

Marres Currents #3

Sightseeing

This winter, Marres presents the third edition of Marres Currents, in which young curators are invited to curate an exhibition of recently graduated artists from art academies in the Southern Netherlands, Belgium, and Germany. In doing so, Marres provides a platform for young artists and curators, and contributes to an international infrastructure for talent development.

Marres Currents #3: *Sightseeing*

Marres aan de Maas

17.12.2015—5.2.2016

Griend 2, Maastricht

Open Wed–Sun, 12–17 pm

marres.org

Vlaams Cultuurhuis de Brakke Grond

19.2.2016—1.4.2016

Nes 45, Amsterdam

Open Mon–Fri, 11–6 pm /

Sat–Sun, 1–6 pm

brakkegrond.nl

De Brakke Grond acts as a venue bringing together the Netherlands and Flanders in a cultural context, and aims to function as a springboard for arts projects that give a refreshing take on current affairs in the Low Countries.



The selected works will be shown during the exhibition in De Brakke Grond.



 **VLAAMS CULTUURHUIS
DE BRAKKE GROND**

Interview with Agata Jaworska, Ina Hollmann, Eva Jäger and Guillemette Legrand, curators of Marres Currents #3 *Sightseeing*

Questions posed by Denis Maksimov

Why did you select these artists?

Sightseeing offers a series of probes and modes of inquiry into how we look at the world. We sought work that strives to understand what is happening in society and manifests this through artistic practice. The participating artists do this in a multitude of ways, ranging from a simulated flight across the Earth to digging up a cubic metre of ground. The works raise fundamental questions, such as: How is it that we come to know the world? And what are the paradigms we take for granted?

The works also share a sense of adventure – from Fanny Hagmeier’s exhilarating experiments with her body to Stef van Dungen’s climbers scaling an Opel garage (painted white to evoke an icy mountain) and the installation by Jan van den Bosch that dares visitors to climb a scaffold. Elements of thrill-seeking, self-confrontation and risk are all palpable. The works ask us to travel to unknown lands, to re-examine the past, to put ourselves in challenging positions, to question dominant ways of seeing and, through this, to inscribe our voices onto the future history of the world.

Tell us about the role that storytelling plays.

There is a strong communicative aspect to these works. Darcey Bennett presents a story in the form of forensic evidence collected

after the occurrence of an event. He deconstructs a tragedy, laying out all the evidence and asking us to piece it together. The resulting message is fragmented and thus inevitably produces multiple incomplete versions of the story.

Alessandra Ghiringhelli was struck by the propagandistic nature of the accounts of Congo’s national parks written during Belgium’s colonial rule and embarked on her own investigation of the national archives. She presents her historical account in a series of texts and illustrations. Well aware of the embedded bias of the author, she struggles with the impossibility of achieving objective representation.

This exhibition is about embracing the instability of a journey – its narratives do not always propose solutions or one immutable truth. The trip through *Sightseeing* is fragmented, sometimes incomplete and sometimes confrontational. Visitors navigate between continents, virtual and physical experiences, past and future. They will inevitably compose their own version of the narrative.

How did you approach the notion of ‘currents’?

The present is a compilation; it co-exists with our knowledge of the past, our memories, our ideas of the future and our life plans. Working with this definition, we view *Sightseeing* as a snapshot of the present.

Some works are speculative; for instance in *Treasure Island*, Skye Sun envisions an island tax haven populated by extinct species. It is an isolated land designed to attract the world’s wealthiest elite to a place where, as Skye says, ‘the rich remake their own world in the image of their investment.’ Though the islands are fictional, their power to provoke relies on the fact that they offer a critique of present-day reality.

Another work that simultaneously plays with the present and the future is *The Dutch Mountain* by Mirte van Duppen. Van Duppen makes a documentary of a mountain that

could arise in the flatland of the Netherlands. She does this by filming real scenes in this country, fragments of reality that gradually build an image of the mountain in our minds. These visuals are augmented with interviews with experts on tourism, urbanism and nature, whose technical commentary on how to create and deal with such a mountain convinces the viewer that this future fiction could just as easily be present-day reality.

Sun and Van Duppen use different means to construct speculative geographies. The value of their scenarios lies not in their capacity to actually predict the future, but rather in their ability to help us see ourselves in a clearer light today. They offer us a mirror of the here and now.

You were asked to make an exhibition of selected graduate projects from art academies. Why did you include design and architecture?

The interesting thing in projects such as Skye Sun's *Treasure Island* or Anja Kempa's *Remembering Spring* is that the emphasis is not on the architectural design of the buildings, but on the narratives they carry. These projects are ultimately about how buildings and their surroundings can manifest our hopes and fears about the future and, in a broader sense, how our material world ultimately fulfils a psychological and social function.

These individuals are working with narrative structures regardless of their formal training and discipline. We felt it was our role to not only convey what is happening at art academies, but also think about what connections we could make to the works we encountered. This is not a discussion that is solely relevant to the art or design field. It is simply about being human and responding to the world.

Could you give us a sense of the experience you aim to create for viewers?

The first image visitors will be greeted with is *We weren't lovers like that, and besides it would still be all right* by Roel Neurajij. It is a photograph of a globe that he has rotated so that the spot where the photo was taken is touching the ground. Normally we orient

ourselves in relation to where we are in the world, but this image asks us to consider how the world is positioned in relation to us. We hope it sets the tone for the exhibition by introducing a bit of disorientation from the outset.

Near the entry, there is also a film of Neurajij's father, a physicist who talks us through an equation for calculating not our weight on the planet, but rather the force of the planet upon us. In Neurajij's words: 'The scientific method has been designed to discover rules and laws that operate beyond the human, but because we ourselves are inadvertently human, so is our science.' Neurajij studies the space between Earth as an astronomical object and Earth as it is understood by humans.

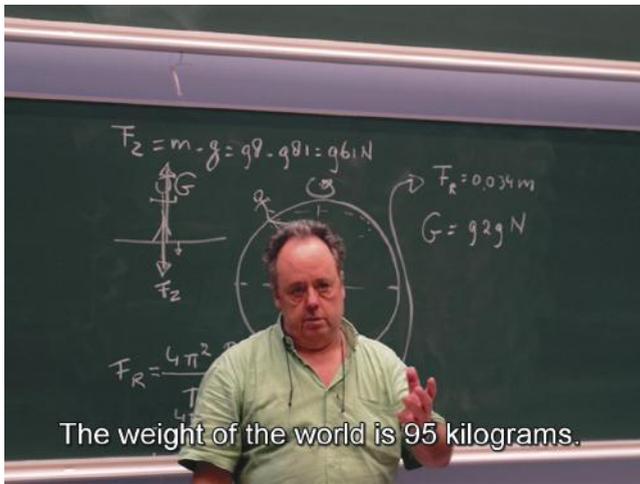
The exhibition goes on to present an inherently human experience of the world. Fanny Hagmeier subjects her body to extreme conditions, whether manmade or natural. Naked, she stands in a car wash, swims next to a sea vessel, lies on frozen ground – all in search of her physical limits and the sense of being alive, through self-experimentation. She subjects her body to various conditions, not unlike a scientist testing how one body reacts to various environments and forces.

One of the exhibition's sections brings together journeys from various places – Iceland, Iran, the Congo, Russia, Japan and the Netherlands. Compiled together, these stories present an incomplete atlas of the world. They provoke us to accept the fact that subjectivity is an inevitable aspect of observation, measurement, analysis, description and other methods used to understand and depict the world.

The sense of experimentation and exploration continues throughout the exhibition, both in the artists' approaches and, we hope, in the viewer's state of mind. One of the intentions of the show is to encourage people see something familiar with fresh eyes. The artists we selected have constructed practices that are largely about re-investigation. As a viewer, your investigation of the show (as a sightseer) will also be informed by your willingness to suspend disbelief and explore with fresh eyes.

Het Gewicht van de Wereld (The Weight of the World) / video (8 minutes)

Roel Neuraij's father, a physics teacher, explains how one can calculate the weight of the Earth on a person using classical mechanics. The human body, rather than the Earth, is thereby placed at the centre of the universe.



I Roel Neuraij ●

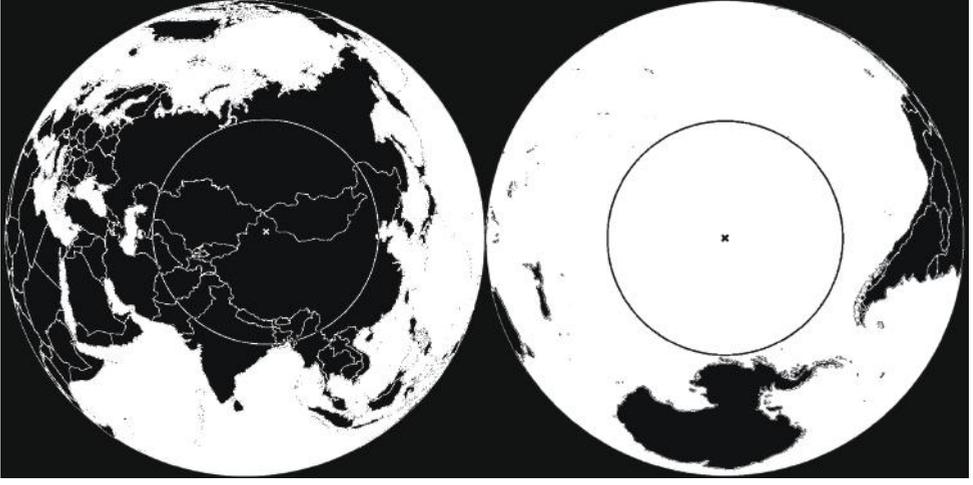
NL — AKV|St.Joost, Den Bosch

roelneuraij.nl



We weren't lovers like that, and besides it would still be all right / Digital print, wood
Roel Neuraij studies the tension between the Earth as an astronomical object and the Earth as it is understood and represented by humans. This image compares a world made of dirt to a world made of plastic. It remains unclear whether the globe is falling towards the Earth, or is balancing on top of it.

Über der Erde überhaupt und über der Erde des Menschen
(On the Earth as such and on the Earth of Man) / video (46 hours)
This video is a 46 hour flight simulation across the Earth between the two most polarised places: the point farthest from sea and the point farthest from land. Roel Neuraj documented his heroic and painful journey over the Earth's virtual geography.



CRASH / digital prints
CRASH is the accidental result of Roel Neuraj's simulated flight across the Earth. While learning how to fly, Neuraj—having had no previous pilot training of any kind—regularly crashed the plane he was flying. With every crash, the simulator program presented him these game over screens.

II Fanny Hagmeier ●

DE — AKV|St. Joost, Breda

*On the Verge II - Experiences
on the verge and the verge
of experience / 4 channel video
installation (20 minutes)*

Fanny Hagmeier examines the thin line where life and death meet. Exposing herself to extreme conditions Hagmeier creates moments in which she has to surpass her physical and mental limits in order to survive. For Hagmeier experiencing this line is paired with exhaustion and endurance verging on a release.

fannyhagmeier.com



III Jan van den Bosch ●

BE — St Lucas School of Arts, Antwerp

Positive Mental Altitude / Installation

At their own risk, visitors are invited to climb Jan van den Bosch's man-made structure. It is a physically confronting encounter that will change the visitor's perspective of the exhibition. Made using readily available materials from industry, the construction appears familiar, yet offers an extraordinary experience.





IV Stef van den Dungen

NL — Maastricht, Academy of Fine Arts and Design

Mont Blanc / Installation, performance

Colour can signify a landscape. Formerly a house painter, Stef van den Dungen provokes the built environment through colour. A white wall, entitled *Mont Blanc*, evokes an image of an icy mountain. Climbers scale the wall's surface and enact the imaginary view.

stefvandungen.com

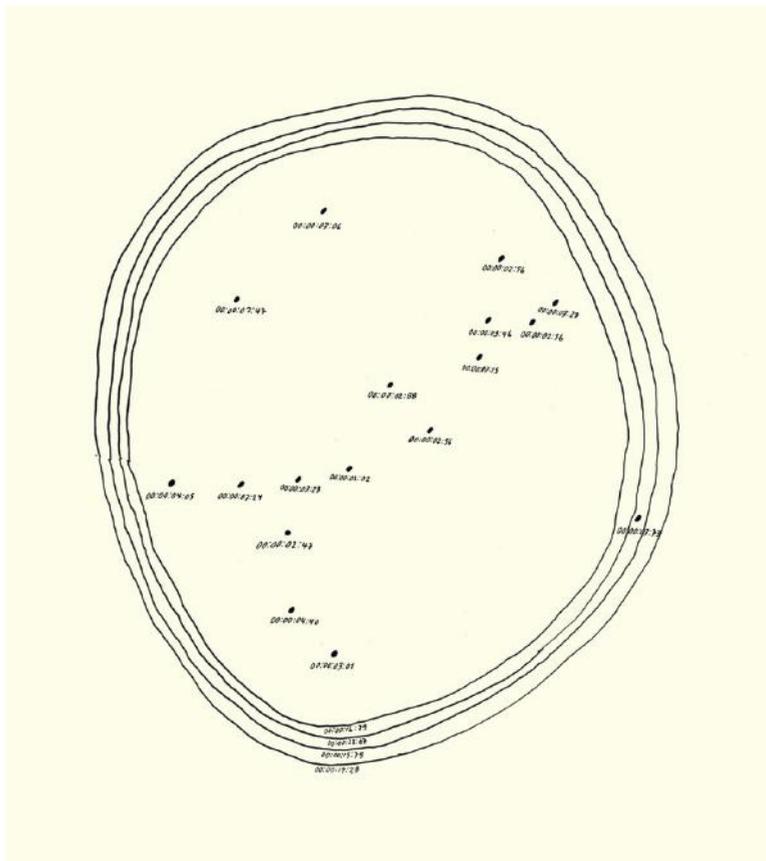
∇ Carlos Alfonso

BE — Sint-Lukas, Brussels

Orbits / Installation, performance

Using a Canta car, Carlos Alfonso creates a performance. Through a series of chain reactions, the car's movement evolves from straight line motion to circumvention. The performance explores the theme of rituals as they are confronted with gaming logics and concentration. The relics of this event are all that remain.

carlosalfonso.blogspot.com





VI Bau Evers ●

BE — St Lucas School of Arts, Antwerp

Intangible Atlas / Printed books

Intangible Atlas offers a perspective of the atmosphere in three volumes. The first volume is a collection of photographs of clouds taken by passengers on airplanes. Based on the flight data of these photographs, the second volume compiles satellite imagery of the same clouds in the form of an atlas. The third volume lists the flight data of these journeys in the sky. By mapping cloud visualisations and archiving flight data, Evers appropriates methods designed for rational explanation. Her poetic visualisations capture our ephemeral relationship with the sky.

bau.gallery



VII Charlotte Smet

BE — Sint-Lucas Beeldende Kunst, Ghent

*A Travelogue / A Journey into the
Interior of the Earth / Film installation*
(13 minutes, 48 seconds)

Charlotte Smet ventured to Iceland at the meeting point of two tectonic plates. She tells the story of her journey, interweaving her prior research, documentation of the trip, and her dream of becoming a mythical figure in the Arctic. Smet merges fantasy and fact to understand her own place at the edge of the Arctic.

charlottesmet.be

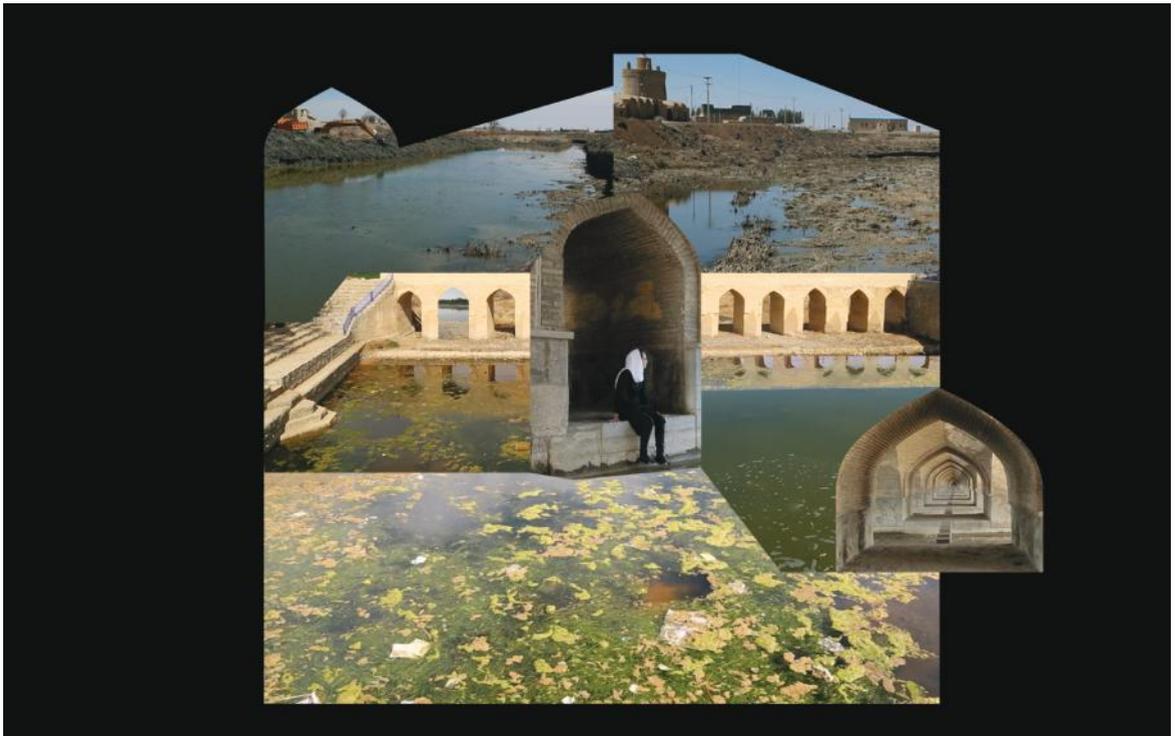
VIII Asieh Dehghani

IR — Sandberg Instituut, Amsterdam

Anahita: The eros of community /
Film installation

From underneath a bridge, Asieh Dehghani films the Zāyandé-Rūd, “life giver river,” the largest river in the central plateau of Iran. In the 2010s, the river started to dry out after several years of seasonal dryouts worsened by modern dams. Embedding herself in a collaged view of the river and its surroundings, Dehghani’s voice and visual compositions tell a story of how geopolitics, religion and culture shape Iranian identity. *Anahita: The eros of community and italicise* portrays the individual as inseparable from nature, community and the landscape.

asiehdehghani.com





IX Alessandra Ghiringhelli ●

BE — Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Ghent

Do you see something there that I do not see? / Printed book, drawings, video (53 minutes, 28 seconds)

Written by cartographer Rasmus Hoier in 1955 before the independence of Congo from Belgium, the book *À Travers Parcs et Volcans au Parc National Albert* documents the National Albert Park (now Virunga National Park) with the purpose of promoting its wildlife and raising interest to the public.

This book sparked Alessandra Ghiringhelli's interest in subjective writing. She began her own investigation in the Archive of the former National Parks of Belgian Congo. Her publication documents the results of her research, discussions with experts in scientific fields and an archivist of the ANPBC. Through drawing and writing, Ghiringhelli suggests different ways of looking— institutional, artistic, subjective—at historical events. Her texts and illustrations explore various ways of describing the same subject matter to convey the author's struggle to describe historical events that are inevitably altered by their personal memories.



⌘ Denis Maksimov ●

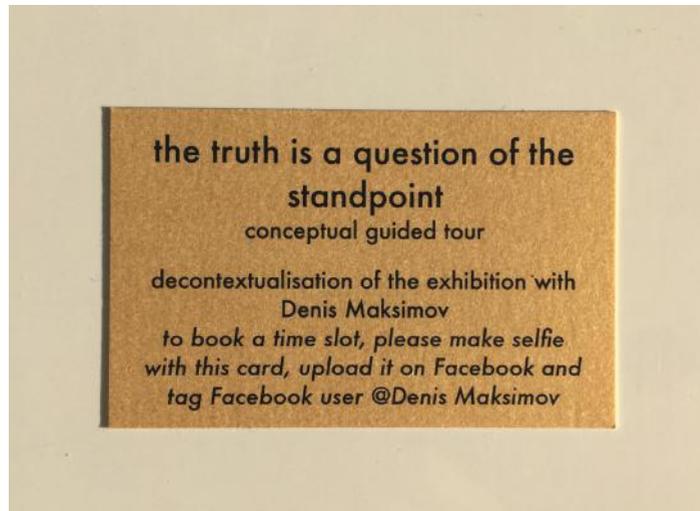
RU — Sint Lucas, Antwerp

The world as it's seen by (Russia and the EU) / Installation, performance

Denis Maksimov delivers an analysis of the world as it is 'seen' from different geopolitical standpoints on reality. Through his research and performance based practice, he questions what is true by creating narratives from multiple perspectives - in this case, Russia and the EU.

denismaksimov.com

*Recontextualisation is upcycling / Guided tour
Sightseeing takes place in the Opel garage, a former car showroom.
Denis Maksimov offers a guided tour through the garage, highlighting the
significance of an art exhibition overtaking an abandoned retail space.*





XI Giuditta Vendrame ●

NL — Design Academy, Eindhoven

*What is the purpose of your visit?
– A journey towards the high seas /
Water, plastic tank, wooden pallet*

Global communication, information and markets foster an idea of a borderless world, but visible and invisible frontiers rise everyday. While we may assume citizenship is something we are born with, it is in fact a social and political construction that introduces friction to this borderless world. Giuditta Vendrame journeyed to the high seas where she collected fifty litres of 'international waters' in a critical response to the institutionalisation of identity. This canister can be shipped anywhere and function as a symbolic zone of exception, where it is possible to rethink the meaning of citizenship.

giudittavendrame.net

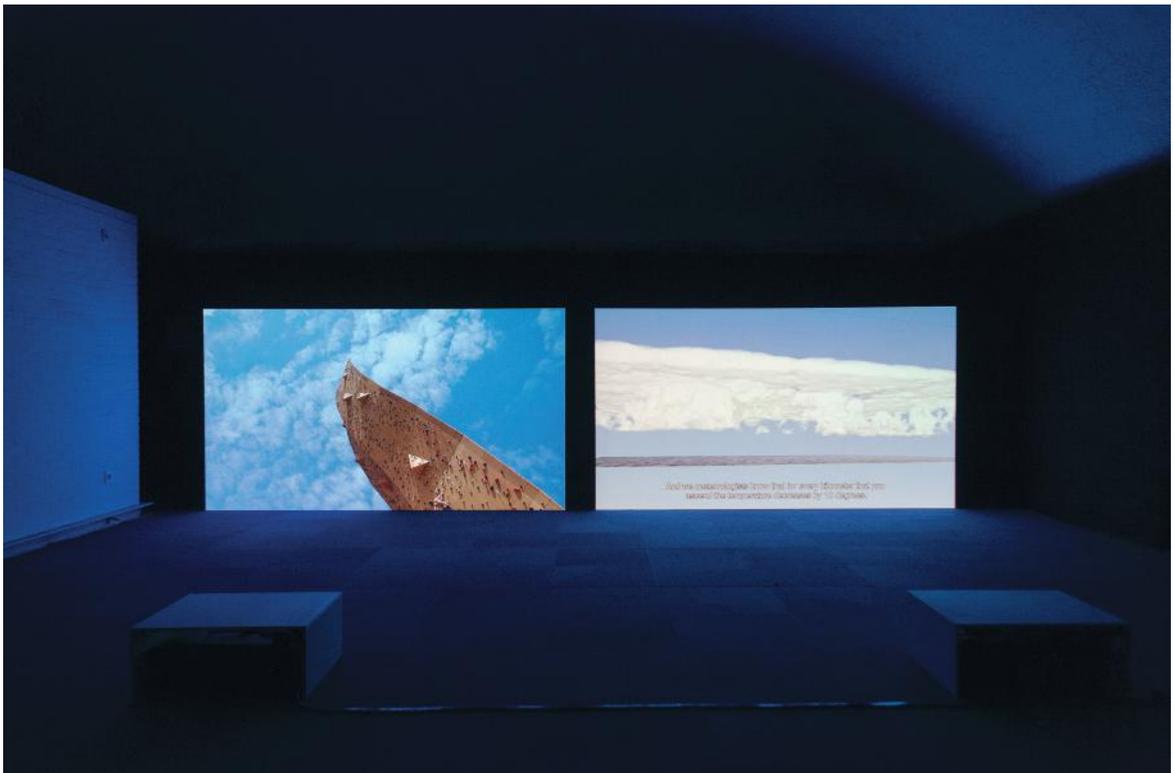
XII Mirte van Duppen

NL — Sandberg Instituut, Amsterdam

The Dutch Mountain / Film
installation (40 minutes)

Imagine a mountain in the midst of a polder in the Netherlands. This fantasy is not as delirious as it may seem, given how the Dutch are continuously designing and shaping their environment. *The Dutch Mountain* is a realistic science fiction, that plays with the fine line between fiction and reality. It is assembled out of fragments of inhabited landscapes and conversations with experts in the field. Their detailed descriptions of how the mountain will look, how it will be maintained, and the influence it will have on the surrounding environment in fact materialise the mountain in the mind of the viewer.

mirtevanduppen.nl





XIII Eva L'Hoest

BE — Fine Arts Royal Academy, Liège

Pareidolia monobande / Video
(11 minutes, 45 seconds)

Eva L'Hoest explores a granitic island. Through an extreme digital zoom, the viewer becomes lost in the topography of the rock's face, and is challenged by the anthropomorphic nature of the image. Pareidolia plays with our ability to recognise the human versus the digital gaze.

XIV Linde Boelen

BE — Media, Arts &
Design Faculty, Hasselt

Der Antrieb 4 / Installation

With constant flow in a closed system, Linde Boelen's installation questions the belief that movement is always a sign of human progress. An indefinite repetition of a short cycle, her work captures a process that never stops or stagnates.

lindeboelen.be



XV Claudia Mann

DE — Kunstakademie, Düsseldorf

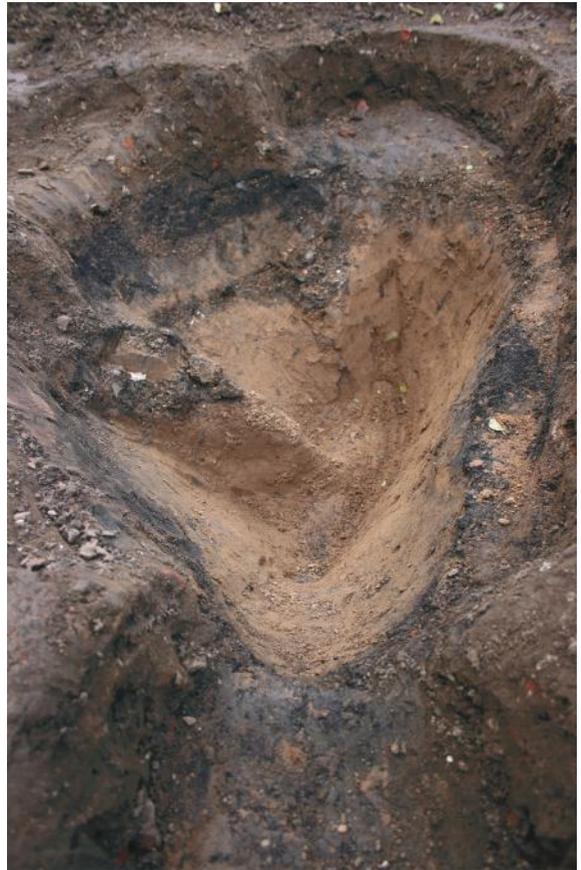
horizon / Film (7 minutes,
40 seconds)

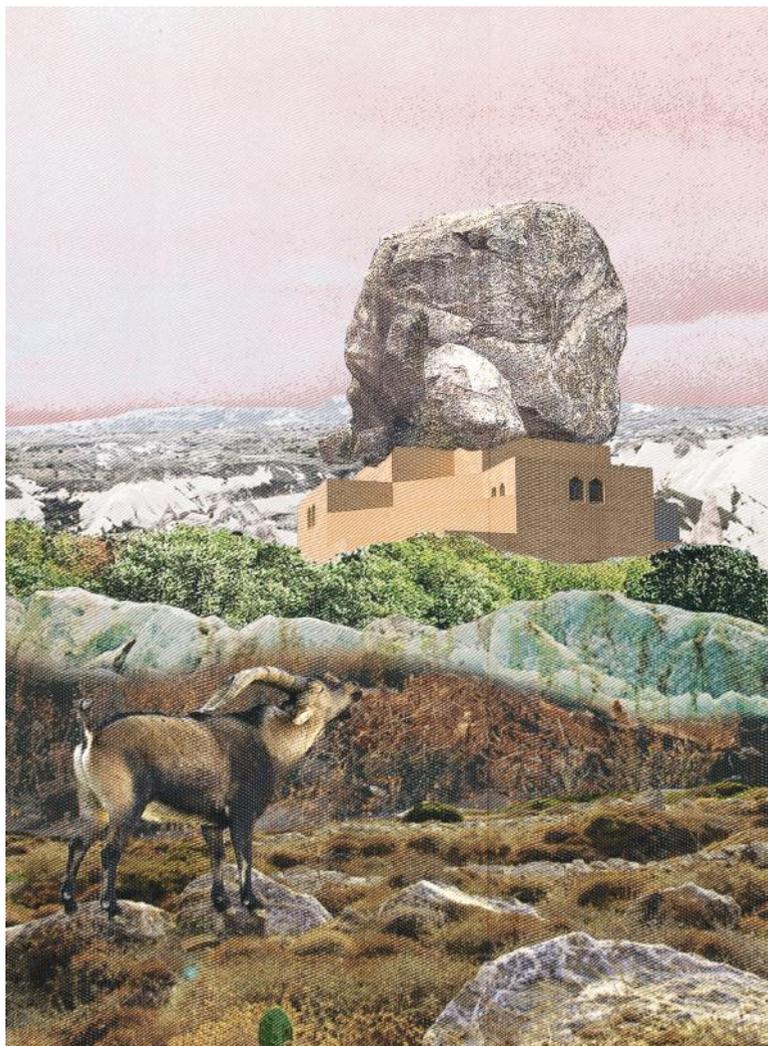
Claudia Mann is casting the ground. By this she is exploring where sculpture begins and where it has got its source of being. Her radical approach to understanding earthly matter defines her point of view as a sculptor. In the film *horizon* Mann films her own sculpture in rotation. The camera circles around the work, allowing us to scrutinise the material and reflect upon its essence. The viewer stands still while it is the sculpture that is moving.

claudiamann.de



Claudia Mann
Cast (Column) Krefelder Kunstverein 2015 / Plaster, wood, wax, plasticine





XVI Skye Sun ●

CHN — Royal College of Art, London

Treasure Island / Digital prints

Skye Sun illustrates the state of wealth in 2029. Her architectural speculations, entitled *Treasure Island*, serve to critique the monumentalism in architecture associated with the super wealthy. Skye imagines that the rich will build isolated territories where they display their power and wealth. This includes resurrecting extinct animals as a symbol of total triumph over the natural order. These images act as a cautionary tale about growing wealth inequity.

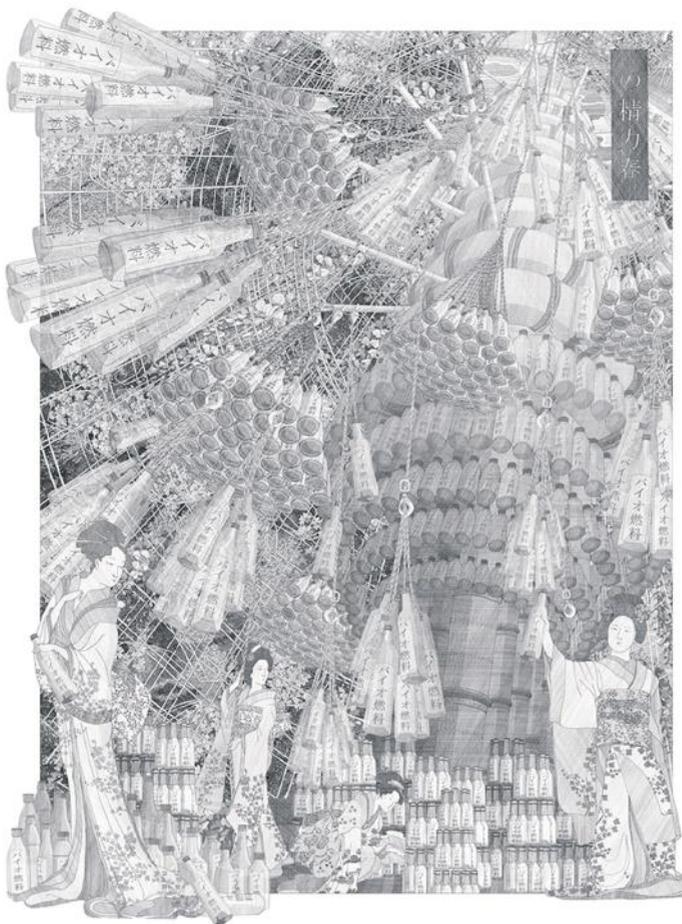
XVII Anja Kempa ●

UK — The Bartlett School
of Architecture, London

Remembering Spring /
Printed drawings

Anja Kempa's drawings use fictional narrative to design fantastical cities. In this future scenario, she envisions spring in a Tokyo where cherry trees fail to bloom due to global warming. Kempa's drawings depict a paper cherry blossom that reimagines the national symbol as part of a circular economy. The new cherry trees are an indicator of the fuel produced by the garden; people gather under these new trees of technology. Kempa uses tradition to create a new relationship between humans and nature.

anjakempa.co.uk



XVIII Mikaël Groc ●

FR — La Cambre, Brussels

Ultradallas, Plastic Laura, Geometric Day / Paintings, oil and spray paint on canvas

Mikaël Groc's paintings introduce the viewer to an alternative cosmos by proposing new imagery of society. The paintings bring together fragments of stagnant urban ruins, temporal digital culture and characters to describe politically-charged landscapes.



XIX Gladys Zeevaarders

NL — Maastricht, Academy
of Fine Arts and Design

Uncharted / Installation, concrete,
wood and other found materials

Growing up Gladys Zeevaarders always played in the forest near her house. The act of meandering, searching and discovering continues to be the driving force of her work. Her installation - built of construction debris emerges seemingly outside of human control. A process of making or taking apart - the result leaves the viewer in a state of disorientation.





XX Maud van den Beuken

NL — AKV|St. Joost, Breda

*Ground Tours / Drawings,
earth, audio tour*

The fact that the ground is always beneath our feet and the sky above our heads is a remarkable phenomenon which we, as human beings, constantly relate to. Maud van den Beuken puts scientific ideas about the Earth, which we assume as self-evident, in perspective. *Ground Tours* takes the visitor on an audio tour of the ground as an attraction, where the visitor is considered a tourist. The tour takes the visitor to a square metre of ground which Van den Beuken has purchased. The meaning of tourism, landed estate and how we give value to our surroundings are questioned in the work.

maudvandenbeuken.nl

XXI Renan Schulze & Eline Kersten ●

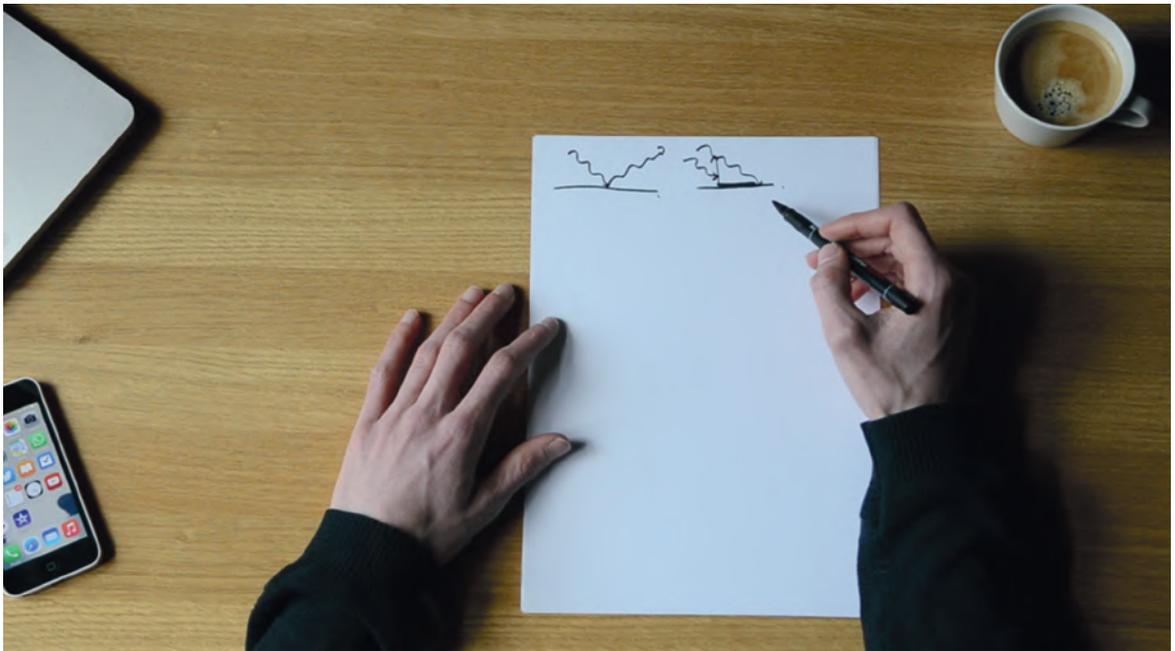
Re-collective, in collaboration
with physicist Tim Neutel

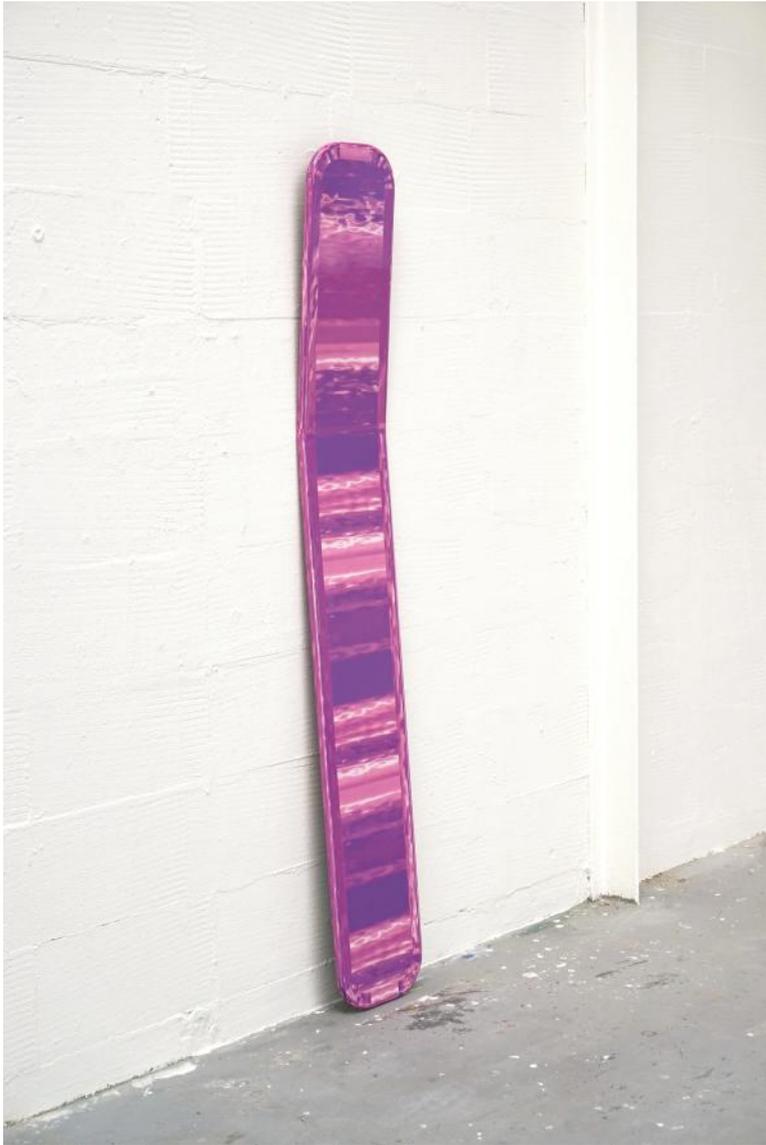
NL — Maastricht, Academy
of Fine Arts and Design

Weight of a Shadow / Film installation
(5 minutes, 33 seconds)

What is the weight of a shadow? With this question, re-collective connect art and science, giving substance to the absence of light. *Weight of a Shadow* is the visualisation of a poetic notion derived from the laws of physics. The installation allows the viewer to follow the step-by-step derivation of a formula from which the weight of a human shadow is calculated.

re-collective.nl





XXII Ivo van den Elzen

NL — AKV|St. Joost, Den Bosch

Rock Incoming, Untitled, S (Small), M (Medium), L (Large) / Printed vinyl, steel, central heating tubes

Ivo van den Elzen uses digital tools to render lines, curves and colour. Produced using 3D software, this series of forms embody the resulting distortion when translating data into physical form. Van den Elzen's work contrasts artificial precision with material imperfection.

ivde.nl

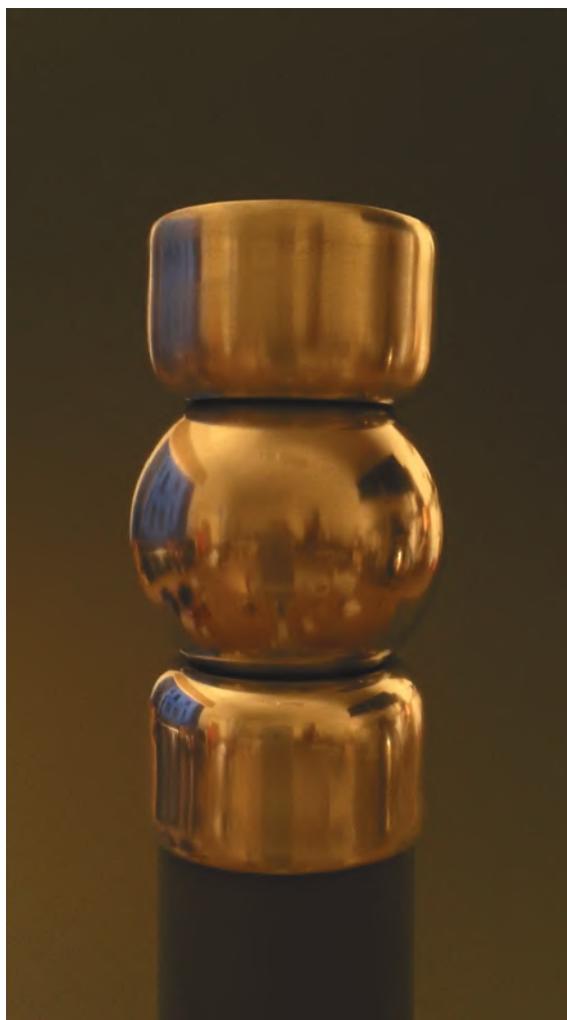
XXIII Thomas Min

BE — Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Ghent

The Perfect Document (excerpt) /
Image, sculpture

Thomas Min questions how we perceive objects in space. Through the view of the camera, the object's reflection portrays a 360-degree view of its surroundings. His work challenges the tendency of objects to be portrayed in isolation and in a static relation to their environments.

thomasmin.be





XXIV Darcey Bennett

BE — Royal Academy
of Fine Arts, Antwerp

Tragic by Accident (off stage) /
Video installation, printed matter
in collaboration with dancer and
choreographer Rob Fordeyn

Darcey Bennett depicts a tragedy. He deconstructs the narrative and uses a forensic format to confront the viewer with the evidence of the event that has passed. The viewer is invited to recombine the fragments, and to recreate the story in multiple versions.

bennettdarcey.tumblr.com

Artists

Carlos Alfonso, Darcey Bennett, Maud van den Beuken, Linde Boelen, Jan van den Bosch, Asieh Dehghani, Stef van den Dungen, Mirte van Duppen, Ivo van den Elzen, Bauke Evers, Alessandra Ghiringhelli, Mikaël Groc, Fanny Hagmeier, Anja Kempa, Eva L'Hoest, Denis Maksimov, Claudia Mann, Thomas Min, Roel Neuraij, Renan Schulze & Eline Kersten, Charlotte Smet, Skye Sun, Giuditta Vendrame and Gladys Zeevaarders.

Curators

Ina Hollmann, Eva Jäger, Agata Jaworska and Guillemette Legrand collaborated for the first time for *Sightseeing*. They operate in field of design and are currently involved in exhibition making on various levels - as designers, curators and producers.

inahollmann.com
evajaeger.com
agatajaworska.com
guillemettelegrand.com

Participating academies

AKV|St.Joost Den Bosch & Breda, Fine Arts Royal Academy Liege, Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, La Cambre Brussels, Maastricht Academy of Fine Arts and Design, Media, Arts & Design Faculty Hasselt, Royal Academy of Fine Arts, Antwerp & Ghent, Sint-Lucas Beeldende Kunst Ghent, Sint-Lukas Brussels, St Lucas School of Arts Antwerp.

Guest academies

Design Academy Eindhoven, Royal College of Art London, Sandberg Instituut Amsterdam, The Bartlett School of Architecture London.

Special thanks

Bendewerk, Servatius, Maximus, Bonnefantenmuseum, Entre-Prises Climbing Walls, Klimwandspecialist, Museum aan het Vrijthof, Theater aan het Vrijthof, Brommobielcenter Limburg, Design Academy Eindhoven, Van Abbemuseum, Intro in Situ, Team Marres.

Marres is a House for Contemporary Culture located in the heart of the old town of Maastricht. Marres develops with artists, musicians, designers, chefs and perfumers, a new vocabulary for the senses. In addition to bringing a lively program of exhibitions, presentations and performances, Marres also features a beautiful garden and a wonderful restaurant.

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Colophon

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Jaworska, Eva Jäger and
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