

Gerda VAN DAMME

Catalogue

www.gerdavandamme.com

GERDA VAN DAMME - BIO

Contemporary artist, painter, visual artist, video artist

Born in 1964, Gerda Van Damme lives and works in Charleroi, Belgium. She presides the artists' collective GROSSES LACUNES and is a member of THE MUYBRIDGE COLLECTIVE (both in Charleroi) and of MECA (Mediterráneo Centro Artístico) in Almeria, Spain.

AWARDS / NOMINATIONS / DISTINCTIONS*

- 2025 Audience Award and Mention of the Jury in the *Prix des Arts Plastiques et Visuels du Waux-hall*, Nivelles
- 2025 Finalist in the Prix de la peinture de Woluwe Saint-Pierre.
- 2024 Finalist in the international contest *MiniARTures* of FiKVa (Figuratieve Kunst Vandaag, Belgium) and WG Galerie (Dordrecht, Netherlands)
- 2024 Finalist in the painting category in the international contest *Arte Laguna Prize*, Venice, Italy
- 2023 Finalist dans le Prix des Arts d'Antoing 2023
- 2023 Finalist in the international contest *Un-cool Artists (Dol-Arts)*, US
- 2023 Finalist dans la *Biennale de l'Art Baron Pierre Paulus*, Châtelet
- 2023 Finalist in the *Prix des Arts Plastiques et Visuels du Waux-hall*, Nivelles
- 2023 Finalist in the painting category in the international contest *Arte Laguna Prize*, Venice, Italy
- 2021 Envision Arts online contest – *BLACK +*

WHITE IV: A Contemporary Collective, Honorable mention, US

1988 *International short video festival*: official selection with video "The Bee", Arnhem, Netherlands

EXHIBITIONS (SELECTION)*

- 2025 Group show *FACBA 25*, Universidad de Granada, Facultad de Bellas Artes, Granada, Spain
- 2025 Prix de la peinture, group show, Woluwe Saint-Pierre, WHall
- 2025 Group show *Latency*, MECA Mediterraneo Centro Artístico, Almeria, Spain
- 2025 *Concours d'Arts Plastiques & Visuels*, Centre Culturel du Wauxhall, Nivelles, group show
- 2025 3^a edición del *Taller de pintura de paisaje del natural PN Cabo de Gata-Níjar* under the direction of Andrés García Ibáñez - Group show at Rodalquilar, Spain
- 2025 *Balad'art*, group show, Barbençon
- 2025 *Belg'idees*, group show, Charleroi
- 2025 *Fêtes de la Saint-Martin*, group show,

Relais Saint-Martin, Tourinnes-la-Grosse

2025 *Ruta del Arte*, group show, Frigiliana, Spain

2024 *Arte Laguna Prize finalists exhibition*, Arsenale, Venice, Italy

2024 *MiniARTures*, group show, FiKVa (Figuratieve Kunst Vandaag) and WG Gallery, Dordrecht, Netherlands

2024 *The Garden of Love - 45 hedendaagse kunstenaars oog in oog met James Ensor*, group show, Galerie P, Ostend

2024 *Silence*, group show, an organization by Kunzthuiz at the Abbaye Herkenrode, Hasselt

2024 *Ars Visibilis VI*, Group show, MECA Mediterraneo Centro Artístico, Almeria, Spain

2024 *Ashes to Ashes*, solo show, Grange at la Dîme, Arquennes

2024 *Études*, La Cellule, solo show, Charleroi

2023 *Always something there to remind me*, Group show (Dol-Arts), Brooklyn, NY, US

2023 *MoNo*, Group show at Kunstfabrik, Berlin, Germany

2023 Group show at Annexe MONOS, Liège

2023 *Concours d'Arts Plastiques & Visuels, Centre Culturel du Wauxhall*, group show, Nivelles

2023 Finalists exhibition of the *Prix des Arts*, Antoing

2023 Finalists exhibition of the *Biennale de l'Art Baron Pierre Paulus*, Châtelet

2023 *Midsummerdaydream*, group show, Galerie P, Ostend

2023 *Arte Laguna Prize finalists exhibition*, Arsenale, Venice, Italy

2023 *Le roucoulement des pigeons*, solo show at Anne Génard, Charleroi

2023 *Moi, pépé, mémé et les poulets d'Oscar*, La Cellule, Charleroi, solo show

2022 Citadel de Dinant, group show

2022 Prieuré d'Anseremme, group show

2022 Faulx-les-Tombes église, group show

2022 Hemptinne, Ferme du Sanglier, group show

2022 Faulx-les-Tombes, Abbaye de Notre-Dame de Grand-Pré, group show

2022 Orp-Le-Grand, église, group show

2022 Biesme Chateau, group show

2022 La Cellule, Charleroi, solo show

2021 Envision Arts online – *BLACK + WHITE IV: A Contemporary Collective*, group show

2021 *Half Empty* – Solo show at *Centre culturel Haute Sambre* and simultaneously at desacralized church *Notre Dame du Mont Carmel*, Thuin.

2021 *Scene de vie, scène de mort* – Solo show at La Cellule, Charleroi

2020 *Figures de Femmes*, Group show at la Maison du Hainaut, Charleroi

2020 Group show at La Manufacture Urbaine (LaMU), Charleroi

2019 "Ashes to Ashes" at West Station Skatepark, Charleroi

2019 Manoir du Capitaine, group show, Feluy

1990 Group show "Salon de la naïveté II", Fêtes de la Saint-Martin, Tourinnes-la-Grosse

1989 Group show "Salon de la naïveté I", De Spuye, Louvain

1988 Solo show Diest

1987 Group show at Irish College, Louvain.

1982 Group show at *Southern Virginia University*, Buena Vista, US

EDUCATION

Academie des Beaux Arts Alphonse Darville, Charleroi, painting, video art, drawing

Masterclass on abstraction techniques in landscape painting with Toña Gómez, Almeria, Spain

Masterclass on realist open air painting with Andrés García Ibáñez, Aguamarga, Spain

Stedelijke academie voor Schone Kunsten, Louvain, photography and applied arts

Catholic University of Louvain (KULeuven) :
- Master in literature
- Video art

Script writing for video, private course

GRANTS & AIDS

- 2022 Aid of the city of Charleroi for the artists collective *Grosses Lacunes* for the curation of La Cellule, contemporary art space at Charleroi
- 2021 Grant of the Province of Hainaut and the Cultural Center *Eden* for the artists collective *Grosses Lacunes* for the project *Vitamines*
- 2021 Grant of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles for the project *Grand Ecart* (contemporary art festival in collaboration with *Eté Mosan*, classical music festival)
- 2020 Grant of the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles for the creation of the artists collective *Grosses Lacunes*

PROJETS (CURATOR / ORGANIZER - SELECTION)

- 2025 The One Week Art Project, an international collaborative project with participating artists from Belgium, Germany, Spain, Poland, Italy, Japan, UK,...
- 2022+ La Cellule (with Grosses Lacunes / Stephan Vee): art space in Charleroi
- 2022 *Grand Ecart*, contemporary art festival in collaboration with *Eté Mosan*, classical music festival
- 1989+ Group shows 'Salon of naïvism I and II, Louvain and Tourinnes-la-Grosse

* Unless where mentioned otherwise, the location of contests and exhibitions is Belgium.

“

*In the desert
I saw a creature, naked, bestial,
Who, squatting upon the ground,
Held his heart in his hands,
And ate of it.*

*I said, “Is it good, friend?”
“It is bitter—bitter,” he answered;
“But I like it
“Because it is bitter,
“And because it is my heart.”*

Stephen Crane, 1895

”



ABOUT GERDA VAN DAMME'S WORK

Gerda Van Damme's art invites us into an intimate exploration of the human condition—one steeped in existential longing and the ever-present awareness of life's transience. Her work confronts the quiet despair and disillusionment that arise when youthful aspirations collide with the inevitability of aging and mortality. Through a diverse practice that includes paintings, video art, and installations, she both questions and transcends the banality of everyday existence, challenging us to consider if true happiness can ever be reconciled with the struggles that define human experience.

In her methodical approach to capturing life's fleeting moments, Van Damme transforms the passage of time into an archive of personal and collective memory. Whether through hyperrealistic paintings that seem to freeze time, or through a systematic digital cataloging of images and narratives, her art speaks to the legacy we forge in moments that are both ephemeral and poignant. Each canvas, photograph, or installation becomes a repository of memory—a testimonial to the inevitable wearing away of time and the persistence of human emotion.

Central to her visual language is a refined use of monochromatic tones, primarily influenced by Payne's grey—a subtle mélange of ivory black and ultramarine blue. This palette, carefully chosen for its capacity to suggest both absence and light, evokes a simplicity

that belies the depth of her exploration. By superimposing delicate layers of oil paint, she achieves a fragile yet potent visual effect, creating dimensions that range from the quiet intimacy of a 14 x 14 cm miniature to expansive installations spanning up to 10 square meters. This dramatic variation in scale reinforces her relentless inquiry into themes of impermanence and the human quest for meaning.

In recent developments, Van Damme's work has begun to embrace a renewed vivacity through color. Inspired by the luminous warmth of the Andalusian landscape, vibrant hues now interweave with her established tonal framework. Although her commitment to exploring life's ephemeral nature remains unchanged, the introduction of new footage and settings—often staged in the stark expanses of the Spanish Tabernas desert—imbues her work with an added layer of sensory allure. Here, the interplay between the old and the new, between somber reflection and bursts of light, opens up a dialogue on how memory and identity can be both archived and reinvented.

In sum, Gerda Van Damme's oeuvre is a meditation on the fragility of existence and the enduring impact of our fleeting moments—a visual symphony that resonates with anyone who has ever grappled with the depths of human experience.

Portfolio | paintings

BEDTIME TALES SERIES

On Fire 53
Oil on wood, 49,5 x 62 cm, 2025

The Pipelines 54
Oil on canvas, 60 x 80 cm, 2021

Nude Descending a Staircase 55
Oil on canvas, 60 x 80 cm, 2021

Time Slipped 56
Oil on canvas, 40 x 60 cm, 2024

Detail 57

ABSTRACT OBJECTS SERIES

Study of an Empty Can #1 58
Oil on canvas, 40 x 50 cm, 2020

Study of an Empty Can #2 59
Oil on canvas, 60 x 80 cm, 2023

At the Museum 60
Oil on canvas, 140 x 180 cm, 2019

THE DOOMED SERIES

Red Girl with Toy Gun 61
Oil on canvas, 65 x 54 cm, 2025

Girl, Standing #1 62
Oil on canvas, 140 x 100 cm, 2022

Girl, Standing #2 63
Oil on canvas, 140 x 100 cm, 2022

THE CONGO ARCHIVES SERIES

Visa for Publication 64
Oil on canvas, 180 x 140 cm, 2020
Exhibition view in Church Notre-Dame de Mont Carmel in Thuin

Measuring Despair 65
Oil on canvas, 180 x 140 cm, 2020

LANDSCAPES

Man with Dog 66
Oil on canvas, 54 x 73 cm, 2025

Aguamarga 67
Oil on canvas, 82x 100 cm, 2025

Pico 67
Oil on canvas, 22 x 27 cm, 2025

Evening 68
Oil on canvas, 90 x 60 cm, 2022, detail

VARIOUS

Bas les masques!
Oil on wood, 25,4 x 25,4 cm 69

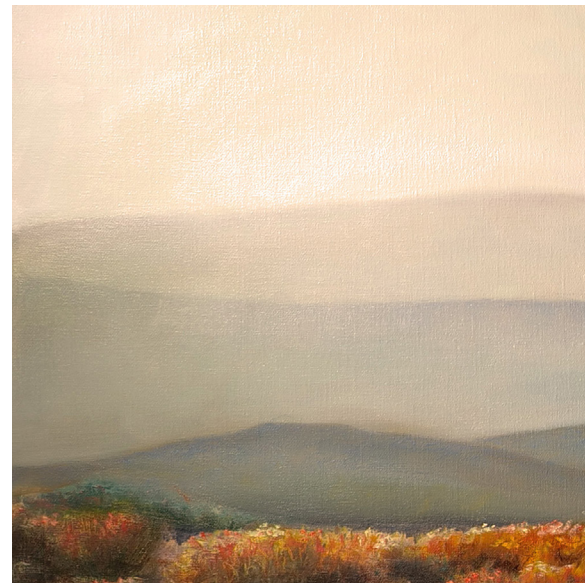
Bitch!
Detail 70
Oil on canvas, 110 x 90 cm, 2023 71



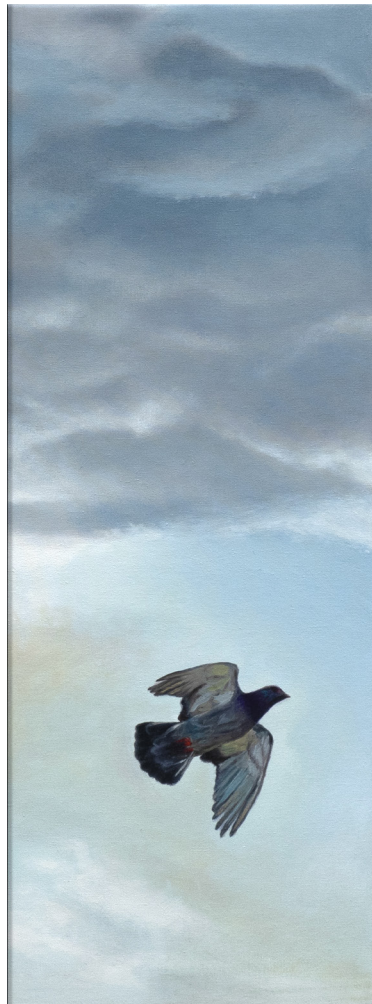
Wordless still, she did not ponder whether she blended in or stood out.













I was going up and down the stairs, minding my own business,
when, suddenly, it came to me:
I would never walk in someone else's shoes.

I was going up and down the stairs, minding my own business,
when, suddenly, it came to me:
I would never walk in someone else's shoes.



... when, suddenly, it came to me: I would never walk in someone else's shoes.











Vendo liguero

€10

Nuevo liguero sin estrenar



club chair en skai

€180

jamais servi acheté 250€ vendu 180€



Black set of lingerie

€7

Never worn. Missed gift. XS #women #sexy #set



Never worn wedding dress

€180



25 € 50-€

Tête à coiffer jamais jouée





Keukenmes

€25

Vlijmscherp roestvrij nooit gebruikt nog in verpakking.



50 €

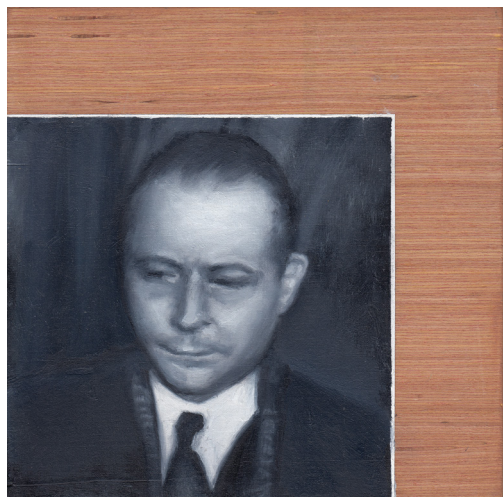
Robe rouge jamais portée





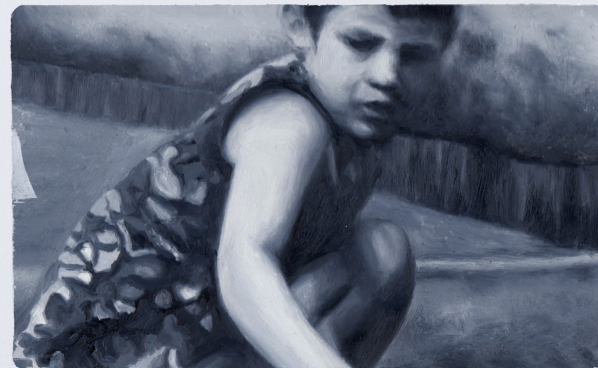


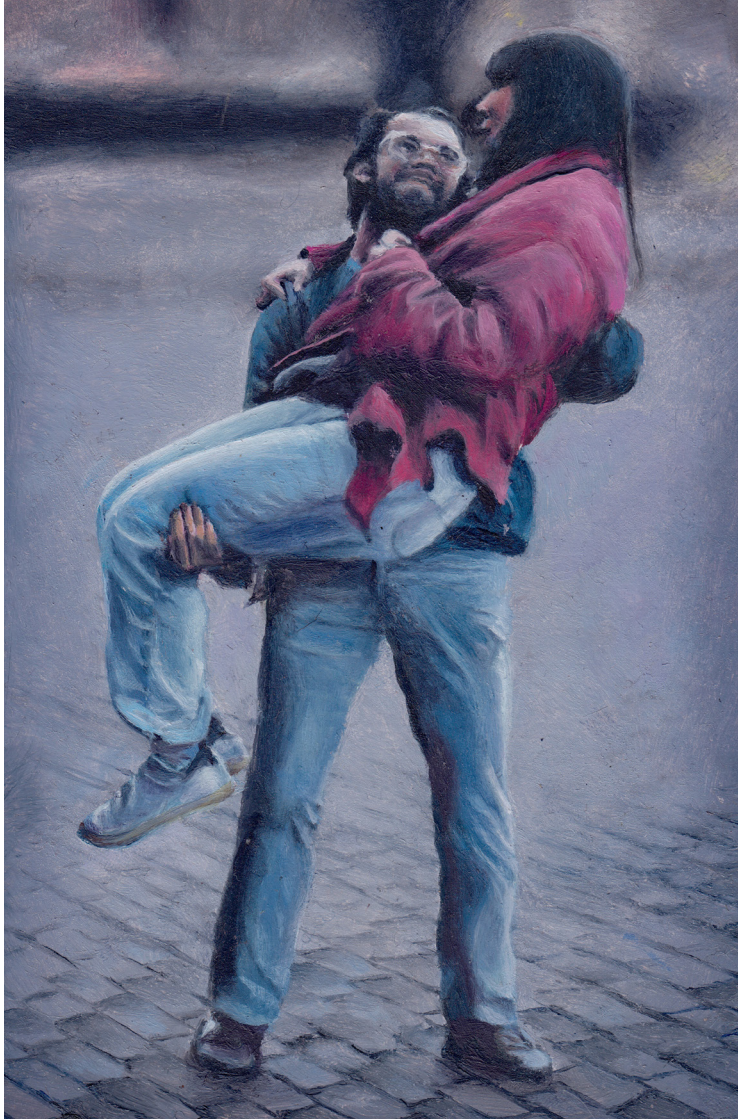
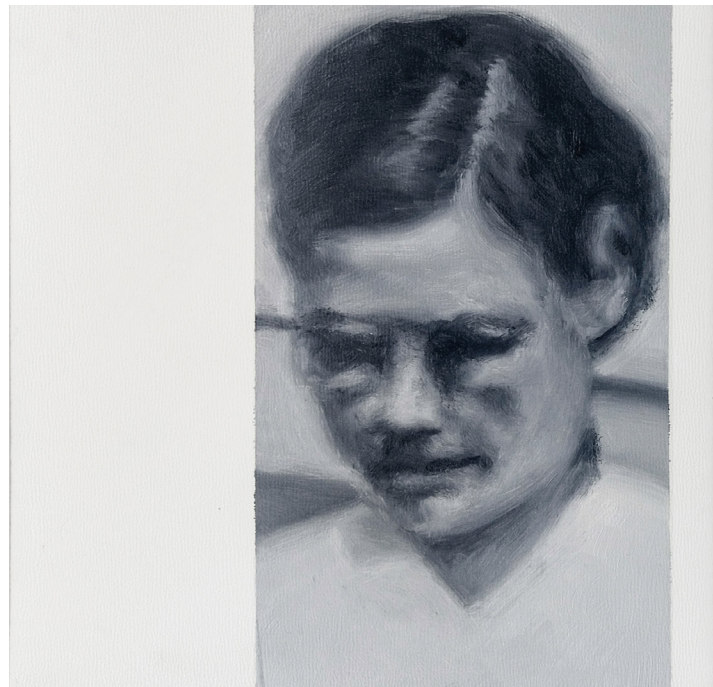
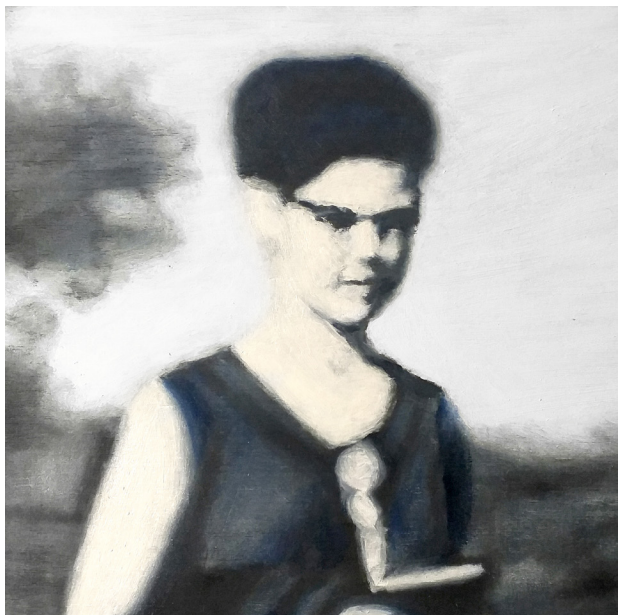










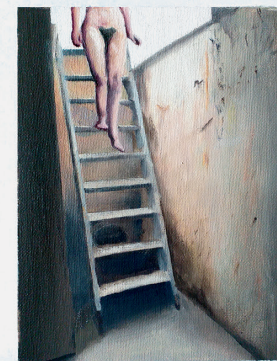




THE FIRE RAGED ON THE MOUNTAIN, YET WE STAYED,
DRAWN TO THE DANGER AND THE SPECTACLE.

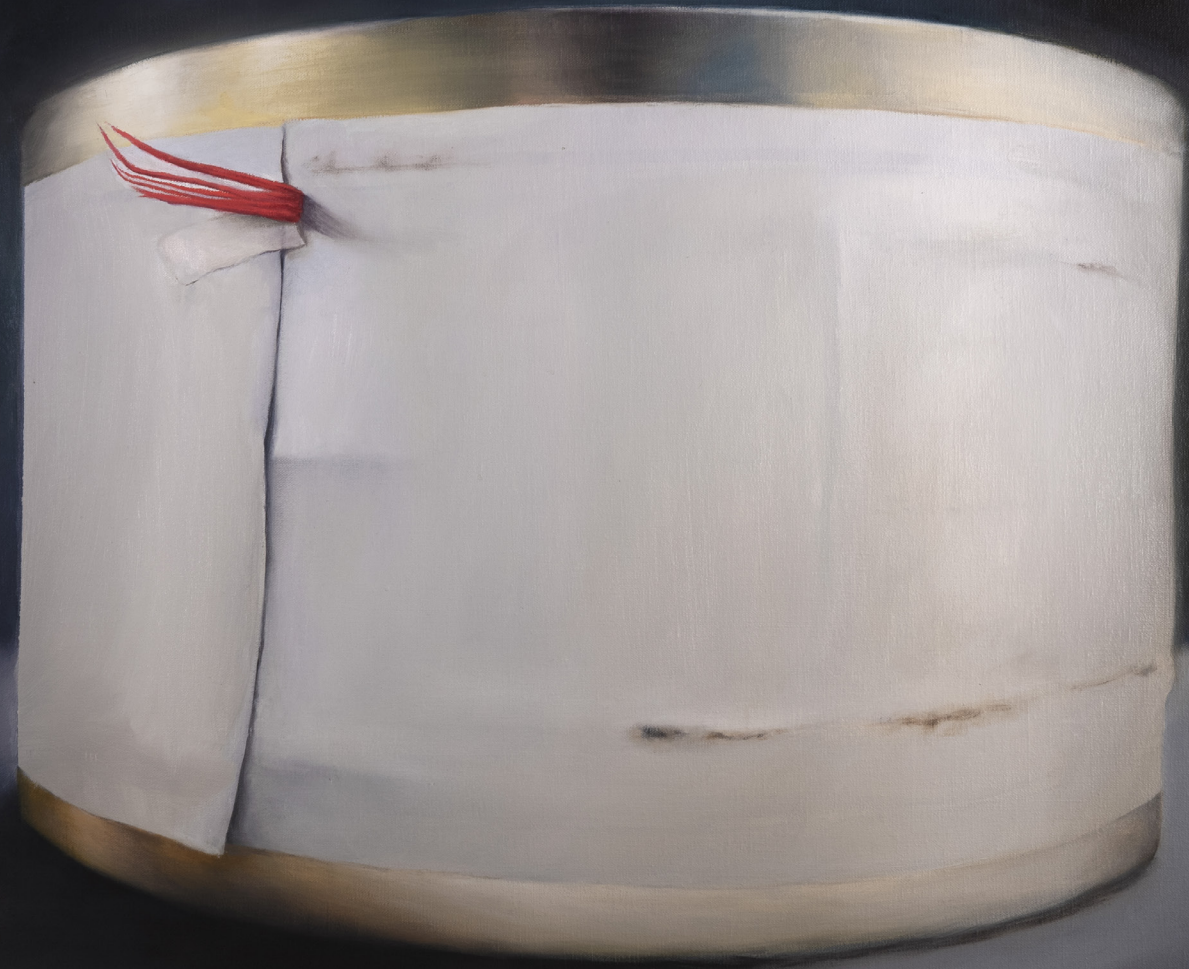


UNE GRANDE TRISTESSE S'EMPARA D'ELLE QUAND ELLE PENSA À LA QUANTITÉ DE GAZODUCS DANS LE MONDE.



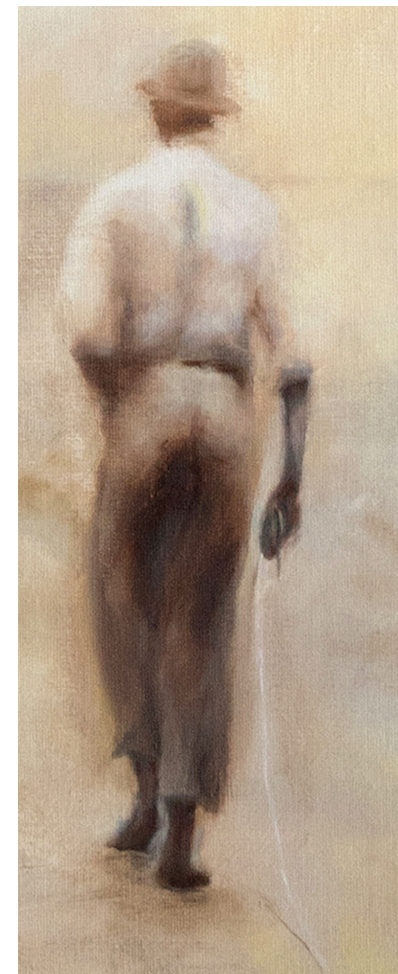
AVANT D'ALLUMER LA LUMIÈRE ELLE SE DEMANDA SI L'ÉLECTRICITÉ EST CONTAGIEUSE.

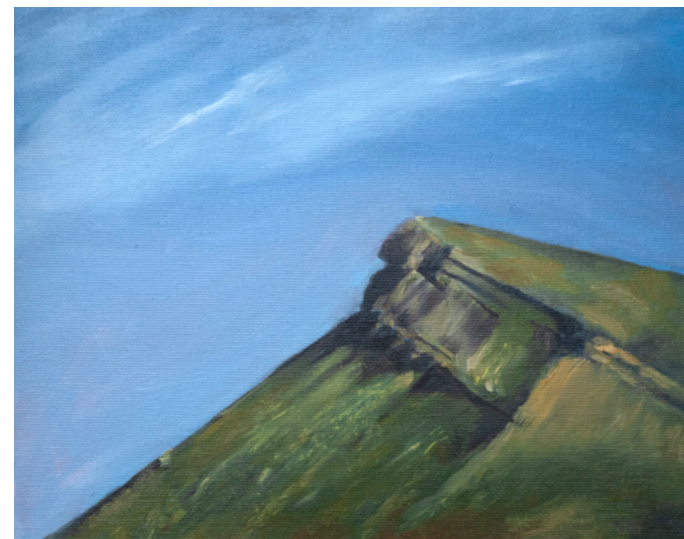
















Portfolio | digital

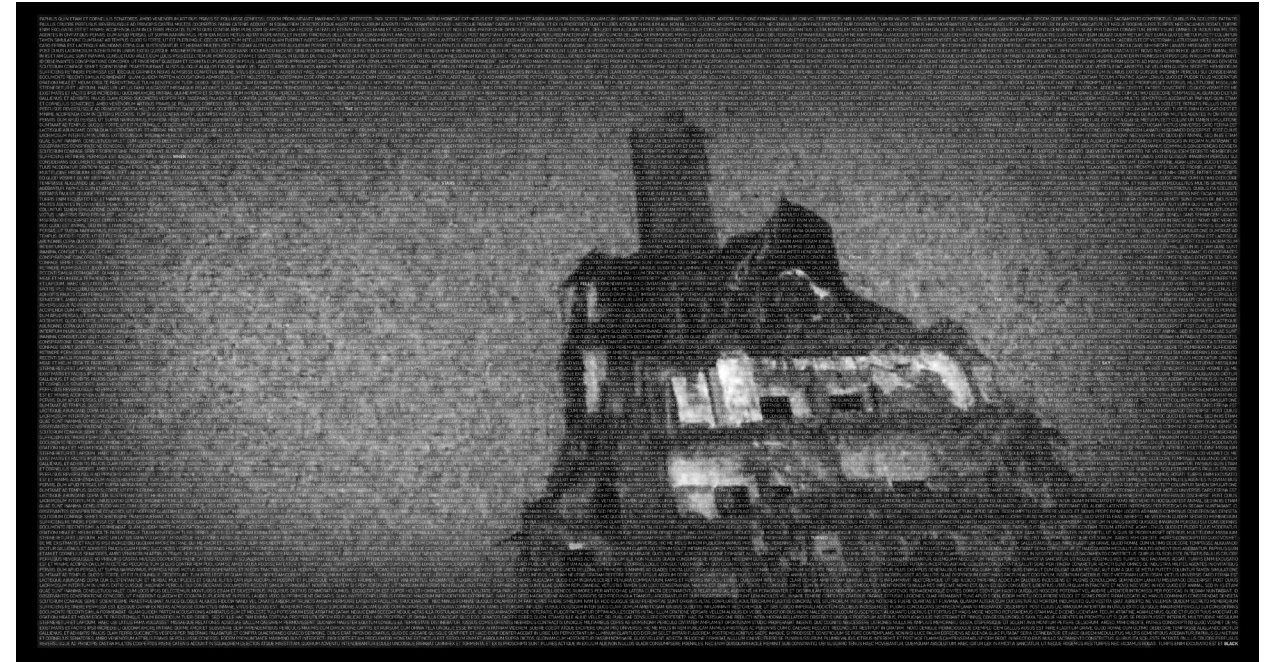
**WHEN THE STARS FELL FROM THE SKY IT TURNED
BLACK**

2019

Brushed aluminium print, 125 x 235 cm

This image of a building in deconstruction bears a vague reminiscence of the tower of Babel. There are no hundreds of workers, but a heavy weighing solitude. There is an endless stream of "lorem ipsum" over the image. Latin is a dead language, the language of tombstones. Within this text the words of the title of this work are seamlessly integrated in bold. The last word is "BLACK".

This is the bankruptcy of communication.





SERIES: AFTER THAT

2023

Various brushed aluminium prints, videos and drawings

Human traces in nature, meaningless remainders of humanity in an eternal nature.

Next page: detail of one of the works;





Portfolio | video art

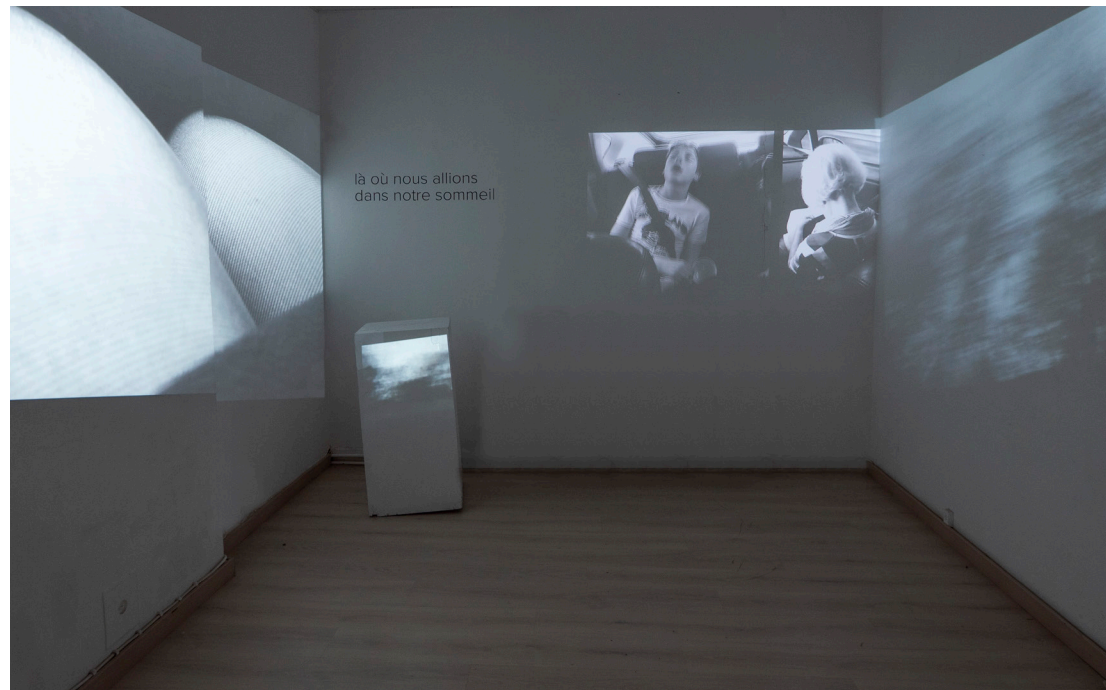
WHERE WE WERE HEADING IN OUR SLEEP

2019

Video installation about the inexcusable boredom with which we let our lives slip out of our hands.

<https://vimeo.com/339849791>

Installation view in the Cultural Center Haute Sambre, Thuin, Belgium



THE MISSION

2022

A story about a man who goes on mission in Tenerife.

<https://vimeo.com/757926001>



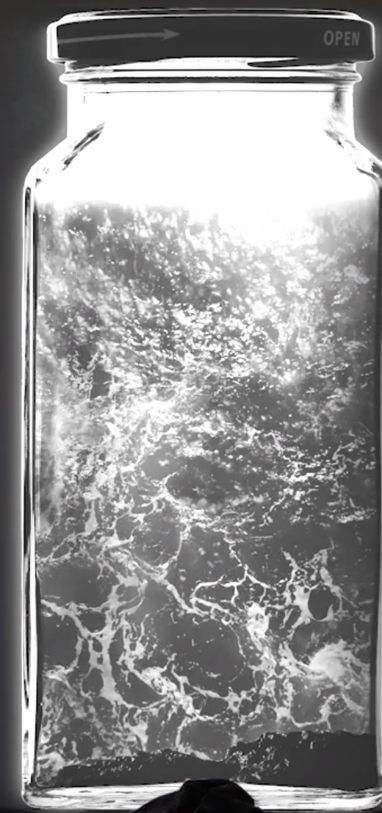
SOY UNA ROCA / JE SUIS UN ROCHER

2018

Video installation with video projection and sculpture of a rock

<https://vimeo.com/user83462212>

*the sea belongs to me.
it only exists inside of me.
all the rest is the fruit of my imagination.
i am a rock, soy una roca.*



THE COOING OF THE PIGEONS

Vidéo
90 secondes
<https://vimeo.com/827740341>

In French. Translation:

Ah, what a beautiful day! It smells like spring. It looks like a bird, that cloud... As long as I live, there are things that will never change, like clouds taking all kinds of forms, there is also the feeling of the sun on my skin, and also the sound of wind in the trees and the roar of pigeons. But when I die, all this will be over. This will no longer exist.



TICK-TOCK

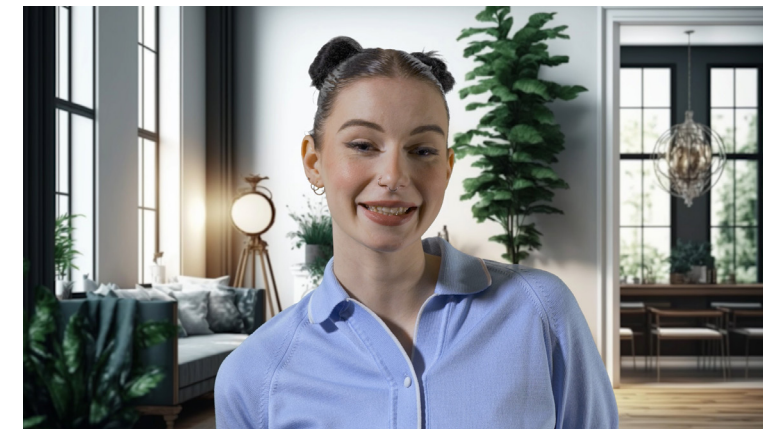
Vidéo
80 secondes
<https://vimeo.com/827740451>

I'm very good at calculating the exact duration of a second! Can say ticking at the rhythm of seconds for whole minutes! Let me show you. Wait, I need to concentrate... Tick-tock, tick-tock (etc.).

AS A GOOD GIRL

Vidéo
80 secondes
<https://vimeo.com/827740225>

It's a very interesting question that I had never thought about until now... So I don't know what to say... What memory would I leave after my death? It's a very complicated question. It's true that I want to do very big things that could change the world and change people's lives. And at the same time, it is true that remaining anonymous is what suits me best for the rest of my life. What memories do I want to leave after my death? Only good memories for my loved ones. Anyway, no matter what we do, we will always end up forgotten. Therefore, even if we are the most famous person in the world, within a few centuries I think everyone is forgotten. So for me it is no use killing yourself by absolutely wanting to leave something after our passage through the earth. So, in a nutshell, I want to be remembered as a good person, as a good girl...



AN AUTUMN WALK

2020

A story about separation anxiety.

<https://vimeo.com/575453701>



BEST FRIENDS FOR EVER

2020

A reading session of a horrifying inventory.

<https://vimeo.com/575444336>



AFTER THAT

2023

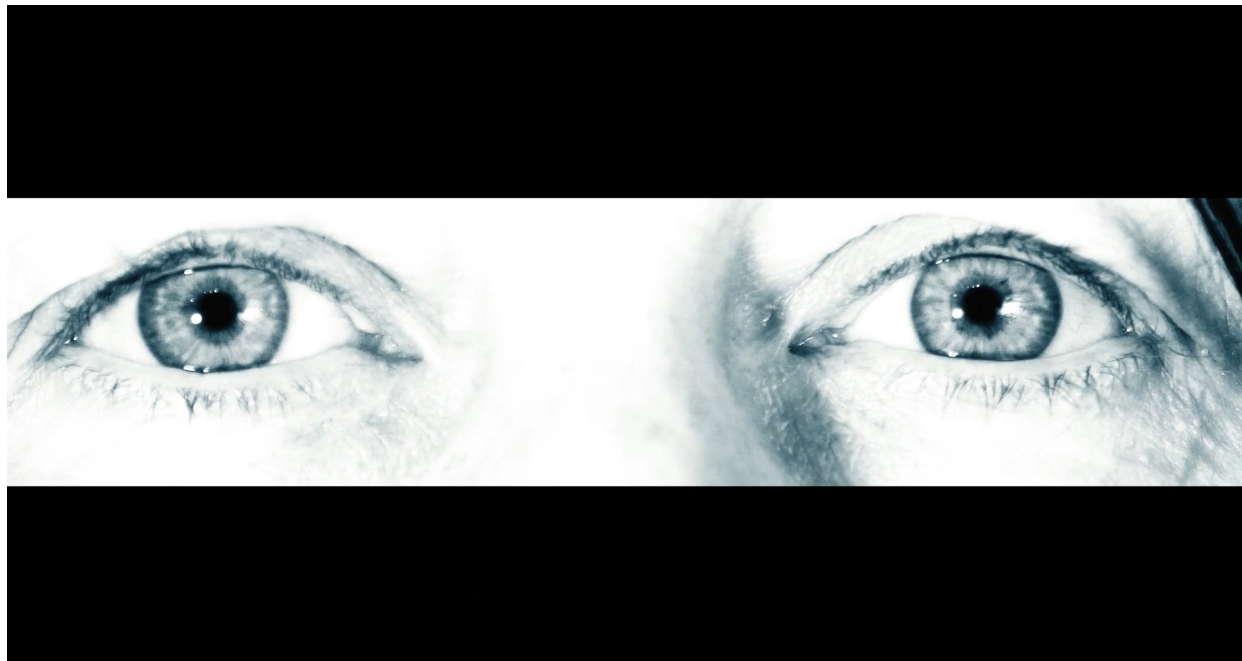
Video - 3 minutes.



THE DOOR

2020

<https://vimeo.com/474405613>



Portfolio | installations



YOU DROVE MY BIKE !

2022

Installation : iron container, various objects (children's bike, wall clock, chandelier, encyclopedia, toy gun, kitchen utensils, children's car, drawers, etc.)



Exhibition view at the Citadel of Dinant, Belgium, 2022



DILUTED VERSION OF GUIDO JANSSENS, 60.06.23-259.62

14 vials in a display case, and an inventory on paper.
2023

The contents of the bottles contain diluted traces of Guido Janssens, husband of the artist: remains of his breath, suspended in the air of his hometown, sea water containing theoretically the formula of his urine, since - one day - he peed in the sea, etc.

THE END OF THINGS KNOWN

2021
Installation - ready made



TIME

2021

Installation, wooden stand, chinaware cup, baby spoon, black paraffin wax.

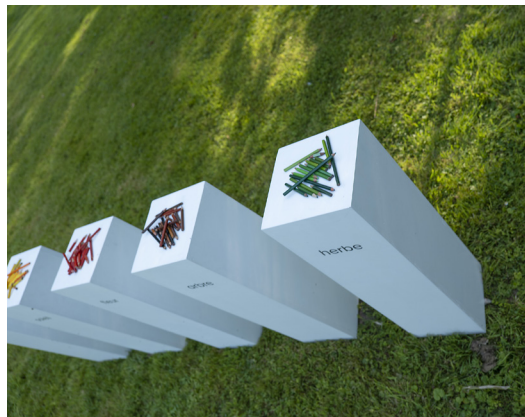


THE WAY WE WERE, 1967 - 1974

2022

Installation, ready-made with the colored pencils from the artist's childhood, bearing her teeth marks.

The words printed on the columns are "sky", "sun", "flower", "tree" and "grass".



Exhibition view at the castle of Biesme, Belgium



THE RAVAGES OF TIME, THE MEMORIAL STONE

2022

Memorial stone of the artist of 84 x 54 cm,
paraffin wax, talc powder, chandeliers and brass plate

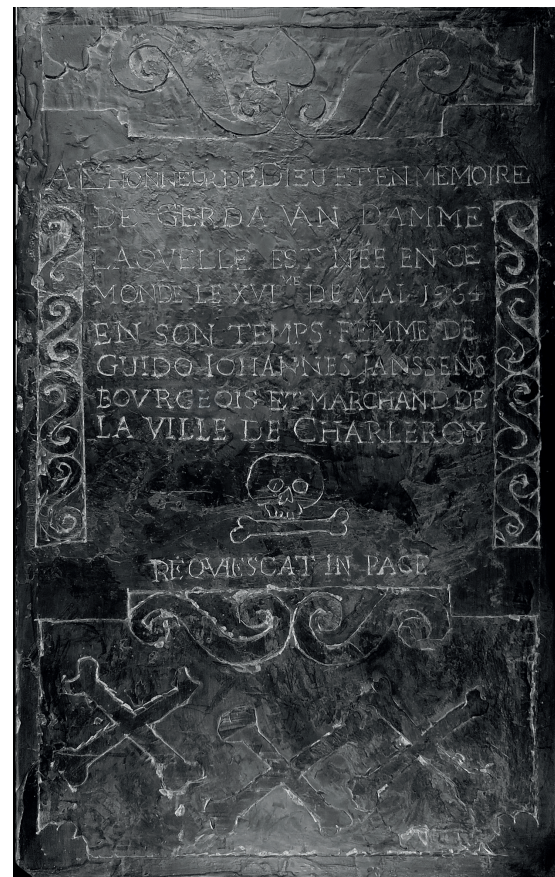
Translation of the inscription: *To the honour of God and to the memory
of Gerda Van Damme. She was [rest is unreadable]*



THE RAVAGES OF TIME, THE TOMBSTONE

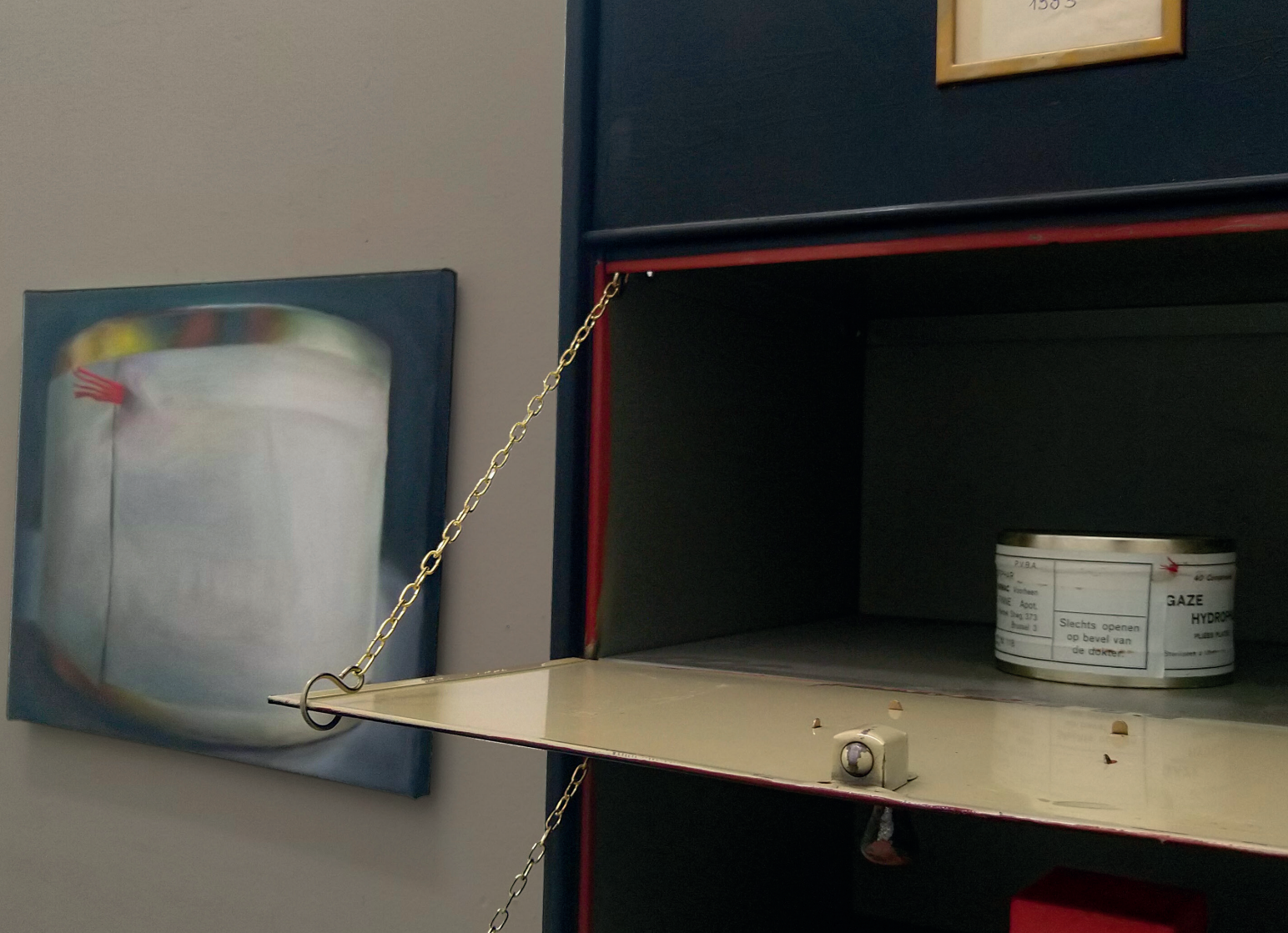
2021

Tombstone of 134 x 84 cm, paraffin wax, talc powder and aluminium.



Right: "in situ" in the Church of Notre-Dame du Mont Carmel in Thuin.

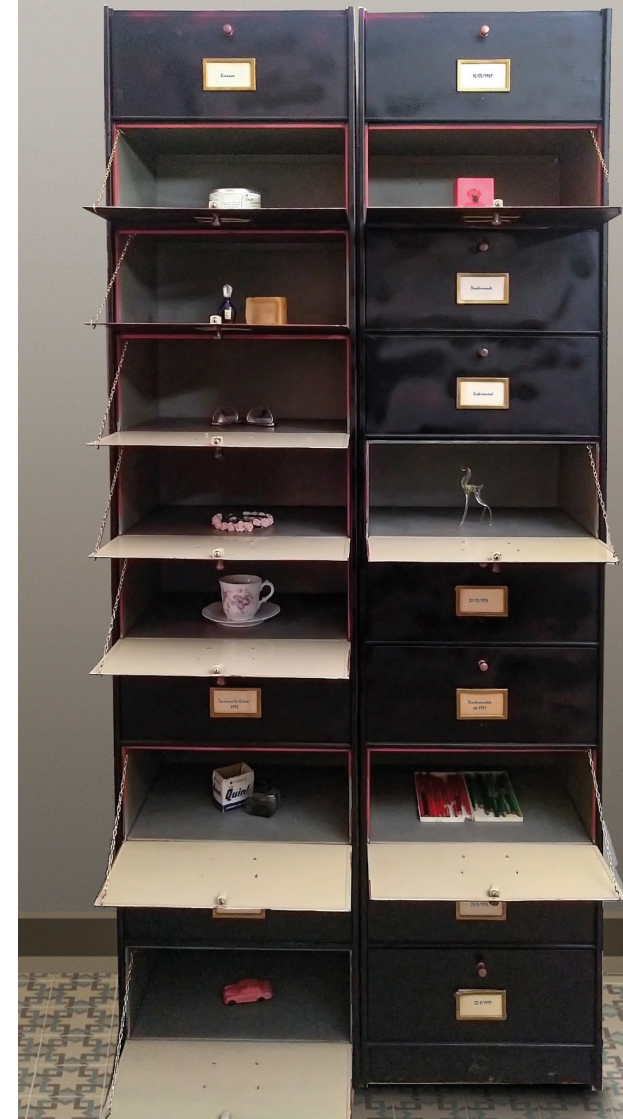




THE CABINET

2021

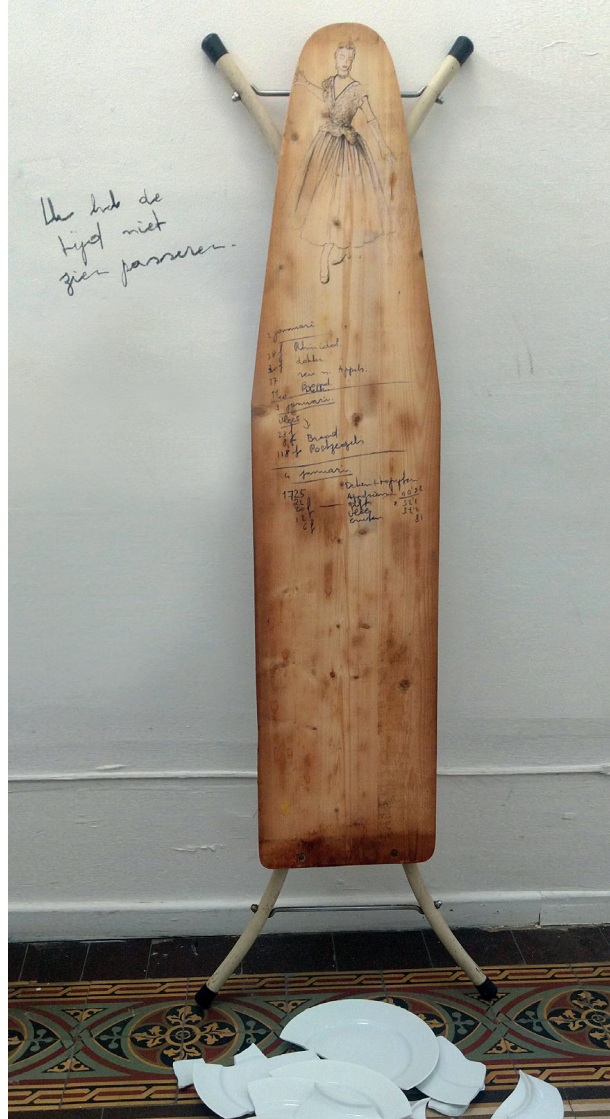
Installation with flap cabinet, found objects



I FAILED TO SEE TIME GO BY.

2021

Installation



Installation view in the
Cultural Center Haute
Sambre, Thuin, Belgium





THE ARCHIVES

2021

Brushed aluminium prints, codes
painted in acrylic, Ytong blocks

*Left: installation view at the Biesme
Castle, Belgium
Right: detail*



**THE WAY WE WERE,
DENDERMONDE, 1973.
LUXURY CAR**
2020
Installation



**THE WAY WE WERE,
DENDERMONDE, 1970.
HEAVEN**
2020
Installation



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vimeo.com/user83462212

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