings, the two disciplines go hand in hand in the development of her oeuvre. In her series of drawings, the artist above all explores psychological topics and develops her visual research, taking inspiration among other things from anatomical studies and academic life drawings.

**D**

**Thierry De Cordier**

b. 1954, Oudenaarde, Belgium; lives and works in Alpujarras, Spain  
 Thierry De Cordier is a philosopher, author and visual artist. He describes himself as romantic and melancholic. His work emanates from his personal quest: he strives to understand his own being and being human. 'Back to nature' is (also) De Cordier's motto. There he is able to distance himself from our consumer society and there he tries to escape it. For a long time his garden represented the ultimate place where he found peace to reflect and work, in harmony with nature. He later went to live by the sea. Escaping the world and loneliness are recurring elements in De Cordier's dark sculptures, drawings and paintings.

**Gargantua, 1996**

mixed media  
 loan Collection Flemish Community  
 'Gargantua', like many of De Cordier's pieces, is produced from waste, from 'poor' materials. The large sphere, from which a plate and human hair emerge, looms like a mysterious presence. The title of the piece is the name of one of the giants from the novels by the 16<sup>th</sup> century French author François Rabelais. In 'Gargantua and Pantagruel' the latter recounts the extravagant and hilarious adventures of a giant and his son. This piece combines strength and vulnerability: the hidden strength of the giant, and the vulnerability of the rather clumsy sculpture. What's more, the reference to French literature is no coincidence. French is the native language of De Cordier, who grew up in a bilingual family. Language also plays an important role in his works, both in the choices of the titles and the sentences that form an essential component of his pieces.

**Koenraad Dedobbeleer**

b. 1975, Halle, Belgium; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium  
 Koenraad Dedobbeleer experiments with a variety of media. For the last ten years he has been creating work that combines everyday materials. Many of his sculptures and installations examine the shifts of meaning that occur as a result of the way something is exhibited. In his opinion, the significance of an object depends substantially on the way it is presented and in which context. He therefore considers, among other elements, that the space in which something is shown plays a crucial role. His works respond to these spaces and in their turn the spaces dictate the meaning of the work.

**Living Is An Act I Did Not Premeditate, 2014**

bronze  
 This installation consists of nothing more than an ordinary copper object. It is a door handle that can be fitted to a door of one's choice in the exhibition room. When presented in this way, the handle seems like a minimalist sculpture. The way it is exhibited causes confusion and clashes with the way we are accustomed to looking at art. This sculpture is a perfect example of Dedobbeleer's experimental, multi-layered approach to sculpture. Sculptures can be turned into objects by the specific place the artist gives them in the space, and vice versa. The absurd title appears to refer to something completely different and emphasises the sense of confusion the work arouses.

## D

**Raoul De Keyser**

b. 1930, Deinze, Belgium; d. 2012, Deinze, Belgium

Raoul De Keyser is considered to be the discrete master among Belgian painters of the past fifty years. His oeuvre is idiosyncratic and tactile, consistently process-based and created without any obvious plan. In his early work he experimented with the fundamentals of painting: colour, paint and canvas. His visual idiom later became more fluid and new motifs emerged. The artist enjoyed exploring the field of tension between reality and abstraction. Painting was a game to him, a study of the possibilities painting offered. He mainly painted small, often rather curious canvases. Playful and serious, seductive and unruly.

**Flank, 1991-92**

oil paint on canvas

loan Collection Flemish Community

'Flank' is built up of multiple colours and layers, like each piece by De Keyser. He spent two years working on this painting. The way in which it is painted urges us to take the time to really observe it. The brushstrokes look like random splashes on a monochrome layer of paint. However, this is only how it appears: the splashes are not so random and the background is not made up of a single colour, but of various layers of colour, painted one on top of another. De Keyser's paintings do not refer to anything specific. They refer only to themselves, and their painted skin. The title of this painting, 'Flank', does not necessarily say anything about its content. De Keyser was not a narrative painter. The painting itself, exploring the materials, that is what constituted the essence for him.

**Luc Deleu**

b. 1944, Duffel, Belgium; lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium

The architect, urbanist and artist Luc Deleu sees architecture as a form of visual, sculptural and political thinking concerning the relationship between public and private space. In 1970 he founded 'T.O.P. office': a firm for the study of urban development and architecture. The firm's motivation and goal were to question architecture and urban design and their position and function in society. Deleu soon became convinced that in many respects our cities would be improved if we built less. In his view, the rapid evolution of communication and mobility should make it possible to lead a more nomadic life again. His initial projects therefore emphasised the wealth of potential of mobility as against the rigid immobility of physical buildings. They argued against the privilege that immovable property enjoys as places to live and work. Together with his wife Laurette Gillemot (1946) and a few members of staff, Deleu is still generating visionary ideas on urbanisation, sometimes with a utopian tendency, which respond inventively to the ecological, economic, cultural, social, geographic and administrative-political reality and future.

**De laatste steen van België, 1979**

diepdruk in beton

donation

In 'De laatste steen van België' Luc Deleu playfully criticises the Belgian obsession with building. He started out from the idea that our country has for decades been filled with poorly conceived buildings which are confused with the real architecture that is worthy of the name, and so designed a 'last stone'. This stone was bricked in near the entrance to S.M.A.K., a public building where we would normally expect a 'first stone'.

## D

**Wim Delvoye**

b. 1965, Wervik, Belgium; lives and works in Gentbrugge, Belgium

With a number of scatological pieces, such as the notorious 'Cloaca' (2000), Wim Delvoye was able to profile himself as one of the most controversial artists of his generation. The artist's model which he employed to do so, is that of the 'super'-artist: the businessman-entrepreneur that remains firmly in control. Characteristic of these types of artists is that they respond like no other to current political, economic and cultural models, and in particular to the mechanisms that drive the art world and the art market. At the same time they respond quickly via their multimedia work to corny assertions about the artistic practice and artwork. Delvoye presents himself as an autodidact who, assisted by experts and experienced craftsmen, continuously expands his knowledge of new techniques and tests their limits.

**Betonmolen met zesenzeventig schoppen, 1991**

mixed media

This piece consists of a mahogany wood concrete mixer with baroque carving and 76 painted shovels depicting heraldic motifs. By adorning two trivial work tools that symbolise hard labour performed by men, with decorative motifs from folk culture, Delvoye confronts social hierarchies with the corresponding orderings, and attempts to eliminate the boundaries between the different worlds.

**Nikolaas Demoen**

b. 1965, Ghent, Belgium; lives and works in Ghent, Belgium

In his drawings, sculptures, collages, poems and film installations Nikolaas Demoen explores the boundary between human, often artistic actions and their end result, which may or may not be visible. In one of his videos we see the artist walk through his studio taking long strides. He isn't heading anywhere, but there is the unspoken promise that something will happen. Demoen plays the role of the artist and the artistic process, a quest during which he sometimes vanishes behind serene, poetic objects.

**L'Homme qui marche, 2011**

video, 6 min 55 sec

donation

The starting point of 'L'Homme qui marche' is the sculpture with the same name by Alberto Giacometti from 1960. The iconic, life-sized bronze statue of a tall, thin man bent forwards on the way to an unknown destination, was often interpreted as a metaphor for man's futility. For Giacometti the work was first and foremost a sculptural study of man in space. The starting point of 'L'Homme qui marche' by Demoen was the walking man as an illusion of a mental process. His sculpture 'walked' through the halls during previous exhibitions in S.M.A.K. As a result the sculpture became a museum visitor and passed by other works, including sculptures by Berlinde De Bruyckere, François Morellet and Jean Schwindt. The film footage of these 'performances' is processed in stop motion. The sound was provided by clarinetist Joachim Badenhorst, who improvised to the rhythm of the film. In between the performances we see the sculpture land each time on a pedestal where it resumes its position as a sculpture.

## D

**Johan De Wilde**

b. 1964, Zele, Belgium; lives and works in Ghent, Belgium

Since the mid-nineties, Johan De Wilde has been making pencil drawings. In the periphery of this, he also creates prints, photo series, graphic art, collages and texts. His meticulous, labour-intensive style is the antithesis to the fast pace of life and the transience of our overly saturated digital visual culture. De Wilde's drawings are built up like paintings: layer upon layer. They consist of horizontal and vertical lines between which the suggestion of shapes or numbers is interwoven. With graphite and coloured pencils, the artist chiefly draws on archival cardboard. He usually works in A4 format because he wants his drawings to be as universal as possible; this is quite simply the most commonly used paper size. De Wilde's oeuvre is never straightforward. His images are more likely to trigger our associative powers than to impose well-defined meanings.

**Pi, 2007**

mixed media

This is a key work by De Wilde that exposes the fundamentally open nature of his oeuvre. It comprises an infinitely continuable series of drawings that began with the irrational number 'pi' and a long series of numbers after the comma. Each new drawing contains a different set of numbers after the comma. Unless you have seen the first work in this series, it is impossible to glean anything meaningful from the numerical sequences in the subsequent drawings. As the creator of an 'infinite' series of works on paper, the artist is akin to a monk who, out of humility and reverence for creation, copies and illuminates incomprehensible books.

**Jim Dine**

b. 1935, Cincinnati, USA; lives and works in Paris, France, New York and Walla Walla, USA

In 1959 Jim Dine settled in New York, where he and other artists such as Claes Oldenburg, Allan Kaprow and John Cage developed the 'happening', a predecessor of performance art. In parallel with his happenings, he did paintings into which he incorporated concrete objects; these were his 'combine paintings'. Although their highly graphic style, vivid colours and simple, popular visual elements often led to their being associated with Pop Art, Dine saw his work on canvas more as a continuation of Robert Rauschenberg's collages and the work of Jasper Johns and the neo-dadaists. Unlike Pop Art, which is intended to represent modern society, Dine made use of personal images from his everyday surroundings.

**Two Hearts (Opera), 1970**

oil paint on canvas and mixed media on canvas  
donation

'Two Hearts (Opera)' is a combination of concrete objects and painted pictures. Reality and illusion come together and dialogue with each other. Dine playfully points out to us the relations between paint, canvas and concrete objects by attaching a dirty cloth and a camouflage jacket to the painted canvas. The canvas is only sparsely painted: it shows two schematic hearts formed by just a few brushstrokes. The dripping paint gives a tangible presence not only to the things, but also to the paint itself. The paintbrushes and the jacket can be interpreted as a self-portrait of the artist. The heart – one of the core motifs in Dine's oeuvre – refers to his close ties with his wife, the human capacity for loving and the constant presence of emotions in our lives.

## D

**Peter Downsbrough**

b. 1940, New Brunswick, USA; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

Since 1989 the American artist-architect Peter Downsbrough has been living and working in Brussels. In his study of the relationship between space and language he has broadened the spectrum of minimal and conceptual art. Using a much-simplified visual language, consisting of black letters and lines, he makes us aware of perspective in interior and exterior spaces. His visual language permeates installations, photographs, drawings, adapted postcards and artists' books.

**5.50 | 3.10, Two Pipes, 1974**

steel  
donation

Peter Downsbrough is known for his numerous versions of 'Two Pipes', which he installed in private and outdoor public spaces in the early seventies. Each version consists of two metal tubes of different lengths, perpendicular and positioned in the ground next to each other. In one respect, Downsbrough with this intervention redefines the original space. On the other hand, the artist reflects on the extent to which, if at all, we are concerned with objects in urban and rural settings. The artist took photos of the variations of 'Two Pipes', which he incorporated into books and sets of postcards.

**Rein Dufait**

b. 1990, Ostend, Belgium; lives and works in Ostend, Belgium

Rein Dufait's youthful oeuvre explores the grey zone between nature and culture. In this, the creation and growth processes are necessary steps to transform an idea into a work. Although they are sometimes constructed from heavy cumbersome materials, Dufait's organic works are fragile and transient. They are not static but are evolving and make us aware that time is passing. Alongside this and in an outside space, the artist creates works that undergo a metamorphosis and gradually merge into their surroundings.

**Malkolos, 2016**

cement, rope, cardboard

'Malkolos' can be seen outside, to the left of the museum building. This 4m high, 45 cm diameter in situ work, was realized via a complex creation process utilizing cardboard boxes, cement, rope and metal rods. The work is present as a 'cultural form' in the midst of other man-made shapes and the continuously evolving natural environment. Cement (earth, soil) and water (sea, rain) form the mortar. Oxygen (air) engenders an interplay. Even ossified, this 'form' remains a natural product. The rain introduces organisms, the wind sows moss, leaves turn to humus. Even after the artist is no longer involved, this sculpture continues to grow. Just as a branch shows the growth of a tree, here the remaining visible cardboard imparts structure. Vulnerability is inherent in life. Vestiges are proof of life.



## D

**Lili Dujourie**

b. 1941, Roeselare, Belgium; lives and works in Lovendegem, Belgium

Since the late 60ies Lili Dujourie has worked on an oeuvre that fluctuates between painting and sculpture. She uses materials that present a contrast: materials that are soft and hard, agile and uncompromising. She uses these materials to explore the space between the floor and the wall, movement and static, between painting, sculpture, photography and video. Her choice is never unambiguous. She seeks the intermediate space, the fold. Each piece by Dujourie is a fragment, an element in a subtle game of presence and absence.

**Roman (5), 1979**

collage on paper

For her series of collages entitled 'Roman' Lili Dujourie tore pieces of paper out of magazines and advertising leaflets. She glued them into a composition on sheets of paper. The large distance between the snippets prevents you from viewing them in their entirety. Fragments of figuration that are visible on the snippets here and there have been torn into unrecognisable shreds. It is impossible to construct a story from them, in contrast to what the title seems to suggest. 'Roman' refers to literature, but in this piece Dujourie also applies principles inherent to sculpture. The snippets and the empty space around them engage in a physical relationship. The snippets appear to transcend their flatness: their jagged edges, paper thickness and type of paper resist the background, the paper 'pedestal'.

**Roze Hoek, 1987**

marble

loan Collection Flemish Community

'Roze Hoek' literally relates to Dujourie's research into the spatial relationship between wall, floor and ceiling. The piece hangs high up the wall, is almost a metre wide and is made from pink and black marble. In the existing architecture of the museum it marks the corner of an alternative, imaginary space. The space suggested by this pink corner is undefined. It is an open space, open to possibilities and to the imagination. Despite the size and weight of the material the sculpture looks light, poetic and subtle. This contradiction and the impossibility of grasping the reality in a single glance are typical of Dujourie's oeuvre as a whole.

## D

**Marlene Dumas**

b. 1953, Cape Town, South Africa; lives and works in Amsterdam, The Netherlands

The Dutch artist Marlene Dumas creates collages, drawings and paintings and also writes poems, essays and statements about her work. She belongs to the select group of painters who revived figurative painting in the 80s and 90s. Dumas mainly makes portraits of human figures, which she executes in a drawing-like, expressionistic style, in sombre shades and with strong contrasts between light and dark. Most of the portraits depict women and are based on mass-media photographs or her own Polaroids. Dumas' work is firmly rooted within her personal milieu and experiences, and deals with such charged themes as sexuality, love, eroticism, death and guilt. She often refers to art history, popular culture and current events.

**Portret van J.H., 1992**

J.H., 1992

**Portret Jan Hoet, 1992****Poging 8 tot het verbeelden van Jan Hoet, 1992**

4 works, ink on paper

donation

These are a series of attempts by Marlene Dumas to portray Jan Hoet, the founder and former artistic director of S.M.A.K. She made this work in 1992, on the occasion of Documenta IX, one of the most important exhibitions curated by Hoet. Dumas' portrait explores the representation of identity in all its complexity, hovering somewhere between the divine and the ungodly. Jan Hoet's close-up has an abstract feel and seems isolated from any context. The subject has a confrontational and intimidating character, yet one that also feels intimate and arouses feelings of empathy. This portrait, which has been given the 'Dumas' treatment, so to speak, exudes the almost essential loneliness and alienation of our existence. Referring to the tradition of deathbed portraiture, Dumas is alluding in this work to the transience of life.

**Sam Durant**

b. 1961, Seattle, USA; lives and works in Los Angeles, USA

Sam Durant makes photographs, sculptures, drawings and installations. His oeuvre touches on a wide variety of themes, ranging from the Civil Rights Movement, to rock music, to modernism. All his works have a historical, social, political or art historical dimension. They draw attention to themes that relate to the link between art, culture and politics.

**Male Chauvinists Beware, 2004**

light box with text

The slogans in Durant's work are generally unambiguous, and this is most certainly the case in this work: 'Male Chauvinists Beware'. His interest in the social movements in the US in the 1960s led to a series of works using light boxes. Newspaper photographs of demonstrations from that period served as his raw material, with Durant's primary interest lying in the use of language on demonstrators' placards. He selected texts with a general message and without an overt connection to a specific event or period, such as: 'Tell It Like It Is', 'We Are the People' or 'Male Chauvinists Beware'. In a different context to a street protest, e.g. in a museum, these texts acquire new meanings. A second criterion was that the texts must be handwritten. The artist copied them onto the same kind of electronic light boxes that are used in the commercial business world. The handwritten texts contrast with the industrial nature of their carriers, the light boxes, and allude to the idea that it is the artist's hand that makes an artwork unique and valuable.

## E

**Joana Escoval**

b. 1982, Lisbon, Portugal; lives and works in Lisbon, Portugal

The delicate works of Joana Escoval resemble remnants from the pre-industrial past or objects from the distant future. Her sculptures of earthenware and metal and her installations with moss, feathers, stones, seashells and tropical leaves blur the boundary between culture and nature. Inspired by nature's motifs, alchemy and cultures such as that of the American Navajo, her creations refer to ritual implements and transitional places. They have the momentum of conductors or a current of energy that interweave form and content, living and dead matter, the concrete and the spiritual, the visible and the invisible. In Escoval's world nothing is decreed, everything is entwined and connected.

**Time Flows Ever On, 2018**

silver, gold, copper

In 'Time Flows Ever On' Escoval questions our relationship with the environment. Her work consists of fragile gold, copper and silver wires that are poised between sculpture and drawing. The elegant, handmade constellation of filaments and circles is reminiscent of devices with which subtle environmental forces such as light, temperature, air and humidity are measured and recorded. The work, which is inspired by a constellation map and North American cosmology, is synonymous with Escoval's research into 'the correlation that encompasses everything that exists'.

## F

**Jan Fabre**

b. 1958, Antwerp, Belgium; lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium

It was through his uncle that the young Fabre learnt about the work of the French entomologist Jean-Henri Fabre, who became one of his personal heroes. In the late 1970s Fabre gave small-scale performances. He also did insect and blood drawings, made theoretical models and films of his short actions. Marcel Duchamp is one of his sources of inspiration. In about 1975 Fabre started writing plays, first as an extension of performance art, and later focusing on 'the falsehood of theatre'. In the 1980s he made his international breakthrough with drawings in and objects coloured with blue ballpoint. In the 1990s his insect drawings evolved into sculptures. In 2002 Fabre created the work 'Heaven of Delight' on a ceiling in the Royal Palace in Brussels using scarab wing-cases. In between times he also designs iconic sculptures for public spaces.

**De man die de wolken meet, 1998**

bronze

Reaching out to the clouds with outstretched arms from the top of a stepladder in an attempt to measure something as transient as the clouds; this is a utopian gesture. It is a metaphor for everyone who – like Fabre, other artists, and philosophers and scientists – aspires to higher goals that are considered beyond reach, such as absolute beauty. 'De man die de wolken meet' is a tribute to Fabre's late brother Emile, and is based on a childhood photo that was modified using ageing techniques. Fabre also found inspiration in the story of Robert Stroud, 'The Birdman of Alcatraz', who was condemned to life imprisonment and is claimed to have said that he wanted to devote his life to measuring clouds. Fabre donated versions of this sculpture to S.M.A.K. in 1998 and deSingel (Antwerp) in 2000. Since then they have adorned the rooftops of these two cultural institutions.

**Belu-Simion Fainaru**

b. 1959, Bucharest, Romania; lives and works in Haifa, Israel and Antwerp, Belgium

Belu-Simion Fainaru emigrated to Israel in 1973: currently he lives and works both in Haifa (Israel) and Antwerp. His work is profoundly influenced by his emigration. As an artist and curator he broaches political and social issues such that his work examines the Jewish-Romanian cultural history, the Hebrew language, and philosophical and mystical questions concerning identity and territory. In this, Fainaru plays off contrasts one against the other, such as past and present, sacred and secular, or body and soul. In expressive terms his ideas are interpreted through sculptures and installations as well as videos.

**Walking Around the Dimension of the Present Moment, 2001**

mixed media

donation

'Walking Around the Dimension of the Present Moment' consists of a stone bench with built-in TV screens on which TV programmes from various countries can be seen. Passers-by can thereby sit on the screens. This work reflects on the important role played by the media in the context of globalization, including their influencing our opinion about the relationship between what is global versus local, between reality and illusion. Fainaru created this installation for Sonsbeek 9 in Arnhem. This links with other of his works which he erected in the thick of everyday city life, for instance in an underground car park in Kronenburg.

**Christoph Fink**

b. 1963, Ghent, Belgium; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

Christoph Fink has been travelling since the beginning of the 1990s as part of his artistic endeavours. He keeps very precise records of these journeys (notes, photos, sound recordings), which he works into drawings, timelines, graphs, (wire) sculptures, slideshows and soundscapes. Fink's work demonstrates how complex the movements of the individual human being, or even more of humanity, in time and space are. In 2000 he bundled together objective recordings with subjective observations in his 'atlas of movements'. These movements take on a more social dynamic in his later work. In this vein Fink analyzes data about the movements of aircraft, historical facts about a city and historical periods relating to the earth, which he displays on ceramic discs.

**Brussel, 1ste beweging, 1994**

mixed media

loan Collection Flemish Community

For this work Fink traversed the city of Brussels for several months. He made notes about the weather conditions, street names and squares, geographical coordinates and even the times when he made the notes, until he had, in his opinion, completed the physical exploration of the city. He compiled these explorations into sixteen drawings: a drawing of Brussels based on his memory and then fifteen smaller drawings in blue ink, with notes in pencil about each of the walks. Since the blue ink is not light-resistant, he presents the drawings behind light-protective roller blinds. In principle – and therein lies the conceptual dimension – we can track the artist's movements through the precision of his drawings.

## F

G

**Mekhitar Garabedian**

b. 1977, Aleppo, Syria; lives and works in Ghent, Belgium

Mekhitar Garabedian, who has lived in Ghent since his youth, explores the position of the individual and the development of his/her identity in our society shaped by migration. Using very diverse media he examines how the split that migration creates continues to determine the present and how, accordingly, 'language' forms the position and the psyche of the migrant. Garabedian reflects on the conceptual possibilities of the artwork. His work is layered, as is his personal history as a migrant. It contains many references to literature, music, philosophy and visual art.

**Les mots des autres, 2011**

neon lighting  
donation

With this neon piece Garabedian visualises another key theme in his oeuvre. The quote "Ne parler qu'avec les mots des autres, c'est ce que je voudrais. Ce doit être ça la liberté" (To speak using the words of others, that's what I'd like. That's what freedom must be), derived from Jean Eustache's film 'La Maman et la Putain' (1973), constitutes an important link in Garabedian's artistic practice. The artist quotes, reproduces and disturbs. He appropriates elements from literature, music, philosophy, film and visual art to interpret his thoughts and shape his own identity.

**Tatjana Gerhard**

b. 1947, Zurich, Switzerland; lives and works in Ghent, Belgium

Tatjana Gerhard made the human figure the central point in her paintings. Her work is recognizable yet simultaneously alienating: it attracts and repels. The artist is not interested in the perfect, pleasant exterior but in what lies beneath it. What is going on in our heads? And why do we behave differently according to the context? Oil paint is the perfect medium for Gerhard to address these questions. Her work is created completely spontaneously, without knowing where it will lead. Sometimes her paintings are playful and full of fun: sometimes they have the aura of a nightmare.

**Ohne Titel, 2018**

oil paint on canvas

'Ohne Titel' hovers on the fine line between figurative and abstract. Describing the background in this painting is perplexing. In the foreground you can distinguish a face but it's almost disintegrating. Gerhard abandons the natural cohesion of the constituent body parts only to subsequently reconnect them into a dynamic, somewhat chaotic whole. She is fascinated by the way in which we interpret images. What is it we need to recognize a nose as a nose, for instance? Gerhard views the human figure as fleeting material that can assume many shapes. The artist is not searching for a simple explanation or harmony. She consciously introduces unequivocally disturbing aspects to her work with the precise intention of adding uneasiness. She enjoys making us confused. Gerhard paints the indecisive person, including their disquiet and fears, using unrestrained, expressive layers of oil paint.

G

**Jef Geys**

b. 1934, Leopoldsburg, Belgium; d. 2018, Genk, Belgium

To Jef Geys art did not exist independently but was intertwined with everyday life, from 'his' village of Balen to the whole wide world. Geys resolutely opted for the anti-elitist side of art. In 1971, he proposed blowing up the Royal Museum of Fine Arts in Antwerp at the end of his solo exhibition held at the very same museum. As of 1957, he developed art from his 'archive of the everyday', a storage space of traces of what had happened in his life and immediate environment. This grew into a widespread tangle of associations. At regular intervals the artist distilled them to produce new syntheses from which he questioned fixed patterns of thought about art and life. Since 1969, Jef Geys produced an edition of the publication 'Kempens Informatieblad' and/or 'Kempens Informatieboek' for each of his exhibitions. This newspaper was originally a local publication that disseminated local news. It also acquired an artistic function after Geys took it over. The newspaper played an essential role within the oeuvre of the artist as a democratic form of exhibition catalogue.

**Gleichheit broederlijkheid libert , 1986**

acrylic paint on wood

In 1986, Geys participated in Jan Hoet's exhibition 'Chambres d'Amis'. The artist installed doors in a number of interiors in rough parts of Ghent. Each time he installed them against a blind wall, so that they lost their function as a passageway. On each door was a single word from the motto of the French revolution - equality, fraternity and liberty - written in Belgium's three national languages (French, Flemish and German). Next to the photos of the doors in the exhibition catalogue at the time, were short descriptions about the life of the residents who occupied the interiors. They provide an idea of the reality in which many people live and deflate the sometimes elitist seriousness of the discourse conducted by the official art world.

**Advertenties, 2015**

print on paper  
donation

Jef Geys shows us Balen, but it is as vast as the whole wide world. His oeuvre may be anchored in the local, but the fundamental questions about art and life that Geys formulates are universal. Geys plucked these advertisements right out of the social life in and around the village where he lived. By elevating ordinary things, not particularly refined in aesthetic terms, from his life to create art, he demands attention for the banal. This piece is consistent with Geys' critical study of the value and original status of art, the institutional clout enjoyed by museums, and the aura of the artist.

## Vincent Geyskens

b. 1971, Lier, Belgium; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

In Vincent Geyskens' eyes, a painting is like a zombie: a restless soul from the past that is unable to justify its presence. It is no coincidence that these two qualities – the material and the physical – happen to be the key elements of painting that are nowadays suppressed. With his paintings and collages, Geyskens wants to liberate our gaze which, as it were, is held hostage by prejudices and visual strategies. Fragments of bare skin, splashes of paint, painted woodgrains, a flash of a naked woman or spilt milk can no longer be reduced to a single logical image but become entwined, thereby creating an immediate visual experience.

### Centerfold Lemon, 2006

oil paint on canvas

Through painting, Geyskens frees images of their meaning. This can be pushed to such an extreme that the resulting images are completely abstract, as in his 'Centerfold' series. The artist always begins by painting a pornographic 'centrefold', a single photograph reproduced across two facing pages in the middle of a magazine, and which can often be unfolded. He ignores the photographic and titillating functions and accentuates, instead, the purely material aspects, such as the creases, the glossy paper and the hues of the skin. Stripped of their meaning and folded back into their materiality, the porn photographs become pure painterly constructions, nothing more than painted images.

## Joris Ghekiere

b. 1955, Kortrijk, Belgium; d. 2016, Klein-Willebroek, Belgium

"It's just a painting". Irony and the ability to put things into perspective came naturally to Joris Ghekiere. What he did take seriously, however, was his lifelong research into the possibilities of painting and the status of the image in our society. With his virtuoso painting style and mastery of materials, Ghekiere liked to lead us up the garden path. Because his images are usually entirely artificial and often contain a 'wrong' interpretation of classical ideals of beauty. Motifs are a common thread running through this pseudo-aesthetic: anything from plants, webcam girls and folk dancing to abstract patterns. Ghekiere also critically questioned the importance of the authenticity of his technical mastery by experimenting radically with materials and his working method.

### Zonder titel (disks), 2015

oil paint on canvas

Ghekiere's oeuvre problematises our romantic longing for the unique, recognisable 'hand of the master'. Thus the painter sometimes mounted his brush on a drill or – as in 'Zonder titel' – his canvas on a turntable in order to apply concentric circles in a colour gradient with spray paint. This way of working lends an alienating depth to the canvas, whereby the painting flirts with the three-dimensional. In this conceptual painting, the two-dimensional picture plane is both negated and confirmed.

## Adrian Ghenie

b. 1977, Baia Mare, Romania; lives and works in Cluj, Romania and Berlin, Germany

In the Romanian city of Cluj, a special generation of artists was formed around the turn of the century. Adrian Ghenie became the most influential driver of this group of young painters who denounced the dark past of their country. In his tactile paintings, Ghenie conveys a contemporary vision of major political stories and universal themes such as the abuse of power and oppression, but he also casts light on the individual human struggle. He processes elements from the huge image reservoir of our collective memory into artistic material but employs an alternative setting. Cogitating figures and events that both fascinate and haunt him, he creates a metamorphosis between fact and fiction, and thereby shows that history can be interpreted in more than one way.

### Selfportrait, 2009

oil paint on canvas

Elvis Presley was the first major icon on a global scale: his legend gave rise to an enormous number of visual clichés. His fame even penetrated the Iron Curtain leading to Elvis impersonators, including Adrian Ghenie's father. The Elvis that Ghenie portrays here is a kind of imitation, reduced to a single image, a distorted image, moreover: the image of his father, who was a reflection of someone whose language and world he would never understand. Ghenie focuses more on depicting a status or an echo from the past, rather than a face, as he does in his later self-portraits as Vincent Van Gogh (2012) and Charles Darwin (2017).

## Robert Gober

b. 1954, Wallingford, USA; lives and works in New York, USA

Robert Gober created his first sculptures in the late Seventies: meticulously accurate doll's houses, entirely hand-made, even the wallpaper. This originated from his fascination with what a 'house' symbolises. In the Eighties, Gober, who came out as gay relatively early, supported the actions of the Aids Coalition To Unleash Power (ACT UP). His 'sinks' from this period stand for 'the impossibility of cleansing yourself'. Gober subsequently focused on other details associated with the home: from beds and doors to drains. He makes them by hand, but due to the high degree of precision he applies, his imitations are virtually indistinguishable from their industrially produced 'models'. Gober's hyper-realistic reproduction evokes a peculiar feeling.

### Drain, 1989

tin

The drain first emerged in Gober's oeuvre in 'Slides of a Changing Painting' (1982-83). Five years later, he integrated a cast of a drain in his house on top of a white stool-like structure. And in 1989, the artist installed a series of eight 'Drains' cast in tin, in the walls of the Paula Cooper Gallery in New York. This 'Drain' from the S.M.A.K. collection is one of those eight. The walls of the original installation in the gallery mentioned above were covered in wallpaper featuring 'unsophisticated drawings of genitals'. In the Eighties, a period gripped by Aids, Gober's drain could be interpreted as a symbol of the desire to be cleansed, or as the entrance and transition to a dark, inaccessible world.

## G

### Zvi Goldstein

b. 1947, Cluj, Romania; lives and works in Jerusalem, Israel

For the past forty years, Zvi Goldstein has been striving in his oeuvre to broaden horizons when it comes to contemporary art. In 1969 he established himself as a young conceptual artist in Italy, only to make Jerusalem his artistic and intellectual base in 1978, a city on the periphery of Europe, Asia and Africa. Since then, Goldstein has focused on anchoring contemporary art outside the West. Yet his works are fundamentally unclassifiable. They are neither ready-made works nor traditional sculptures. They have the attractiveness of an object that spontaneously appears in the world, while the effort that went into its production remains largely invisible. With his oeuvre, Goldstein wants to convert aesthetics into a political instrument with which to reshape the Western cultural gaze.

#### Vegetable Construct, 1994 (From the series: Botanyology)

untreated aluminium, anodised aluminium, untreated copper, lacquered copper, metal mesh, insulation panels, wire fuse element, PVC, Novotex, silkscreen, printed text on paper, aluminium frame  
donation

'Vegetable Construct' is a wall-mounted composition that is reminiscent of a musical stave or irrigation system. It consists of parallel tubes to which rectangular boards have been attached. These contain prints of vegetables that allude to the activities of the artist in his vegetable garden in Jerusalem. At the same time, the prints are a metaphor for the foreign origin of many of the vegetables that are eaten on a daily basis in the West. With 'Vegetable Construct', Goldstein wants to call into question the idea of cultural origin in general, and artistic originality in particular.

## H

### Raymond Hains

b. 1926, Saint-Brieuc, France; d. 2005, Paris, France

"Traditional resources have been exhausted. The only possible reaction is to abolish the painting." These words from 1960 originate from the first 'Manifeste du Nouveau Réalisme', written by the art critic Pierre Restany. The French artist Raymond Hains – along with Yves Klein and Daniel Spoerri – was one of the eleven signatories. The new 'realists' viewed the world as a painting. Since 1957, Hains had taken posters glued on top of one another, from the street scene, removed their communicative function in his studio and presented the remaining compositions in an artistic context. He did not create collages, but 'décollages'. Hains flirted with Pop Art for a while in the late Sixties with his enlarged versions of, for example, matchboxes. In 1997, his oeuvre was honoured with the Kurt Schwitters Prize.

#### Sans titre, 1974

collage, paper and ink on canvas  
loan private collection, Belgium

For 'Sans titre' Raymond Hains deconstructed the decipherability of overlapping street posters until only an abstract composition remained. It has become impossible to deduce what the hands are doing in the middle of this image. The fragments from the black and white photo cannot be connected in any obvious manner and the text has been fragmented to leave incoherent letters, which now only have a graphic value. This 'décollage' is a textbook example of 'anti-art': something existing was plucked from the everyday reality, reduced to its visual essence – in this case a museum – and afforded a new purpose and meaning as an object of aesthetic pleasure.

## H

### András Halász

b. 1946, Budapest, Hungary; lives and works in Budapest, Hungary

As a student András Halász called together several avant-garde artists to take a stand against the enforced communism. They opposed the artistic limitations that the regime had thrust upon them. Halász displayed his work in private houses, community centres and alternative clubs. He experimented with different art forms such as photograms, conceptual work and performances. In 1978 he left Hungary and from then on worked frequently both in Paris and New York, thus escaping the restriction of artistic activities in his homeland. Since 1990, the artist has been able to visit his native country legally and since 2005 has been living once again in Budapest, where he teaches at the University of Fine Arts.

#### A State Before Religion, 1979

gelatin silver print on photo paper  
donation

'A State Before Religion' is a series of photograms by Halász. A photogram is a print of an object produced in a dark room, whereby the object is placed on light-sensitive material and then very briefly exposed directly to light. Thus utilizing the resulting vivid black-and-white contrast Halász wants to appeal to us in a very direct way. His simple images of hands, heads and ears elicit a mysteriously religious atmosphere. In the 'situation prior to religion', the artist reasons that all things were 'equal and concrete'. Halász wants to encourage us to think about antiquated meanings and actions. His choice of photogram is judicious: it is a readily available and easily interchangeable medium, and as such is also the reason why he sometimes creates work in the form of letters, photos and videos. These media allow him to formulate his artistic ideas quickly and to disseminate them easily. Halász and his Hungarian contemporaries want first and foremost to enter into dialogue with us, to make us think and to incite social change with their art.

### Hamza Halloubi

b. 1982, Tangier, Morocco; lives and works in Brussels & Ghent, Belgium and Tangier, Morocco

#### Letter to Aura, 2012

video (colour, sound), 8 min

A wall into the top of which slivers of glass have been inserted, filmed from a terrace in Tangiers, is the only image in Hamza Halloubi's video 'Letter to Aura'. The image remains virtually unchanged throughout. All that makes time visible is a couple of birds flying overhead and the slow approach of darkness. This long take provides the starting point for the reflections in Halloubi's letter to Aura, which he reads in a monotone. The wall symbolises frontiers: national frontiers, and also the limits of free speech and of the imagination. In his letter, the artist talks about his youth in Tangiers, reflects on the geopolitical situation in Morocco, on exile, borders and identity. In his account, personal and collective memories intermingle and official history is questioned. While the darkness of the night lays its black veil over the wall, Halloubi quotes from a letter written by the well-known Cuban-American artist Felix Gonzalez-Torres to the owner of the gallery where he exhibits. In this letter, Gonzalez-Torres writes about his 1991 work 'Untitled (Passport)', which consists of an endless series of blank posters. Virgin white pages as a counterweight to the dark wall in Halloubi's video. The pages are empty, so you can write (or rewrite) your own history and life on them. They are blank passports, hopeful letters of safe conduct to a better future.

## H

**David Hammons**

b. 1943, Springfield, USA; lives and works in New York, USA

David Hammons is one of the most important Afro-American artists of our time. The urban reality of his home base New York and his Afro-American roots are important aspects in his oeuvre. Hammons developed his own vocabulary using symbols from everyday life – often rubbish and banal objects – that he associates with the urbanised Afro-American life. In his installations, videos, drawings, paintings and performances he mixes this personal vocabulary with references to Western art history, which affords many of his works an ironic change.

**Chasing the Blue Train, 1989**

mixed media

'Chasing the Blue Train' is an installation comprising impressive grand pianos, a mountain of coal and a blue miniature train that meanders through this strange landscape to the notes of Afro-American jazz by John Coltrane and Thelonious Monk. The title is a contraction of two titles of Coltrane's records. The train track and the coal refer to the infamous A metro line that connected Brooklyn to the New York 'black' district of Harlem. They also refer to the crisis of 1920-'30, in which thousands of Afro-Americans traversed the US to work in the coal mines. Besides the brown and black concert pianos the installation includes a single white one. The artist uses it to refer to the dominance of the rich, white minority over the poor, black majority. 'Chasing the Blue Train' is simultaneously an ode to the jazz of Coltrane and Monk and a criticism of the exploitation and deportation of black slaves in the context of mining the American coal mines.

**Phat Free, 1995-99**

video transferred to DVD (colour, sound), 5 min 20 sec donation

In 'Phat Free' a man walks in the dark through the streets of a city, kicking a metal bucket in front of him. The video is based on a performance Hammons gave in the street (possibly in New York) in 1995. 'Phat Free' is an allusion to 'Fat Free', used to refer to healthy food. In the dialect of the Afro-American community during the Eighties and Nineties 'phat' also meant 'cool', 'sexy' or 'great'. The word regularly crops up in the powerful bass lines and drum beats of hip hop. Hammons appears to refer to the rhythmic sounds in this video. Due to the lack of imagery in the first section and the vague connotations of the word 'phat', it is not easy to interpret this work unambiguously. This obstinacy is not coincidental: Hammons admits that he prefers to work for random passers-by on the street than for an elite art audience.

## H

**Karin Hanssen**

b. 1960, Antwerp, Belgium; lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium

In the early '90s Karin Hanssen was pivotal in regenerating an increased appreciation for painting. She bases her paintings on photographic and film material from the '50s and '60s, regularly incorporating art-historical references. Hanssen views this image "recycling" as a flashback. Her images appear immediately recognizable but nevertheless remain anonymous because the provenance of the source material has been lost. Interpreting Hanssen's work is hindered by her neutral painting style and because the characters defy identification, combined with the fact that the landscapes are generalized and the period indeterminate.

**The Approach (Donald Duck), 2007-08**

oil paint on canvas

This work is painted in Hanssen's characteristic, impersonal and pseudo-neutral style. It is part of a series where the artist focuses on the influence of mass media and popular imagery on our perception of reality. Hanssen points out the pitfalls of an exaggerated belief in our personal fantasies and ambitions, to the extent where these ideals acquire a life of their own and every link with the truth threatens to be lost. Thus the painting is regarded as a subtle warning against a disruption in our sense of reality by a grotesque rendition of the fantasy, as is often, for example, portrayed by the film industry.

**Heide Hinrichs**

b. 1976, Oldenburg, Germany; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

The works of Heide Hinrichs are fragile and subtle. It is not possible to decipher them quickly. They demand time and attention, and invite us to observe them in silence. Tactility is an important starting point. Hinrichs collects all kinds of materials and assigns them a new identity. Or in her own words: "By listening closely, I intend to set them free". Her oeuvre examines the relationship between the body and space, and how it can be depicted. The standpoint we adopt as the observer, determines what we see. When we walk around her work we see ever-changing perspectives. Something that appears fixed is constantly changing.

**Trigramme, 2015**

pencil on paper

In 'Trigramme' subtlety and play converge with perspective. The interplay of fine lines looks different depending on the position we adopt. A trigram is a combination of three characters in a certain order. They could be numbers or letters, as well as, for example, lines positioned horizontally above one another, like the pencil lines in this piece. Sometimes trigrams have a specific meaning that we can unravel. This is not the case here. Heide Hinrichs uses the trigrams as a purely visual motif.

## H

### David Hockney

b. 1937, Bradford, United Kingdom; lives and works in Bradford, United Kingdom

David Hockney is considered one of the most symbolic person-ages of British pop art in the 1960s. British pop art originated in the 1950s and was characterized by satire focused on mass culture and consumerism. Hockney developed his own figurative style and painted everyday scenes with an uncomplicated, realistic and flat painting approach with vibrant colours. Often aspects of his personal life determined the subjects for his work. His homosexual nature became a theme of his early work and later the lifestyle of the well-to-do American society was likewise often a theme.

#### Man Stood in Front of his House with Rain Descending (The Idiot), 1962

oil paint on canvas

After his tutelage in London, Hockney quickly developed a personal, seemingly effortless style. In many of his early paintings, the artist combined abstract compositions with figurative elements. Often he also integrated fragments of text to underpin the image. In this painting the apparent three-dimensionality of the castle architecture contrasts with the flatness of the remainder of the composition. This gives us the impression that the central figure is positioned in a film or theatre setting. The title of the work, in combination with the castle in the background, seems to allude to the saying 'An Englishman's home is his castle', prompting us to interpret the painting as social satire.

## J

### Ann Veronica Janssens

b. 1956, Folkestone, United Kingdom; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

Since the early 1990s, Belgian artist Ann Veronica Janssens has explored the possibilities of the art of sculpture. She applies intangible phenomena such as light, colour and sound, to develop new forms of perception. In the process she attaches greater importance to the physical-sensory effect of her sculptures than to their actual forms. The atypical, ephemeral materials Janssens uses allow her to manipulate us more easily in sensory and optical terms. The play on space and our gaze has become increasingly important and more refined over the course of her career.

#### Untitled (blue glitter), 2015

blue glitter

This poetic piece consists of a mountain of blue glitter made from ground PVC. The glitter was subjected to a powerful kick to distribute it. The sculpture illustrates Janssens' research of materials, observation, movement and space. The material in its raw beauty takes precedence here. It is a work of contrasts that vibrates between energy and calm, concentration and distraction, light and shadow, and density and transparency.

## K

### Joachim Koester

b. 1962, Copenhagen, Denmark; lives and works in Copenhagen, Denmark and New York, USA

A complex web of documentary and fiction forms the core of the photo series, installations and films realized by Joachim Koester. After careful consideration, the artist selects from a diverse range of sources paying special attention to the mystery surrounding missing fragments and ambiguities present in our history. In doing so his work reveals a common link, sparked by his personal interests: the discovery of unknown regions, the human body, body language and performance; art, history and art history; the occult (or the secret doctrine of the unknown), the hidden or the immeasurable; the limits of the human mind and experiments for its expansion. Exploring the threshold of the esoteric is a constant theme in his oeuvre.

#### To Navigate, in a Genuine Way, in the Unknown Necessitates an Attitude of Daring, but not One of Recklessness (Movements Generated from the Magical Passes of Carlos Castaneda), 2009

16 mm film (black and white, silent), 3 min 16 sec

In 'To Navigate [...]' Joachim Koester explores a world that is untapped territory for western science. A performer executes movements based on 'Magical Passes' (1998), the last book by writer and anthropologist Carlos Castaneda. In 1960 Castaneda came into contact with the Yaqui Indian, Juan Tus, who trained him as a shaman. From 1968 Castaneda wrote several influential books about this, including one about Tus' knowledge of botany, including plants with mind-broadening and/or healing qualities. Koester's influence on the counter-culture of the late '60s and '70s was substantial.

### Surasi Kusolwong

b. 1965, Ayutthaya, Thailand; lives and works in Bangkok, Thailand

In recent years, Surasi Kusolwong has built remarkable installations in museums and galleries all over the world, among other things an actual market with stalls, a lottery kiosk and a massage parlour. These room-filling creations, usually arising out of personal memories, often express the artist's interest in popular culture, but not only that. His main point is that we, the onlookers, should be actively involved. As he emphasises: "No public, no art".

#### Emotional Machine (VW with Marcel Broodthaers), 2000-04

mixed media

donation

Between 2000 and 2004, Kusolwong built his 'Emotional Machine (VW with Marcel Broodthaers)'. This installation consists of a 'landscape' of car parts. In the middle hangs the dismantled bodywork of a Volkswagen Beetle, which in this work serves as a swing. You could just get in and enjoy some idyllic views of the city in the setting sun. In a playful way, the old Beetle gains a new significance as a means of transport, though only figuratively, and as a vehicle for poetic transports. In exactly the same way as the hand silhouettes appeal to our imagination in 'La souris écrit rat' (1974), an artwork by the major Belgian conceptual artist Marcel Broodthaers (1924-1976) that Surasi Kusolwong has incorporated into the installation.

## Annika Larsson

b. 1972, Stockholm, Sweden; lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Over the last twenty years, Annika Larsson has generated a surprisingly coherent oeuvre. Many of her videos revolve around the way people behave in our rigidly defined and highly stratified social world. In her work, trivial actions assume an almost ritual nature and take place in an oppressive atmosphere of domination and suppression. Larsson focuses almost exclusively on the body language of the characters and films the actions they perform meticulously and in fine detail. In doing this she makes frequent use of the visual codes of cinema, including close-ups, zooming in, slow-motion shots and precisely composed framing. In addition, a variety of camera angles succeed one another, though the scenes are never seen in their entirety.

### Dog, 2001

video (silent), 16 min  
donation

In 'Dog' we see two men in suits. One is holding a dog on a chain. They exchange glances. The camera focuses on their expressionless faces and on details of their accessories, such as a golden chain around the neck, a belt and leather gloves. The slowness and the close-ups establish an atmosphere somewhere between dream and reality, detail and absurdity, and contribute to the well-planned minimalist aesthetics of the video. The insistent, repetitive soundtrack also has a hypnotic effect and accentuates the creepy undertone. Larsson seems almost to be suggesting a sadomasochistic relationship between the two men and the dog.

## Louise Lawler

b. 1947, New York, USA; lives and works in New York, USA

Louise Lawler uses photography to study the value, meaning and use of art. By photographing artworks in museums and other spaces and situations, she reveals hidden mechanisms in the art world concerning production, distribution, consumption and storage. Without making any judgement, Lawler points out that there is no neutral way of exhibiting art and that the meaning of artworks is determined by the context they are presented and viewed in.

### Storage, 1986

mixed media

A framed photo hangs against a rectangular salmon-pink background. In the photo we see an artwork hung in a storage space amongst other frames that are leaning against the wall. In this instance, Lawler captured the artwork at a time and place where it no longer has the same aura as when it could be seen in the 'ideal' museum setting. In this way she points out the hidden influence that the context exerts on the meaning, value and presentation of art. Next to the photo are a red dot and an identification label, on which we can read that the dot represents the 6 megatons of explosive energy used during the Second World War. The dot is related to the painted rectangle, whose area in its turn represents the world's 16,000 megaton stockpile of nuclear weapons. In the 1980s, Lawler frequently added this sort of evocative and confrontational statistics to her work.

## Lee Kit

b. 1978, Hong Kong; lives and works in Taipei, Taiwan

Lee Kit is not a political artist, but in 21<sup>st</sup> -century Hong Kong, depicting the everyday, both human and domestic, was sufficient to be considered political. His work can be seen as an aesthetic examination of human emotions that he considers as the unique common denominator in a world that is both globalized and yet divided. With his 'situations' or 'settings' Lee Kit discards the traditional painting of his training. He goes beyond the two-dimensional aspect of it and introduces light, colour, perspective, composition and texture – also characteristic components of painting – so that spatial installations come into being. In Lee Kit's work the pictorial space found in a painting becomes a real space.

### Hand-Painted Cloth Used to Cleaning Window, 2008

color photo no paper, textile

Lee Kit uses his paintings literally for daily tasks. In soft pastel tones he paints striped patterns on pieces of textile, which then serve as a picnic blanket, tablecloth or curtain. The photo alongside the painting in 'Hand-Painted Cloth Used to Cleaning Window' 'proves' that this hand-painted piece of cloth has in fact been used to clean windows. More than a painting, this cloth is a 'relic' or remnant of an action: the dirty marks are proof of contact with 'real' life. The cloth is a 'delayed ready-made': the cloth was initially a painting – and thus a work of art – afterwards it waxed into a domestic accessory and subsequently – a museological context – elevated to a 'ready-made' or 'found (everyday) item that is classified by the artist as art'.

## Jac Leirner

b. 1961, São Paulo, Brazil; lives and works in São Paulo, Brazil

Jac Leirner creates art with everyday items such as stickers, rulers, plastic bags, business cards, bank notes and cigarette paper. She combines them into new configurations arranged by size, colour or shape. Employing formal elegance and humour, Leirner gives the objects meaning and value and links them with social problems in her homeland or her personal life. Through this versatile oeuvre, the artist mainly examines notions of repetition, obsession, addiction and value, at material, economic and artistic levels. After her participation in Documenta IX in 1992, directed by Jan Hoet, Leirner received international acclaim. Today she is one of the most important South American conceptual artists.

### Corpus Delicti, 1987-92

mixed media

This installation is the result of Leirner's burgeoning international career, in the early 1990s, with the concomitant air travel. At Documenta IX, the artist showed four floor sculptures, each consisting of stacks of bubble wrap and two glass panels, on top of which were a series of ashtrays taken from aeroplanes and strung together. Between the glass panels are the accompanying boarding passes and flight tickets, the only evidence from the crime scene. The title 'Corpus Delicti' – the 'object of the crime' – refers to that evidence. By showing the tickets, everyday things without value, in a creative compilation, Leirner elevates them to art. After Documenta IX she extended the series with new installations utilizing other accessories from aeroplanes, such as blankets, pillows, sleeping masks, luggage tags, ear plugs and cutlery.



## L

**Bernd Lohaus**

b. 1940, Düsseldorf, Germany; d. 2010, Antwerp, Belgium

The German sculptor Bernd Lohaus trained at the art academy in Düsseldorf from 1963 to 1966, where Joseph Beuys was his mentor. He moved to Antwerp in the mid 1960s. Lohaus was involved in the happenings of Wout Vercammen, Panamarenko and Hugo Heyrman. Between 1966 and 1976, he ran the 'Wide White Space' gallery in Antwerp with his wife, Anny De Decker, and showed the work of James Lee Byars, Joseph Beuys, Carl Andre and Bruce Nauman, amongst others. Lohaus did not focus exclusively on his own work until 1976. He found all the materials he needed on the banks of the River Scheldt: from heavy wooden beams to scraps of metal and cords. The artist added random words, text fragments and sentences to his sculptures and drawings. In this way, he gave his work a semantic and existential stratification.

**ICH-DU, 1979**

concrete

The concrete installation 'ICH-DU' was designed by Lohaus 'in situ' – made specifically for the location – on the occasion of the 1979 exhibition 'Current Art in Belgium: Inzicht/Overzicht - Overzicht/Inzicht'. When S.M.A.K. opened in 1999, the work was moved. The monumental, curved sculpture consists of stacked concrete blocks and partially obstructs the passage between two museum galleries. The opposing pair of concepts 'ICH' and 'DU' ('I' and 'YOU'), chiselled on either side of the massive walls, refers to the distance between both people and objects, as well as to how they can position themselves in relation to each other but never coincide. This work is an example of the duality that characterises Bernd Lohaus' existential thought processes.

## M

**Jorge Macchi**

(b. 1963, Buenos Aires, Argentina; lives and works in Buenos Aires, Argentina)

"Colour and form are important keys to my work. They seduce, like carnivorous plants", admitted Jorge Macchi during an interview in 2009. His multifaceted, poetic oeuvre makes the fragility and complexity of our existence tangible through everyday objects.

**Bandiera (Greenwich/Ecuador), 2009**

gouache on paper

'Bandiera' means 'flag'. This tenderly painted cross in a white void is a world flag. The Greenwich meridian and the equator ('ecuador' in Spanish) were all that Macchi required to depict the world. Both axes are predominantly rendered in light blue, representing the oceans. Countries that lie along the axes are indicated by the official colours in which they are normally shown on a world map. The two imaginary lines on the globe, 0 degrees latitude and 0 degrees longitude respectively, are the international standard for cartography and navigation. Moreover, Greenwich is the reference point for time measurement. Since the 1990s, Macchi has regularly created work based on city, country or world maps. His 'cartographical work' is associated with the philosophical surrealist novel 'Invisible Cities' by the Italian writer Italo Calvino, and with the famous short story by the Argentinian author Jorge Luis Borges about the perfect map, which was as large as the kingdom it depicted, but proved useless and was left to rot. Reality is too fleeting and too complex to be accurately mapped. Macchi's painting subtly disrupts and disorients, but also exudes worldwide openness.

## M

**Mark Manders**

b. 1968, Volkel, The Netherlands; lives and works in Ronse, Belgium

Manders originally wanted to become a poet and write a self-portrait, but he quickly came up against the limitations of language. So he dreamt up a 'self-portrait as a building', an imaginary construction in which he went on to collect his works, ranging from drawings and spatial installations to monumental sculptures, and present them in ideal conditions. Many of Manders' installations can be understood as 'imagined poems' or 'poem images', in which everyday logic has made way for a parallel reality. In terms of mood his installations often lean strongly towards the 19<sup>th</sup>-century Gothic aesthetic, of which the writer Edgar Allan Poe was a well-known representative.

**Nocturnal Garden Scene, 2005**

mixed media

The starting point for this black-coloured still life – a 'night-time garden scene' – was to put two different objects in the same place. This is physically impossible, but Manders successfully carried out his intention by splitting one of the objects – a cat – in two and securing the other object – a loosely-hanging cord – in between the two halves. In this way, the cat and the cord are indeed positioned in one and the same place. Manders made a number of these 'three-dimensional nocturnal images', which seem to be abstracted from time.

**Werner Mannaers**

b. 1954, Schoten, Belgium; lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium

Werner Mannaers' oeuvre has been developing since the 1980s and can be read as a highly personal pictorial investigation. His improvised working method leaves scope for playful associations of motifs, signs and language. Mannaers does not disguise the trial and error involved in the creative process. On the contrary – it is an essential part of his aesthetic. In his drawings this is expressed in the deliberate retention of crossed-out fragments of text. Mannaers peppers his painting with a range of art historical references, which he subsequently links to philosophical quotes or elements from popular culture. Through this 'sampling' technique, a multi-layered context is created that allows the artist to soften the often existential subject matter with irony and self-mockery.

**Das Fehlen eines Werkes heißt nicht das keines da ist, 2008**

oil paint and acrylic paint on canvas

With an almost emotional tension, Werner Mannaers provides an abstract composition starting from the caption 'Das Fehlen eines Werkes heißt nicht das keines da ist' ('The absence of a work does not mean that there is not one there'). Thus an extremely weighty field of tension is created between word and image. The cosy aesthetic of an abstract composition in soft colour tones is brutally undermined by a text that questions the status of the artwork. Mannaers appears to be suggesting that the making process takes precedence over the result.

## M

**Danny Matthys**

b. 1947, Zottegem, Belgium; lives and works in Gentbrugge, Belgium

Over the years, Danny Matthys has harnessed a variety of media to lend form to his lifelong study of human perception. With the support of Karel Geirlandt, Matthys rose to fame in the 1960s as a Belgian pioneer of photo and video art. In the 1970s, he emerged as a conceptual artist and received international recognition. Following this period, in which he chiefly created conceptual work, Matthys turned to more traditional disciplines, such as assemblage, collage and painting. Shortly after participating in Jan Hoet's 'Chambres d'Amis' in 1986, the artist became fascinated by Australia and aboriginal art. Since 2000, Danny and (his wife) Danielle Matthys have been operating from Australia as an artistic duo. In 2017, the conceptual photographic work 'Brabantdam 59, Downstairs-Upstairs' (1975) was exhibited at the Fridericianum in Kassel during 'Documenta 14'.

**Olam, 1994**

mixed media

Matthys' oeuvre constantly analyses and probes our surroundings, focusing on the complexity of our perception. 'Olam' is a seminal work. It consists of dozens of life-size busts in pigmented concrete and is anchored to the left-hand side of S.M.A.K.'s facade. Literally translated, 'olam' means "the crossing of boundaries". As a result of being displayed on the facade, the work would seem to allude to the indefinable dividing line between the worlds inside and outside the museum. And yet the installation was originally intended to be installed horizontally. At the express request of Jan Hoet, however, it was assigned a place on one of the museum's exterior walls.

**Bjarne Melgaard**

b. 1967, Sydney, Australia; lives and works in New York, USA

Bjarne Melgaard grew up in Oslo, where he studied visual arts. In the 90s he broke into the art world limelight with neo-expressionist work permeated by desire and fear. He depicts a chaotic world of sado-masochism, drugs, homosexuality and perverse violence, in which words, paintings, drawings and sculptures form installations that immerse us in an utterly overwhelming experience. In these installations Melgaard presents himself as an outsider and homosexual. Since 2009 he has been living and working in New York and although he no longer fits the romantic image of the lonely artist in his studio, his oeuvre remains an obsessive, incessant stream of ideas about social exclusion and the need for individual freedom.

**Moon over Islam, 1999**

mixed media

Three sides of the installation 'Moon over Islam' are occupied by paintings: a twofold landscape, a canvas with a panda and an expressive work bordering on the abstract. In between there are two rough stones, each with a group of bronze figurines, in which anti-social statements are carved. A giant bronze sculpture rises like a totem pole amid copper balls and chains that are scattered like fetters. The installation and its title evoke a multitude of comments and reflections about the belief in a single god and the conflict situations that may be associated with it. When determining a possible storyline between the various elements, we are challenged to evaluate our attribution of meaning to the work.

## M

**Henri Michaux**

b. 1899, Namur, Belgium; d. 1984, Paris, France

The oeuvre of painter, writer and poet Henri Michaux is generally associated with informal art. This is a collective term for post-war abstract art movements in which artists sought out and employed their 'pure', intuitive and spontaneous creative impulses. During his travels through Asia, Michaux became acquainted with Eastern culture and developed an interest in calligraphy. This also led to a predilection for East Indian ink. Finding it impossible to communicate what he wanted to say via language, the poet began to paint. A breakthrough came in 1948 – a few years after the tragic death of his wife – when he sought refuge in hallucinogenic substances. In 1978, Henri Michaux was given prestigious retrospective exhibitions at the Pompidou Centre in Paris and the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum in New York.

**Sans titre, 1967**

acrylic paint on paper

From the mid-1950s until the early 1960s, Michaux executed his most famous works under the influence of LSD and mescaline. In all probability, 'Sans titre' was also created under the influence of mind-altering substances. According to the artist, he took this approach in an attempt to liberate the non-static within himself and make room for 'a suddenly new and living movement'. As with many of the drawings he made, both early and late, the black lines – which he never wanted to imbue with any form of language or meaning – refer to the graceful oriental calligraphic script that Michaux had made his own.

**François Morellet**

b. 1926, Cholet, France; d. 2016, Cholet, France

In François Morellet's oeuvre, painting, light art, sculpture and graphic art all coexist. The artist quickly developed a grammar that lies at the heart of his conceptualization. In the 1960s Morellet investigated the possibilities of kinetic art and went in search of a medium with which he could express his fascination with the importance of coincidence, movement and optical effects. From '63 he created items in light with neon tubes. Like the American minimalist Dan Flavin, he allowed space and light to interact, creating a sort of a ghostly intangible sculpture. But the undertone of his personal sense of perspective positions Morellet closer, in terms of content, to Dadaism than to Minimal Art, with which he is formally linked.

**2 carrés, 1993**

acrylic paint on canvas, neon lighting

legacy Henri Chotteau

In the early 1990s Morellet returned to two-dimensional artwork. In '2 carrés', colour and light appear as an inseparable unit. One side of the square is lit with a line of blue light; the line continues to the other side along a line marked out with blue acrylic paint. This composite square was put together on a panel or, expressing it in a different way: a second rotated square merges, as it were, into the wall behind. By combining the lamp and the light with a painted portion, Morellet united his painterly and sculptural ambitions and primed this work with an absolute dimension.

## M

### Oscar Murillo

b. 1986, La Paila, Colombia; lives and works in London, United Kingdom  
Oscar Murillo's artistic career was launched less than ten years ago. He was discovered at an exhibition in Miami in 2012, the year he completed his studies. It was not long before his works were selling for several hundred thousands of dollars. To the artist's frustration, the spectacular figures detracted from the actual work, which is much more complex and in which other, less tradable values such as experimentation, process and community building take precedence. Murillo's solo exhibitions, which are usually accompanied by performances, are social statements. His work is about displacement – he emigrated from Columbia to the United Kingdom as a child –and makes connections between diverse worlds. Murillo aims to expose the feelings surrounding displacement and to ultimately overcome them through community building.

#### Untitled, 2013

mixed media on canvas  
loan private collection

Murillo considers his paintings as the residues of their creative process. He starts by cutting up the canvas, after which he individually works on the pieces, adding scribbles and scratches in oil paint. The pieces then end up on the floor of his studio and are exposed to the debris there. The aim of this process is for them to be 'contaminated' by work going on in the studio. Pieces of canvas are only selected and stitched together once the process is sufficiently advanced. Murillo sometimes adds a word at the end. The words symbolise displacement: they do not lose their meaning, but are displaced because they appear on a carrier that is alien to them.

## N

### Bruce Nauman

b. 1941, Fort Wayne, USA; lives and works in Galisteo, USA  
Bruce Nauman is one of the most influential post-war artists. In 2009, he was awarded the prestigious Golden Lion at the Venice Biennale. Nauman made his debut as a performance artist in the mid-1960s but his oeuvre is now extremely diverse, including videos, films, installations, drawings, sound compositions, sculptures, graphics, photography and neon sculptures. Yet Nauman always describes himself as a sculptor. This can be explained by the fact that he considers the medium to be of secondary importance in his work. Nauman does not regard an artwork as a finished product. Rather, it is an activity or process in which we, the viewers, are also involved.

#### Violent Incident (Man/Woman Segment), 1986

VHS transferred to DVD (colour, sound), 30 min 28 sec  
'Violent Incident' is both seductive and alienating. Nauman's video installation begins with an image of a beautiful table setting, but the subsequent action utterly upends the romantic ideas that it elicits. On different screens, we are confronted with a hypnotic repetition of senseless violence. At the foundation of this confusing experience is a script that Nauman wrote for two characters and which was performed in four versions. In each instance, the man and woman adopt different attitudes. In the background, we hear a man continuously shouting at the actors.

#### Untitled (Four Small Animals), 1989

polyurethane

The installation 'Untitled (Four Small Animals)' reads like a playful nod to the well-known mobiles of the American sculptor Alexander Calder. But unlike Calder, Nauman deliberately used anti-aesthetic materials. He has created an assemblage using the rubber moulds that taxidermists use to mount their work. By fusing the heads, limbs and torsos of various animals, Nauman became the creator of four small creatures with mutilated anatomical structures. Given that we live in the age of genetic engineering, it is not clear whether we should laugh or cry at the sight of this grotesque sculpture.

### Carsten Nicolai

b. 1965, Karl-Marx-Stadt, Germany; lives and works in Berlin and Chemnitz, Germany

Carsten Nicolai connects art with science in his visual work. Under various pseudonyms, he is also active as a sound artist, sometimes in collaboration with others. Nicolai regards sound as something that can be visualized and take spatial shape in terms of images, installations and compositions of mixed art forms. He combines different sensory perceptions and makes them perceptible to both ear and eye. The connection between art, music and science is a common thread in both his visual and sound artistic endeavours.

#### Portrait (Anti-Reflex Version), 2004

magnetic tape, acrylic paint, aluminum, polyester

This is an interpretation of a portrait. It belongs to a series of identically named works with which Nicolai started in 2004. The artist always starts by making a video portrait of a person. He then pulls the tape out of the cassette and spans it vertically over a polyester panel. The strips of tape are so close together that a rhythm of vertical lines ensues that we perceive as an abstract painting. The resulting glossy surface reflects the surrounding space including, of course, we who stand in front of the panel. Each portrait starts as a filmed, figurative portrait of a person on magnetic tape. But in the end, each time we are left with only the mirror image of ourselves, who attempt to discern the starting image that gradually became fragmented as a result of the artist's editing and is now indiscernible.

## N

### Sophie Nys

b. 1974, Borgerhout, Belgium; lives and works in Zurich, Switzerland and Brussels, Belgium

Sophie Nys' oeuvre consists of photographs, videos, sculptures and drawings. Out of her interest in philosophy, (art) history and the fabric of society, Nys questions both the law of cause and effect and the tension between transience and continuity. In a playful and humorous way, she combines a minimal visual language with a conceptual working method. Time and time again, Nys departs from intuitive and associative research into specific contexts or personal experiences. By removing objects and images from their everyday context, transforming and thus redefining them, she not only reveals and undermines the underlying mechanisms of the art world, but also invites reflection.

#### Fort Patti II, 2015

mixed media  
donation

With 'Fort Patti II' Sophie Nys presents a work that is faithful to her playful artistic practice. The artist appropriated a photograph from 1915, which she found shortly after the 'Occupy' protests in New York in 2011. The picture was taken during the construction of the Wall Street subway station and shows an old, exposed water pipe, as if it had been documented by an archaeologist. The installation that this inspired features a ceramic tube mounted on two Emeco Navy chairs, developed during WWII by the U.S. Navy. On the tube, Nys has enamelled the sad, blue eyes of Walt Disney's Dumbo. 'Fort Patti II' not only refers to the lack of an archaeological culture in the United States, but also to American imperialism supported by capitalist and militaristic structures.

## O

### Oswald Oberhuber

b. 1931, Meran, Italy; lives and works in Vienna, Austria

For the past seventy years, in addition to working as a visual artist, Oswald Oberhuber has been a gallerist, editor, professor, rector and exhibition maker. This versatility is also reflected in his artistic practice. His refusal to limit himself to a single artistic discipline or to develop his own style lies at the heart of the Austrian's unruly oeuvre. Oberhuber was already alternating abstract sculpture with figurative painting in the 1950s and 60s. He consciously experimented with diverse forms of artistic expression in order to allow his art to evolve. Oberhuber was given a solo exhibition at S.M.A.K. in 1984. Two years later, he also participated in Jan Hoet's cutting-edge exhibition 'Chambres d'Amis' with 'Eine Chambre d'Amis für Victor Servranckx'.

#### Drahtskulptur, 1952

wood, iron wire  
donation

Oswald Oberhuber created 'Drahtskulptur' shortly after studying sculpture under Ernst Barlach, Fritz Wotruba and Willi Baumeister. The work dates from the year in which Oberhuber first started exhibiting. The young artist had been strongly influenced by the French 'Art Informel'. With their lyrical, abstract works, adherents of this innovative movement, which predominantly found its expression in painting, focused on the decomposition and dissection of shapes. They were also consciously searching for spontaneity in the creative process. Oberhuber polished his 'Art Informel' credentials by applying its principles to sculpture. With its intuitive use of unstable materials that are rarely employed in artworks, 'Drahtskulptur' is a good example of this approach.

## O

### Saskia Olde Wolbers

b. 1971, Breda, The Netherlands; lives and works in London, United Kingdom

One of the motifs in the work of Saskia Olde Wolbers is spaces that deviate from normal environments. They often appear to be closed virtual worlds, a setting for endless wandering. Yet the opposite is true. Recognisable objects and materials appear occasionally, leading one to suspect that Olde Wolbers' work is more closely related to reality than would appear at first sight. Unlike the current culture of films and games, for which the most unimaginable dream landscapes are designed digitally, the artist creates the sets for her videos by hand. Nevertheless, these ingenious models, in which she films her videos using a miniature camera, evoke a world like science fiction.

#### Placebo, 2002

video projection: DVD (colour, sound), 6 min  
donation

Olde Wolbers' videos invariably start out from a clearly delineated story with hints of magic realism, told in a neutral-sounding voice-over which she herself records. In each work, an anonymous character tells of implausible, dramatic or absurd occurrences that they have experienced. Each of these stories reaches a crucial point that brings to light the character's personal view of the event and the strange reality in which it occurs. Olde Wolbers again and again finds inspiration for this in virtual reality – which creates the possibility of rendering fantasies and hallucinations visible and palpable – and the daily media stream. Time after time, her scenarios generate fantasy-like visual narratives that transcend the slickness of digital images of a similar type and to which her 'craftsmanlike' approach gives a more authentic and realistic stamp.

### Henrik Olesen

b. 1967, Esbjerg, Denmark; lives and works in Berlin, Germany

The artistic projects of conceptual artist Olesen are based on well-founded research and cover a wide range of subjects, such as legislation, natural sciences and history. He links these subjects to art historical facts and gives them form by means of posters, flyers, text and collages, sculptures made from found objects and spatial interventions. Since the mid-1990s, Henrik Olesen has been researching homophobia and racism within the patriarchal logic of European democracy.

#### A.T., 2012

collage on cardboard

The series of drawings 'A.T.' examines the forgotten biography of the British mathematician Alan Turing (1912-54), who developed the Turing machine. This calculation device was the starting point for the development of computer logic. Turing was tried and prosecuted for his homosexuality, which is thought to have led to his suspected suicide. His life seems to link his personal story exceptionally closely to 20th-century history. Olesen made 'corrections' to original documents by hand. These are authentic traces of the artists' direct interaction with his research material. He does not present the annotated originals but scans of them, new images in which he attributes equal historical value to both the documents and his corrections.

## O

### Meret Oppenheim

b. 1913, Berlin, Germany; d.1985, Basel, Switzerland

Meret Oppenheim is regarded as one of the most important female artists of the 20th century. Her artistic production was extremely versatile and included design, collage, sculpture, literature, photography and painting. As a key figure within the Surrealist movement, Oppenheim became famous for her playful yet alienating assemblages in which she juxtaposed everyday objects, often drawn from the domestic sphere. Fascinated by the analytical psychology of Carl Gustav Jung and inspired by dreams and myths, Oppenheim addressed themes such as metamorphosis, the cosmic and the supernatural and explored the tension between life and death. She often alluded to the female identity and sexuality.

#### Sommergestirn, 1963

oil paint on canvas

From the early 1960s onwards, Meret Oppenheim not only focused on the volatility of the dream, but also on the changeability of nature. With a series of landscapes and views of the sky in oil paint or oil pastel, Oppenheim explored natural phenomena such as moons, butterflies, stars or planets. She attached importance to cycles, metamorphoses, coincidences and to the uncertainty of nature. To represent the intangible and indefinable aspects of the cosmos, Oppenheim turned to geometric abstraction. The abstracted celestial body in 'Sommergestirn' is a representation of nature and its power.

## P

### Panamarenko

(b. 1940, Wilrijk, Belgium; lives in Michelbeke, Belgium)

Henri Van Herwegen first made himself heard in the mid 1960s. He came up with the pseudonym Panamarenko – a reference to Pan American Airlines, with a Russian-like suffix – and in 1966 had his first solo exhibition in the Wide White Space Gallery in Antwerp, with actions, happenings and a number of poetic objects. Through the gallery he came into contact with foreign artists, such as Joseph Beuys, who convinced Panamarenko that what he made was art. In the following decades, Panamarenko became famous for his fantastical aeroplanes, cars, submarines and fragile mechanical creatures. He stopped his artistic activities in 2005 and retired.

#### The Aeromodeller, 1969-71

mixed media

'The Aeromodeller', one of the most legendary of all Panamarenko's airships, consists, just like his later zeppelin prototypes, of three parts: a balloon-shaped floating body, made of long strips of PVC glued together; a construction with propellers and engines for propulsion and control; and a gondola, conceived as a 'living space', made of flexible reeds sprayed in silver. Panamarenko took the name of the airship from an English magazine for model builders and made it sound official with the addition 00-1PL ('00' for the legal identification of Belgian aircraft, and '1PL' for '1st Panamarenko Luchtschip'; the Dutch word 'luchtschip' translates as 'airship'). Several test flights failed, if they were not already banned. In 1972, the awe-inspiring 'The Aeromodeller' was exhibited at Documenta 5 in Kassel, the exhibition that definitively put Panamarenko on the map of international contemporary art.

In the Museum of Fine Arts Ghent. For more information, see at the front of this visitor's guide under 'off-site'.

## P

### Manfred Pernice

b. 1963, Hildesheim, Germany; lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Sculptor Manfred Pernice is recognized for installations in which he brings together his architectonic sculptures. He derives the scale, material, aesthetics and methodology from architecture. Pernice invokes association. Nowhere do we get the feeling that his installations are complete or definitive. Shapes, objects and materials coalesce into one spatial experience that the artist himself describes as a 'mush'. His art is a manifestation of reality and gives substance to diverse ideologies and global concepts. However, he regularly leaves his installations open to interpretation.

#### D&A-Punkt, 1997

mixed media

loan Collection Flemish Community

'D&A-Punkt' is an agglomeration of components and intuitively we look for thematic associations, but the artist presents no conclusions. The function of the seat is familiar to us. The documents seem to expound on the sculpture yet clear function or meaning cannot be assigned to it. It is what it is and we have the artist's permission to imbue it at will with meaning. Pernice counts on our talent and our desire to turn reality into something meaningful. In his view, it is our responsibility to further conceptualize his work and to add its interpretation.

### Urs Pfannenmüller

b. 1943, Basel, Switzerland; lives and works in The Hague, the Netherlands

Urs Pfannenmüller makes paintings, drawings, installations and projects in the public space. His view of the world focuses on the periphery, or what he himself calls 'the frayed edges of cities and landscapes', places that can be found on the edge of every major city. In his view, the word 'periphery' also applies to the marginal position of artists in society. In this sense, that spot in the periphery does not have to be negative. It can also be a sanctuary, a place where artists and others can develop new visions that run counter to the prevailing values and norms.

#### Gelaagde Stad, 1995

mixed media

loan Collection Flemish Community

Pfannenmüller is fascinated by the way in which people create environments in which they feel safe. In his work, the artist reflects on urban landscapes. The bottom layer of this work consists of tightly packed, tiny, bric-à-brac houses. In the upper layer we see high-rise buildings. Both of these elements are made up of various found materials. In this way, Pfannenmüller creates two completely different interpretations of a city: the shabby and miniscule versus the high-rise and monumental.

PIERO MANZONI HUGO CLAUS JIMMIE DURHAM CARMEN DIONYSE DANIEL BUREN MALCOLM MORLEY OTMAR ALT ANTONIO SAURA CHRISTIE VAN DER HAAK MARK LUYTEN DIRK ZOETE HANZA HALLOUBI KEITH HARING KASPER BOSMANS WESLEY MEURIS GERRY BIBBY LUDWIG REDL LAURA OWENS JAN VAN IMSCHOOT

OLIVER LUTZ OTL AICHER ERIK A. FRANDSEN JIRI BALOGH STIJN VAN DORPE LUC TUYMANS RAUL CORDERO KOEN VAN DEN BROEK DIETER APPELT JOACHIM KOESTER TIMM ULRICHS GERHARD MASCHBERGER HERMAN VAN INGELGEM ROBERT MANGOLD OIL SHACHAR RINEKE DIJKSTRA THOMAS RUFF JOCKUM

NORDSTRÖM ANTON HENNING RAPHAËL BEAR ANDRÉ BEULLENS EUGENIO CARMÍ MAR THE WÉRY THOMAS BOGAERT HANS VANDEKERCKHOVE WERNER MANIERS PHILIPPE VANDENBERG JOHN STEWART HELMUT DORMER TIMOTHY HENNESSY BERNARD FRIZE PIERPAOLO CALZOLARI JEF GEYS LUDO GEYSELS JOHAN

P

**Nicolas Provost**

b. 1969, Ronse, Belgium; lives and works in New York, USA

Nicolas Provost is an artist, photographer and film-maker. In his video works, photos and films he uses the visual idiom of the cinema to influence and manipulate the prevailing interpretation of images and stories. Provost appeals to our collective film memory and, almost like a sculptor, misleads it by remoulding aspects such as time, visual codes and form into new storylines that link visual art to cinema. In so doing, Provost plays on the boundary between fiction and reality, so that his works come across as both recognisable and odd and challenge our expectations in an aesthetic game of tension, mystery and narrative abstraction.

**Plot Point, 2007**

video projection: digital file (colour, sound); 15 min

For 'Plot Point', Provost spent five evenings on Times Square in New York with a hidden camera. He shot documentary footage of tourists, cars, policemen and security guards, flashing lights, passers-by and strange characters, all of which he edited together, paying particular attention to aesthetics and suspense, to create a video with a haunting tension. The images are underpinned by dramatic film music and almost have a Hollywood air about them. But although Provost applied the rules of thumb for film fiction, this did not produce a traditional film. 'Plot Point' does however keep to the standard narrative composition of establishing location, introducing the characters, unfolding a 'problem' and its ultimate 'solution' or 'winding up', but it takes place at a substantially reduced tempo and without a plot. The work consists merely of the creation of a paranoid atmosphere and can also be interpreted as an ironic comment on American hysteria post 9/11.

R

**Royden Rabinowitch**

b. 1943, Toronto, Canada; lives and works in Ghent, Belgium

In Royden Rabinowitch's early period, the relationship of his sculptures to the viewer and the space played a central role. Although his work may appear to be linked to it, the artist denies any affinity with the minimal art of the 1960s and 70s. He emphasises that his fascination for the contrast between concrete space on the one hand, and abstract or geometric space on the other, was a personal development that is independent of any art historical trend. In 1982, Rabinowitch made the acquaintance of Jan Hoet. Two years later, the sculptor was given a solo exhibition at S.M.A.K. Rabinowitch's friendship with Hoet and his fascination with the Van Eyck brothers' 'Adoration of the Mystic Lamb' have meant that the Canadian has lived and worked in Ghent on a part-time basis since 2005.

**Lesson of Emanuel Feuermann, 1986**

steel  
donation

As a child, Rabinowitch played the violin, whilst his father played the cello. The artist's fascination with spatiality stems from this musical background. Instead of focusing on the actual music, the young Rabinowitch developed an eye for the horizontal and vertical movements made by musicians. 'Lesson of Emanuel Feuermann' does indeed allude to the well-known cellist from the first half of the twentieth century. But for Rabinowitch, Feuermann's lesson was above all a lesson in movement. The sculpture is the abstract end result of a study of a specific musical performance by Feuermann.

R

**Jean-Pierre Raynaud**

b. 1939, Courbevoie, France; lives and works in Paris, France

Jean-Pierre Raynaud first started a collection of objects during his military service. In 1962 he discovered the art world and came into contact with the nouveaux réalistes Niki de Saint-Phalle and Jean Tinguely. In this period he became obsessed with everyday materials, such as white tiles and flowerpots - which are found all over the world. This 'mania' goes so far that the artist identifies himself with his materials. Despite the fact that Raynaud uses mundane everyday objects to express his presence in the world, his oeuvre acquires an existential dimension.

**300 pots, 1974**

mixed media  
donation

Around 1962-'63 Raynaud, a certified horticulturalist, created his first 'flowerpot work'. The artist fills or 'neutralizes' a standard flowerpot with cement, paints over the terracotta using bright red and provides the pot with a number. With this deed, Raynaud marks the end of his gardening venture and the beginning of his artistic career. He denudes the flowerpot of all its quintessential appeal, reproduces it prolifically, often in diverse materials, sizes and colours, hangs it up on a building crane in Berlin, and also places it in Beijing's Forbidden City or elsewhere as a permanent installation in the public space. The flowerpot, which is used in its stereotypical form just about anywhere in the world, became the archetypal object that is omnipresent in Raynaud's opus.

**Gerhard Richter**

b. 1932, Dresden, Germany; lives and works in Cologne, Germany

Gerhard Richter is considered one of the most important artists after WWII. His oeuvre is unique and cannot be classified. In the catalogue compiled by the artist himself, Richter divides his body of work into two major groups: abstract paintings and paintings based either on his own photographs or photographs he discovered produced by others. Around the end of the 60s, Richter began to reproduce paintings based upon both black and white and colour photographs. Later his work became more lyrical and abstract in shades of grey or mixed colours, where he applied the paint in a variety of ways.

**Große Pyramide, 1966**

oil paint on canvas  
donation

In the 60s, Richter painted primarily on the basis of photos he had discovered. 'Große Pyramide' was also created in this way. The artist did not paint the motif for the sake of the pyramids themselves. For him it was nothing more than a composition organizing paint on canvas. He painted the subjects of his work based on photos in a deliberately blurred manner. Thus Richter did not make a hyper-realistic painting of a hazy photo, but a blurry painting of a sharp photo. With a soft brush he ran it through the still wet oil paint, making the outline of the razor sharp form blurred. Initially we get the impression that we are looking at a photograph and not a painting. Haziness was often regarded as an instantly recognizable characteristic of a (perhaps unsuccessful) photograph in order to, no matter how contradictory this may seem, emphasize the fact that this painting is actually 'painted'.

R

**Meggy Rustamova**

b. 1985, Tbilisi, Georgia; lives and works in Brussels and Sint-Niklaas, Belgium  
 Meggy Rustamova's roots lie in Georgia, but she has lived in Belgium since the mid-1990s, when she was in her early teens. In the last few years she has made an impression with videos, performances and photographic works that take both language and image as their subject. Rustamova's work lies on the boundary between fiction and reality and in most cases starts out from a personal or historical story. Its characteristic features are subtle humour, a gently melancholy undertone and sometimes an absurd exuberance.

**Waiting for the Secret, 2014**

digital file (colour, sound), 6 min

The main focus of the video 'Waiting for the Secret' is one single panoramic photo. It is repeatedly shown in different ways: upside down, then focusing on a particular detail, or else concentrating on the pixels that make up the digital photo. While the static image of a man sitting on a green mountain ridge is given a certain dynamic, a female voice off-screen speaks in Esperanto, an artificial language designed to enable people from different language areas to communicate fluently with each other. 'Waiting for the Secret' makes a theme of our fascination with images. But as this short video astutely makes clear, our attraction to the image is exceptionally hard to grasp: it is too complex, our gaze is too mobile and the formation of a stable meaning remains a vain hope.

S

**Anri Sala**

b. 1974, Tirana, Albania; lives and works in Berlin, Germany

Anri Sala points out to us that there is no such thing as a political reality, nor any unambiguous image by which to portray it. He converts personal experiences into stories and images – including films, sculptures and installations – and makes use of their power to connect past with present.

**Byrek, 2000**

video installation, mixed media (colour, sound),  
 slide projection, 21 min 43 sec

The starting point for his video installation 'Byrek' (2000) is a seemingly timeless ritual. You see an old woman making 'byrek', a traditional Albanian dish using flaky pastry. Whenever this intimate, domestic occupation is disturbed by the sound of aircrafts, the camera quickly turns to the window to scan the sky. A facsimile of a letter in which Anri Sala's grandmother wrote the recipe is printed onto the projection screen itself. In another projection we read that Sala's grandmother had made this dish very often for many years. She continued to do so after the artist and his sister had moved abroad, but recently stopped baking because she had grown too old. The film, which looks like a documentary, increasingly takes on the nature of a performance, in which this authentic family tradition is handed down to the next 'generation', who are the people watching the film.

S

**Wilhelm Sasnal**

b. 1972, Tarnów, Poland; lives and works in Krakow, Poland

Wilhelm Sasnal is one of the most important painters of his generation. As a student he was a member of a painters' collective that delivered ironic commentary about academicism in the art of painting. This artistic mentality laid the foundations for the stylistic diversity in Sasnal's later painting and video work. Since leaving the collective in 2001, Sasnal has become, in his own words, 'a more realistic painter' and 'a more engaged artist'. He might still focus on his everyday environment, but in a less ironic manner. When designing his exhibitions he applies as much stylistic diversity as he does in his artistic work itself; he appears to highlight a different aspect of his oeuvre in each new exhibition.

**Me and Rafał, 2000-06**

oil paint on canvas

Characteristic of Sasnal's work is his detached style of painting and his quest for simplicity, which results in work that is highly graphic in nature, but also intense and elusive. 'Me and Rafał' depicts two anonymous men (the title suggests that one of them is the artist) each lying on a bed in an otherwise abstract room. The skewed, disruptive perspective, the spotless room and faceless characters refer to the Polish communist visual culture, which fundamentally changed as the country became more westernised. At first glance 'Me and Rafał' appears to be an homage to an outdated visual language, but the nostalgic impression of the image has far more to do with subtle irony than a longing for the past.

**Michael E. Smith**

b. 1977, Detroit, USA; lives and works in Rhode Island, USA

Michael E. Smith's work consists mainly of videos and sculptures made from rubbish, corpses, junk and other remnants of our consumer society. The artist recovers found (visual) material, isolates natural products and man-made things from their original contexts, makes interventions and, in so doing, shifts their meaning and/or function. Smith's absurd, alienating, and sometimes even morbid assemblages spring from his reflections upon the social, economic and ecological challenges of the 21st century. In this sense, his artistic practice can be seen as an archaeology of contemporary humanity that looks at both the present and the past.

**Untitled, 2017**

mixed media

In his work, Smith often integrates clothing or other industrially manufactured mass products that can be associated with basic human needs such as comfort, shelter and protection. With 'Untitled', a black sweater illuminated with a red laser beam, Smith refers in a rudimentary way to the previous function of the sweater. The sweater also stands for an empty shell or a trace of a human body, and this within a world to which it no longer seems to belong.

## Nedko Solakov

b. 1957, Cherven Briag, Bulgaria; lives and works in Sofia, Bulgaria

Nedko Solakov plays with the symbols of art and of the art world, but he is also critical of its context within society. He links his personal experiences as a Bulgarian artist in the 'old' communist system with typical western, capitalistic artistic strategies. Ironical-humorous texts mostly form the underlying impulse for his drawings and installations. They often convey an absurd tone and thus undermine the plausible conceptual seriousness of his work. In his deceptively simple narratives and drawings, drenched in a slightly melancholy shrewdness, Solakov pokes fun at himself, his artistry and the entire art world.

### **The Collector of Art (somewhere in Africa there is a great black man collecting art from Europe and America, buying his Picasso for 23 coconuts...), 1992-present**

mixed media

The idea for this work arose when Solakov came upon objects from Africa and Asia in the Rietburg Museum collection in Zurich, donated to the museum by wealthy Swiss collectors. 'The Collector of Art' can be seen as an exhibition within this exhibition: in a caricature of an African hut with fake African trinkets, real works of art from the S.M.A.K. collection have been included. By suggesting that this art was collected by an African, Solakov not only chides the western-oriented art world but also exposes the cliché image that very same art world still has of Africa. This Solakov work turns the art world upside down: he permits his black collector to exchange a Bruce Nauman for two antelope bones and a Picasso for 23 coconuts.

## Bart Stolle

b. 1974, Eeklo, Belgium; lives and works in Ghent, Belgium

In his artistic practice Bart Stolle combines animated film with painting, drawing, sculpture and sound. Since his début, he has connected his artworks under the title 'Low Fixed Media Show': a fictional advertising agency for the artist and his work on the one hand, and an artistic alternative firm that specialises in entertainment on the other. In our fast-paced time and reality, in which our empathetic and creative capacities groan under the burden of the endless stream of digital stimuli, Stolle opts for an artistic practice that encompasses analogue as well as digital elements, and in which the slow pace inherent to the practice of an artisan craft plays a key role.

### **Selection of drawings, 2008-15**

pencil and ink on paper

Although Bart Stolle has been drawing every day for a long time, he has only recently started exhibiting his sketches. Aware of the profound effect of digitisation on the way in which we observe, the artist responds with his slow, distilled idiom to the ever-faster production and dissemination of images. He analyses how computers 'draw': using random distribution, plotting and repeating shapes, and creating rhythmic series of the binary numbers 0 and 1. Many of Stolle's drawings are variations of dots, dashes and lines. These visual elements converge in some places, and diverge in others. Stolle summarises their dynamic as "infinite separation and infinite connection".

## Tove Storch

b. 1981, Denmark; lives and works in Copenhagen, Denmark

Tove Storch explores the complex relationship between material, form and colour within the medium of sculpture. In doing so she focuses intensely on the relationship between her work and the space in which it is presented. In general, Storch seeks ways to balance contrasts. She combines soft, fragile silk with hard metal, delicate sensuality with cool, sleek minimalism, and solid weight with the lightness of wafer-thin textile. In 2013, Storch's solo exhibition was shown in the 'KunstNu' hall at S.M.A.K.

### **Untitled, 2011**

silk, aluminum

'Untitled' is not only illustrative of Storch's play on contrasts. The sculpture also testifies to her sustained attempt to make us look more closely. Soft, monochrome silk cloths are stretched sequentially and enclosed in an industrial metal structure. By varying shapes and dimensions many shades are created, whose almost painterly colour effects change as we alter the angle from which we view them. Storch invites us to discover the subtle colour differences that not only permeate her work but the world as a whole.

## Walter Swennen

b. 1946, Brussels, Belgium; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

Although Swennen always had a love-hate relationship with (painting) art, he was already artistically active in his parental home in the late 1960s. He made rather absurdist paintings and objects bordering on Dadaism. However, it took until the early '80s before he actually appeared on the art scene. In the last thirty-odd years Swennen has developed a very heterogeneous artistic methodology, experimenting with various substrates and all kinds of painterly motifs and styles, whether or not in combination with word and language constructions. When speaking about painting, Swennen increasingly saw himself as a searching orator and 'intuitive theoretician'. His unwavering exploratory mentality, based on the assumption that everything is meaningless, makes Swennen one of the most striking painters of his generation.

### **Sans titre, 1983**

oil paint on canvas

'Sans titre' is a rather early work by Walter Swennen, in which his interest in language can be felt from a psychoanalytical point of view. The canvas was not framed but was attached directly to the wall, which is characteristic of Swennen's painting style from that period. The artist presents three commonplace allegorical motifs: a pair of glasses, a dog's head and a pile of logs. The motifs seem to have no logical relationship with each other. It is up to us to 'read' any links between them. In a visually poetic way, Swennen lays the link between image and language, where image can turn into word and vice versa. The work is like a rebus. But if there is a 'solution', it turns out to be surrealistic or absurdist. It is clear that the image cannot be interpreted in a rational way.



T

## Pascale Marthine Tayou

b. 1967, Yaoundé, Cameroon; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

Pascale Martine Tayou is an autodidact. After various wanderings around Europe, he now lives and works in Ghent. In his work he confronts personal aspects of his life in Cameroon and Europe with such universal themes as economics, identity and migration. He often uses his work to raise thorny socio-political questions concerning cultural and national identity. Africa, and his native country of Cameroon in particular, are virtually always present in his work. "Cameroon is my registered trade mark, the basis from which everything started. I find it important to show this in my work so that everyone there who keeps track of me can see that anything is possible".

### Plastic Bags II, 2004

mixed media, video projection: DVD (colour, sound), 13 min 30 sec

In his installations, Tayou often uses disposable products such as the plastic bags in this video work. Crumpled and abandoned, this universal disposable material figures in a poetic choreography set in a landscape. A pile of plastic bags also occupies the exhibition room and is set in motion by electric fans. The artist likes to compare himself to a plastic bag: "I too am simultaneously full and empty. In constant transition, moving in several directions. A plastic bag is a banal everyday item that is familiar all over the world, crosses boundaries and has a usefulness and a uselessness that are universal".

## Javier Téllez

b. 1969, Valencia, Venezuela; lives and works in New York, USA

As a son of psychiatrists, Javier Téllez grew up in an environment where the mentally ill were part of his daily life. In his film projects, he engages in potent collaborations most often with groups who are 'invisible', such as psychiatric patients or people with disabilities. On the basis of both documentary and fictitious elements, the participants rewrite, in collaboration with the artist, classical myths, collective memories and historical chronicles. By actively involving the marginalized, people without basic rights, 'outsiders' in his work process, Téllez creates a worthy, non-stereotypical image of them. The artist gives them a voice and questions the notion of normality and pathology in our society.

### Oedipus Marshal, 2006

video projection, S16mm transferred to digital video (colour, sound), 30 min  
Téllez made 'Oedipus Marshal' together with actors from the American psychiatric institution Oasis Clubhouse. The film brings together four elements: the western, the classical Greek tragedy ('Oedipus Rex' by Sophocles), the Japanese No play and the mentally ill (not only the actors are psychiatric patients, the character Oedipus also becomes insane). The actors wear painted wooden masks from traditional Japanese theatre. The masks are used as a defence against social prejudice and the stigmatization of the mentally ill. The Greek mythological figures King Laius and King Oedipus are replaced in the film by cowboy-like marshals. While the hero of the story approaches his downfall, the actors gradually transcend their identity as a patient and, as it were, become 'themselves' again.

T

## Robert Therrien

b. 1947, Chicago, USA; lives and works in Los Angeles, USA

In the 1980s and 1990s, Robert Therrien examined the so-called 'ready-made' objects and the way they were viewed in post-modern sculpture. His early sculptures breathe echoes of Pop Art and Minimalism, but because of their domestic aesthetics and their limited size range they remained 'on a human scale'. From the nineties on, Therrien began scaling up his 'household sculptures', embodying them with a monumental aura of alienation. Therrien's enlargements of everyday objects had a somewhat similar effect to the imposing sculpture of totalitarian regimes, but provided a critical commentary on western people, who had become slaves to their daily routine, while totalitarian regimes often benefit from routine. Therrien's sculptures symbolize the underlying drama of our banal but universal existence.

### No Title (Stacked Plates), 1994

ceramic paint on wood

The uncritical acceptance of petty-bourgeois life is also addressed by Therrien in 'No Title (Stacked Plates)'. The work consists of enlarged epoxy soup and dinner plates untidily stacked on top of each other. These 'Stacked Plates' are one of the most common motifs in Therrien's oeuvre of the nineties. By enlarging them, the artist gives the stack a disorientating, even threatening effect. The fact that the design of the plates reveals nothing exclusive but is 'vintage mass production' was important for Therrien. It makes us more able to empathize and take the criticism of the universal grind of our lives more to heart.

## Sven 't Jolle

b. 1966, Antwerp, Belgium; lives and works in Melbourne, Australia

Sven 't Jolle creates tragicomical sculptures, works on paper and installations. The artist's socio-political commitment at the core of his work results in a critical, humorous oeuvre. The artist meticulously removes superfluous details from any allusions to history, politics and social events and then incorporates them into his work. Some of his assemblages refer to almost forgotten artisanal techniques; this conscious link strengthens Jolle's social message.

### Mens erger je niet, 1994

mixed media

loan Collection Flemish Community

'Mens erger je niet' refers to the eponymous board game that originated in India called 'Pachisi'. However this work by 't Jolle is much more than a game board with two dark plaster figures with red conical head coverings. The figures are actually absorbed into the game and appear oblivious to the fact that they are actually the pawns with which the game is played. 'Mens erger je niet' has an apparently emotionally charged colonial contradiction, which epitomizes the artist's historical critique in a playful recognizable image, which, due to its approachability, is not lost to the observer.

## T

### Narcisse Tordoïr & Vincent Geyskens

Narcisse Tordoïr: b. 1954, Mechelen, Belgium; lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium  
 Vincent Geyskens: b. 1971, Lier, Belgium; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

Since the 1980s, Narcisse Tordoïr has been exploring the boundaries and possibilities of painting with stubborn determination. Tordoïr studied at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp, but soon shook himself free of the constraints of his classical education. He is constantly exploring new things, and mixes styles and media with apparent ease. Tordoïr's works are simultaneously both subtle and direct. As no other, he interweaves romance with harsh reality, history with current events, static images with those in motion, lunacy with seriousness. He elevates painting to an act, a performance. Tordoïr is one of Belgium's most important artists, and one of the few who revived painting after it had been ostracized.

#### Scène de naufrage, 2002

mixed media on wood, in collaboration with Vincent Geyskens  
 donation

The inception of this painting, which Narcisse Tordoïr made together with colleague and friend Vincent Geyskens, was a photograph of boat refugees. The further source of inspiration was Théodore Géricault's masterpiece 'The Raft of the Medusa' (1818). In 'Scène de naufrage' the focus shifts to the way today's refugees are picked up by the police on the shores where they are stranded. Géricault's painting is historically the first artwork where the artistic stimulus derives from a modern-day piece of news. Tordoïr and Geyskens' version of 'La Méduse' revives the historical anecdote of the old masterpiece and makes the link between painting and current affairs in different epochs.

### Luc Tuymans

b. 1958, Mortsels, Belgium; lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium

In 1992, Jan Hoet invited Luc Tuymans to take part in Documenta IX. At the time the painter had already made something of a name for himself in Belgium, but participating in the exhibition in Kassel, organised every five years, also resulted in Tuymans' big break on the international scene. Since then he is considered to be one of the most pioneering Belgian artists, and as one of the important representatives of 'New European Painting'. His work is exhibited all over the world.

#### De Ontelbaren, 1987

oil paint on canvas

In aesthetic terms 'De Ontelbaren' (The Uncountable) is highly characteristic of Tuymans' oeuvre: faded colours and undefined shapes come together in a simple composition. Allowing the artist to create – in his own words – “an aesthetic that cannot be morally interpreted”. The way in which the artist plays on the framing in this painting is essential. The snapshot-perspective and close-up betray the artist's past as a filmmaker. Just as the often vague figuration and static representations in Tuymans' work are sometimes partially concealed, the title 'De Ontelbaren' also partly disappears from view. The letters 'ren' have vanished, just like the details of the silhouette left behind in the reflection of the water. As a result, our attention drifts away from the painterly and our focus shifts to the absent.

## V

### Adam Vačkář

b. 1979, Prague, Czech Republic; lives and works in Prague, Czech Republic  
 Adam Vačkář focuses on current societal and social topics. His conceptually-oriented oeuvre is extremely varied in both form and content. 'The Indefinite Continued Progress of Existence and Events...' shows the artist's interest in elusive and changeable phenomena such as time.

#### The Indefinite Continued Progress of Existence and Events (That Occur in Apparently Irreversible Succession), 2012

Perspex, paper, cloth

For this project, Vačkář asked an old female convict from his home country to collect the dust in her prison cell for two weeks. He then put this dust on a large, snow-white sheet of paper which he then closed off from the outside air with a Perspex box. Vačkář compares this work with a reliquary. On a white museum wall, the box acts as still, almost banal evidence of the extreme slowness with which time passes when you are kept in isolation. In this work the artist emphasises that prisons not only separate people spatially, but also isolate them in terms of time. "Time passes differently in prison," he comments. "It is a difference that man himself has created: there is a time that applies to prisoners and a time for everyone who is entirely free to come and go."

### Englebort Van Anderlecht

b. 1918, Schaarbeek, Belgium; d. 1961, Schaarbeek, Belgium

Englebort Van Anderlecht was not a member of 'La Jeune Peinture Belge', but his post-war quest to break free of painting was close to what this group had in mind. Encouraged by the painter Serge Vandercam and the poet Jean Dyrpréau, Van Anderlecht devoted himself from the beginning of the 1950s to the representation of deep primal passions. His aim was to revive a collective sensitivity and to express an age-old universe from which he and his contemporaries were in danger of becoming alienated. Van Anderlecht created ever larger informal canvases using broad brushstrokes and colours with an almost explosive beauty. Shortly before his premature death, he joined two Flemish renewal movements: the Antwerp-based 'G58', or 'Group 1958', and the New Flemish School.

#### Le Grand Noir, 1960

oil paint on canvas

'Le Grand Noir' (or: 'The Great Black') dates from the last year of the artist's life. Opaque black tones and flashes of white and grey crisscross the canvas. The wild movements with which paint and colour were applied are striking. Van Anderlecht surrendered uninhibitedly to the intuitive spirit of painting. The power of the feeling that underlies his painterly gestures seems to suggest a dark emotionality. This is reinforced by the title of the work. 'Le Grand Noir' can be viewed as the depiction of Van Anderlecht's struggle against doubts and fears. The dark mood is augmented by the drama of his fatal illness and the approaching end.

## Koen van den Broek

b. 1973, Bree, Belgium; lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium

Koen van den Broek converts many things, including motorways, curbs and parks, to planes and broad lines: he distils the essence of images. His work has an abstract character, which seems to distance itself from reality. The artist does not necessarily intend to convey a message, indeed his thoughts are fully focused upon colour, composition, shape, paint, canvas and painting surface.

### Melrose Ave, Balloons, 2007

oil paint on canvas

'Melrose Ave, Balloons' effuses the atmosphere of an American road movie. A desolate landscape, furrowed by motorways, forms the backdrop. The strange framing, in this case of a street leading to somewhere outside the composition, is based on a photograph. During his travels through deserted landscapes van den Broek takes snapshots from which he allows his work to germinate. He does not paint complete images, but instead portrays distilled fragments of landscape, like snapshots derived from his observations. In addition, the artist has a preference for unusual perspectives that draw attention to details, such as the cracks in a road surface. Nothing in van den Broek's images is shrouded in shadow; everything is basking in bright light.

## Rinus Van de Velde

b. 1983, Leuven, Belgium; lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium

Rinus Van de Velde is sometimes described as the James Dean of the Belgian art world, known as a workaholic and invariably spotted with a cigarette hanging from his lips. Photographic material forms the basis for his monumental charcoal drawings. He often stages the photographs himself in his studio. As a result, his canvases regularly feature himself and his acquaintances. Van de Velde uses his work to create a fictional autobiography: a story in which he plays the role of both the director and main character. Therefore, we also see the artist regularly crop up like a chameleon in his own stories.

### Deep in the Jungle of Our Fiction,...., 2016

charcoal on canvas

'Deep in the Jungle of Our Fiction,....' was one of nine works exhibited by Rinus van de Velde in S.M.A.K. Jules Romains' film script 'Donogoo Tonka' (1920) formed the basis for the solo exhibition of the same name. Van de Velde played a role in Romains' surreal and satirical story, which – just like the artist's oeuvre – constantly teeters on the edge of the fictional. The drawing is a typical example of Van de Velde's practice: virtuoso and light, but meticulously constructed from intelligent, at times confusing, layers. 'Donogoo Tonka', the story: A geographer's career is at stake after it is discovered that he made up a city in South America. A young man with suicidal thoughts finds a new purpose in life: he wishes to restore the geographer's reputation and launches a fanatical promotional campaign for the fictional city. Hilarious developments lead to the city's actual foundation, a fact that raises questions about the truth of scientific knowledge and the historic chain of cause and effect.

## Jan Van Imschoot

b. 1963, Ghent, Belgium; lives and works in Noncourt-sur-le-Rongeant, France

The extent to which Jan Van Imschoot places every facet of human existence under the microscope is unparalleled. He often approaches his – sometimes historical – themes with a smile, but he is always serious, critical and refreshingly sharp-witted. The Ghent-based painter, who moved to France in 2013, never dances to the art circus's tune. His style, which he once described as 'anarcho-baroque', fluctuates according to his subject matter.

### Mourir à Mallorca, 1997

oil paint on canvas

loan Collection Flemish Community

'Mourir à Mallorca' ('Dying in Mallorca') is strikingly subdued. In muted shades, almost like a grisaille, this series of five paintings explores the world of senior-citizen tourism. In the first work, two elderly people are drinking a cup of coffee on a balcony. The dimmed colours place them in the twilight of their lives. In the other paintings, we see a rather mysterious figure beside a table on a terrace, a stout grandmother on a donkey, an interior, and a lady standing at a terrace balustrade. There is a cynicism to these works. A certain melancholy and sadness also hangs in the air. Van Imschoot may exploit found visual material for his own ends, but his work invariably begins with something that strikes him in his surroundings, or in society as a whole. At a flea market he found a photograph album from a retired couple who had spent their winters in Mallorca. Before the rise of the internet. The artist created the series as an ode to anonymity, and as a monument to those in our society who are invisible. He added: "After twenty years, this five-part work took on a different meaning. Of its own accord it changed from images painted with empathy for the unknown person, into an ode to silence."

### The Big Castrator, 1993

oil paint on canvas

'The Big Castrator' is raw. A dark hand holds a curved dagger as if to attack. Up above, the title is written in burgundy capital letters. The small painting is full of pent-up aggression. The artist spontaneously thought of 'the big castrator' when, in an old publication on anatomy, he saw an over-exposed photograph of a hand clasping a dagger. It reminded him of a film still. Cinema and painting are not so very different for Van Imschoot. He painted this work as if it were the beginning of a film. A Hitchcockian thriller, for example, or a movie by Tarantino or Spike Lee. We are left to imagine how the story unfolds. Jan Van Imschoot reveals: "In my own mind, it's about a person who takes revenge on rapists and other sex offenders. 'The Big Castrator' is a declaration of support for all victims of sexual offences."

## Herman Van Ingelgem

b. 1968, Blankenberge, Belgium; lives and works in Mechelen, Belgium

Witty, absurd and full of signs of sharp collapse. This is how the art of Herman Van Ingelgem can be described. His site-specific installations with sculptures, scale models, videos and many genres of intervention utilizing everyday items, shake their surroundings, our familiar world, probing to discover what lies behind and beneath it. The artistry of Van Ingelgem has a radical character, something typically Flemish. Van Ingelgem's artistry comes from a do-it-yourself attitude whilst nevertheless being very precise.

### Blow Up, 2008

paper, tape

No more than four paper shreds on the wall, torn-off corners of an image. The remainder of the rectangle is empty. Perhaps you recognize something in the corners: a bouquet. Maybe not. The work 'Blow Up' can easily be adapted to become larger or smaller; the image can be expanded as if it had exploded. Conversely, it can also be shrunk until the four pieces almost touch each other. 'Blow Up' is part of a folder with the torn corners of fifteen photographs from the book 'Bring the Garden in the House' and one complete photo from the same book, which describes how you can make bouquets and flower arrangements with separate names such as 'Feast for a young girl'. Van Ingelgem often works with abandoned material and his interventions are usually minimal. 'Blow Up' is a good example of this. Flowers wilt. Here they are no more and we can only use our imagination to replace the void. 'Blow Up' is a very flexible work of art. The owner of the folder, in this case S.M.A.K., may, according to the artist's instructions, choose any one of the 15 edited photos and attach its four corners to a wall in the form of a rectangle. This may be on any self-selected surface and customized format.

## Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven

b. 1951, Antwerp, Belgium; lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium

The extensive oeuvre of Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven, in short AMVK, is very diverse. Nevertheless, her work is immediately recognizable: colourful, layered, feministic and strongly socially critical. She establishes links between technology, sex and imaging in our current society. She draws on various sources of inspiration, from research to artificial intelligence through alchemy to soft-pornographic images, bringing them together in a new universe. Strong, self-assured women are pivotal in this, to counterbalance the classic female nude in traditional art. She deploys materials and techniques from commercial graphics: hard Perspex, plastic and bright colours. In combination with schematic black and white contrasts, another graphics element, fascinating images come into being.

### Heimweer (Schatten uit het Westen 4: Crisis op de schijnbare meerwaarde van het publiek (t.o.v. de woede van de kunstenaars)), 1993

mixed media

AMVK links words with images, thereby creating possible new interpretations. In this way she wishes to free words from their everyday context. Thus she gave this work the cryptic title 'Heimweer (Schatten uit het Westen 4: Crisis op de schijnbare meerwaarde van het publiek (t.o.v. de woede van de kunstenaars)), 1993'. This titillating quirky title relates to an image of an interior – 'the woman's domain' but equally seen for a long time as an 'oppressive straitjacket' – and a (semi) naked, powerful woman. It is left to us to see or imagine connections.

## Philippe Van Snick

b. 1946, Ghent, Belgium; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

Philippe Van Snick developed a simple pictorial form of language that is related to minimalism. He relied on binary logic and on patterns in the dynamics of the cosmos and daily reality to develop formulae. Van Snick thus created a decimal system with which he makes the reality around him manageable and which concomitantly forms the core of his palette consisting of ten colours: red, yellow, blue, orange, purple, green, white, black, gold and silver. The artist uses these colours to render observations and feelings in a systematic way.

### Monochrome déstabilisé-re, 1980

acrylic paint on cardboard

Describing how we perceive the countryside or art is impossible, according to Van Snick. That is because the images we discern are always composed of loose fragments. From that idea the series 'Polychromes déstabilisés' evolved, ensembles of geometric shapes in cardboard, each fragment painted in one of Van Snick's ten colours from his systemized palette and then applied to the walls of exhibition spaces. From 1980 'Polychromes déstabilisés' unfolded into a new series entitled 'Monochromes déstabilisés', once again employing ensembles of geometric cardboard figures, but this time all fragments received just one of the ten colours from his colour system, as here in 'Monochrome déstabilisé-re'. The 'destabilized forms' visualize the dynamic of spirit and matter. They refer to the disruption of rigid ideas and a restricted body of thought.

## Richard Venlet

b. 1964, Hamilton, Australia; lives and works in Brussels, Belgium

Richard Venlet's earliest works consisted of untitled abstract wall sculptures constructed from basic geometric shapes. It wasn't long before Venlet began to consider not only these objects as part of his work but also their presentation, the exhibition concept and the spatial context. These factors gradually began to dominate. Venlet's work could increasingly be read as visual statements that explored the archetype of the white exhibition space. Venlet was soon being asked to design sets for exhibitions of work by other artists, and began incorporating art by others in his exhibitions.

### Museum for a Small City, 2013

mixed media

Venlet created 'Museum for a Small City' in and for S.M.A.K. in 2013. The piece derives its name from a project by the modernist Mies Van der Rohe, which did not go ahead. It was conceived as a 'museum in a museum', a space for alternating exhibitions of collection pieces and a forum for public lectures. It consists of a platform of grey, square carpet modules, on which museum pieces selected by Venlet are displayed. The museum walls are left blank. The low 'stage' is slightly smaller than the museum room, so that it feels like a 'space within a space'. As part of this exhibition, 'Museum for a Small City' serves as a presentation platform for the public programme.

### Zonder titel, 2000

mixed media

loan private collection, Belgium

The internal space of this cube – once again a 'space within a space' – was painted entirely black using chalkboard paint. A light bulb hangs in the middle, illuminating the space with a blinding light. A box of white chalk invites us to write messages on the walls. 'Zonder titel' exists solely as the result of our participation. Due to our input the black space is slowly transformed into a 'white cube' or the archetypal white exhibition space. 'Untitled' was exhibited for the first time in 2001 in the Marie-Puck Broodthaers Gallery in Brussels. The work was also exhibited at the 25th São Paulo Biennial in 2002.

## Verlust der Mitte

curated by Christoph Büchel

'Verlust der Mitte' presents artworks that were purchased during the formation of S.M.A.K. They are the foundation of the museum's collection and the result of more than fifty years of collecting by various parties: the Museum of Fine Arts (from 1957 to 1975), the Association for the Museum of Contemporary Art (from 1957) and the Museum of Contemporary Art, which has been known as S.M.A.K. since 1999 (from 1975). In his speech on the occasion of the first presentation of the museum's collection, curator Henry Lecube described it as follows: "The collection is unique of its kind. It has nothing to hide, knows no secrets and owes nothing to anyone except its founders."

### Verlust der Mitte, 2017

mixed media  
donation

S.M.A.K. presented an expanded version of 'Verlust der Mitte' ('Loss of the Centre') in 2017. The presentation of the works was organised around the basic principles of the museum's collection policy. In this partial redisplay, the presentation focuses on the Cobra movement and includes works by, amongst others, Corneille, Karel Appel and Pierre Alechinsky: all artists who are internationally recognised as reference points within modern art. These works from the collection are confronted with the current issues surrounding migration. The exhibition's title, 'Verlust der Mitte', is taken from a 1958 work by Cobra artist Asger Jorn – also among the works shown. It refers to a controversial cultural-philosophical publication from 1948 by the art historian and former member of the Nazi party, Hans Sedlmayr.

## Henk Visch

b. 1950, Eindhoven, The Netherlands; lives and works in Eindhoven, The Netherlands and Berlin, Germany

A human being is clearly present in many works by Henk Visch. Not as a character but through activities such as walking and standing still, resting and lying, thinking and dreaming. The leg is often featured, in different shapes and sizes. "In fact, all my work is related to standing", the artist once said. "You could call that a kind of theme. All my images stand on a foot or are supported by something. Standing, just as you yourself stand, is part of your existence. Feet with which you stand on the ground – no, not on the ground but on the earth. The earth has no ground."

### Noch Einmal, 1990

unlimited, bronze  
donation

Artist, sculptor and graphic artist Henk Visch has a remarkable feeling for the interaction between image and language. 'One More Time' is the English title for this work. What will this leg do 'one more time'? It suggests movement but is at one and the same time motionless. It is heavy and sturdy but also unstable. This tension between standing and movement is intriguing for Henk Visch. The image looks simple but does not present an unambiguous message. It stimulates our potential for association. For Visch, the meaning of a work unfolds whilst looking at it. 'Noch Einmal' is an unlimited edition. Every time the work is sold, the artist casts a new one. One More Time?

## Wolf Vostell

b. 1932, Leverkusen, Germany; d. 1998, Berlin, Germany

Up to 1958 Wolf Vostell, was principally active with 'déchollage', an artistic composition in which existing images are taken apart, thus in a sense form the opposite of a 'collage'. In the years that followed, the artist was noted for his work with happenings and installations in the public space. He frequently incorporated TV sets into his work and in this way questioned (public) manipulation by the medium. In the early 1960s, Vostell became one of the driving forces behind Fluxus, an art movement that elevated everyday things to art, thus campaigning against the elitism of the art world. Vostell gained fame with spectacular performances, for example he publicly poured concrete over cars. He recorded many of these performances on video, a new medium that he immediately considered to be a fully-fledged art form.

### La Sibérie d'Estrémadure (III), 1983

U-Matic transferred to CD

In 1975, Vostell and his Spanish wife Mercedes arrived in Extremadura, a rugged deserted region in south-western Spain. He described the area as "An artwork of nature where 'natural people', who have not grown up with aesthetics, live." In 1983, the artist gave stature to this region in the rotunda of the current Ghent Museum of Fine Arts via a performance and video recording. Completely in line with the Fluxus philosophy, there is not only the music produced during the performance. Non-musical sounds from the performance are also included in the soundtrack of this video work, in which life and art flow together.

## W

**Lois Weinberger**

b. 1947, Stamms, Austria; lives and works in Vienna and Gars am Kamp, Austria  
Lois Weinberger grew up in rural Tyrol and thinks of himself as an 'agricultural worker'. Plants on fallow ground form the impetus for drawings, sculptures, photographs, texts and installations. Weinberger makes a conscious choice for what he himself calls 'second-rate nature' with a pivotal role for wild plants. The romantic image of nature as the primitive counterpart to culture is, in his opinion, a misconception. He allows the border between nature and culture to become blurred. Weeds symbolize the endangered free spirit and, for the individual who cherishes his individuality and imagination, it goes against the grain.

**Wild Cube, 2019**

steel  
donation

With minimal disturbance, Weinberger creates temporary areas where he leaves room for the free intervention of nature. One of them is 'Wild Cube', a steel construction that the artist has been installing at various locations in and around the city boundary since 1991. Every plant whose seed blows in can germinate and grow spontaneously and untamed within this construction, often in contrast to the neatly maintained area around it. For example, Weinberger 'frees' a piece of nature in the city by placing a fence around it - apparently a contradictory logic. Within it, weeds and wild plants, which disregard demarcation, go their own way. The proliferation in Weinberger's 'Wild Cube' contrasts with gardening, in which managing and controlling nature is the main focus, and also with our tightly regulated society. The work is a song of praise for the unrestricted nature of weeds, for the everyday, the strange, for freedom and nature's purity.  
(from August 2019)

**Wege, 2005**

mural  
donation

'Wege' (roads) is a mixture of a road map and a vegetable motif. Weinberger uses vestiges of nature as patterns. They become motifs in his drawings, sculptures and architectural concepts. The natural forms represent continuous growth. Plants are symbols of dynamism and change. They do not allow themselves to be restricted by borders, but seek out their own way. This organic growth represents Weinberger's resistance to a tight, rational interpretation of our environment and society.

## W

**James Welling**

b. 1951, Hartford, USA; lives and works in Los Angeles, USA  
James Welling is one of the most innovative visual artists in the world working with photography. He draws on all the technical possibilities that the medium has to offer him, with both digital and analogue processes. In doing so, the artist traverses traditional genres and styles, such as portrait, landscape, abstraction and documentary; additionally he involves other artistic disciplines such as painting, architecture, sculpture and dance. Often, autobiographical material forms the starting point for new projects, whether or not it comes from his immediate surroundings.

**Seascape, 2017**

colored 16mm film transferred to digital file (colour, sound), 5 min 12 sec  
For his digital video projection 'Seascape', Welling digitally coloured black-and-white film footage produced by his grandfather, William C. Welling. The Sunday painter filmed these images of the Atlantic in the 1930s as inspiration for his paintings. James Welling's brother composed the soundtrack. In 'Seascape' we witness a grandson looking through the eyes of his grandfather, as it were, but in colour. The video questions the meaning of authorship and family, and connects our digital age with the analogue era of photography and film.

**Jordan Wolfson**

b. 1980, New York, USA; lives and works in New York and Los Angeles, USA  
Jordan Wolfson represents a new generation of artists for whom digitalization was part of the context in which they grew up. Wolfson combines his own visual material with images, film and sound fragments that he encounters on the internet or in art history. In this way he creates his own artistic universe in the form of animated films, in which artificial characters add themes such as alienation, sex and sentimentality. With these animations, Wolfson examines the physical and psychological environment of man in our post-digital era.

**I'm sorry but I don't want to be an Emperor—that's not my business—I don't want to rule or conquer anyone. I should like to help everyone if possible, Jew, gentile, black man, white. We all want to help one another, human beings are like that. We all want to live by each other's happiness, not by each other's misery. We don't want to hate and despise one another. In this world there is room for everyone and the earth is rich and can provide for everyone. The way of life can be free and beautiful. But we have lost the way. Greed has poisoned men's souls—has barricaded the world with hate; has goose-stepped us into misery and bloodshed. We have developed speed but we have shut ourselves in: machinery that gives abundance has left us in want. Our knowledge has made us cynical, our cleverness hard and unkind. We think too much and feel too little: More than machinery we need humanity; More than cleverness we need kindness and gentleness. Without these qualities, life will be violent and all will be lost. The aeroplane and the radio have brought us closer together. The very nature of these inventions cries out for the goodness in men, cries out for universal brotherhood for the unity of us all. Even now my voice is reaching millions throughout the world, millions of despairing men, women and little children, victims of a system that makes men torture and imprison innocent people. To those who can hear me I say "Do not despair." The misery that is now upon us is but the passing of greed, the bitterness of men who fear the way of human progress: the hate of men will pass and dictators die and the power they took from the people will return to the people, and so long as men die [now] liberty will never perish.... Soldiers—don't give yourselves to brutes, men who despise you and enslave you—who regiment your lives, tell you what to do, what to think and what to feel, who drill you, diet you, treat you as cattle, as cannon fodder. Don't give yourselves to these unnatural men, machine men, with machine minds and machine hearts. You are not machines. You are not cattle. You are**

men. You have the love of humanity in your hearts. You don't hate—only the unloved hate. Only the unloved and the unnatural. Soldiers—don't fight for slavery, fight for liberty. In the seventeenth chapter of Saint Luke it is written "the kingdom of God is within man"—not one man, nor a group of men—but in all men—in you, the people. You the people have the power, the power to create machines, the power to create happiness. You the people have the power to make life free and beautiful, to make this life a wonderful adventure. Then in the name of democracy let's use that power—let us all unite. Let us fight for a new world, a decent world that will give men a chance to work, that will give you the future and old age and security. By the promise of these things, brutes have risen to power, but they lie. They do not fulfill their promise, they never will. Dictators free themselves but they enslave the people. Now let us fight to fulfill that promise. Let us fight to free the world, to do away with national barriers, do away with greed, with hate and intolerance. Let us fight for a world of reason, a world where science and progress will lead to all men's happiness. Soldiers—in the name of democracy, let us all unite! Look up! Look up! The clouds are lifting—the sun is breaking through. We are coming out of the darkness into the light. We are coming into a new world. A kind new world where men will rise above their hate and brutality. The soul of man has been given wings—and at last he is beginning to fly. He is flying into the rainbow—into the light of hope—into the future, that glorious future that belongs to you, to me and to all of us. Look up. Look up., 2005

16 mm film (black and white, silent), 3 min

This ominous black-and-white film shows a man without a head fiercely expressing himself in sign language. The title refers to a speech by Charlie Chaplin in the film 'The Great Dictator' (1940). Wolfson transposed the speech into the silent dialogue of sign language. This brings Chaplin back to his original communication channel: the silent film. In situating the character against a sterile white background, Wolfson was inspired by the short film 'The Perfect Human' (1967) by the Danish artist Jørgen Leths, about the impossibility of perfection in humans. By bringing these two extremes together, Wolfson positions Chaplin's idealism alongside nihilistic examination thereby reflecting the juxtaposition of the senselessness of human actions and despair in times of political oppression.

## Z

### Zhang Peili

b. 1957, Hangzhou, China; lives and works in Hangzhou and Shanghai, China  
Zhang Peili has been making an important contribution to contemporary art in China and beyond since the mid-1980s. His artistic pursuits include painting, text, video and digital media. The artist examines the narrative potential of these artistic media and the ease with which they can be transformed into and used as propaganda. Often he manipulates the aesthetics of the mass media and popular entertainment. Zhang Peili's work comments on and responds to the social, political and cultural climate in China.

#### One-Thousandth of a Second to One Second, 1995

fan, liming paper, inkjet printing

This installation consists of a fan and a series of colour photos, covered with tracing paper, of an anonymous, desolate landscape. The back and forth movement of the fan makes the photos visible one at a time. Zhang Peili had photographed the landscape and, image by image, went through the entire range from the minimum to the maximum shutter speed of the camera, with the aperture at the lowest value. The artist presents the photographs arranged from underexposed to overexposed. With this work he questions the objectivity and credibility of photography as a medium.

### Gilberto Zorio

b. 1944, Andorno Micca, Italy; lives and works in Flagstaff, USA and Inishkeame, Ireland

As from the end of the 1960s, the most important concept in the work of the arte povera artist Gilberto Zorio was that of 'energy'. In his own words: "Energy means the possibility of filling a space, the possibility of emptying what is full, the possibility of filling the past, present and future and the possibility of activating the conscious and subconscious functions of language." Recurring elements in his work include bull-skin, the spear and the star: symbols of survival and doom, accuracy and disorientation, freedom and restraint, and energy. In Zorio's work, light also symbolises energy.

#### Scultura per purificare le parole, 1979

mixed media

'Scultura per purificare le parole' occupies the space in a penetrating manner. Its angular shape and overt linearity means it is not simple for the viewer to choose a physical position in relation to this work. The sculpture consists of two copper rods and a curved glass vessel with a 'mouthpiece', the latter of which is filled with a mixture of phosphorus and alcohol. We might speak into the mouthpiece. Do words that pass through the sculpture via the mouthpiece emerge purified? The title of the work means 'Sculpture to purify the word'. Zorio created a poetic object in which language enters into a pure and purifying relationship with reality. The pointed construction with its sharp protrusions suggests the underlying danger that can accompany the utopia of purifying language.

## I

After the end of the 1980s there was a major shift in the view of and from within contemporary art. The large-scale 'Magiciens de la Terre' exhibition in Paris in 1989 raised specific questions about the standpoint which until then had been almost exclusively Western.

Until that time, non-Western artists had rarely if ever been included in the prevailing canon and access to 'the other' in art had remained limited. This serious change was accompanied by an exponential increase in our physical and technological mobility, which led to an explosive growth in the internationalisation of contemporary art and society.

Since that period, S.M.A.K. too has deliberately and regularly purchased work from artists of non-Western backgrounds or who operate from the periphery of the West. The three room-sized installations in this wing of the museum not only modify the outdated, exclusively Western view of art and our societal reality, but also, on the basis of a way of thinking rooted in the periphery, present possible new and universal ways of approaching it.

**Artur Barrio, David Hammons and Verlust der Mitte**

## II

One of the main elements of the work of public museums since they came into being in the 18<sup>th</sup> century – alongside collecting, conservation and exhibiting – is research into the collection. This research can take many different forms: from exhibitions and publications, related talks, book launches, interviews with artists and debates, through the restoration and scientific documentation of works in the collection, to making them accessible in ways appropriate to various target groups by means of workshops and other public activities.

Artists also carry out research into art and collections. They make use of their practices as a means of questioning, interpretation or guidance. S.M.A.K. has always devoted a lot of attention to this particular form of artistic research, and so it has been made the subject of this wing of the museum. Richard Venlet's 'Museum for a Small City' is thus not presented just as an artwork, but is also put to active use as a platform for the public programme related to this exhibition.

In addition, part of this wing – under the heading 'S.M.A.K. in motion' – is occupied by the museum's outreach team, who will present the results of recent target-group-oriented research projects. Finally, an extensive and varying selection of important video works from the collection will also be shown.

**Allora & Calzadilla, Johanna Billing, Dara Birnbaum, Hamza Halloubi, David Hammons, Joachim Koester, Annika Larsson, Bruce Nauman, Saskia Olde Wolbers, Nicolas Provost, Meggy Rustamova, Anri Sala, Richard Venlet, Wolf Vostell and Jordan Wolfson**

## III

Contemporary painting has been a pillar of collection policy since the genesis of the S.M.A.K. collection in the late 1950s. Painting no longer remained concentrated chiefly on the building blocks of the medium – e.g. paint, support, composition and texture – but was increasingly employed to expose societal issues. The advent of Pop Art and Nouveau Réalisme meant that artists expressed themselves increasingly critically regarding society and its consumerism.

In about 1985, painting enjoyed a great revival. Many artists once again questioned the inward gaze focused solely on the medium itself. They replaced this with a more committed view focused on the world and dealt with topics related among other things to politics, religion, sociology, geography, sexuality and identity. This wing of the museum presents paintings and artworks inspired by painting, created between the 1960s and the present, that display this approach.

**Harold Ancart, Korakrit Arunanondchai, Salam Atta Sabri, Ricardo Brey, Kathe Burkhart, Berlinde De Bruyckere, Jim Dine, Tatjana Gerhard, Adrian Ghenie, Bjarne Melgaard, Wilhelm Sasnal, Walter Swennen, Sven 't Jolle, Narcisse Tordoir & Vincent Geyskens, Jan Van Imschoot and Gilberto Zorio**

## IV

In the course of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, artists gradually let go of the idea that art had to represent reality. They started to concentrate on the building blocks and inherent properties of the various artistic media and as from the second half of the 1940s gave shape to this in abstract expressionist painting. The minimalist sculpture that appeared as from the 1960s went one step further by denying any form of meaning. It was focused solely on relations between the artworks themselves, space, and us the viewers.

Most of the artists in this wing are continuing to build on these traditions. They blur boundaries – between artistic media, or art and design, and other things – by means of intermediate forms that are impossible to define unambiguously. More recently, artists have been reconsidering media for the purposes of a more sensory experience of art. They use such atypical or intangible 'materials' such as light, colour and space. In this work, passive viewing by means of the intellect has to give way to the active physical experience. Apart from this, several works in this wing negate certain dogmas regarding art. Such seemingly indisputable contrasts as realism versus abstraction are unmasked as purely cultural constructions.

**Art & Language, N. Dash, Raoul De Keyser, Lili Dujourie, Joris Ghekiere, Ann Veronica Janssens, Werner Mannaers, François Morellet, Bruce Nauman, Royden Rabinowitch, Tove Storch and Philippe Van Snick**

## V

Since the birth of the mass media shortly after WWII, many artists find in the continuous, almost hysterical stream of images in newspapers, television, film and social media the inspiration and motivation to critically question images and what they represent (or are intended to represent). Existing images are taken out of their original context, different elements are accentuated, specific details are emphasised, to the point where new meanings arise. In this process, forms that lie between painting, photo and film take shape and as a result the difference between analogue and digital sometimes becomes unclear. Motives and forms of expression differ hugely between one artist and another. Some of them appropriated techniques and strategies from the mass media – such as the loop, cropping and extreme close-ups – to expose or manipulate the media from the inside out.

**John Baldessari, Guillaume Bijl, Dara Birnbaum, Chuck Close, Franky D.C, Vincent Geyskens, Zvi Goldstein, David Hockney, Louise Lawler, Mark Manders, Carsten Nicolai, Manfred Pernice, Gerhard Richter, Luc Tuymans, Rinus Van de Velde, Herman Van Ingelgem, Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven, James Welling and Zhang Peili**

## VI

Since the advent of Postmodernism in the early 1980s, society and more specifically the contemporary art scene have become increasingly fragmented. Clearly-defined art movements – the familiar 'isms' – made way for a pronounced emphasis on the individual and the individual artistic practice. This also led to greater freedom in ways of presenting art: above all confrontation, dialogue and the search for new connections and insights.

This wing of the museum contains pieces from the S.M.A.K. collection that have been grouped on the basis of this sort of open 'postmodern' approach. In many cases it is a matter of combinations made with a sly wink from the curators or works with an ironic, relativising or even trivialising humorous undertone. This wing is moreover a modest tribute to Jan Hoet, the founder and former artistic director of S.M.A.K. who, as a child of postmodernism, was better able than anyone to link together seemingly contrasting, highly individual artistic works in a pioneering way.

**Giovanni Anselmo, Richard Artschwager, Massimo Bartolini, Gaston Bertrand, Pierre Bismuth, Michaël Borremans, Charbel-joseph H. Boutros, Stanley Brouwn, Nina Canell, Leo Copers, Johan De Wilde, Wim Delvoye, Joana Escoval, Robert Gober, Karin Hanssen, Heide Hinrichs, Lee Kit, Bernd Lohaus, Jorge Macchi, Henri Michaux, Sophie Nys, Oswald Oberhuber, Meret Oppenheim, Jean-Pierre Raynaud, Nedko Solakov, Bart Stolle, Robert Therrien, Adam Vačkář, Englebert Van Anderlecht and Henk Visch**



## VII

This wing of the museum takes as its theme man's suffering as an individual and in the broader societal perspective of migration, displacement, globalisation and minorities. The selection casts a critical eye on traditional contradistinctions and ostensibly fixed categories.

We see artists working for a more inclusive, participatory and intercultural society. Differences between cultures are acknowledged, but the emphasis is mainly on similarities and possible means of connection. For instance, intensive artistic research into cultural customs on several continents provides the starting point for a new and dynamic conceptual model with no hierarchy or discrimination. Or in another case the use of waste material represents the building of bridges between rich and poor, South and North.

A few artists speak up for minorities which in the past – and sometimes even now – were stigmatised or driven to the margins of society. By letting them take an active part in the development of artworks and/or making them their subject, artists point out to us that what most of us consider to be 'normal' is merely a construction.

**Francis Alÿs, Kader Attia, Francis Bacon, Marinus Boezem, Thierry De Cordier, Christoph Fink, Raymond Hains, András Halász, Surasi Kusolwong, Jac Leirner, Oscar Murillo, Henrik Olesen, Urs Pfannenmüller, Pascale Marthine Tayou, Javier Téllez and Koen van den Broek**

### Permanent Works

'The Collection (I) | Highlights for a Future' also includes the artworks which, independently of this and other temporary exhibitions, have a permanent or semi-permanent place in and around S.M.A.K. These are artworks which have either remained here after the end of an exhibition (by agreement with the artist) or works that were deliberately purchased or donated so as to be installed here even though they were not developed specifically for this museum. To give two examples, 'ICH-DU', a sculpture in concrete by Bernd Lohaus, which was designed for the former Museum of Contemporary Art in Ghent, and Peter Downsbrough's work '5.50 | 3.10, Two Pipes', which until recently stood in the garden of a private collector in Brussels.

S.M.A.K. thus also intends to highlight these works from its collection in this presentation. The fact is that several of them do not stand out so much because they were deliberately integrated into sites in or near the museum where we would not normally expect any art. Jef Geys' 'Advertenties' are a good example. These posters have been pasted onto the glass wall between the museum and the Flower Show Hall. This means they do not immediately look like an artwork. This location was chosen deliberately because it was precisely the distinction between art and life that this artist questioned.

In addition to this there are also (semi-) permanent works that occupy such a conspicuous position that it is hard to imagine S.M.A.K. without them. For example, Jan Fabre's sculpture 'De man die de wolven meet' has stood on the roof of the museum since 1998. For many visitors it is the first work they see, even before they enter the building. On the occasion of this exhibition, Koenraad Dedobbeleer and Lois Weinberger will also each be given a permanent location for one of their works.

**Koenraad Dedobbeleer, Luc Deleu, Peter Downsbrough, Rein Dufait, Lili Dujourie, Jan Fabre, Jef Geys, Danny Matthys, Bernd Lohaus and Lois Weinberger**

MARIUS BOEZEM ADAM VACKAR MAURICE BLAUSSYLD LOEK GROOTJANS JOS JANS FABRICE HYBER SASKIA OLDE WOLBERS WALTER L. BREWDEL HUGO DUCHATEAU D.E.S.Y. KELLEY WALKER EVELYNE AXELL HANS VANDEKERCKHOVE MARCEL BROODTHAERS MEDKO SOLANKOV ROSÁNGELA RENNÓ ROEL D'HAESE

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STARITSKY CHRISTIAN BOLTANSKI LAWRENCE WEINER MALCOLM MORLEY MESCHAC GABA ADO HAMELRIJCK GER DEKKERS SHUSAKU ARAKAWA EDWARD LIPSKI SAM DURANT JACOB LAWRENCE MARCO CINGOLANI COSTAS TSOGLIS PATRICK LEBRET RAPHAËL BEJAR MORTOSHI HIRAKAWA FRANÇOIS HERS OLEG KULIK

CAROLE VANDERLINDEN ROBERT MANGOLD JAN BURSSENS WINFRED GAUL SUCHANI KINOSHITA BERNID & HILLA BECHER OTMAR ALT VLADIMIR GAZOVIC BARBARA HEPWORTH HUGO DE CLERCO PETER DE MEYER MASASHI ECHIGO THOM MERRICK MARK VERSTOCKT PAUL VAN HOEYDOONCK BIZHAN BASSIRI MICHAEL

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Canvas documentary makers Pieter Verbiest and Bertrand Lafontaine closely followed the installation of *The Collection (I)*, *Highlights for a Future* and asked artistic director Philippe Van Cauteren to highlight a number of key works and

personal favourites from the collection. The result is a portrait of a unique museum with an equally unique history. A museum that, in the spirit of its founder Jan Hoet, wants to open up the world of contemporary art as much as possible...

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- From 28.04.2019 . . . . . *Susketwiet*

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- Jusqu'au 02.06.2019 . . . . . *Time Extended, 1964-1978. Part III*
- Jusqu'au 02.06.2019 . . . . . *The Konrad Fischer Years, 1964-1978*

Info: [gentsemusea.be](http://gentsemusea.be)

Info: [herbertfoundation.org](http://herbertfoundation.org)

TATIANA GERHARD JACQUES-LOUIS NYST NICK ERVINGCK PIERRE ALECHINSKY HEIDE HIMRICHS MIROSLAW BALKKA WILHELM SASNAL TOON TERSAS CRAIGIE HORSFIELD ASTA GRÖTING OTTO ZITKO JEAN RENÉ BAZAINE LUCIO FONTANA PATRICK VAN CAECKENBERGH DANIEL LANG VIK MUNIZ ZSIGMOND KAROLYI RICHARD

WALTER SWENMEN ATSMICKER RICHARD FONCKE LOIS WEINBERGER MICHELLA SINGANI ROMEO DE MEESTER JUS JUTTIJANS URI TZ

ALEXANDER ZEDLITZ CHRISTINE CLINCKX JUAN MUÑOZ ROBERT DEVIENDT ELIZABETH EWART KATHARINA FRITSCH GHISLAIN FERNANDE KARIN HANSEN STEFANI DHEEDENE PER BERNDTSON GEORGE ZONGOLOPOULOS PAOLO ICARO TIMOTHY HENNESSY BAGNOLI DIETER ROTH HAROLD ANCART MATTHIEU ROMSSE

JACQUES MOESCHAL CHRISTOPH FINK CHAIM VAN LUIT RAPHAËL BEAR BERIND LOHARUS VICTOR VASARELY MARK VERSTOCKT ANTONIO SAURA SIMONE LACOUR HEIMO ZOBERNIC DAMIEN DE LEPELEIRE HAROLD ANCART THOMAS HIRSCHORN ANIMÉ INTAKIYICA PETER DE CUPERE HEIDE HINRICHS MICHAEL TIMPSON

# A TRANSLATION FROM ONE LANGUAGE TO ANOTHER UNE TRADUCTION D'UNE LANGUE À UNE AUTRE EEN VERTALING VAN DE ENE TAAL NAAR DE ANDERE

Marcel Broodthaers  
Luc Deleu - T.O.P. office  
Jean Glibert  
Guy Rombouts  
Lawrence Weiner

Pierre Bal-Blanc  
Noé Soulier  
f.o.t.a.  
Anton Parys

De keuze van:  
Jeroen Staes & Wouter  
De Vleeschouwer

Leyla Aydoslu  
Minja Gu

Philippe Van Cauteren

Hugo Debaere  
Nina Canell  
Jonathan Horowitz  
Chlanda Marek  
Thom Merrick  
Jura Shust  
Michael E. Smith

22.03 - 22.05.2019

Zomer in Grimbergen:  
Sculpturen in de openlucht van

Barry Flanagan  
Rui Chafes  
Lawrence Weiner

langdurige bruiklenen uit de collectie van S.M.A.K.



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## improvisation & jazz Ghent

## CITADELIC CONCERTS @ SMAK Museum 2019

**04/04**  
**PAK YAN LAU**  
'BOOK OF TOY'  
Pak Yan Lau (HK/BE) toy piano, electronics, objects

Pak Yan Lau, active in the underground scene of Brussels, exposes in her 'Book of Toy' a universe of overtones, harmonics and the metallic bass sounds of several toy pianos (inside and outside) in combination with clockwork and electronics.

**DE GROOTE - FAES DUO**  
Bruno De Groote (BE) electric guitar  
Ben Faes (BE) double bass

De Groote-Faes Duo is a Belgian instrumental project with a strange minimalistic line-up, the raw electric guitar of Bruno De Groote (dEUS) and the classical double bass of Ben Faes (different symphonic orchestras). Echoes of modern jazz, classical beauty, solos deeply embedded in rock, fragments of world music from all corners of the world and electronically manipulated sound scapes form a coherent story that reflects the broad background of both these gentlemen.

**02/05**  
**TOMA GOUBAND**  
'SINGING STONES'  
Toma Gouband (FR) percussion

You don't need to 'enter' into the music of Toma Gouband; your ears and eyes are invited by the spectacular and extraordinary organisation of colors and timbres that make up his inventive dream universe. Pieces of flint, natural skins covering a bass drum, pebbles rolled on the ground, ... inverted cymbals collecting all sorts of natural resonators, ... just the happening for a relaxing and meditative atmosphere...

**ERIK BOGAERTS 4TET**  
Erik Bogaerts (BE) alto saxophone  
Jeroen Van Herzele (BE) tenor saxophone  
Brice Soniano (FR) double bass  
Steven Cassiers (BE) drums

This quartet, with members seriously involved in putting Belgian jazz on the map through bands like Mâak, Mephiti, Dans Dans,... is very playful and balances between serene melodies within harmonic structures and the energetic expression in improvisation or groove. Interplay has a guiding role in the pursuit of an exiting encounter.

**29/05-02/06**  
CITADELPARK  
SUMMER FESTIVAL

**06/06**  
**RUBEN MACHTELINCKX**  
Ruben Machtelinckx (BE) baritone guitar,  
baritone banjo

Machtelinckx is undoubtedly one of Belgium's finest contemporary guitar players. All About Jazz, the American authority in the world of jazz puts it like this to banjo fans all over the world: 'Especially recommended to banjo fans looking for something different, but there's plenty of minimalist atmosphere for people who didn't even know they liked the banjo.' \*\*\*\*

tickets & info: citadelic.be

ticket concerts = free admission to 'nocturne' and exhibition SMAK 20 jaar: De Collectie (1) | Highlights for a Future

gent:  Flanders  
State of  
the Art

PIERPAOLO CALZOLARI RUI CHAFES PETER SANTINO CHRISTOPH BÜCHEL PAUL GEES ANSELM KIEFER HEINRIK OLESEN BRACO DIMITRIJEVIC MARY HEILMANN JEAN MILO JACQUES-LOUIS INYST MARIUSZ KRUK MARIA VASSILEVA DANIEL DEZEUZE GILBERTO ZORIO FRED DERVOETS HORST ANTES TINA GIROUARD MEKHITAR

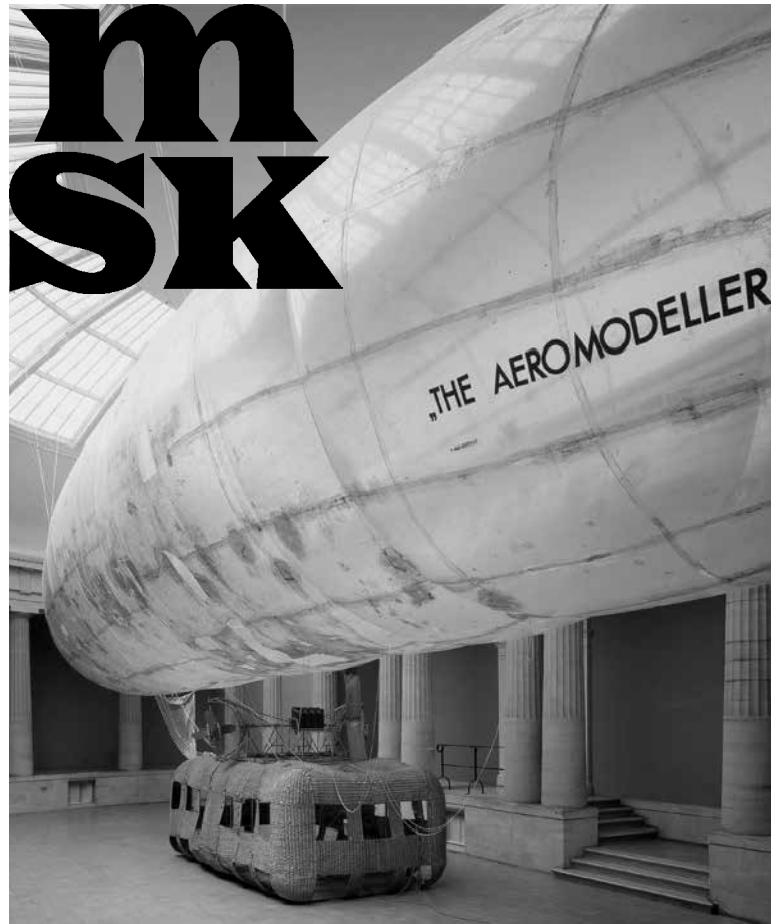
# S.M.A.K.

Three key works from the S.M.A.K. collection are temporarily returned to the place for which they were created or first exhibited, the Museum of Fine Arts Ghent: *The Aeromodeller* by Panamarenko, *Wirtschaftswerte* by Joseph Beuys and *Le Decor et son Double* by Daniel Buren. Entitled *Back & forth*, the presentation is part of a long-term project that was launched in 2017 to highlight and renew the historical interconnectedness of the two museums.

15 March 2019 (opening)  
8 PM - 11 PM

16 March - 29 September 2019  
tue - fri 9.30 AM - 5.30 PM  
weekend and holidays 10 AM - 6 PM

**MSK Gent**  
Fernand Scribedreef 1  
9000 Gent (opposite S.M.A.K.)  
mskgent.be



# BACK & FORTH

A cross-disciplinary collaboration between the **SKaGeN** theatre collective and the American visual artist **Richard Jackson** on the themes of civil war, tenderness and revenge.

# 'TILL IT'S OVER'

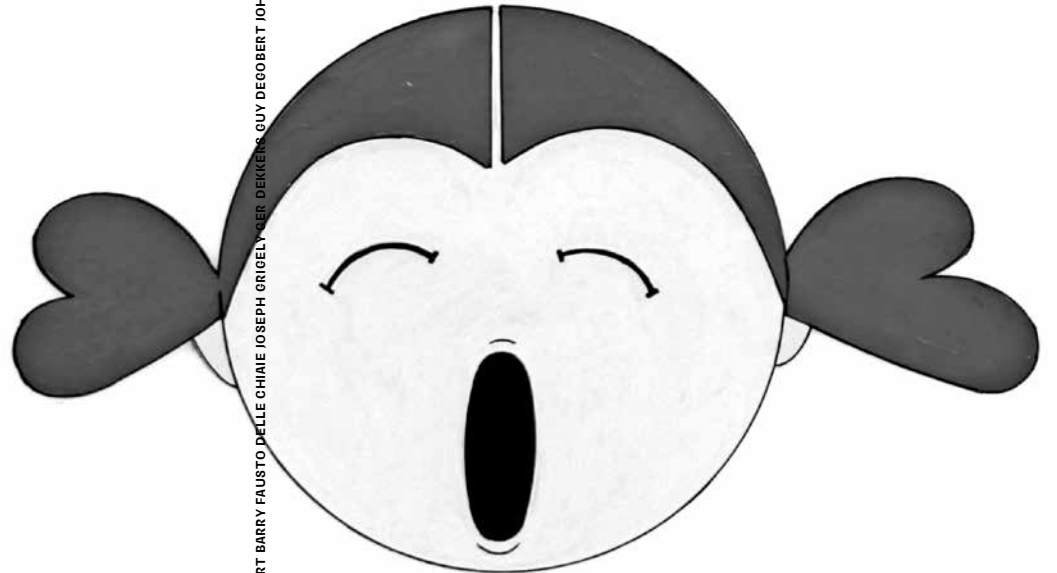
C-mine Genk  
25-30 March 2019, 8.15 PM

Antwerpse Kleppers  
14-19 May 2019, 8 PM

**S.M.A.K.** (Floralies Palace)  
26 May - 2 June 2019  
17-29 September 2019

INFO: SKAGEN.BE  
ONLINE TICKETS: SMAK.BE

Concept & play: Valentijn Dhaenens & Clara van den Broek  
Scenography: Richard Jackson  
Choreographic direction: Charlotte Vanden Eynde  
Costumes: Barbara De Laere  
Technical director: Jeroen Wuyts  
Chief production: Karen Van Peel  
General management: Korneel Hamers  
Production: SKaGeN ism Villanella/DEStudio  
Coproduction: S.M.A.K., C-TAKT, KASKA  
With the support of: the Flemish Government



GARABEDIAN BARTHEL RITZEN SILKE SCHATZ CHRISTINE CLINCKX ROBERT THERRIEN SISLEI XHAFI KURT KOCHERSCHIEDT MARCEL MAEYER PIERO GILARDI WILLY VAN SOMPEL OLEG KULIK NATHALIE NIS DAVID CUMMINGS OIL SHACHAR RAOUL DE KEYSER ORLA BARRY VLADIMIR GAZOVIC MICHAEL CROSS JEAN-PIERRE

MARCEL NOTEBERT FRANKY DC PIERRE BISMUTH GERHARD RICHTER DARA BINBAUM CHRISTO CLAUDE VILLAT DANIEL LANG MAURICE BLAUSSYLD FRITZ KLEMM

THOMAS RUFF JAMES LEE BYARS RENÉ HEYVAERT VITO ACCONCI PIERRE SOULAGES CHARLES LAPICQUE HANS HARACHE JANINA TSCHÄPE NIELE TOROMI GIOVANNI MANFREDINI SOL LEWITT JONATHAN HOROWITZ ICI VANDERHEYDEN GASTON DE MEY MAURIZIO ELETRICO BAGNOLI JAMES REINEKING ANRI SALA ERWIN

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