

'in between' summer 2005: what> to be continued>>>>
The exhibition project 'in between' started in July 2005 and lasted until the end of October 2005. Only to be continued...

This little book is a what> notebook to share images, thoughts, words, bits and pieces and and.... You are invited to make up your own stories and anecdotes from it. Eva Sturm made the first move: visiting what>, inspired her to write down some thoughts concerning what> and Deleuze. (As every other text in the world) you can read her texts in different ways...one after the other or just pick one out at random. Enjoy the reading.

what what is what>? a space, place, wunderkammer, wonderland, somewhere, nowhere, everywhere, where fantasy, intuition, play, joy, colours, fabrics, the haptic, visuality, tactility, people, things meet each other. Where people and things are welcome... Where Alices come to play and wonder. Let your imagination run free...

not a museum not a shop not a gallery not a church not a workshop not a stage not a court not a playground ...

what>, a meeting space for visual culture what> explores the at times familiar, at times bewildering surface world of visual culture. Classical art from the collection of the city museum, from the university or from private collections, as well as contemporary art, pieces of cultural heritage from the city archives, design work, photography, video, comics, popular culture, fashion and media can be a part. what> is a meeting space, a place where people and things meet and where intercultural dialogues take place with residents from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, students, tourists, ... through an exchange of experiences and ideas. what> encourages different ways of looking at, interpreting and creating images.

intensities what> is not about representation but about creating intensities, densities and presenting them. By shifting from one context to another, things that seemed familiar become unfamiliar, strange. what> layers those different contexts one aside the other, or on top of one another so that many readings become possible. People can step in from different perspectives: there is not such thing as "the right way" to visit what>.

what> to be continued>>>> is our last exhibition project in Leuven and the beginning of a new journey: we are rounding up, preparing our relocation to Brussels and starting a new series of projects...

where what> could be situated anywhere, as long as it is imbedded in the local environment: what> has a primarily local function, with and for the people who live in the neighbourhood. what> was based in Leuven due to local cultural policies. City policies have changed, the building will be torn down but the memories will remain and shift into other contexts, projects,...

celebrate This little what> book aims to be a celebration: the joy of making what> projects, working with people: children, teenagers, the elderly, amateurs, the curious, collectors, artists, city inhabitants, tourists... From the so-called "culturally ignorant" over less experienced museum-goers to lovers of culture, cultural omnivores and trained exhibition-goers; from youngsters over teenagers to students, from adults to active senior citizens, grandfathers and great-grandmothers,...

rhythms rhythms of lines, colours, spaces, repetition, alternation, harmony, contrasts, densities, multitudes and (though rarely) emptiness.

movements looking forward and back, “in between” past and future, trying to grasp the present, the poetry of daily life: the ephemeral, changing images, colours, visitors and participants.... Some people, things, projects accompany us during a long period, some stay only for a brief moment; other projects, people, things disappear, only to resurface in a later stage...

associations and intuitions allowing intuition and associations to play an important part, visible and invisible connections are knitted and crocheted together. Grasping this principle might require new languages. The students of Eva Sturm embarked upon an attempt to describe these processes, resulting in a poetical dreamlike text full of associations and images. The rabbit and the hare; Alice and the girl with the red shoes: associations and fantasy, real-time and dreamtime, animals, and dancers becoming Alice becoming animal?

incidence what> is about creating a space where things can happen, a place where coincidences are welcomed and encouraged. Where unusual encounters can take place. It's about possibilities, and we are especially pleased when things happen: a choir starting to sing; visitors who write poems while eating walnuts; hosts dressing themselves up in pink dresses, people who learn crocheting from one another, or participate in creating a rhizomatic sculpture from taped cuddly toys...

anecdote what> collects anecdotes to share them with others. The poetry of small, accidental facts or events: the man posing with the stove, Tjen Belpaire, who came into what> to watch the theatre play of Leren Ondernemen and suddenly recognized a stove assembled by his father. The building's former function (former city library, court, university building...) gives rise to anecdotes as well.

contexts there are contexts and there are many of them. The context of Leuven (Belgium), for instance: what> is an initiative of the city of Leuven and de kunstbank, a non-profit organization; the context of de kunstbank: as a non profit organization, we focus on promoting the visual arts and visual culture through gallery education and exhibition projects, and on enhancing cultural participation through participatory (art) projects and learning together; the context of the museum site: an ambitious plan to valorise the city museum and the cultural heritage in the city and to initiate contemporary art projects by enlarging the museum and constructing new buildings all concentrated together on one specific site in the centre of Leuven. what> is part of this site: what> was initiated as an experiment in order to find new, innovative ways of dealing with audiences and gallery education. what> was part of it: this is the last exhibition: the building will be torn down in autumn 2006. The museum site will be closed down for 3 years; this experimental project is not to be continued in Leuven.

to be continued elsewhere The strategies, energy, results will move with us and will pop up elsewhere...

Alice Alice is back! Alice was here in the third exhibition “what three> things unusually usual”. (s)he came to look around, to act and to dance... with other Alices... now s(h)e 's back and there are more of them: sometimes wondering, sometimes struggling... Joy and play, innocent and knowing, sensual and tough, black and white, flesh and blood and unreal.... they were here or not? Our Alices use what> as a theatrical space, as Eva Sturm describes it.

actively welcoming Our hosts and hostesses play a crucial role: they initiate conversations and share information. They contribute to making visitors feel welcome and listen intensely to their stories, associations and dreams... This results in what we once called "energy in two directions" where visitors feed back their stories, anecdotes, associations, ideas to us and enable us to respond in a bottom-up approach. It's about creating possibilities to share the space, to share the ownership of culture instead of dictating a certain concept of what people should see and learn. We refuse to define what people should learn, rather we invite them to learn together with us .

coffee and tea Be welcome, be our guest. what> cherishes those moments where a community feel arises between people who entered the space as strangers.

interpretation what> encourages the visitors to make their own interpretations. We prefer conversations to "fixed" explanatory texts. what> likes to share information and exchange knowledge. Therefore we integrate books, videos and magazines into the exhibition.

access what> 's original task was to find experimental and innovative strategies for making the museum site accessible to new audiences. what> lines up to this mission by making exhibition projects. We learned that by (re)mixing various aspects of the visual culture into an exhibition, people are offered opportunities to find their own paths of access to it. Leuven, for instance, has always shown a reluctant attitude towards contemporary art, but owing to (local) side-steps like like Piet Gilles (a classically trained artist whose work is part of the city museum collection) or the "Leuven stove" (cultural heritage), elderly citizens come over to visit and get to see the other projects as a result.

names we have plenty of names of people who contributed to this "in between" exhibition: artists, our team of hosts and hostesses, the crocheting ladies, the collectors ... and then there are the missing names: all the anonymous people who came in and talked with us or just strolled around, often curious, sometimes slightly irritated; some fascinated, others delighted...

artists involved in this exhibition:

Piet Gilles, a Dutch artist who resided in Leuven most of his life: paintings, silk screens. Together with the Academie van het Leives (Academy of the Local Slang) we pay him homage.

Leopold Liou, a Leuven based Taiwanese artist and philosopher with Chinese roots, who deconstructs the western notions of art and philosophy.

Francis Denys (B), artist in residence of what> 2005, who energized the space with his orange coloured interventions. "new thinkx", a project developed together with de kunstbank, takes the Zen garden like installation with the boules migratrices (migrating balls), the Modified, Modulated Boxes (MOB's) and the sewed carpet, as a starting point for a discovery of Japanese visual culture.

JesseR (B), street artist and musician. "something about skateboarding" is a project of Lowdown, a Leuven store for skateboarding, clothes and lifestyle, what> and JesseR. He "painted" 150 decks and carried out several interventions in the space. Lowdown also exhibited several decks from their collection, e.g. boards from Carhardt.

Stéphane Blanquet , French artist, comics, mural paintings, dolls

Aurélien Henquin (B), artist, flowers and "hypnotic" monsters

Frank Vangrinsven (B), artist, sculptures

Patrick Poels (B), photographer, pinhole box photos

Eli Celen (B), fashion designer in Leuven, ceremonial clothes

contributors / participants:

our crocheting ladies: Cateau, Nini, Rita and many others

Eva Sturm and the students who attended her course "art and art education/ mediation" at the University of Hamburg, Section Pedagogy and Art Pedagogy. In June we met for a presentation in Hamburg. In July we held a seminar- workshop- weekend in Leuven. Eva Sturm is preparing her habilitation, about the interrelation of Deleuze and art education/ mediation.

Meeting with two members of watch>, our international working group. Many thanks to Veronica Sekules and Carmen Mörsch for their friendly criticisms, suggestions and help.

de bloesemboompjes: organization which accommodates kids and youngsters after school and during school holidays. One-day workshop with them in August, on their request.

"Leren Ondernemen" a non-profit organization for community development work, especially concerned with the empowerment of women in the neighbourhood. Their theatre project group, a mixed group of children and adults, guided by their theatre director Hein Mortier, presented their piece "roger roger" in what> on the first of October 2005

the button dress project: the textile atelier of the recycle centre Spit (Leuven) and Jennifer Jalon

the “collections-collectors wanted” project: initiated in 2004 we did a call to map collections and collectors in Leuven. With the collaboration of professor Gust De Meyer, researcher at the Centre for Media Culture and Communication Technology, KULeuven

the skate deck project of Carlo Meuws, Lowdown, what> and JesseR

the Kaki Tree project, in collaboration with the Revive Time Kaki Tree Organisation (Japan): This project commemorates the atom bombings on Nagasaki and pleads for peace by ceremonial tree planting and artistic workshops with children. what> shows some results and invites visitors to participate.

the Piet Gilles project: Paul Reekmans, a former professor in art history, owner of a shop specialized in drawing instruments, friend of Gilles and editor of the journal of the “Academie van het Leives” wrote a text for the special edition of this journal. Two videos accompany this project: two interviews, one with Piet Gilles himself (1987) and with Paul Reekmans, about Gilles, commemorating the tenth anniversary of his death, spoken in local slang.

permanent breakfast: an ongoing project about communication and public space initiated by Viennese artist Friedemann Derschmidt. “By organizing breakfasts in the public space for at least four persons, breakfasters start to communicate with their surroundings, just by being there without much of their active doing. They become their own medium to take space, to be space and to change it - things are told, things are heard and breakfasts are eaten. Again and again and again”.

the ongoing collaboration with the crea(tive) atelier of the recycle centre Spit (Leuven) and Jan Odeyn: paintings, cut figures (dinosaurs, the lady with the fierce creatures of Blanquet)

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