

If found, please return to:

April 2020

nowhere

objets trouvés
verloren
voorwerpen



Dear Reader,

If found, please return to is a particular issue; it is a contribution to a no-longer-existing exhibition (or rather, an exhibition which continues to exist differently). Who could think of a better scenario for *Nowhere*?

Last year, Bert Puype, a curator and a friend, invited us to take part in the exhibition he was organising in Bruges. The premise of the exhibition was 'inserting' the works into different public and private spaces across the city, for the visitors to stumble upon, or to 'find'. Our role in this project was characterised by just the right dose of vagueness, so we gladly accepted. As a collective working broadly with the idea of bridging exhibiting and publishing practices, we were asked to document the exhibition – in the broadest sense of the word, implying not only recording of events, but also responding to and accompanying them.

From the very beginning, 'ephemerality' and 'temporality' were the words on everyone's mouth. When we started working on our concept for the publication, we couldn't even imagine how soon these notions would gain other, much darker overtones. The exhibition *objets trouvés – verloren voorwerpen* opened on the first weekend of March and closed prematurely, a week later due to the pandemic. While some components of the programme couldn't have been realised, what's possibly the most beautiful about the exhibition is that the works installed in the public space simply remained there, to be seen by the few passers-by running only necessary errands. Have they become lost without the overarching framework of the exhibition? Or have they found their place? These kinds of questions resound eerily with the initial concept of the exhibition, which now has dissolved into the everyday.

Because of these circumstances, it feels even more important to realise this publication; for many people, who didn't

make it to the opening weekend, this will be the only way to experience *objets trouvés – verloren voorwerpen*. This publication, however, won't provide you with a full picture of the exhibition. Instead, it is filled with subjective, often personal accounts of the encounters with the city, people, and works. We conceive of it as a notebook found in the streets by a perceptive passer-by and constantly changing hands, with each owner leaving their own mark on its pages.

The publication opens with Cira Huwald's *Yellow Napkin*, which enters into a dialogue with a specific work — Chloé Op De Beeck's video *Movement* (17).

In *Curating absence*, Eline Kersten assumes a narrative path, taking the reader along on a stroll through Bruges, meanwhile reflecting on her long-term interest in absence. *The Exchange* by Miriam Sentler is a poetic account of a number of felicitous coincidences surrounding the exhibition. In the following text, *Dupty*, Hannah Mevis shares with the readers a glimpse — or rather a taste — of her working process. *If found, please return* ends with an introspective conversation between Bert Puype and Alicja Melzacka, focusing in particular on the curatorial practice. Once every couple of pages the reader may stumble upon a hand-drawn map — one of Emile Hermans' variations on the possible paths through the exhibition — which brings to mind a mathematical puzzle without one right solution.

Nowhere Team



Kruispoort

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The yellow napkin.

Cira Huwald 02.04.

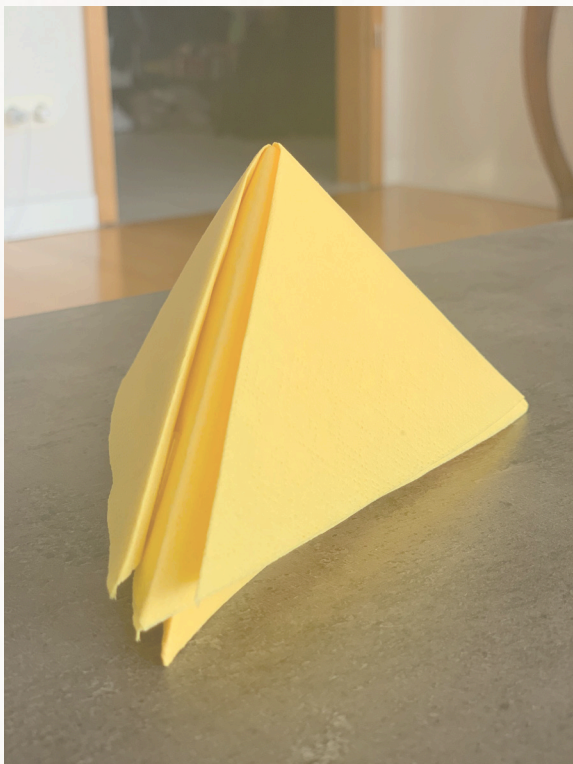
A reflection of our time in Brugge - a weekend mix of artistic intervention and a scenic touristic trip.

I was left thinking a lot about what I had experienced on my long weekend in Brugge and tried to turn the events of what I seen, heard and felt into something tangible. Something that not only represents the works of art presented but more of what I could make out of the experience from the position of the viewer. What remained in my memory quite dominantly was not the journey and the objects that surrounded the works of art but yet the objects that were part of the work themselves.

The video piece by Chloë Op de Beeck quite beautifully presented the folding of a yellow napkin. A task that I myself am quite familiar with. From the age of 14 I earned my pocket money by working in various bars, restaurants and hotels. The one thing all of these locations had in common was not ~~the~~ only the terrible wage, but also that I spent a lot of time folding napkins. Always in different sizes and forms and quite often also a yellow tissue napkin as in this instance. Instead of reflecting on the numerous works presented, my reflection has become more personal. The work Chloë presented now not only relates to her memories of folding but for me it has also brought back mine. The 9 images present a simple display of folded napkins. Some being more elaborate than others. They are photographed in my living room and in the background, there are a selection of objects that may or may not be seen as part of the work. Maybe these objects can now take on the same purpose as the yellow napkin did for me. Creating a new strand of memories to stimulate the urge to create something new.















Curating absence

Personal notes on showing invisibility

It's Saturday morning, you're running an errand. Wearing your sloppy jogging pants, you've quickly gone to the nearest supermarket to buy fresh bread and milk. Staring at the plant-based milk options, you suddenly see someone familiar out of the corner of your eye. It's your high school crush you haven't seen in many years. On the way back home, the sudden encounter pops up in your mind time and again. Even though you're in a different stage in life now, you still understand why you had a weak spot for that person. There is still something about them, making it feel like meeting an old distant lover.

Equally, the ephemeral exhibition *objets trouvés - verloren voorwerpen* felt like an unexpected encounter with a former crush; in the final year of my Bachelor studies, I have been intensely occupied with invisibility within the arts.

Later in my first Master year, heavily influenced by conversations with artist, friend and Nowhere colleague Emile Hermans about Heidegger's notions on nothingness, we developed an exhibition called 'Glaringly Absent'. Despite our attempts to realize it, the exhibition remained a concept. Even later, it became a guideline for our very first zine.

"The creative and discursive potential of absence came to our attention a few months ago, while developing an exhibition project that still lingers in our minds, but remains - for the time being - glaringly absent. Within the framework of

this exhibition, we considered absence as a process of becoming or ceasing to be - the positive and/or negative position contained in the semantic gap between anticipation and loss."

Introduction by Alija Melzacka
for Nowhere zine #1
'In the Bleak midwinter'

Getting lost in order to be found seems like a strategy curator Bert Puype chose for *objets trouvés - verloren voorwerpen*, which took place mostly in public space. Solely the searching glances on the faces of passers-by seemed to be indicating a potential encounter with a piece of art. The exhibition dictates, you just have to play along. Heightening your ability to observe, this strategy works tremendously. Suddenly, everything turns into a potential artwork. A passing bus displays 'gevangenis' (transl. prison) as its final station. Is it an artistic intervention? It must be. Or is it truly driving to the prison? It's as if we're playing Monopoly in real life. It fits the theme park feeling of the city. Or perhaps it is silently poking fun at it.

Nowadays, most invisible exhibitions have different, conceptual and urgent underlying motivations. A prime example is *Don't Follow the Wind*, an exhibition that is "on view" in the exclusion zone of Fukushima as we speak and will finish as soon as the excluded zone is released. In these cases, the invisibility has usually been imposed by external factors. The inaccessibility makes the art invisible, but the actual artworks are there. *objets trouvés - verloren voorwerpen* refrains from any political or ecological agenda and also does not present artworks that are explicitly dealing with these underlying themes. Where this urge for conceptual invisibility or absence within visual arts stems from remains a big question. Perhaps it tries to provide a counterpart in a world full of excess, a world in which we are exposed to hundreds, if not thousands, of images a day.

But invisibility or semi-absence comes with challenging terms: it requires the visitor to have an open mindset and willingness to search for art.

That art is only there for those who dare to see, is proven by the piece *What Kitty and Els Were Afraid of* by Leander Schönweger. A random knocking mechanism on the door of a local store might astound a passerby. Waiting at the Speel-o-theek, a surprisingly loud yet modest knock embellishes the street for a mere 2 seconds. In the five minutes I wait there, no one passes by. This time, the knocking hasn't reached anyone. The work is a meeting by chance. It reminds me of the graduation work by Tim Neutel that used the same artistic strategy. At one point during last year's Rietveld Academy graduation show, a hired eagle with a wingspan of 2.4 meters flew above the art academy. The chance that the visitor would look at the sky at the exact right moment and witness the eagle was absolutely minimal. And that's exactly why both works are effectual. They open up expectations when it comes to presence and time: the works are about to happen, happening or have happened, all at the same time.

Throughout various places in the city, Thomas l'Anson presents a series of posters, distributed on a number of public poster poles. For this new site-specific work l'Anson adapted the exhibition's graphic design and included details from his research on triangles and geometric shapes. On Friday, March 8th, I arrive at one of the prime locations where l'Anson has hung his posters, only to not find them there. A mere 2 hours

after the artist has applied the posters to the destined poles, they are already covered by new ones, announcing other upcoming cultural events later that month. It's the day before the opening and the work is already lost, like a thin sheet of paper merged between a bulk of information.

The analogy with *Nowhere* is striking here. It is just like our collective operates: a webpage in an endless digital database of webpages.

Later that day, I arrive at a courtyard where the work of Jeancy Nsumbu is supposed to be displayed. But wherever I look, I can't find it. The map that is produced alongside the exhibition isn't precise enough and Google Maps sends me in another direction. Only when I'm about to give up and head home for lunch, I find the work in the window of an antiquarian. My gaze saved it from being lost. Looking through the dusty window, I can't help but feel a little disappointed. Three figures are placed amidst a selection of rare books. The somewhat clumsy cardboard figures resemble so-called Sapeurs and are based on colorful Congolese fashion. It's a particularly nuanced cultural reference, and on second thought, it's placed very well – the works somehow resonate with the store that sells all kinds of atlases, natural history and art books from around the world. *objets trouvés* exhibited in a store window. I suppose I stepped on a mental trap that I laid for myself here. Having been exposed to a number of minimal conceptual works and nearly invisible interventions that day, I have created a certain expectation pattern for myself. Without making grand gestures, the work *Sapeur*

by Jeancy Nsumbu as well as the curatorial statement to place it in this location, made me look at the aim of the exhibition again with fresh eyes.

objets trouvés - verloren voorwerpen seems like a casual composition of absent acts, but does provide us with a conceptual frame exactly because it withdraws from the beaten track, from that which is in line with our expectations. Here in Bruges, a pattern in the asphalt or a name written in a dusty car window becomes a potential artistic contribution. And that is why it works so well: *objets trouvés - verloren voorwerpen* is an exercise in looking and celebrates the lost and overlooked. I'm happy to have met my old crush again, and am ready to face the glaringly absent side of the arts for myself.

– Eline Kersten

Epilogue

A few days after the opening of *objets trouvés - verloren voorwerpen* the development of the COVID-19 virus and the consequent Belgian measurements made the curator cancel the finissage and all works that are exhibited indoors. A decision that is taken as a result of superior measurements, but nonetheless rhymes phenomenally with the project. 'Voorwerpen' are now 'verloren' in a new sense. The works that are on view in public space and shop windows remain open for business.





Photo by Atlesque

Jeancy Nsumbu, *Sapeurs*



Kruispoort

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Goele De Bruyn, *The last incandescent 500 Watt light bulb*





The Exchange - Lost and Found in Bruges

A reflection on the group exhibition *objets trouvés - verloren voorwerpen* in Bruges, March 2020.

A pair of dark sunglasses, a train-timetable, a set of pretty blue gloves, a pink curling iron in a small black case, a headdress with feathers, a social security card number, a multi-colored headscarf, an empty purse with long-forgotten art-related business cards, a map of the city centre of Bruges, two pens, a damaged red lipstick and a staple of notes and tourist flyers.

This accumulation of objects awaited us when we turned around the corner of the Saint Walpurga church, just outside the city centre of Bruges. In the shades of the old church lay a black leather handbag, situated awkwardly in a corner on the ground. "Where is the nearest Police Station?" I asked my host, simultaneously kneeling down to inspect the insides of the bag. This chaotic encounter was well known to me; it was not the first time I entered a space which reeked of the excitement of just-accomplished theft, in which the evidence was still splattered all over the crime scene.

It felt almost forbidden to inspect all these personal objects, making them wander through my hands one by one; but I justified my actions by convincing myself that I was looking for an identity within this mess. The thief had been quick but thorough; the wallet was emptied of pocket money, no phone or identity card to be seen. Although everything inside the bag had become rather worthless the moment it

departed from its owner, it was still a very full bag. After opening the wallet, we found a social security card. It was made out of light and cheap plastic, the kind which reminds one of a children's game, but at least there was a name stamped into it. It was the name of a woman, most likely of Australian, English or American descent; a tourist-victim, robbed somewhere in the nearby city centre. Coming to Bruges for a culture-filled weekend, the woman might have already left the city again, disillusioned after being robbed on its romantic cobblestoned streets. The mental image of the fast-moving petty thief appeared in my head; after quickly searching the handbag, he harvested its forbidden fruits and then dismissed it, ambivalently tossing it next to the church while escaping the city centre.

The name on the card was utterly useless; after a quick google-search, there were dozens of names to be found, dozens of faces from all over the world, smiling and posing but without displaying any leads to the accumulation of objects in front of us. We united the bag with its belongings, turned around and walked to the police station, which was situated in an old marl monastery. After laughing at the police posters and undergoing the rather stiff and formal procedure of returning a lost good to the officials, we stepped into the sunlight again, now making our way to the first venue of the *objets trouvés - verloren voorwerpen* exhibition.

Over the course of a weekend, Nowhere Collective was invited to review an ephemeral group exhibition,

taking place in the city centre and near outskirts of the historical city of Bruges. The artworks displayed were all easily-overlooked, ephemeral, hidden; and maybe the lost-found situation presenting itself within the first hour of my time in Bruges already trained me in searching for them. One of the artworks by Jacques Charlier displayed an, at first glance rather typical, set of expressionist paintings; just when looking really closely, one could identify a crushed fly on each of the paintings. Where the other artworks of *objets trouvés* - *verloren voorwerpen* were well hidden within the every-day outside environment, this diptych of paintings turned it around; the every-day here was well hidden within the artwork. Just like the title of the exhibition played with the cultural relationship between lost and found, the artworks in this exhibition played with the art/non-art dichotomy, making it ultimately a challenging but rewarding pleasure-hunt for the more experienced art-viewer. The exhibition challenged the white cube display of art, displacing works from their pedestals and turning them into a meeting spot for tourists, art-viewers and ordinary passengers.

Just like the found handbag gave me a certain uncomfortable shiver, some of the artworks in the exhibition did so as well. One of the works by artist Leander Schönweger was a hidden knocking device, attached to a heavy, green, wooden door. After a passenger did not recognize the art-context in which it was placed, he called the police, having the murmuring suspicion that something dark was going on behind this door. In Raffaella Crispino's work, an electrical board in the window of a bookstore spits out apocalyptic science fiction scenarios, functioning as a dark prophet in between the smothering and lively heart of Bruges capitalism. Goele de Bruyn's light bulb was slightly too bright for the living-room environment it was placed within, representing a now forbidden object which will disappear slowly from the market, just as this artwork will dim gradually over the course of the exhibition. All of the works seemed to address a certain discomfort with the art-world which is expressed through a constant appearing and disappearing of every-day objects. As an intern to the art-world familiar with the exhibition concept, you see it, might shrug your shoulders in disinterest or cheerfully write or talk about it. As an extern to the art-world, the only manner in which you can recognize it within the every-day environment of Bruges is in sensing that something is slightly *off*; recognizing a sense of theatricality or artificialness in the normal, every-day environment. The exhibition, therefore, addresses the poetical and mythical foundation of art, the surprise element, prickling a sense of adventure and curiosity.

I left Bruges with the feeling of gaining something; being in high spirits, my take on the exhibition was

primarily focussed on the spontaneous *appearance* of objects in front of me. However, upon arrival at the Rotterdam train station, I was also confronted with the *disappearance*. There, in the exact spot where I parked my bike days before, was now a gaping hole of emptiness. I caught myself making the same physical movements as in the moment of finding the handbag; walking past and forth, I sneaked around the corners searching for the thief with my bike in his hands, wondering if I would have the odd pleasure of catching the thief red-handed. But, of course, no one looked or moved suspiciously, and I felt caught in retracing every step which I took from the moment I last arrived here. With the physical disappearance of my bike, it now appeared more vivid in my memory than ever; its shade of blue, the word 'Pointer' written over its frame, the colorful lights attached to its handlebars. I remember how dearly I felt about it just days before it was stolen, and I almost felt like I was punished for having the luck of finding the handbag in Bruges the other day. After this unfortunate encounter, I started to think about *objets trouvés* - *verloren voorwerpen* reversely; now approaching it from the last two words of its spelling. And in that moment, the two came together, merged into one big experience which began and ended with the interference of art, which directed and influenced my experiences of these few days in which I both found and lost objects.

- Miriam Sentler







Dupty [d i p t i]

Dupty [d i p t i] is the neatest “nachtwinkel” I’ve ever visited. At the same time, Dupty [d i p t i] is also a very generous man who shares his nickname with his night shop. It is dark outside. Inside, lights shine as bright as the products. While restocking shelves, Dupty [d i p t i] shares life experiences with me. I listen to stories about the businesses which are run by him and his family members, here as well as back home. Red, green, yellow, blue. If there is not enough space for all the different varieties of one product to fit side by side, they are stored behind one another. When storing in tandem, it is important to place in alternate order. Red, green, yellow, blue. If the customer takes one package, they will always find another variety behind. Like this, there is little chance to miss what one is looking for. Between the usual Chocomel boxes, assortment of heavy beers, cigarettes and sanitary products, I find treasures I only know from far away, if I know them at all. Walking up and down the shop, my mind starts spinning. So many possibilities for unknown creations! When a product caught my special attention, my eyes start looking for something to combine it with. There are some creations, which have been proven to work out well, such as Bugles nacho cheese flavour, speculoos paste, pickles and chilli paste. But how about cooking chocolate pudding powder with banana juice? Or is it possible to use the “juice” of the canned cocktail sausages for an actual cocktail? Why did I never come across a liqueur called “Au de Vie de Kirsch”? And is the inside of Fristi as colourful as the packaging?

While I’m trying to keep up with one appealing inducement after the other, my eyes catch a glimpse of the surveillance system. There are eight different cameras and all of their fields of view come together on one screen. The screen is situated above the shelves filled with candy and crisps, so that the customer can look at it too. When I look at it, I am searching for myself to see what I look like. I’m curious to see myself in relation to the shelves around me and with the things I’m carrying on my arms. I look like a dark coated dwarf in the land of milk and honey. When the screen is out of sight, my ghost is dancing from one display section to the other. My mind keeps on revolving around possible flavour combinations, products are accumulating on the checkout counter, other costumers come and go (I see them either in person or on the screen), Dupty [d i p t i] is cooperatively patient and starts packing beautiful dark and shiny blue plastic bags with my product selection. After I payed, he offers me to choose one thing as a present. Anything I would fancy! In here, it is even more difficult to choose than back in the days, when I was annoying one of my parents until I could take one of the candies at the check-out. Finally, I go for red with green. Chewy. Sweet. Delicious. The taste of forbidden childhood pleasures. Strawberries.

All of the products were brought to the location of the exhibition opening, the day after. Throughout the day, the ingredients flavoured the places’ air with delicious smells. In the evening, the visitors were invited to take part in a “mixing session” to create their own cocktails and share unknown flavours.





Hans Demeulenaere & Dimitri Vangrunderbeek, *Sylvette* & *Promenade (circular)*

Not what people expect from a tentoonstelling – Bert Puype in conversation with Alicja Melzacka.

AM Let's begin by unpacking the title and, with it, the concept of the exhibition. Where did *objets trouvés* – *verloren voorwerpen* come from?

BP Because of the organic nature of the process, it's hard for me to pinpoint when the title was actually decided upon, but I have carried it within me for a while. Every day on my way to work, I pass the bilingual sign 'objets trouvés – verloren voorwerpen' (lost and found) in the Brussels metro. It has always fascinated me; firstly, because 'objets trouvés' has this art-historical connotation with Duchamp and, secondly, because of the paradoxical nature of the translation. In fact, the expressions in French and Dutch state the opposite: one speaks about found- and the other about lost objects... Even though there weren't that many objects in the exhibition, it was also about looking for things and finding things, even if some of them were immaterial. So to me, this title refers to the exhibition being spread in time and in space.

AM Two participating artists from Bruges, Daniël Dewaele and Hans Demeulenaere, were also involved in the curatorial process. How did it work for you, sharing this responsibility?

BP Indeed, I initially wanted to refer to Daniël and Hans as co-curators but they declined, which is kind of funny considering the fact that it was them who contacted me first about doing something in Bruges. Even though at some point, the division of tasks became more clear and they retreated to focus on their own works, we did start the project together, which definitely affected how the exhibition-making process and the exhibition itself felt like. For example, the notion of authorship became vaguer... We

made many decisions together with the artists; there was no instance when I went to an artist with a specific piece in mind and said: "I want that work and that's it!" It really felt like a joint effort, like something that could be organised by an artist-run space.

AM Why was it important to organise this exhibition in Bruges?

BP People of Bruges have a lot of local pride, I have that too, a bit. However, for us artists or people working in the art field, Bruges is not a dynamic environment. I think that things are slowly changing, but it feels somehow forced. Even projects that look alternative or self-made are often organised in a top-down manner. Not that there's anything wrong with the city supporting the arts, it's great that they do. But the big art events like Triennale, which gain a lot of support, are very much oriented towards the city-marketing, and we wanted to take another path. We didn't, however, want to start from this frustration but from something positive, and we wanted to use the city as a platform to do what feels important to us.

AM In an intimate and generous gesture, you turned your home into the main 'venue', the information point, and the accommodation for the artists... Many other venues also had a private or semi-private character. What was the idea behind choosing these kinds of locations for your exhibition?

BP I wanted to explore the ambiguity between private and public spaces and question these terms themselves. This is why I played on the tension represented by the places on the interface of the private and the public sphere, like facades, flagpoles, etc. Also, bringing the flags to people's homes became an 'excuse' to enter into conversations and make new connections... I was glad to see that we attracted many people who normally, wouldn't necessarily become

involved in an art project. So this sharing of space with the artists and audience was really about sharing the experience.

AM Would you call your exhibition site-specific? I can imagine, in a way, the ephemeral quality of the exhibition being a response to the surrounding context...

BP I'm sure the ephemerality resulted from the fact that I wanted to make a subtle gesture – as opposed to the flamboyant city marketing of Bruges. The exhibition itself was not strictly site-specific; you could in principle stage it elsewhere. However, while walking through Brussels or Ghent I often tried to envision it there and I had a feeling that it wouldn't work... Not sure why. Maybe it would get lost in what's already there. What's really interesting is that the majority of the works on show weren't new commissions and were not made in-situ. But with time, some of them – for example, the works by Daniël Dewaele or Chloé Op de Beeck – almost became site-specific because they fitted the context and seemed to blend in so well. Even though the initial idea was to play with the already existing works, there were a couple of exceptions to the rule, for example, the culinary happening by Hannah Mevis, created in collaboration with Dupty, the owner of the local night shop. Or a series of posters by Thomas I'Anson, appropriating and alternating the graphic identity of the exhibition. Then, there was Kris Dessel's sound piece *sons trouvés – verloren klanken*, the workshop by Stijn Van Dorpe and a new production of Hans Demeulenaere & Dimitri Vangrunderbeek.

AM In other words, everybody delivered more than expected, which happens often with bottom-up projects. Many people contributed their time, resources and skills to make this exhibition happen – you too worked voluntarily. What do you think the importance of these kinds of projects is right now? What are the pros and cons of this way of working?

BP I feel that these kinds of projects contribute a lot. They provide a platform for experimentation, which is not at all rigid, where there is a lot of freedom to try things out, to change things last-minute, to not have to worry about being judged by the 'result' only... A lot of things have developed because of that freedom and it is something I want to keep furthering through my curatorial practice, even though these kinds of projects might be harder to access for some people. To me, it is important that there exists a balance between large-scale, crowd-pulling projects and the projects which help develop experimental curatorial & artistic practices.

AM Because of the ephemeral, dispersed character of the exhibition, it must have been particularly difficult to make decisions about accessibility, mediation, or communication. What was your strategy concerning the exhibition's outreach, and was it even one of your concerns?

BP I have been thinking a lot about this... As you might remember, at some point, I even had a very radical idea of not communicating about the exhibition at all. In that case, the only 'trace' of the exhibition would be the publication released afterwards. In the end, however, I decided to materialise it a bit more. I went for a simple leaflet in the format of a map, of a kind you could find in a tourist centre, a hotel, or a store. I liked the idea that tourists can just come across it and use it as a map. And once they realise it's something more than just a city plan, maybe they will spontaneously walk to the nearest venue? I also hoped for many coincidental encounters with the works by people unaware of the entire idea. This is why I installed the QR codes for each work. What matters to me is that we created an 'opportunity' for people to interact if they wanted to – or at times even if they didn't want to. The lamp, flags, door knocker, might have influenced some people, even if they did not conceive of them as art. I enjoyed playing with this border between knowing and not knowing whether something is an artwork.

It's really about bringing art to the context where you least expect it and seeing what happens to it and how it affects both the intentional and unintentional audiences. Of course, it is impossible to measure this kind of impact and, luckily, the luxury of doing something non-institutional is that you don't have to quantify your audience...

AM One could say that the exhibition was easy to overlook. What were the visitors' reactions to that?

BP I've received some criticism from people who told me they couldn't find a specific work or complained that they had to walk too far to see it. I can understand their frustration, but at the same time, it makes sense as a part of the larger experience of looking for and finding – or at times, not finding. There were some instances where the 'invisibility' or 'unexpectedness' of a work took people out of their comfort zones. It happened particularly often with the work of Leander Schönweger, which involved an automated door-knocker installed on the inside of the door. A group of friends who came by told me that they weren't aware of this being an artwork and that, when they knocked on the door to enter the expected venue, the door knocked back at them. They did it again and the door knocked back again. They rang the doorbell... They waited 5 min... the door just kept knocking back. They said it was really spooky! In another case, it went even further; a couple called the police because they were concerned with the repeated knocking from the inside... I had to do my best to explain the situation... (laughs).

AM I am wondering how you approach the documentation of a project like this. How do you imagine the afterlife of your exhibition?

BP This publication is important because it brings it all together. This exhibition – and I consciously keep using the

word 'exhibition' and not a 'project', a 'route', or a 'tour' because it raises specific expectations – is not what people expect from a *tentoonstelling*. But the publication will be able to do that, it will bring the exhibition together. So the idea was that the zine will function as one of the platforms for the exhibition.

Especially today, in the times of COVID-19, we see the art world moving online. It is not a subject I have worked on before, but I am excited about the prospect of exploring different ways of presenting this exhibition to a broader public. Right now, many of the works we installed in March are still in the city, so in a way the exhibition is continuing, mostly unseen. Many things remain behind closed doors, but these things are still conceptually part of the exhibition.

AM Let me conclude with this openly provocative question... Since you have placed so much emphasis on the publication and the documentation and have made the invisibility or the easy-to-miss aspect the core of your concept, why do you think this exhibition had to be materialised?

BP Actually, that question has been on my mind before. I can't really explain why, but the situated presence of the works was really important to me. For example, in the work of Goele De Bruyn, it was really important that the light-bulb was hanging there and was being used... this physical aspect, the interaction with the inhabitants and the possibility that it can burn out at any moment were the core of the work. So in principle, *objets trouvés*... could work online but it would be an entirely different exhibition. You can lose or randomly find things on the Internet, jumping into the rabbit hole of YouTube, for example, but it is a very different way of discovering things or finding things than when this happens in your daily material life.



Raffaella Crispino, *Weather Forecast*



Colophon

Exhibition:

objets trouvés – verloren voorwerpen

Bruges, Sunday March 8 – Sunday March 29, 2020

Participating artists: 019, Bart Lodewijks, Benjamin Verhoeven, Chloé Op de Beeck, Daniël Dewaele, Goele De Bruyn, Hannah Mevis, Hans Demeulenaere & Dimitri Vangrunderbeek, Ingel Vaikla, Jacques Charlier, Jeancy Nsumbu, Kris Van Dessel, Leander Schönweger, Nowhere Collective, Raffaella Crispino, Stijn Van Dorpe, Thomas l'Anson.

Curated by: Bert Puype

Graphic design: Emile Hermans

Supported by: City of Bruges

verlorenvoorwerpen.org

Zine:

Contributors: Emile Hermans, Cira Huwald, Eline Kersten, Alicja Melzacka & Bert Puype, Hannah Mevis, Miriam Sentler

Photo-documentation of the exhibition:

Cira Huwald & Miriam Sentler (unless stated otherwise)

Graphic design: Emile Hermans

nowherecollective.com

Nowhere, 2020