

Sarah & Charles

www.charlessarah.com

SARAH & CHARLES (Brussels 1981 en 1979)

Collaborating since 2004, Belgian artists Sarah & Charles draw inspiration from the world of entertainment and more specifically, its invisible structures. Subjects and genres such as make-believe, simulacrum, the story within the story, cinematic experience, the suspension of disbelief and music are playfully and thoughtfully reviewed in their research and practice. They produce architectural interventions and stage designs combining video, photography, sculpture and installation techniques that communicate both artists' interests.



EDUCATION

- 2007 Laureate of the Higher Institute of Fine Arts (HISK), Gent
- 2005 Master Diploma in Fine Arts (MFA), Experimental studio, Sint-Lukas University College, Brussels

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2021 We never grow tired of each other. II, duo show with Erika Hock, Cosar HMT Gallery, Düsseldorf (DE)
- 2020 The Heads, NICC Vitrine, Brussels (BE)
- 2020 Vanity of Vanities, Brakke Grond, Amsterdam (NL)
- 2019 A Screening Among Friends, Cinnnamon, Rotterdam (NL)
- 2019 Sarah & Charles's In The Hands Of Puppets, Be-Part, Waregem (BE)
- 2018 Returning to an unfamiliar place, c5, Brussels (BE)
- 2016 Vein Viewer II, Cinnnamon, Rotterdam (NL)
- 2016 Extremely hidden, terribly exposed, D+T Project Gallery, Brussel (BE)
- 2015 An unbelievable truth, Netwerk, Aalst (BE)
- 2015 Moving a brick trough water, Nest, The Hague (NL)
- 2014 Bright Like a Diamond' met Carles Congost, Komplot, Brussel (BE)
- 2014 Props for Drama", Broelmuseum, Kortrijk (BE)
- 2013 The suspension of disbelief', Z33, Hasselt (BE)
- 2012 The Hidden Fortress', Kortrijk Congé 2012, Kortrijk (BE)
- 2011 A show about Nothing', Or Nothing, Brussel (BE)
- 2011 Props for drama: plot twist', Galerie van der Mieden, Antwerpen (BE)
- 2009 The hero dies...but the story goes on forever', Galerie van der Mieden, Antwerpen (BE)
- 2008 The art of imitating life', Brakke Grond, Amsterdam (NL)

PERFORMANCES

- 2020 A Creative Spa. End of the Winter Festival 2020. Buda / Kortrijk
- 2019 A Creative Spa, Playground 2019. Museum M / Leuven
- 2018 Umwelten booklaunch (a performance for a book)
- 2018 Wander Meander, A performance affair (solo presentation)
- 2011 A show about nothing, Or Nothing, Brussels (BE)
- 2004 Co-mu-mi-fication, Recyclart, Brussels (BE)

GROUP EXHIBITIONS (selection)

- 2021 Kunstenfestivalwatou 2021 / Watou (BE)
- 2021 Triënnale Brugge 2021: TraumA'Group / Brugge (BE)
- 2020 Medicine Breath / Cinnnamon / Rotterdam (NL)
- 2020 Sanpaku Eyes Espai Tactel / Barcelona (ES)
- 2020 Art Rotterdam (duo/solo) Rotterdam (NL)
- 2019 Stance & Fall - A Wavering World, Museum Marta Herford / Germany (DE)
- 2019 Uit Beleefdheid. MuHka, Antwerp (BE)
- 2019 The HISK Connection, KANAL Centre Pompidou, Brussels (BE)
- 2018 The Resistance of Transperancy, Centro Parraga, Murcia (SP)
- 2017 Het museum van de eigenzin, Mu.zee, Oostende (BE)
- 2017 Vein Section, Berthold Pott Gallery, Cologne (DE)
- 2016 Available For Reference, Yoko Uhoda Gallery, Liège (BE)
- 2015 Opening Exhibition, Cinnnamon Gallery, Rotterdam (NL)
- 2015 Sounds Like Music, D+T Project Gallery, Brussel (BE)
- 2014 Return to Sender, Residentieruimte Wiels, Brussel (BE)
- 2014 Facadism, Nest, Den Haag (NL)
- 2013 Playground, Stuk (BE)
- 2013 Dublin Doubles, Broadcast Gallery, Dublin (UK)
- 2012 Landscapes city people, Netwerk Aalst (BE)
- 2012 Introducing BXL Artists of the galler, Galerie Van der Mieden (BE)
- 2012 Facade, Middelburg (NL)
- 2011 Splendid Isolation, Free State, Oostend (BE)
- 2011 Bosch young talent show, Stedelijk Museum 's-Hertogenbosch (NL)
- 2011 Human Nest, Galerie De Meerse - Hoofddorp (NL)
- 2011 Jonge Vlaamse Meesters, De Hermitage / Amsterdam (NL)
- 2010 Zweierlei, Klingental, Basel (CH)
- 2010 The good, the bad & the ugly, De Garage, Mechelen (BE)
- 2010 Artpie, Westergasfabriek, Amsterdam (NL)
- 2009 Hellewach gegenwartig, Marta Herford Museum, Herford (DE)
- 2009 Watou 2009 - Collected Stories #1 (Polyphony), Watou (BE)
- 2007 Desolation Angels, Cluster, Berlin (DE)
- 2006 Leere X Vision: Connexions, Marta Herford Museum, Herford (DE)
- 2005 Extra Features, HISK, Antwerp (BE)
- 2004 Dialogen, Recyclart, Brussels (BE)

PROJECTS AND COMMISSIONS

- 2021 Public sculpture, Bow Bent & Step Start, West Vlaanderen (BE)
- 2019 Public sculpture, Peanuts, Anderlecht (BE)
- 2019 Many Hands Make Light Work, art integration, DVC Zevenbergen, Ranst (BE)
- 2017 Communities, exhibition design for video exhibition at Argos & Iselp (BE)
- 2017 Cour, Jardin kunstintegratie stadstuin Robbrecht & Daem, Ronse (BE)
- 2017 Stage design for Petite Amie, Juliette Armanet's tour (FR)
- 2016 Wander Meander, commission for a private collection, Sint-Eloois Winkel (BE)
- 2016 They might be giants, scenography, Grip production, Steven Michel (BE – FR)
- 2014 The Cover-up, scenography kunstenfestivaldesarts (BE)
- 2013 Hulk, stage design, SPIN (Diederik Peeters) (BE)
- 2012 Red Herring, stage design, SPIN (Diederik Peeters) (BE)
- 2011 Blond Eckbert, stage design, Muziektheater Transparant (BE)
- 2010 The Sensory Room, art integration, Vlaams Bouwmeester (BE)
- 2009 Thriller..., stage design, Margarita Production (Diederik Peeters) (BE)
- 2008 Assignment for a textile company, Arteconomy (BE)

FESTIVAL SCREENINGS

- 2022 Internationales Trickfilm-Festival Stuttgart (DE)
- 2021 FICBC - Balneário Camboriú International Film Festival (BRA)
- 2021 Minikino Filmweek (IDN)
- 2021 Fest Anča International Animation Festival (CS)
- 2021 2ANNAS ISFF 2021
- 2021 Ann Arbor Film Festival
- 2021 16th Prague Short Film Festival (CS)
- 2020 Internationale Kurzfilmtage Winterthur (SW)
- 2020 Leiden Shorts (NL)
- 2020 International Film Festival Rotterdam (NL)
- 2016 SI Festival, Sifnos (GR)
- 2015 21st Short Film Festival, Leuven, (BE)
- 2015 42nd Film Festival Ghent, Vooruit, Ghent (BE)
- 2014 32nd International Festival of Films on Art, Montreal (CA)

Selected Works
2020 - 2013

VANITY OF VANITIES / 2019

Multichannel video installation, sound, HD screens, steel, paint. Dimensions variable

On three screens, photos and videos circulating on the internet alternate with quotes from the Book of Ecclesiastes in the Old Testament. The video is a live capture of an Instagram feed whose content one can follow and like during its time as a video installation. The notion of vanity in the Book of Ecclesiastes refers to the transience of the world and is often used in combination with the word emptiness.

watch the movie: <https://vimeo.com/358780747>



IN THE HANDS OF PUPPETS / 2019

Computer animated film, 9'03", stereo sound

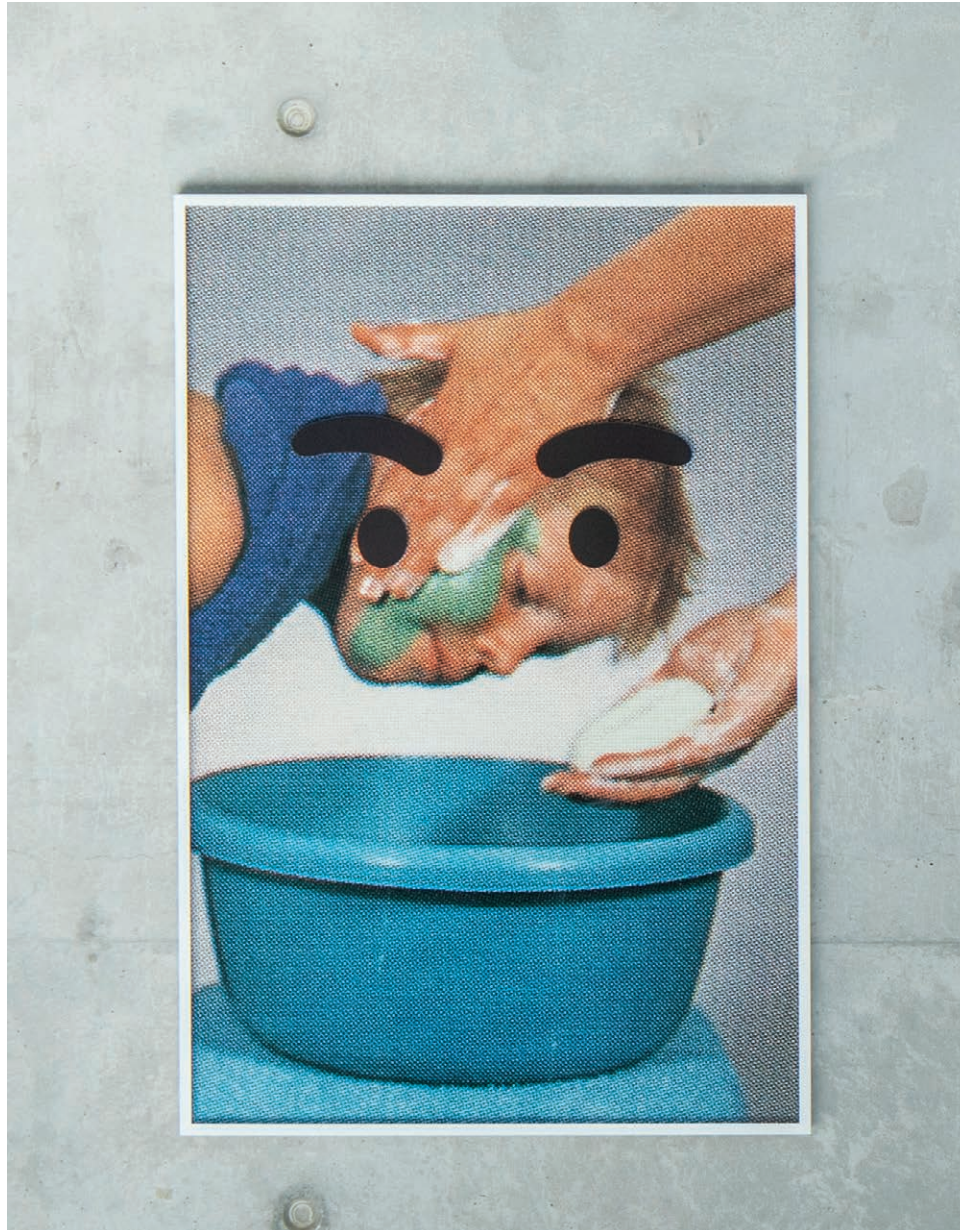
A computer-animated hand puppet has a conversation with several artificial identities about their feelings and social relationships. The film addresses how we relate to the virtual and share our intimacy with it. It foreshadows what could happen when artificial intelligence becomes more human-like. This animated conversation, both literally and figuratively, is based on interviews with patients and care providers at a psychosocial hospital. Later the artists asked friends and colleagues similar questions. The format of the 'online chat' is used to address subjects like self-analysis, personality and anxiety.

watch the movie: <https://vimeo.com/355288699>



SIMULACRE ET SIMULATION / 2019

High resolution print of scanned images,
mounted in six wooden frames with print on
glass of frame



DYSTOPIA / 2019
stainless steel, powder coated structures



CREATIVE SPA / 2019

Multichannel video, Concrete smoke fountain,
stainless steel structure, powder coating, 2 full
hd flat screen

watch the movie: <https://vimeo.com/358880649>



STRUCTURES / 2016

mixed media, steel, wood, pvc, molding paste,
paint, sticker foil.



SOUNDS / 2016

pigment print on paper in custom painted frame

Sounds is a series of works which consists of a written summary of a technical description of one or several sound effects. Put together, they hint towards a certain plot. While reading the description, a personal, cinematic experience is created in one's imagination. This happens along with the association of the sound itself one personally links to the description.

The frames, measuring 60 x 80 cm each, are shown in different ways. Sometimes two frames or a group of 6 form a larger story. On other occasions, the frames and the wall behind the works take on the same colour so they blend into an almost sculptural installation.



HAUT RELIEF / 2016

Mixed media, wood, pvc, glass, molding paste,
paint.



UNTITLED (LIGHTBOX) II / 2015
Lightbox, Diasc 100 x 125 cm



A DAY WILL COME MY FUTURE WILL
BE YOUR PAST / 2015

Single channel video, Full HD, color, dolby
sound Duration: 25 minutes, 17 seconds

'A contemporary tale about the friendship between two middle-aged women who get trapped in a wormhole between the first and last moment they've met.'

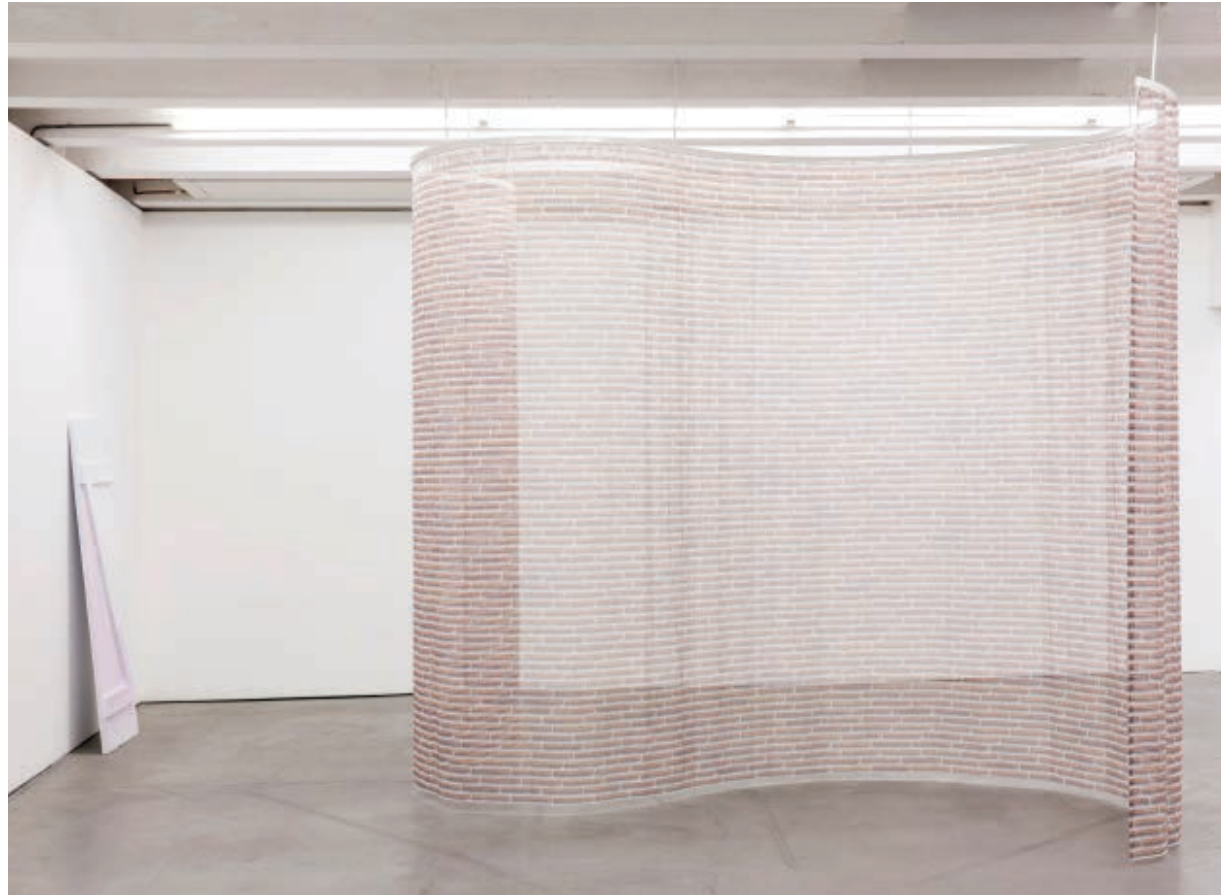
written and directed by Sarah & Charles and co-written by Benjamin Deboosere.
director of photography Hans Bruch jr.
original score by Lieven Dousselaere.
music performed by Kinderlandkoor Kortrijk
edited by Gert van Berckelaer.
sound edit, foley recording & mix: Matthias Hillegeer.
post-production image by Mikros Image Brussels
produced by O.C.A.M. and Untitled Production
with the support of The Flanders Audiovisual Fond (VAF), Netwerk/centrum for contemporary art, arts center Buda, arts center Vooruit

watch the movie: www.charlessarah.com/aday



BRICK CURTAIN / 2015

Print on semitransparent polyester fabric,
mounted on aluminum frame, 285cm x 700cm



BARN DOOR / 2014
custom made white PVC, paint



THE COVER-UP / 2014

A scenographic concept for
kunstenfestivaldesarts 2014

"We chose pinkish melon, which sounds like a martini, a molecular dynamics coarse-grained force field, and when all material revolves to dust, there's the salty dessert, the merchant of salt, and there's the wall, so let's toast to that, let's toast to life!"

In 2014 the festival centre was housed in an old, partially abandoned space in Brussels: the Cinema Marivaux. The Kunstenfestivaldesarts asked Sarah & Charles to rethink the spaces of this old cinema. The artistduo generated an abstract and timeless situation. The cover-up is as much a functional space as a visual installation. A scenographic concept for three weeks of encounter, conversation and celebration.

concept by Sarah & Charles
in collaboration with and assisted by Zoé Nehlig, Thomas Ebraert, Wouter De Raeve, Stéphanie Croibien and Joëlle Bacchetta
costumes by Stan & Loesje
produced and presented by Kunstenfestivaldesarts



GLIMMER,
GLIMMERING LIGHTS / 2013
(aka Red Herring Installation), mixed media
09'50" (loop)

In collaboration with Henri-Emmanuel Doublier Sarah & Charles made a backstage interpretation of the scenography for the theater play Red Herring by Diederik Peeters. Glimmer, glimmering lights, functions as a large scale light installation permitting the viewer a glance at the backstage machinery before entering the space on which walls the lights cast their projection. The making of thus wins in importance over the targeted result.



THE GREAT ZIEGFELD / 2013
silver curtain



THE STORAGE / 2013

installation, mixed media,
custom made white PVC, wooden structures,
carpet, neon lights, tripods.
Dimensions variable

The Storage can be seen a warehouse for props. In a sense, the artists present their archive or studio, granting the visitor a glimpse behind the scenes.

Some of the objects on display appeared in the short films from the Props for Drama series. The objects in The Storage are partly originals that served as moulds from which sprung a series of pvc derivatives. On the other hand, the pvc forms themselves have been piled up as multiples ready to be used as props in the films. The Storage shows other works as well such as: Sounds, Plan, Study for Plot Hole, The Stand-In and Plan Layout.



PROPS FOR DRAMA:

SUSPENSION OF DISBELIEF / 2013

Single channel video, Full HD, colour, sound
Duration: 14':07"

The term suspension of disbelief refers to the viewer's willingness to accept the presented narrative as "real", within the set boundaries of the fiction. This allows him to identify with the story and empathize with its characters.'

In a colorful musical film, set against a surreal background, typical of the genre, we follow a girl through the different chapters of her life; from a young child, towards an adolescent woman. In a staged world she enticingly sings about her own state of mind. The enchantment is brutally interrupted when the set and the camera crew become unexpectedly visible. The film draws the viewer into a story within a story, lead on by an exhilarating soundtrack, through a world filled with impossible events.

written and directed by Sarah & Charles
original score & sound design by Lieven Dousselaere
choreography by Siet Raeymaekers

performed by Lee Aertsen and Linda Blomqvist and by
Marcus Baldemar, Siet Raeymaekers,...
director of photography Hans Bruch Jr.
produced by O.C.A.M. and Untitled Production

with the support of The Flemish Community, Z33, Pianofabriek, Tour & Taxis and Hilife.

watch the movie: www.charlessarah.com/suspension



PROPS FOR DRAMA:

PLOT HOLE / 2013

Multichannel video, Full HD, colour, sound
Approx. 20'

'A plot hole is a gap or inconsistency in the storyline that contradicts or breaks the originally set narrative logic.'

In an abstract visual set-up of doors, walls and windows, we watch an actor change into two different characters while a voiceover coordinates his movements.

The front- and backstage of the archetypal stage setting have been put up alongside each other. The voiceover describes the actions of the characters, just before but often simultaneously when these take place. This leads to absurd situations in which it is no longer clear whether the voice directs the actor or the actor, the voice.

On three screens, similar images are shown concurrently. The mutual nuances between scenes, differences in synchronicity or camera angles, only become apparent because of the repetition of the material. The film slowly builds up to an ending in which one of the characters wipes out the other characters world, culminating into a vast void of nothingness.

written and directed by Sarah & Charles

performed by Diederik Peeters

voice-over by Kate McIntosh

image and light by Hans Bruch Jr.

sound by Lieven Dousselaere

produced by Sarah & Charles

with the support of The Flemish Community, Kunstencentrum Buda, Kunstencentrum STUK, Hilife and O.C.A.M.

watch the movie: www.charlessarah.com/plot-hole



Site-specific works
2020 - 2010

MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK /
2020 (commission in progress)
site-specific public light sculpture, neon acry-
laat structures

A line drawing as a light sculpture.
For the new buildings of the Zevenbergen ser-
vice center in Ranst, we are designing a series
of line drawings that are attached to the front of
the long brick facades as a neon light sculpture.

commisioned by WZC Zevenbergen, Ranst



BOW BENT, STEP, START / 2019
Public sculpture (commission in progress)

a collaboration with Lindert Steegen



PEANUTS / 2019

stainless steel, powder coated structures

The project consists of a main sculpture placed in the center of a square and 18 additional elements, scattered throughout the streets surrounding the square. The existing steel barriers protecting the trees are used as a starting point in form, material and intersection for the steel sculptures. Moreover they were incorporated in the project by painting them with the same bright colors as for the added sculptures.

a visual concept by Sarah & Charles in collaboration with architects Trémège and Villeret.
assisted and documented by Agathe Rivet
produced by Anderlecht and the Flemish Region



COMMUNITIES / 2017

temporary sculptures for an exhibition

The show with more than 18 hours of film footage was designed to either individually enjoy at Argos or to experience in a more cinematic way at Iselp. The artists made an extensive installation embedding the works in a sculptural installation with references to the idea of community in relation to their own work.

Through the various perspectives of the artist, the curators want to explore what is this space that defines communities—and gives rise to them. Furthermore, they delve into the question what unites communities and drives them apart. It does not mean simply showing projects that were jointly realized, but rather observing the result of links between communities and the world around them.

Four contemplative axes function as chapters or itineraries along which are explored the implicit complexity of this theme, while at the same time the thresholds that condition the existence or non-existence of communities in our societies are considered.

a visual concept by Sarah & Charles assisted by Benjamin Jaubert and Andréa Le Guellec
produced by Argos and Iselp with the support of the French community.
curated by Ive Stevenheydens and Maité Vissault.



COUR, JARDIN / 2016

permanent, site-specific public sculpture,
stainless steel, powder coating.

The title of the work refers to a theater expression used to determine the players position on stage. It dates from Molière's time, where in the Palace of Versailles, players referred to the 'side of the courtyard' and 'the side of the garden' to indicate their location.

Inspired by the garden's design, conceived by architects Robbrecht and Daem, Sarah & Charles proposed a permanent stage design, located behind the garden's amphitheater. Concurrently they invite the local theater- and art schools to activate the sculpture on a regular basis.

located at Stadstuin, Bredestraat 82 - 9600 Ronse
curated by Win Van den Abbeele for The New Patrons
commisioned by the city of Ronse
In collaboration with Jan Leconte

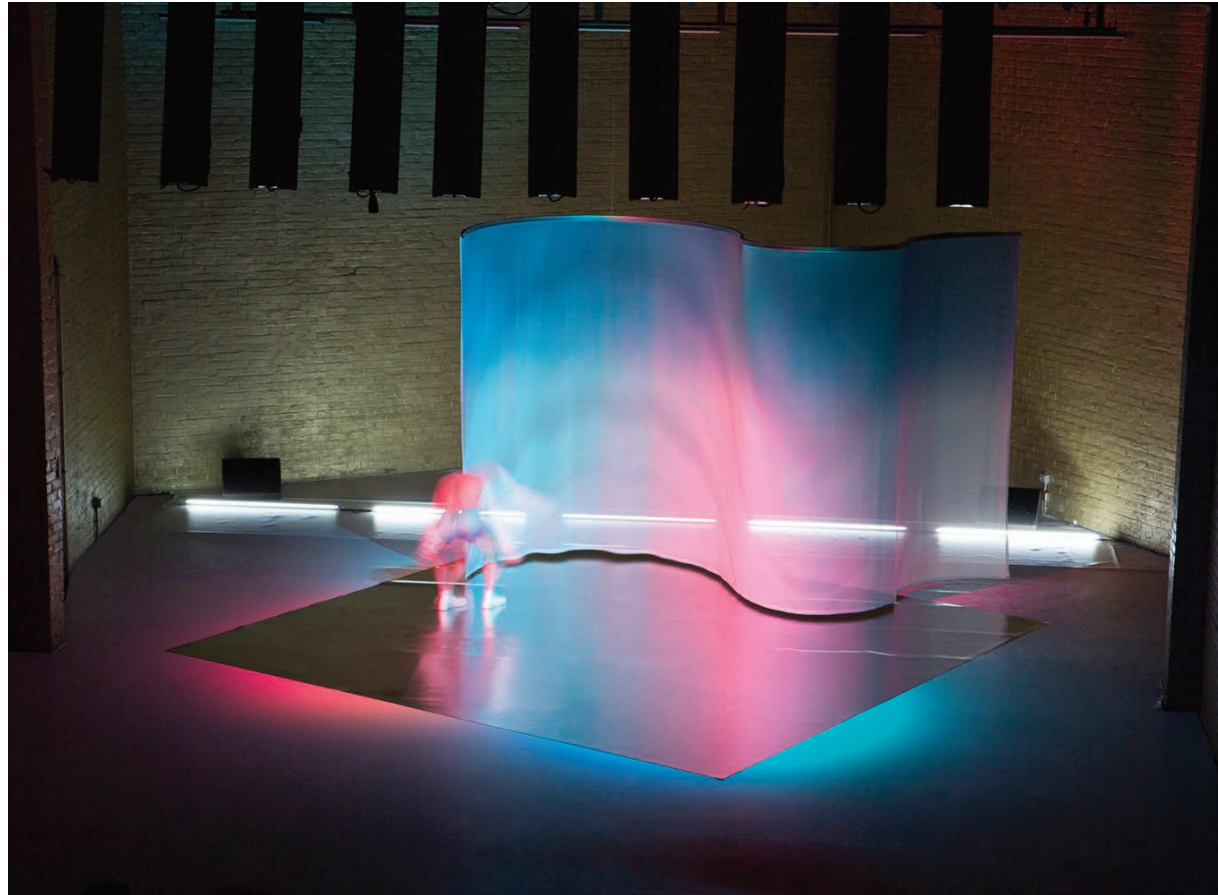


THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS / 2016

stage design

They might be giants, a dance performance by Steven Michel, is conceived as a series of orchestrated visions with audiovisual scores by British composer Anna Meredith. Sarah & Charles were invited to design the sculptural concept for the show. The piece balances between 'Bauhaus for beginners' and 'Tik Tak for professionals'. This synthetic symphony of form and colour is a joy to behold. The piece has been performed in festivals at Takt, Cement and Stuk among others and in Palais de Tokyo, Paris at the Indisciplines festival

concept, direction and performance by Steven Michel
scenography by Sarah & Charles
music by Anna Meredith
outside Eye Jan Martens
lighting design by Hans Meijer
produced by GRIP
coproduced by Workspacebrussels, TAKT Dommelhof,
Cement festival, CAMPO with the support of: STUK,
wp zimmer, GRIP
with the financial support of: Flemish community
commission of the Brussels capital region.
international diffusion: Line Rousseau / a Propic



WANDER MEANDER / 2016

permanent performance in a private house

A silver nail is embedded in the surface of the terrace of the house together with a task for the collectors; to activate the piece at least once a year for 20 years.

At the inauguration, Sarah & Charles put in motion the first articulation of the piece in close collaboration with performer Bryana Fritz. The performance developed in the house is based on the experience of the architecture and the way in which the space relates to its inhabitants.

The silver nail functions as a symbolic anchor to the house and instigates the performance. The Brussels based artist collective After Howl welcomed the public into a momentary pavilion set up in the garden of the house. They offered temporary sculptures to the public.

An important part of the task accompanying the activation of the silver nail is the documentation of each happening.

the project was developed during occasional stays at the house of Julie Vandenbroucke and Michel Espeel starting in 2014. The project was made possible by the ongoing involvement and exchange of ideas between both the collectors and the artists.

an intervention by Sarah & Charles in close collaboration with and performed by Bryana Fritz with temporary sculptures by After Howl and documented by Hans Bruch jr.



PUBLIC PLACES FOR PRIVATE EXPERIENCE / 2013

a collaborative architectural project with
architects De Vylder Vinck Taillieu

This project was approached as a pragmatic research on the possible meaning of public space, borders and potentiality of public space. Six architects and six artists were asked to design a shelter for a specific spot alongside a busy traffic vein called N16, running from Mechelen to Bornem. Together with architects De Vylder Vinck Taillieu, Sarah & Charles created a white platform around an abandoned house, lifting the architecture of the house onto a concrete stage for people to access.

with Architecten De Vylder Vinck Taillieu i.c.w. Sarah & Charles, OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen i.c.w. Michael Van den Abeele, Philippe Vander Marcken i.c.w. Richard Venlet, Robbrecht & Daem architects i.c.w. Valérie Mannaerts, uapS i.c.w. Wesley Meuris, Tractor collective Peter Aerts, Denis Dujardin, Honoré 'O, Lore Perneel, Luc Reuse, Frank Vande Veire, Hugo Vanneste and Dirk Zoete.

A collaboration of CC Ensign, CC Kollebloem, CC Ter Dilft and CC Mechelen.



LA NUIT AMERICAINE / 2012

print on paper mounted on billboard
300 x 700 cm

On a billboard we see an image of a night-time recording session, which took place in the very same park in which the billboard is posted. We not only see a scene as perceived in a movie, we also see how it was made. It is as if we are watching a play in real-time, but we can also see behind the scenes, where we discover that the décor is made of cardboard. Sarah & Charles reveal the lamps needed to illuminate the nocturnal set, the tripods and the smoke emanating from a machine. This 'making of' is a nod to the work of Federico Fellini and duplicates the reality we perceive. The image is a still, which suggests a movie, but we do not see a movie, because it only exists in our imagination or memory.

commisioned by kunst- en architectuurmanifestatie
Facade Middelburg 2012 (NL)
curated by Thom Schaar
in collaboration with Britt Guns, Fotorama and
Untitled Production



THE SENSORY ROOM / 2010

permanent, site-specific public sculpture

The Vlaamse Bouwmeester for the Heem-school in Neder-Over-Heembeek, Belgium commissioned the Sensory Room. The project was initially in collaboration with B-architects who had to shelve their part of the project due to funding issues.

We had never heard of a 'sensory room', even though it's a common feature of schools for physically and mentally challenged students. We smiled when we heard the Flemish translation; Snoezelkamer, but when we saw the room itself, we thought it was just brilliant.

commissioned by The Vlaamse Bouwmeester
in collaboration with Lahaag, Pepite Production and
Margarita Production
soundtrack composed by Lieven Dousselaere

