

UNI - Annie Gentils Gallery

Carla Arocha & Stéphane Schraenen

Carla Arocha (b. 1961, Caracas, Venezuela) and Stéphane Schraenen (b. 1971, Antwerp, Belgium) have been collaborating as an artist duo for two decades, following active individual careers. Arocha and Schraenen have gained international recognition for their sculptures, drawings, paintings, photography, and installations—particularly their signature large scale modular mirror curtains. Arocha and Schraenen challenge perceptions of space, reflection, and reality itself. Their work critically examines the illusions and complexities of contemporary visual culture.

Since 2006, their collaborative practice has been featured in major international exhibitions, including at: FRAC Auvergne, France (2006); The Wallace Collection, UK (2011); Contemporary Art Museum St. Louis, USA (2013); CC Mechelen, Belgium (2014); Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp, Belgium (2016); Fondazione Prada, Italy (2018); XIV Bienal de Cuenca, Ecuador (2018); Museum of Fine Arts Split, Croatia (2019); Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp, Belgium (2024) and the Busan Biennale, Republic of Korea (2024). Work by Carla Arocha and Stéphane Schraenen is held in the collections of MoMA, New York; Chicago Art Institute; Chicago Contemporary Art Museum; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Cisneros Fontanals Art Foundation, Miami, USA; Centro de Arte Caja de Burgos CAB, Burgos, Spain; FRAC Auvergne, Clermont-Ferrand, France and Museum of Contemporary Art Antwerp, Belgium. Their works are permanently installed in the Chicago Art Transit Center, USA; in Belgium at Hof Ter Leenen, Nevele; Tekbroek Nature Park, Puurs-Sint-Amands; and the Campus Coppens, Brasschaat.

<https://www.arocha-schraenen.com/>

The 2013 exhibition *Looking for Clues* at ICA Los Angeles, by Carla Arocha and Stéphane Schraenen, brought together five interconnected works that orchestrated an immersive environment where circular motifs and the dynamics of observation converged. The centerpiece—*Looking for Clues* a large-scale installation of ninety photographs—presented seemingly mundane scenes unified by a recurring circular motif. Each image, printed on glass and mounted on mirrored backings (measuring 34.5 × 46 cm), functioned as both an autonomous visual unit and an integral component within a broader visual syntax.

The photographs transcended documentary function through their systematic orchestration. While each circle maintained a referential link to its source—a coffee cup's rim, ceiling fixtures, clustered bulbs—the ensemble emphasized the interstitial intervals over the objects themselves. This deliberate spacing generated a rhythmic structure that articulated underlying formal relationships, echoing Gilles Deleuze's conceptual framework in which repetition materializes through difference. The installation thus operated on two registers: preserving the recognizability of quotidian scenes while abstracting them into a visual lexicon of circles and voids.

The exhibition's conceptual concerns were further distilled in *Peep Blue*, *Peep Pink*, and *Peep Purple*. These monochromatic panels, each featuring a single peephole with mirrored backing, produced reflexive viewing conditions in which the act of looking returned the viewer's gaze. Situated in dialogue with *Peep Box* (2012)—a vertical plexiglass grid—and *Looking for Clues (Eye)*, a photographic close-up of Schraenen's eye, these works foregrounded vision as a mediated and recursive process, analogous to camera optics constrained by singular perspectives. This investigation of spectatorship extended beyond the gallery walls, anticipating the artists' subsequent furniture sculptures (*Bedside Table*, *Credenza*, and *Cabinet*). Where the earlier installation internalized vision through reflective and mirroring devices, these later works redirected visuality outward by embedding peepholes, marking a shift from introspective reflexivity to environmental interface. The persistent peephole motif anchored these inquiries to canonical precedents—from Marcel Duchamp's *Étant donnés* (1946–66) to Roy Lichtenstein's comic-inspired voyeur (1961)—while preserving Arocha and Schraenen's characteristic emphasis on systemic arrangement over narrative representation.

What began as an exercise in formal pattern recognition ultimately revealed itself as a complex apparatus for interrogating the constructed conditions of visual perception. *Looking for Clues* positioned the viewer as an active participant in the production of meaning, in which each circular motif operated as a visual anchor and each spatial gap proposed a perceptual relation. The exhibition did not simply present discrete works but functioned as an experiential matrix in which vision was redefined as a procedural and implicating act, collapsing the distance between observation and interpretation.

(From *Carla Arocha and Stéphane Schraenen: Monograph as Project*, Barbara Verlinden, Mercatorfonds)

Kasper Bosmans

Kasper Bosmans was born in 1990 in Lommel, Belgium, and currently works in Brussels. Solo exhibitions of Bosmans's work have been mounted worldwide at institutions including: Fundació Joan Miró, Barcelona, Spain; Fondation Cartier, Paris, France; Jameel Arts Centre, Dubai, United Arab Emirates; Fondazione Pomodoro, Milan, Italy; Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam, Netherlands; National Museum of Contemporary Art Athens (EMST), Athens, Greece; S.M.A.K., Ghent, Belgium; Witte de With, Rotterdam, Netherlands; Centrale for Contemporary Art, Brussels; MuHKA, Antwerp, Belgium; De Pont Museum of Contemporary Art, Tilburg, Netherlands; and WIELS Contemporary Art Center, Brussels, Belgium. Additionally, a major monographic catalogue of Bosmans's work was published by Walther König in 2020, tracing a decade of Bosmans's practice and artistic output.

On the Poison works:

"These are based on a snail called Polymita Pictas, or Cuban Painted Snail. It is a snail that protects itself by becoming unique. Every snail has a unique color – they do it by eating certain food in the wet season. That's how they get their unique color. That's how they self-protect – so, because they make themselves look unique, predators like birds think, "oh, I don't know, this snail must be toxic. So, they are pretending to be poison. The small ones I called Poison. They are made into enamel, an advertising material – it can be hung outside, used for billboards, signs on the street... They are all unique, even though they are made in an industrial process, in a thin layer of color glass and steel. Because of that, I had to make an excel sheet with all the production orders to guarantee that none would be the same. So, to make them unique, you have to negotiate with the company, and they acquire somebody to concentrate on it. The big ones I called Souvenir. Because the snails are unique, humans got interested and started collecting them. So, they are threatened by the human obsession with aesthetics. What I like about this self-protection by being unique is the opposite strategy of self-protection within a conservative society. It is the opposite mindset of a protective environment, and I think this is quite interesting. I think we can take it as a social example. They [the snails and the boy butter series] have a kind of a social correspondence [or a social tension]. There is an intuitive parallel, an intuitive bridge between them."

"There aren't many aesthetic decisions [in my work] whose origins do not lie in content. An elevator pitch, during which you need to explain the ideas behind your work in a matter of minutes, well, I don't have to do that at all. I enjoy the fact that there are many layers and openings, and only the tip of the iceberg is revealed. My work is a visual-ready meal, but I take pleasure in filling it with oodles of information. Not everything needs to be explained."

Kasper Bosmans

<https://www.kasperbosmans.com/>

Jack Davey

Jack Davey (b. 1990, London) is a London-based artist whose practice encompasses a range of tactile methods from drawing, sculpture, textile manipulation to installation. Davey is concerned with memory and through his work investigates the consciousness held within objects. Forms allude to domestic architectures and a suggested human physicality, whilst remaining entirely non specific; freezing the tension between two states of being. Fascinated by the alchemy that occurs when material is subjected to memory, he employs a number of formal devices by which to achieve this: materials are exaggerated, documented, wrapped or upholstered, repurposed, repeated and stacked, generating emotionally charged and intriguing results.

Jack Davey obtained a BA & MA in Fashion (2013), followed by a BA & MA in Fine Arts Sculpture (2018) from the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp, Belgium"

<https://jackdavey.uk/>

Emeline Descreaux

Emeline Descreaux (b. 1996, France) lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium.

She articulates her plural practice with painting, while video and sound came along to open on a triangular dialogue. Her work investigates the surface by examining its material conditions and its meanings. Experimenting from within the surface itself, she reflect it as a space where forces meet, overlap, and regenerate repeatedly. She considers established structures as a starting point to think about, through and beyond. In search of ambiguous assemblages, she questioned the state of the subject.

<https://siuxsun.be/>

On the works exhibited in UNI - Annie Gentils Gallery:

UNISSON, 2026 (2022)

UNISSON meditate on the pure state of meeting. Its been conceived and cut wide open. Two beings around a table, in a synchrone relation, timeless, surrounded by unknown possibilities- what's present until now and what's waiting to be.

In the context of UNI, UNISSON can be an occasion to remember the important role of uniting, as a tangible power. An isolate element can't exist by itself, it takes two to think the world.

Korte Metten, 2024

The painting is composed of symbols turned into a narrative matrix. We stand at an ambiguous intersection in time: whether it unfolds as ominous or propitious vision.

The answer can appears while looking at the outside. Yet there remains a 'hole', an undefined area: a green key. That gives the possibility of choices.

Marijke De Roover

Marijke De Roover (B, 1990-2026) was a performance and visual artist. She lived and worked in Ghent, Belgium. De Roover holds a Bachelor and Master in Fine Arts from KASK School of Arts, Ghent (BE) where she was nominated for the Start Point Prize, Prague (CZ). In 2021 De Roover had her first solo exhibition in the Netherlands at Museum de Pont in Tilburg.

Her work has been shown at among others: Centre Pompidou, Paris (FR), Museum fur Neue Kunst, Freiburg (DE), Museum de Pont, Tilburg (NL), EMST Athens (GR), MUHKA, Antwerp (BE), Garage Rotterdam (NL), Point Ephemere, Paris (FR), UNTITLED, Moscow (RU), BOZAR, Brussels (BE), Extra City (AAW), Antwerp (BE), Mu.ZEE, Ostend (BE), ARCADE, London (UK), KIOSK Ghent (BE), ISELP, Brussels (BE), Museum Angewandte Kunst, Frankfurt am Main (DE), Beursschouwburg, Brussels (BE), Tatjana Pieters, Ghent (BE) & Soft Focus Institute.

De Roover shows a wide variety of ideas, such as coupling practices (e.g., dating, marriage, and heartbreak) that secure the intersection of several consequential social hierarchies including gender, class, sexual orientation and institutional power in her work. Although it may seem so, De Roover's work is rarely about her personal life. On the contrary – because the artist, throughout her practice, has constantly been adopting new disguises, it is not at all clear who Marijke De Roover really is. In this way she sheds light on an important tendency that, with the rise of social media, has had a far-reaching impact on the behavior and perception of the individual. In a world where everything revolves around performance and the construction of a digital façade, however, failure is never far off. The glorification of failure runs like a red thread throughout De Roover's work. The heteronyms (a term coined by Pessoa to define the series of invented selves as autonomous agents with their own specific interests, literary styles, biographies and physical physiognomies) she fashions are often grotesque, vulgar, or pathetic. Usually they're not particularly successful, and have been known to sing off-key. Talent, however, is no prerequisite for attracting attention, as demonstrated by countless uninspiring reality-TV stars. These people are not famous for their extraordinary talents or notable deeds, but rather for the way they present their image. De Roover's work constantly balances on the thin line separating fame and failure – never quite good enough, always on the verge of the wrong.

<https://marijkederoover.art/>

Messieurs Delmotte

Born (accidentally) in Liège, Belgium, in 1967, Messieurs Delmotte has developed, over more than three decades, a multidisciplinary artistic practice encompassing performance, video, photography, drawing, painting, installation, and three-dimensional works. Working across media, he creates a coherent artistic universe in which image, gesture, and object become tools for exploring the fragile boundary between reality and fiction.

His work has been presented internationally at institutions and exhibitions including the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the New York Underground Festival, M HKA (Antwerp), WIELS and ARGOS (Brussels), and the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía (Madrid). His career has also been shaped by numerous international residencies and artistic programmes, notably at the Goethe-Institut (Togo and Benin), the Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten (Amsterdam), the Akihabara TV Project (Tokyo), and Ruangrupa (Jakarta).

Humour, burlesque, and subtle displacement are central to Messieurs Delmotte's practice. Instantly recognisable by his impeccably tailored suit, he has developed a distinctive persona that serves as the conceptual thread running through his work. Beneath the apparent simplicity of his performances lies a critical reflection on social conventions, systems of representation, politics and the contradictions of contemporary life.

Neither "IN" Neither "OFF" – (Between Venice and the Biennale)

Video – 25 min 55 sec – Colour – Sound

© Messieurs Delmotte - 2013

Created during an artist residency in Venice, *Neither "IN" Neither « OFF » begins with a question that is as simple as it is political : what does it mean to exist within a space defined by the opposition between what is recognised as "IN" and what remains « OFF » ? Rather than accepting this distinction, Messieurs Delmotte deliberately inhabits the territory between the two, refusing both inclusion and exclusion, centre and periphery.

Filmed throughout Venice during the Biennale, the work unfolds through a sequence of understated interventions in public space. Walking without destination, standing motionless, subtly altering his trajectory, blending into the flow of visitors or momentarily interrupting it, Messieurs Delmotte performs gestures that appear almost insignificant. Yet these quiet actions gently unsettle the behavioural codes that organise public space, inviting viewers to reconsider how bodies are seen, recognised and assigned a place within social and cultural systems. This reflection on visibility and belonging also encountered the reality of the territory itself. During the filming, in Venice's historic Ghetto district—the very place from which the word « ghetto » originated—the artist was violently assaulted, suffering multiple fractured ribs and extensive bruising. In a city where such attacks are exceptionally rare, this unexpected event became a stark reminder that the presence of a body in public space, however discreet or silent, is never entirely neutral but remains shaped by relations of power, vulnerability and otherness. Venice therefore becomes far more than a backdrop. As a city shaped by tourism, spectacle and one of the world's most prestigious art events, it functions as a theatre of visibility where identities, roles and hierarchies are continuously performed. Against this carefully choreographed environment, Delmotte introduces a wandering, deliberately unproductive presence that resists expectation, classification and spectacle itself.

Presented within the framework of « UNI », the work resonates with contemporary reflections on identity, belonging and LGBTQIA+ experiences without attempting to illustrate them directly. By rejecting fixed identities and binary oppositions—inside/outside, centre/periphery, visible/invisible—the film proposes the « in-between » not as a place of uncertainty but as a space of freedom, coexistence and transformation. Here, identity is understood as something fluid, continuously negotiated rather than fixed or predefined.

Yann Freichels

Yann Freichels (°1996 Gröfflingen, Belgium) is among the most exceptional young talents to come out of Belgium's Eastern Cantons.

Freichels works and lives in Gröfflingen, Belgium, a small village which is close to Eupen. He completed his education in painting at the “École supérieure des arts de la ville de Liège” (ESAVL) in 2020. His analysis of early 20th-century German painting history is sardonic and humorous and is reminiscent of Otto Dix and George Grosz, two painters of the New Objectivity movement although Martin Kippenberger and Luc Tuymans are an inspiration because of their political commitment. Being German-speaking but Belgian, has the advantage of allowing him to paint a wide range of subjects; in particular, his paintings effectively illustrate the role the Eastern Cantons play as intermediaries between the French- and German-speaking cultural worlds; the region south of Eupen is on the traditional border of Germany, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, and Belgian French-speaking territory. His work, which demonstrates excellent literary and historical knowledge, heavily draws on the violent past of national socialism. (e.g. die Weiße Rose – Sophie Scholl)

Work by Yann Freichels was part of the exhibition “Painting after Painting – A contemporary Survey from Belgium” in SMAK Ghent in 2025, with the painting “Kids Unite”.

Yann Freichel had important exhibitions at a.o.:

Annie Gentils Gallery, 2025

Awards IKOB (Museum für Zeitgenössische Kunst, Eupen, 2024) / Espace 251 Nord, Liège, 2021, 2023/

LLS-Palais Antwerpen, 2024 / Musée de la Boverie, Liège (BE), 2023 / Saarländische Galerie, Berlin - 2022

2023 Prix Renée Janssens at Académie Royale des Arts, des Sciences et des Lettres

2022 Prix du Parlement de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles

2020 Prix de l'académie des Beaux-arts de Liège – Esavl

<https://yannfreichels.com/>

Yann Freichels on the drawings in UNI

‘Staatsmachtpenis’ means ‘state power cock’.

This work depicts the tower of the Palace of Culture and Science, which Josef Stalin gave to Warsaw. The tower stands in the centre of Warsaw and was a significant landmark during the Soviet era.

I created this work whilst the Polish PiS government was continuing its attempts to deny women access to abortion.

Rome was founded by two men who were raised by a she-wolf. In Latin, the word for ‘she-wolf’ can also mean ‘bitch’.

Solan, a French-speaking Belgian singer, picks up on this and draws a parallel by singing about ‘une chienne’ – meaning a bitch i.e. a she-dog. In my drawing, I have omitted Romulus and Remus, as it was the she-wolf who raised Rome.

Paul-Armand Gette

(Lyon, 1927 – Paris, 2024)

Paul-Armand Gette was born in Lyon in 1927 and lived and worked in Paris until his death in 2024.

Paul-Armand Gette was fascinated by both the natural sciences and the female body. These are at once the subjects and the materials of his work: pebbles, shells and plants become ornaments adorning the mons pubis of the young women he photographs.

From the 1980s onwards, Gette increasingly devoted his practice to exploring the limits of our perception of the body. His work came to revolve around intimacy, the female body, its representation, and its relationship to the artist. He photographed women who freely chose to participate, establishing the principle of the model's complete autonomy—a concept that culminated in *Touching the Model (Le Toucher du modèle)*.

For Gette, the female figure remained an enduring ideal, often evoked through references to the goddesses of classical antiquity. He transformed volcanic stones into altars for his performances. In every case, his work reflects an experience unique to each model, while its titles frequently draw on mythology, which becomes the scenario for the playful and mischievous games of the "great child" he always remained. (tekst Colette Dubois: in Hart 2010, Benelux expo)

Chris Gillis

In Chris Gillis' ((Belgium, °1962)) work, visual elements are taken out of their original context, recycled and deconstructed to ultimately form the foundation for a new story.

She works with paper scraps, ready-made images, and textures from printmaking.

Chris Gillis draws from a variety of sources. Aspects of biographical and everyday perception, elements from landscape and culture. These become intertwined with each other or are reduced to abstract areas of color.

All these sources undergo a recycling process. In a collage-like manner, reality is dismantled and reconstructed at will. The means have become the motif. On the one hand controlled and on the other hand she allows coincidence to play a role. Like a dream works, several impressions are transformed into a synthesis of reality.

Chris Gillis studied printmaking at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp and studied painting for 2 years at the Escola Das Belas Artes in Lisbon. From 1991 she exhibited in several spaces, mainly with paintings and graphic work.

From 1997 until 2006 she was actively involved in the artist's initiative Factor44 in Antwerp, where she collaborated on a regular basis with several artists in a spatial context.

From 2002 to 2014 she worked primarily with video. However, her exhibitions departed from an overall concept, in which different media were often used.

Besides exhibitions Chris Gillis also realized video documents, with a focus on underground events (Performances in visual arts and experimental music).

Since 2016, her work mostly consists of works in paper, i.e. in print, collage and montage. In 2026, she embarked on a new chapter in her practice by taking up painting. A recent work is featured in UNI.

Since 1999 she teaches at the Fashion Departement of the Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Antwerp.

Chris Gillis lives and works in Antwerp.

<https://www.chrisgillis.be/>

Hantrax Dolls Solutions

Hantrax Dolls is an artistic project by Antwerp-based composer, musician, and performer Han Swolfs, better known as Hantrax. A key protagonist of the Antwerp underground, Hantrax's live performances of electronic music, in particular, create atmospheres of vitality and hypnotism. Their life of creativity is so unbridled that they are equally embraced by Antwerp's creative community, including its visual artists and designers as much as the music scene.

Hantrax Dolls is an ongoing project by the artist in which making a doll is part of their daily ritual. For Hantrax, these everyday dolls are 'non-intentional' creations, without a predetermined form, so intuition is the key. The exhibition shows a selection of their growing doll community with references from music, literature, and the internet.

During each exhibition, Hantrax organizes a workshop where they invite both artists and the public to give free rein to the creation of unique dolls, made from every conceivable material, no matter how ephemeral. Hantrax invited artist and designer friends to participate. The workshop dolls are all labeled "Hantrax Dolls by ..." and are added to the exhibition. Renowned names such as Ann Demeulemeester, Luc Tuymans, Carla Arocha & Stéphane Schraenen, Vedran Kopljar, Kati Heck, and many others all created their own Hantrax Doll.

Each of these dolls has its own name and story, and together they form a growing family of symbols for free expression, fantasy, non-normativity, and joy.

<https://hantrax.com>

The triptych Awards is a tribute to identity, history, resilience, and celebration within the LGBTQIA+ community.

Panel 1 refers to the groundbreaking book *Gay American History* (1976), one of the first comprehensive studies of the history of homosexuality in the United States. Published before the AIDS epidemic and long before many of the social achievements that today may seem self-evident, the work also serves as a reminder that the struggle for equality is never definitively won and that the community continues to face significant challenges today. The book is transformed into a doll-like figure, symbolising identity, self-definition, and the visibility of both personal and collective histories.

Panel 2 – *Space and Time* is executed in nail polish. Its title refers to the concept of spacetime in modern physics, in which space and time do not exist independently but form a single, inseparable continuum. For me, this idea embodies a philosophy of hope: history, the present, and the future are interconnected in a continuous process of change and transformation. What was once hidden can become visible; what seems difficult today may find a solution tomorrow. Spacetime thus becomes a metaphor for human development, emancipation, and the possibility of a more inclusive future.

Panel 3 takes the form of an award, conceived as both a gift and a celebration of the LGBTQIA+ community. It refers to the world of the Hantrax Dolls: a growing family of figures that embody free expression, imagination, non-conformity, and joy. The award acknowledges not only the struggles that have been endured, but also the creativity, strength, and beauty that emerge from this community.

Together, the three panels trace a journey of remembrance, reflection, and celebration: from preserving history, through a belief in change across time and space, to recognising diversity as a source of strength and inspiration.

Sina Hensel

Sina Hensel is a Brussels based visual artist and researcher with a special focus on critical colour practices. They include the question of various ecologies of colour and the kaleidoscopic transformations caused by the current and future chemical make-ups of landscapes and environments.

Sina studied painting at the Academies of Fine Arts in Karlsruhe and Hamburg, and graduated in 2019 from HISK Ghent. Today, Sina is pursuing a PhD at the School of Arts Basel and the University of Art Linz, in collaboration with Humboldt University Berlin and KASK Ghent. From 2024–25, Sina is also a researcher in the Art & Ecology research group at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp.

Her works have been shown at the 18th La Biennale di Venezia/IT, M HKA Antwerp/BE, Beursschouwburg Brussels/BE, PACT Zollverein Essen/GER, IKOB Eupen/BE, Albert van Abbehuis Art Center Eindhoven/NL, Cultural Center San Pedro de Atacama/CL, Kunsthalle Trier/GER, and CIAP Kunstverein Genk/BE, among others. Artistic residencies have brought her to Villa Empain Brussels/BE, Hangar Barcelona/ES, and La Wayaka Current Residency in the Atacama Desert/CL, among others.

<https://www.sinahensel.de/>

Sun hats for cats

By introducing phycocyanin, Hensel gestures towards the oceanic pigments of microalgae and cyanobacteria— the main companions in her ongoing PhD research. These organisms fix carbon, generate oxygen, and regulate the planet's climate, reminding us that colour is not solely of the soil or terrestrial chemistry but also belongs to the oceanic microbial life that sustains the Earth: How human and non-human organisms protect themselves from heat or sun while microalgae, cyanobacteria, or blood oranges can shift colour as a protective mechanism, human attempts appear in the shape of a humble sunhat—an object conceived not only for ourselves but also for the organisms we value most: cats.

Philip Huyghe

Philip Huyghe's (B, 1959) oeuvre balances between comedy and cult, between reality and surrealism. Huyghe creates installations, photographs, videos, light boxes, drawings, objects and sculptures in which he often refers to a bourgeois environment. His work is critically intense and entertains us with an illusion -a rare combination in a work of art. Huyghe's work appeals to us directly, because of its recognisability and often funny undertone, which prompt us to disentangle its secrets.

He studied at KASK Gent (B), the Stedelschule Frankfurt A/M (D) and the Jan Van Eyck Academie of Maastricht (NL).

He has shown his work both in Europe and in the States. He had soloshows in MUHKA Antwerpen (B), Künstlerhaus Bethanien Berlin (D) and on Arco Madrid and showed his work in the Corcoran Gallery Washington DC.

From 2009 till 2015 he was a researcher at the UGent / HoGent and recently achieved a PhD in Fine Arts.

He works and lives in Antwerp (B).

Juliet Jespers

Juliet Jespers (2002, B) infuses her art with a fresh attitude, constantly exploring new horizons to avoid stagnation. The energy and motifs in her work emanate something emotional without being able to put your finger on it. As she moves into abstract work, she discovers the essence of painting and the art of knowing when to stop.

Jesper's art captures elusive narratives and untold stories, inviting the viewer to interpret and engage with their own emotions. Her oil paintings reflect a vibrant rhythm imbued with a naivety that resonates on a profound level.

Juliet Jespers works and lives in Antwerp obtained her Masters in painting at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts Antwerp. Her oil paintings reflect a fresh look at the traditions of painting they radiate the energy and dynamism of the Cobra movement and the raw authenticity of outsider art.

Collecting preserving and releasing played an important role in her artistic evolution from figurative to abstract Jespers' works on canvas touch on the elusive the untold. Her work does not leave the viewer unmoved and shows a lively rhythm imbued with a naivety that resonates on a profound level.

In her artistic practice, Juliet Jespers focuses predominantly on oil paint. Her inspiration is drawn from the eclectic rhythms of daily life, ranging from song lyrics and posters to personal obsessions and spontaneous conversations. Since graduating in 2024, her work has undergone a transition, moving away from abstraction to embrace a renewed sense of figuration.

In her recent compositions, she integrates text to keep her creative process challenging and unpredictable. She often works with raw, unadulterated pigment straight from the tube, allowing colours to find one another directly on the canvas rather than on a palette.

Juliet Jespers on the painting *I can walk under ladders*, 2026:

This work is, above all, a declaration of happiness and an embrace of being exactly who you are.

Despite the danger that LGBTQIA+ people face—a danger that continues to grow while its rise is increasingly ignored—it often feels as though we are turning the clock back by years, even decades. Trans rights are being attacked, serving as a lightning rod that distracts from the broader erosion of human rights. Yet despite everything, truly despite everything, I am proud and happy to be who I am.

This is my life, and I would not trade it for anything in the world.

Clara Lissens

Clara Lissens (1993) is an Antwerp based multidisciplinary artist who moves between music, performance and visual arts. She tries to give shape to emptiness. Her inflatable objects that produce high-pitched squeaking noises play a prominent role in her work, functioning as an almost literal means of shaping the void - empty shells that blow out an unintelligible, abstracted message. Through air and abstraction, Clara Lissens explores questions around structures, identity, existence and void.

<https://www.claralissens.com/>

Rufus Michielsen

Rufus Michielsen (b.1982) Resides and operates in Antwerp, Belgium. His oeuvre is equally informed by early modernist and Dadaist artists, Situationism, and CoBrA, as it is by the realms of graffiti, video games, and underground cartoons. This amalgamation serves as a touchstone for Michielsen's multifaceted expressions across various mediums: canvases adorned with paint or drawings etched onto paper, sculpture, and unconventional media.

His creations exist within the liminal space between abstraction and figuration. Michielsen revels in a playful exploration of anthropomorphism within the abstract forms that emerge from the strokes of paint. Often, he strives to encapsulate the sensation of a kind of sensory overload, akin to the experience of surfing the internet or strolling down the street. In his drawings, he endeavors to unearth a particular poetry inherent in that process.

<https://pizzagallery.be/Rufus-Michielsen-2>

Jonathan Paepens

Jonathan Paepens (°1989, Zottegem, Belgium) is an interdisciplinary artist living and working in Ghent, Belgium. His practice is characterized by the combination of themes such as gender, society, and mythology into a contemporary whole, always departing from the performative masks we all wear. In 2018, his work received the Friends of S.M.A.K. Audience Award, and he has exhibited both nationally and internationally.

Daphne flees from the possessive god Apollo by pleading to be stripped of her beauty. In response, her father transforms her into a laurel tree. Yet even after this transformation, Apollo can still feel her frightened heart beating and attempts to kiss the tree. The bark recoils, trying to evade his touch.

In this work, mythical narratives converge in a triptych. On one side, tree trunks are depicted, bathed in golden light. On the other, images of “Daphne” appear alongside the captive words Apollo addresses to her. Here, they come together, embedded in glass—stilled in time and space. The work asks whether true overcoming might ultimately lie in letting go.

The work is about the words that are no longer spoken, and all the words uttered to fill that emptiness. It is about speaking *to* one another rather than *with* one another. And it is about the words from which our ears long to turn away, so that we may instead hear the sounds that give voice to our soul.

<https://jonathanpaepens.wixsite.com/website>

Ria Pacquée

Ria Pacquée (b. 1954) had her international breakthrough in the 1980s with her performance series featuring characters she created – ‘Madame’ and ‘It’. Infiltrating reality by means of these two personae, she carried out an artistic investigation of the thin dividing line between the fictional and the actual. In more recent work she has tended to concentrate on photographic and video productions, in which the experiences gained as a performance artist still play an important role.

As a spectator (photographs and videos) of public life and as a participant (performances), Pacquée tries to find answers to the most elementary questions of existence. In this respect the street is her arena of study. She sees the street as a living setting, in which she moves discreetly (‘street rambling’), recording events from a particular viewpoint with a camera. Her interest in rituals and the metaphysics of religious experience, anonymity, city wandering and collecting of concomitant sounds and images – recreation and appropriation of reality by extracting details from their everyday context are also important themes in her work. Much is left to chance.

riapacquee.com

Veronika Pot

BE, °1965 - Lives and works in Brasschaat, Antwerp

Veronika's process revolves around these transformations of images and the discovery of new poetic spaces. The original image has often become unrecognizable, raising the question of the context in which it was created. They are landscapes, mountains, figures, and text fragments that Pot attempts to ‘re-see,’ ‘re-memorize,’ and ‘re-visualize.’ Ambiguity is at the core of Veronika Pot’s visual language.

<https://www.basealphagallery.com/artists/veronika-pot/>

<https://www.veronikapot.com/>

Marc Rossignol

Marc Rossignol was born in Namur, Belgium, 1954 and died in Brussels, Belgium, 4 November 2025. He lived and worked in Brussels. His studio and artistic estate are currently managed by Patrimoine Marc Rossignol.

His last exhibition at Annie Gentils Gallery was *Salon de Dames* (Summer 2025).

Although Marc Rossignol's artistic practice embraced a wide range of media, in recent years he devoted himself primarily to the development of his *Networks (Réseaux)*, created on both canvas and paper. Since 2004, his practice involved painting and drawing simultaneously with his right and left hands, often accompanied by performances during which he recited texts by Édouard Glissant, François Cheng, and Pier Paolo Pasolini.

In 2008, Rossignol drew inspiration from the topological drawings of Vanuatu (*sandroing*) and the *Lusona* drawings of the Chokwe people, fascinated by their Eulerian structure. From 2015 onwards, he began producing *Kolams*, a traditional drawing practice made with rice flour, chalk, or powder by women in southern India and parts of Indonesia.

The recent works presented on our stand continue to employ a single continuous line based on Eulerian principles, filling the entire surface of the canvas or paper. Each line ends where it begins, forming an uninterrupted path. As Rossignol explained:

"To create the networks, I first establish an invisible grid of points across the surface. Then, using both hands and two brushes simultaneously, I trace a line that circles each point once and only once, as in every Eulerian network."

For his final exhibition, *Salon de Dames*, Rossignol shifted his focus towards the game of draughts (*checkers*) and a reflection on gender. Through colour—particularly pink and light blue—he explored masculine and feminine codes within his network paintings. This investigation culminated in large continuous drawings in which blue represents the "little boy" and pink the "little girl": intertwined lines that begin where they end, crossing and overlapping in an endless dialogue.

The work presented in UNI, *Dames vénitiennes pionnières du féminisme (Damier / Hygiaphones Venise)* (2025), extends this reflection. It refers to the often-overlooked origins of feminist thought, suggesting that its history does not begin in the nineteenth or twentieth century, but has much deeper roots in the intellectual and cultural life of Renaissance and early modern Venice. Through the metaphor of the checkerboard and Rossignol's characteristic continuous line, the work connects historical ideas of emancipation with contemporary questions of gender and identity.

<https://www.anniegentilsgallery.com/marc-rossignol>

Lieven Segers & Johanna Trudzinski

Lieven Segers typically seeks out situations or concepts where part of the outcome is left to coincidence, or to the interventions of others. In many ways his drawings, publications, editions, sculptures, installations, and actions challenge the conventions of the (commercial) art world. His work is ephemeral, coincidental, collaborative. The idea of creating a momentum, making something happen, sharing an experience is what drives his art. The spontaneous and serendipitous nature of his practice is an homage to our shared daily banalities; to the small, seemingly insignificant incidents and encounters that, however, can carry much meaning and beauty in the course of a lifetime.

Humour is a key element in this practice: Segers often uses lightness, wit, and subtle absurdity to highlight the beauty and strangeness of everyday situations. These humorous gestures are not merely intended as jokes, but subtly undermine the seriousness of the art world and invite viewers to take a closer look at the everyday moments that shape our lives, thereby revealing their vulnerability, tenderness and poetic potential.

Lieven Segers (B, °1975) lives and works in Antwerp.

<https://www.basealphagallery.com/artists/lieven-segers/>

<https://lievensegers.be>

<https://aaimachine.be/>

Johanna Trudzinski (1979) is a costume, fashion and stage designer

Graduated 2006 at the Antwerp Royal Academy Fashion Department.

She worked for hui-hui and A.F. Vandevorst, currently at japanese label grounds. She designs costume and stage design for theatre and opera productions at, amongst others, Theater Artemis, Berliner Ensemble, hetpaleis, NT Gent, Opera de Bologna, Staatsoper unter den Linden Berlin, Theater Bochum, Wiener Burgtheater. In 2023, she received the German Theatre Award DER FAUST.

She is part of the zangles a womens performance choir.

Jesse Siegel

Jesse Siegel (b. 1984, Cancun, Mexico / Lives and works in Antwerp, BE) uses the language of urban planning and design to confront the polished mythology of the tourist resort and prefabricated experiences. His installations, sculptures and digital works examine nostalgic memory and belonging.

His work embodies the instruments of prefabrication and rapid development, finding a global default in the aesthetics of newness. Born in Cancun, a city founded by the Mexican government in the 1970s, Siegel approaches his hometown as a starting point from which objects hold meaning beyond their function. The disposable and overlooked become sites of inquiry into the unease of placelessness itself.

Jesse Siegel on the audio work *Ownership of Words (Perfect Cognates)*, 2016

The concept behind the work is me reading the perfect cognates in English and Spanish. Perfect cognates are words that have the same or similar meaning in two languages, and yet are pronounced differently. My idea with the work was to exteriorize something internal to me, that while I can natively speak both English and Spanish, it means that I am constantly switching between two identities. Our fixed perception of ourselves may only extend as far as the words we speak.

On the work *Flourish*, 2024

The work draws on the ambiguity of the Spanish word *barrotes*, which denotes both the ornamental iron bars protecting domestic windows and the bars of a prison cell, collapsing notions of security and confinement into a single image. Printed by Studio-Vanpoucke in Antwerp.

<https://www.jessesiegel.com/>

Luc Tuymans

Belgian artist Luc Tuymans (b. 1958, Mortsels) is known for a distinctive style of painting that demonstrates images' power to simultaneously communicate and withhold. Emerging in the 1980s, Tuymans pioneered a decidedly non-narrative approach to figurative painting, instead exploring how information can be layered and embedded within certain scenes and signifiers. Based on preexisting imagery culled from a variety of sources, his works are rendered in a muted palette that is suggestive of a blurry recollection or a fading memory. Their quiet and restrained appearance, however, belies an underlying moral complexity. They engage equally with questions of history and its representation as they do with quotidian subject matter. Tuymans's canvases, which are typically executed on a large scale, both undermine and reinvent traditional notions of monumentality through their insistence on the ambiguity of meaning.

<https://www.luctuymans.be/>

During the lockdown, the Luc Tuymans created several short animation films lasting a few seconds, all of which were titled *Seconds*. The intensive and time-consuming process of animating series of gouaches was probably only possible thanks to the time that was suddenly available.

Comprising sixteen individual drawings for each animation, the series was exhibited, among other venues, at Zeno X Gallery.

Sietske Van Aerde

Sietske Van Aerde (b. 1992) is a Belgian visual artist and costume designer based in Antwerp. Her multidisciplinary practice spans figurative and magical realist drawing and painting, performance, and video. Central to her work is the transformation and disappearance of the body through sculptural costumes, body paint, and make-up, which she approaches as both painterly and performative media.

Van Aerde has participated in several group exhibitions. At the Antwerp contemporary art space Lichtekooi she presented a large sculptural triptych in *Exit the Vampire Castle* (2022), and during *Impossible Enough to Be an Art Space*, organised as part of Antwerp Art Weekend in 2024, she performed one of her signature live make-up performances. In 2021 she also participated in Belgium now and later 2024 *Affiniteiten #6* at LLS Paleis.

Alongside her autonomous artistic practice, Van Aerde works as a costume designer for opera and theatre productions in Belgium and abroad.

For the Biennale of Painting, Van Aerde created two new video works in response to paintings selected for her. One reimagines a painting by Léon Spilliaert through performative transformation. The second is a psychedelic body-paint film centred on the image of a cow, conceived in dialogue with the many cow paintings by Roger Raveel. In both works, make-up becomes a painterly medium and the human body functions as a living canvas.

In May 2026, Van Aerde presented her film *1000 Girls, A Place We Go* at Vonk, Hasselt. Alongside the film presentation, she organized an evening of performances that are in connection to the film bringing together multiple artists in a programme exploring transformation and mythology.

Her film *1000 Girls, A Place We Go* follows a series of playful transformations inspired by the nymphs of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, whose bodies are continually altered in response to violence inflicted by the gods. Filmed within her own surroundings, the work brings together friends, fellow artists, and passersby, whose personal reflections create a collection of intimate portraits. Through these encounters, Van Aerde explores identity, vulnerability, and the search for ways of existing within an often overwhelming world.

<https://www.sietskevanaerde.com/>

Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven

Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven aka AMVK, °1951 Antwerp Belgium, studied graphic design at the Fine Arts Academy of Antwerp. From the mid-seventies the erotic meets machine-fetishism in her drawings, works on paper and textile, videos, murals, and installations. With her straightforward feminist tone, the artist integrates science, philosophy, mysticism, technology, and social issues. From 1983 she worked for years in the periphery of the Artificial Intelligence Laboratory in Brussels, where the functions of the human brain are studied and reconstructed. There she explored the uneasy accessible area of the unconscious. Hence, she positioned herself within a reviving tradition where scientists and artists try to collaborate and attempt to achieve a more humane society.

In 1994 AMVK wrote: 'My installations deal with topical problems of contemporary survival related to the restoration of impaired functions of the central nervous system. The fundamental principles underlying the work of the brain, which enabled it to function for many years without interruption, today command the interest of experts not only in philosophy and science, but in art as well. This is because these principles can be utilised to make survival mechanisms more reliable.'

She is occupied with the ways in which invisible forms of self organisation are working within certain systems. And how they attach themselves each time to the systems own logic.

Interior, if not domestic spaces often serve as settings for her drawings and collages, from which dream-like futuristic enactments between human and machine-like forms unfold. In the nineties, hand-made paper works gave way to computer graphics, while text has always featured alongside images, underlining the message of Van Kerckhoven's proud, sometimes exhibitionist female figures, like song-lyrics. Music plays an important role in her creative production in parallel to her visual output, and she and Danny Devos have stood as a key pair of the Antwerp experimental music scene under the band name Club Moral (1981-now).

When a mindset structures, analyses and classifies new knowledge and the perceptions of its appearance, then that mindset transforms itself into a vital, vibrant new abstract that lifts me up. It supports immediately the train of work that is vital to my personal existence and evolution. In 1979 I made my first installation and titled it 'Art:Science=Future:Logics'. Any scientific article bearing an utopian undertone and any logical reflection on the systematics of perception push me to go further in my quest for what made the mind make the mind. And for linking this issue with the necessity, the inevitable urge for bringing new things in the world, such as 'artefacts'. (AMVK in Ortszeit/Synprozess (Basel 2014) für Susanne Neubauer)

<https://www.amvk.be>

Stef Van Looveren

Stef Van Looveren (they/them) is a Belgian multidisciplinary artist working across performance, video, photography, sculpture and installation. Their practice explores the politics of embodiment, sexuality and the constructed nature of identity, often employing humour and prosthetic objects to reveal how identities are formed, constrained and liberated. Using symbolic transformation and ritualistic gestures, Van Looveren explores the continuous evolution of inner states, bodies and selves.

Their installations and sculptural works often incorporate materials such as silicone, wax, metal and glass: substances that evoke the malleability of the body and states of transition. These material choices reinforce a central interest in transformation, both physical and psychological, and reflect the fluidity inherent to identity.

Van Looveren's performances and installations blur the boundaries between theatrical spectacle, ritual and bodily exploration. Drawing on influences from religious iconography, technology, popular culture and subcultures such as BDSM, their work creates an immersive and charged visual language that questions normative expectations of the body while inviting viewers into a heightened, transformative experience.

<https://stefvanlooveren.com/>

Stef Van Looveren on the works displayed at UNI:

Torso, Self-Portrait (2025)

Borrowing its title from Louise Bourgeois's *Torso, Self-Portrait*, Stef Van Looveren's sculpture enters into a quiet dialogue across generations while shifting the work's symbolic terrain. Rather than presenting the body as a site of psychological fragmentation or memory, Van Looveren imagines the self as an evolving organism; one suspended between human anatomy, seed, and plant.

Throughout Van Looveren's practice, the seed functions as a recurring metaphor for transformation, latent potential, and the continuous process of becoming. Here, a softly rounded form evokes hips and a torso before gradually unfolding into an elongated stem that branches into delicate, budding forms. The sculpture never settles into a single identity; instead, body and vegetation merge into a shared morphology, dissolving the distinction between the human and the botanical.

Rooted yet reaching upward, the work recalls the archetype of the Tree of Life; a figure linking earth and sky, ancestry and futurity, mortality and regeneration. Growth is not presented as linear or complete, but as a fragile, ongoing negotiation between emergence and change. The polished surface reinforces this sense of vitality, allowing light to move across the form like a living skin, emphasizing its shifting contours and organic movement.

Balancing biomorphic abstraction with bodily suggestion, *Torso, Self-Portrait* resists fixed identity. Instead, it proposes the self as something cultivated rather than given: a living form in perpetual metamorphosis, carrying within it the latent possibility of future growth, much like a seed that already contains the potential of an entire tree.

SEED (2023)

The seed takes the form of a buttplug, suggesting that growth begins from within. It plays with the dual symbolism of insertion and implantation, blurring the line between eroticism, potential, and transformation. Traditionally a sign of fertility and new beginnings, the seed becomes something carried inside the body. It suggests that becoming does not only unfold outwardly in the world but also internally, as desire, identity, and change emerge from within.

Vanessa Van Obberghen

Vanessa Van Obberghen's work often incorporates themes of language and misunderstanding, particularly in how communication can both connect and divide people. Language, in her art, is not just a tool for expression but also a site of tension where meaning can be lost, transformed, or manipulated. She examines how miscommunication, translation, and cultural differences can create gaps in understanding, leading to both personal and political consequences.

Her work frequently highlights the limitations of language as a means of conveying identity and experience, emphasizing how linguistic barriers can reinforce power imbalances or perpetuate exclusion. Van Obberghen might use fragmented texts, multilingual elements, or distorted symbols to emphasize the ambiguity inherent in language, playing with the viewer's expectations about meaning and interpretation.

In this way, her art prompts reflection on how misunderstanding shapes human interaction, especially in contexts of migration, diaspora, and cultural exchange. The fragility of communication in cross-cultural contexts becomes a metaphor for broader societal issues, such as xenophobia or systemic inequality. By engaging with the failures of language, Van Obberghen's work speaks to the complexity of human connection and the ways in which misunderstanding can be both a barrier and a creative force.

Vanessa Van Obberghen (°Seoul, Korea) lives and works in Antwerp, Belgium. She is currently the assistant of Luc Tuymans

<https://www.vanessavanobberghen.com>

Tom Volkaert

Tom Volkaert's sculptural work is a testimony to the materiality of memory as much as it is an ongoing tribute to the spiritual and shamanic force of art.

Born in Antwerp in 1989, Volkaert's sculptural work is a carefully balanced combination of refined artistic craftsmanship and the strategic use of unpredictability that comes into play when working with enameled ceramics, epoxy, or oxidized metal. Many of his works consist of circles on legs, which the artist likes to call steering-wheels. These works are like totems: symbolic and organic artifacts that make present the otherworldly alien life in the cosmos and that put us in touch with something radically different from us. On the edges and inside these circles, contorted arachnoid limbs, intestines, and sickly satanic tongues are carefully arranged and held in suspended animation. It is as if these circles are portals to another cosmic dimension and something wholly other than human life is trying to get through, a lumpy otherworldly and alienated organic gesturing at us in a way that feels both familiar and estranging.

But Volkaert's so-called steering wheels are also a totem for his own life and memories, a way of navigating and coming to terms with his own life. For Volkaert, colors embody memory. Personal memories first of all. And thus, the lived memory of the cinereous cigarette stains on the caput mortuum colored carpet in his parent's living room is reenacted and relived through the use of these colors in his work. But universal memories too. The usage of umbilical greyish pink and placenta-colored red appeal to a birthing process all of us have gone through; engaging with these colors, Volkaert's sculptures establish a connection to the matrixial mother in which all creativity is situated, making the viewer receptive to the most intimate and estranging experience of being alive.

Conjuring up these contradictory feelings and holding them together is, ultimately, at the core of Volkaert's artistic practice. Holding together contradictory sensations, his art opens a space where feelings of joy, surprise, wonder, and disgust are enclosed in the same ceramic totem, metal cut-out, or epoxy statue.

<https://www.tomvolkaert.com/>

Andrew Webb

Andrew Webb (1966–2019) was a British artist born in Warwickshire, England. He studied at Goldsmiths College, University of London. After a brief stay in Spain, he moved to Belgium with his partner, Jon Thompson, in the mid-1990s, living first in Antwerp and later in Brussels until 2008. From 2008 onwards, he lived and worked in Sandwich, Kent, England.

Andrew Webb's early oeuvre consists of conceptually based objects and collages. While his work is informed by Dadaism and Surrealism, it is unmistakably contemporary. He made extensive use of language through visual and phonetic puns, anagrams, humour, and eroticism.

As Jean Fisher (1942–2016) wrote:

"Webb works with the visual-verbal pun, the anagram and the portmanteau word, which more often than not conceal a sexual meaning. They constitute the hinge of what Duchamp called a 'corridor of humour', disrupting our expectations of language and meaning, and opening experience to the play of the imagination."

Unfolding Leaves

The starting point for this set of collages is the devotional cards and other material found saved in missals. They are littered with elements of humanism and classical references such as flowers, leaves and ribbons. The collages explore the remarkable similarity between religious and physical iconography in Renaissance painting and contemporary images of the male figure and homosexual pornography. Some collages contain autobiographical elements, while others directly reference artists of the modern period.

<https://www.anniegentilsgallery.com/andrew-webb>