



**MID
DEL
HEI**
Museum

**FLEMISH
MASTERS
2018**

ANTWERP
BAROQUE 2018
RUBENS INSPIRES

FLORIS VAN DER MEER

en

16 artists lead you up the garden path

EXPERIENCE TRAPS

01/06

23/09

For **EXPERIENCE TRAPS** the Middelheim Museum has invited sixteen contemporary artists who have each found inspiration in the innovative ideas behind the Baroque landscape. The approach of the participating artists and collectives is as personal as it is diverse and manifests itself in architectural sculptures, installations and performances appealing to all senses. The artworks, often purpose-made for this project, can be found throughout the park and at several locations in town.

EXPERIENCE TRAPS is one of the leading exhibitions of the cultural city festival *Antwerp Baroque 2018. Rubens inspires*. For a museum park such as the Middelheim Museum, approaching 'Baroque' via the Baroque garden and landscape turned out to be an evident choice.

BAROQUE AS A CRISIS

During the Baroque era (ca. 1600 till ca. 1730), there is a fierce competition going on between the religious and the secular powers. International trade flourishes and an explicit bourgeois culture arises, supported by self-conscious patrician families such as the one of Nicolaas Rockox (1560-1640), friend and Maecenas of Rubens.

But the Baroque is also a period of deep social crisis: (religious) wars, famine, rural exodus, the inquisition and the plague determine people's daily life. The word 'crisis' appears first in medicine but from the 17th century onwards it gets a larger interpretation: to 'cure' the sick society by controlling its 'diseases'.

The crisis causes an obsession for guiding human behaviour. Both the church and the worldly elite try to reinforce their dominant position and oppress disobedience. The art of the Baroque was always 'commissioned'. It is a rational art form deployed as a weapon in order to direct and control people and society.

*"The human being believes it is leading itself,
when in fact it is being led."*

— François de la Rochefoucauld
(1613-1680), French author

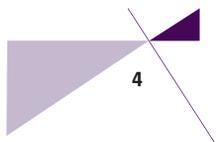
BAROQUE AS A GARDEN

The garden is traditionally used as the major metaphor for control (and dominance) of humanity over nature. The 16th century sees aristocrats engaging artists and architects to shower both garden and landscape with spectacular effects. The Baroque garden is a status symbol, a kind of pre-amusement park where visitors are being surprised and entertained. Its success is directly proportional to the amount of artificiality added: laid out labyrinths, artificial grottos, trompe-l'oeils, fountains with fake birds singing, imitation ruins ...

These gardens are exclusive: being allowed to enter them means you belong to the happy few, something that was inconceivable for ordinary folk. People are willing to travel a long way for the experience, to live it personally so they can talk about it. It incites an early form of garden tourism. The aristocratic garden becomes a destination, a place for social gathering, for sharing and exchanging experiences.

Besides the garden as playground for the rich, at the end of the 16th century a second type is introduced: the botanical garden. It is a place where knowledge and science are shared, and where visitors can expand their mind and their senses. In this inclusive garden close attention is paid to the classification of plants. Scientists hope that this will allow them to get a grip on nature's secrets and so be able to use the medicinal qualities of plants to influence human behaviour.

In the garden of Peter Paul Rubens (1577-1640), Antwerp's greatest Baroque artist, we recognize traces of both types: the exclusive garden, designed to impress, as well as the inclusive garden, inspired by Rembert Dodoens' (1517-1585) *Cruijdeboeck* (1554). As a matter of fact, this herbal repertory was published in Antwerp by Christophe Plantin (1520-1589). The garden of the Rubens House is open for visiting.



BAROQUE AS AN EXPERIENCE / MOVEMENT

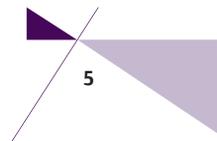
'Experience' can be read in two different ways: as the emotional kick of a one-time-only event, but also as 'the repetition that leads to gathering more and more understanding', resulting in a (rational) progress. In both cases the notion of *movement* occupies a special place. Baroque art moves the spectator 'from within'. The exuberant movement in Baroque art turns him into a participant: the spectator becomes the artwork's accomplice.

"Our life is nothing but movement"

— Michel de Montaigne (1533-1592),
French philosopher

MIDDELHEIM MUSEUM AS A BAROQUE GARDEN

The age-old park surroundings of the Middelheim Museum are a combination of a park garden and a botanical garden. Once a private property, the Hortiflora was an example of a garden from Rubens' era, with plants from Rembert Dodoens' herbal repertory. Now it is a social space where people gather to relax, to meet and to admire the artworks. To a certain extent the museum collection's development is in keeping with the baroque fact of 'architectural and sculptural interventions to make the landscape, and the encounters that take place in it, more attractive'. This is apparent in several site-specific works, such as Luc Deleu's *Orbino* (2004), and in performances such as Chris Burden's *Beam Drop* in 2009.



EXPERIENCE TRAPS

In this exhibition, contemporary artists try to guide our physical and mental experience. To this end they use style elements such as the grotto, the ruin, the fountain and the labyrinth. These motifs allow us to look at 'commissioned art' in a playful but critical manner. The art tries – in true Baroque tradition – to trick, surprise, impress or seduce the public. *EXPERIENCE TRAPS* is also a critical reflection on our contemporary society and economy, in which we continuously expect unique experiences, preferably authentic and with a good story behind it. This way, we try to position ourselves against the other(s) – for instance via social media.

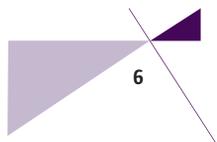
A WALK ALONG THE ARTWORKS

The artworks are marked on the map with a number.



YOU MAY TOUCH - YOU MAY ENTER

You may not touch the artworks in the Middelheim Museum unless they are marked with this logo.



MIDDELHEIM HIGH

site above Middelheimlaan

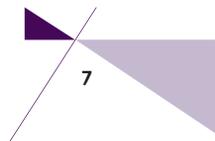
WILLIAM FORSYTHE (°1949, US)

Known as choreographer of memorable productions with the Forsythe Company and as the artistic leader of the Frankfurt Ballet. He takes the classical-academic ballet's movement patterns as a starting point, which he then unravels and combines into new structures. A virtuoso technique, interaction with objects on the scene, a striking light design, electronic music and improvisation are typical of his productions. Forsythe was the first artist who accepted our invitation to participate in the exhibition. He invited two other artists: Ryoji Ikeda and Spencer Finch.

1 **Debut, 2018** (new creation)

In the past ten years Forsythe has been producing 'choreographic objects'. He uses them to force the spectator to become aware of his relationship to the artwork, by suggesting or inviting physical interaction. In doing so he directs the spectator, just as the Baroque garden was directing the visitor's behaviour. Only by respecting a preconceived trail, will the secrets of the garden be revealed. To become part of this astonishing experience, the participant must be prepared to give up control and to take on a role.

"In all cases, physical engagement is the means to understanding the actions to which each choreographic system refers. This is regarded as the first principle of the choreographic objects themselves."
— William Forsythe



BERTRAND LAVIER (°1949, FR)

Investigates since the late 1960s the relationship between painting and sculpture, figurative and abstract, life and art. Lavier invented a series of strategies to test our intellectual vigour and to dispel our visual habits.

2 *Fountain, 2014-2018* (version Middelheim Museum)

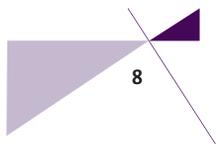
Lavier intended this 'disobedient bunch of garden hoses' to be cheerful and optimistic. Fountains were very popular in the Baroque era. Water is the symbol of eternal movement and change. It has an enormous power that, when you master it, can be mobilized for a variety of purposes. In the Renaissance fountains were more innocent, more constant. In the Baroque period 'obstacles' are built in causing the path the water follows to be completely unpredictable.

WILLIAM FORSYTHE (°1949, US)

3 *Lectures From Improvisation Technologies, 2011*

In the documentation centre (duration: 10 min)

In this video Forsythe explains a number of basic principles of the choreography. Here the artist also gives instructions but this time more as a teacher. The work divides movement like the lines of a drawing or the letters of a text. In doing so it adds to the viewer's 'visual literacy'.





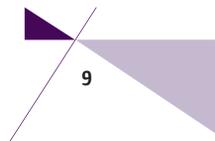
4 ***Towards The Diagnostic Gaze, 2013-2018***

In the documentation centre (version Middelheim Museum)
This 'instruction' investigates the (im)possibility of movement, one of Forsythe's favourite topics. Forsythe's instructions often come across as a labyrinth, an important Baroque motif. In Greek mythology the Minotaur is held inside the labyrinth. A way to escape is to use your body for dancing. Forsythe's instructions are usually 'entanglements' too: a complex puzzle in which you need both your body and your brain in order to bring the instruction to a successful conclusion.

DENNIS TYFUS (°1978, BE)

Produces at a high pace drawings, paintings, silkscreen prints, posters, record sleeves, music ..., which he distributes via his own label Ultra Eczema. Tyfus needs this diversity: to him boundaries, fear and limitations are the biggest enemy of art. Pinning down his unique style is impossible, but it is characterised by a rebellious attitude to both the contemporary art world and popular culture.

"There are so many reasons why Baroque is attractive: her opulence and movements, her own gardens, the architecture in which she nestles, her greed as well, especially in the morning when I tap on a plate with a fork. Then she wags her tail and starts to drool like never before. The fact she hears about eight times as well as most human beings implies that we better not play too loud the music she is attached to – Jean-Baptiste Lully to name but one due to lack of space
— Dennis Tyfus





5 **De Nor, 2018** (new creation)

De Nor is a travelling theatre with a bar that until further notice will come to a halt on the boundary of the Middelheim Museum and the public space. It is a theatre in which several of Tyfus' activities come together: music, paintings, drawings, marathon dance performances ...

This summer Dennis Tyfus plans/improvises a series of cultural events on Friday evenings in De Nor. For a detailed programme please consult www.middelheimmuseum.be

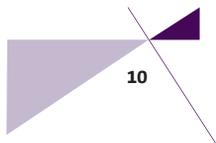
ADRIEN TIRTIAUX (°1980, BE)

Trained as an architect. He often uses interaction or audience participation to realise or complete his projects. With his installations and constructions he tries to capture the relationship with the environment and then intervene in it.

6 **Heaven and Earth, 2018** (new creation)

Tirtiaux decided not to design a sculpture but to let it emerge as a connection between the earth and the sky. By pouring concrete into an excavated pit or mould, the earth becomes part of the work. It is this spatial relation in particular that the artist finds interesting in Baroque architecture.

In 1514, astronomer Nicolas Copernicus (1473-1543) introduced heliocentrism: the idea that the earth revolves around the sun. The Copernican revolution led to a fascination with infinity. For artists at the time this resulted in an increased interest in space, time and light.



“Baroque compositions are exemplary for those like me, who like to reflect on systems of power through architecture and urbanism. In designs such as St Peter’s Square in Rome or the Viennese Belvedere, the control ambitioned by the Church or the State is expressed by a centralized and enclosed space, yet open to the infinite through dramatized openings on the city and the sky. This is the kind of spatial articulation that I’m interested in when I conceive an exhibition or a site-specific installation.”

— Adrien Tirtiaux

MONIKA SOSNOWSKA (°1972, PL)

Sees her work as 3D-paintings and considers the space as a medium to which she adapts her creations. To achieve this goal she manipulates existing architectural elements, transforms the physical space into mental space and toys with the viewer’s perception. She always uses the typical elements and materials from the architecture of Eastern Bloc regimes: metal, dull colours, concrete ...

“Ornamental buildings were often deliberately built in ruins. Although they were follies, there was a sad note of wisdom in them too: foreshadowing death, enemies lying in wait”

— Michel Saudan & Sylvia Saudan-Skira.

From Folly to Follies. Discovering the world of Gardens. 1987

Characteristic of ruins is the passing of time and the absence of humans. Referring to mortality is not uncommon in the Baroque: “Memento mori”, remember you are mortal.

7 **Untitled, 2008-2018** (version Middelheim Museum)

In spite of the 'hard' materials it is made from, this work does have a poetic character. It resembles a silenced, frozen fountain, the stern contours of which are in contrast with the classical sculptures nearby. Nevertheless, movement is implied through the liquid quality of concrete. The sculpture, with its rough materials that could easily come from a building site, causes a disruption in this idyllic part of the park. Just like **Fence** and **Stairs**, two other works by Sosnowska in this exhibition, it can be seen as a ruin or a sign of the times.

MIKE BOUCHET (°1970, US)

Uses a broad range of art forms to criticize political, cultural and economical systems and to define the artist's role in society. Deadly serious and tongue-in-cheek at the same time, his work deals with the thin line between art and life, fantasy and reality – and often transgresses it.

*"Baroque is the total seduction of the viewer,
by any means possible. — Mike Bouchet*

8 **Energy Fog, 2018** (new creation)

Mike Bouchet is fascinated by the frequent use of smells in our society. Scents can be very intimate. We often associate them with childhood memories or a beloved one. But they are just as well deployed to sell cars or clothes. Scent has a strong influence on the unconscious, and can therefore be used as an invisible director. Are we being seduced? Or is it manipulation? Bouchet 'takes us by surprise' with the strong and highly artificial smell of the energy drink Red Bull. We are confronted with the specific and also confusing relation between the natural and the artificial in the museum park.

ANDRA URSUTA (°1979, RO)

Produces installations and sculptures that are a personal homage to the history of Romania and her youth in that country – coloured by occult folk traditions and nationalist propaganda. She incorporates these stories in her work, in a personal, rebellious way, peppered with a dark sense of humour.

“What intrigues me most in Baroque is its artificiality, a super-ordered image of the world that was imposed on the real world. Under the surface all kind of things bubbled up: follies and extravagance. Baroque art is about man’s impotence to meet his imagination. There is a lot of darkness in Baroque. It’s no coincidence that scientific concepts such as the vacuum (a space without matter and without pressure) stem from the Baroque era.” — Andra Ursuta

9

Natural Born Artist, 2012 (on loan)

This sculpture is, like **Scarecrow**, (p.24), a toy stripped of its functionality. It is a trompe-l’oeil, the illusion of seeing something that in reality is not there. An object for children that should be soft and playful and accessible but that is, on the contrary, hard and forbidding. The sculpture is no longer an appliance, you cannot participate. As a spectator you are in both the physical and the mental space of the work, without the two coinciding.

ULLA VON BRANDENBURG (°1974, DE)

Is inspired by literature, theatre and psychoanalysis. She is fascinated by how theatre and performance throughout history have been used to reflect on politics and society.

10



Le Soleil te regarde, 2018 (new creation)

Just like the Baroque garden, theatre uses tricks and artifices such as perspective and trompe-l'oeil to create illusions. This principle can also be found in von Brandenburg's installations. An ingenious theatre device which allows 'the sea' to move has been incorporated in her sculpture. These machineries were a characteristic Baroque element. By the use of pure materials, such as planks and textile, any historical or contemporary reference is removed. It makes von Brandenburg's work timeless. The work is not a historical copy, nor a contemporary theatre, but her personal interpretation of the Baroque theatre.

"Because theatre is obviously a means of travelling with your mind, we should remind ourselves that it was the sailors, with their knowledge of machinery, who worked in the theatres whilst on shore. I would like to build a stage made of sails, halfway between a theatre and a boat, moored on a lawn far from the sea, where the backdrop looks like the sails of a boat."

— Ulla von Brandenburg

Ulla von Brandenburg's performance during the opening weekend is based upon the book *'Les États et Empires de la Lune'* by French writer Cyrano de Bergerac (1619–1655). After the performance the visitor will be able to experience how it is to be on stage and to activate the 'sea machine'.

BERTRAND LAVIER (°1949, FR)

11 *Honda*, 2018 (version Middelheim Museum)

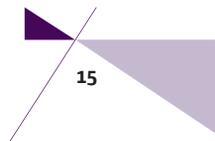
This sculpture is a typical example of this artist's work, a 'superposition' in which he combines two existing objects. He places a tool of the contemporary gardener on a pedestal. This renders the tool completely useless. Lavier uses the superposition to question things: how do we handle controlling our surroundings? Is this a garden instrument? Maybe a weird insect or a monumental flower? Or is it the overkill in control that paralyses us and makes us immobile?

RYOJI IKEDA (°1966, JP)

Visual artist, DJ, VJ and composer, his music consists mainly of sound in various 'raw states', such as sine tones and static noise. He incorporates frequencies close to the reach of human hearing. As a result you only notice the sound when it stops.

12 *A (6ch version)*, 2018 (on loan) in the **Braem Pavilion**

In music *A* stands for the note La and A4 for the diapason or standard pitch. Today this pitch is internationally standardised at 440Hz. Until the 19th century the pitch was not standardised, and so a La did not sound the same at different moments in time nor at different places on the same moment. The pitch of Handel's tuning fork (1751) from the Baroque era is 422.5 Hz. The fork used by Steinway & Sons to tune pianos in London in 1879, is 454.7 Hz.



1. **William Forsythe**
Debut
2. **Bertrand Lavier**
Fountain
3. **William Forsythe**
Lectures From Improvisation Technologies
4. **William Forsythe**
Towards The Diagnostic Gaze
5. **Dennis Tyfus**
De Nor
6. **Adrien Tirtiaux**
Heaven and Earth
7. **Monika Sosnowska**
Untitled
8. **Mike Bouchet**
Energy Fog
9. **Andra Ursuta**
Natural Born Artist
10. **Ulla von Brandenburg**
Le Soleil te regarde
11. **Bertrand Lavier**
Honda
12. **Ryoji Ikeda**
A (6ch version)
13. **Gelitin**
sculpture for a sculpture park
14. **Spencer Finch**
Mars (Sunrise)
15. **Gelitin**
Arc de Triomphe
16. **Monster Chetwynd**
Folding House 2
17. **Bruce Nauman**
Diamond Shaped Room with Yellow Light
18. **Monika Sosnowska**
Stairs
19. **William Forsythe**
Backwards (13, 5, 23, 7)
20. **William Forsythe**
Circuit (Hexagonal)
21. **Louise Lavier**
Birdcalls
22. **William Forsythe**
Underall II / III
23. **Andra Ursuta**
Scarecrow
24. **Andra Ursuta**
Nose Job
25. **Monika Sosnowska**
Fence
26. **Jeremy Deller**
Sacrilege

MAP



- 15 Gelitin, *Arc de Triomphe*, 2003-2017**
This artwork is the representation of a urinating male nude. If you prefer to avoid this exhibit, you can opt for an alternative route through the museum park.

GELITIN (collective since 1993, AUT)

Is a collective of four visual artists: Tobias Urban, Wolfgang Ganter, Florian Reither and Ali Janka. They make installations and performances in the tradition of the 'relational aesthetics', a trend in contemporary art that sees art and the artist as social connectors and in which the spectator often has to take on an active roll within the artwork. Humour is seldom lacking. Gelitin feels very inspired by the Baroque: *"In our work everything twists and turns, just like in the Baroque"*.

- 13** *sculpture for a sculpture park, 2018* (new creation)
"Getting swallowed up by the earth has always fascinated us. But the clay pit in the Middelheim Museum is different: this is not about the creation of a shape. Everybody gives the previous form a new form." —Gelitin

Gelitin makes for the museum a temporary interactive clay spot. You can come and play or work in this clay pit, as long as you leave the clay in the pit. If desired, you can rinse yourself off afterwards.

SPENCER FINCH (°1962, US)

Is known among other things for his ethereal light installations, which demonstrate his knowledge of natural phenomena. His research into the nature of light, colour, memory and perception manifests itself in drawings, videos and photos. He filters our observations through the lens of nature, history, literature and personal experience. His work emanates both a scientific approach and a poetical sensitivity.

Light is one of the most articulate forms of expression for the Baroque artist. It is part of the naturalistic vocabulary (consider for instance

Baroque landscape paintings). Moreover, light is both a natural and a supernatural phenomenon (as a proof of the divine intervention).

The Baroque period sees the rise of a fascination for astrology and stargazing. In 1609 Galileo Galilei invents the telescope. Finally man can thoroughly study (the movement of) the stars and other celestial bodies. When in November 1618 a comet appears, it causes a lot of commotion. Both scholars such as Johannes Kepler (1571-1630) and prophets of doom write about it extensively. Not much imagination is required to be aware of the fact that man in the 17th century was quite impressed by (as yet undefined) natural phenomena.

14 *Mars (Sunrise), 2018* (new creation)

Spencer Finch covers the windows of the **Gloriette**, the boat-house at the entrance of the museum, with coloured foil. This installation recreates the colour of the light of a sunrise on Mars, based on the measurements from the unmanned Pathfinder in 1996. According to the artist the observation of the sun is probably the only thing that has never changed throughout our whole history.

GELITIN (collective since 1993, AUT)

In the Baroque period – and long after – erecting triumphal arches and other city ornaments was a customary practice. In 1635, Rubens is the director/choreographer of the Joyous Entry of Cardinal Infant Ferdinand in Antwerp. For his triumphal arches Rubens bases himself on the arches of Antiquity. He decorates them with mythical and historical scenes.

15 **Arc de Triomphe, 2003-2017** (on loan)

This artwork is the representation of a urinating male nude. If you prefer to avoid this exhibit, you can opt for an alternative route through the museum park.

Gelitin's triumphal arch is deliberately anti-aesthetic and made from temporary, perishable materials such as plasticine and furniture panels. Over the years the collective has produced several versions of a triumphal arch, often with a number of urinating male nudes. This work can be read as a critical comment on the many female nudes in the museum collection, or on the art world as a closed circuit.

This triumphal arch is positioned opposite an existing stone arch in the park. It presents a perspective that was used in the Baroque era to give depth to a space or to emphasize its continuity. We can experience a similar trompe-l'oeil effect in Rubens' city garden where there are also two arches placed one behind the other.

MIDDELHEIM LOW

site under Middelheimlaan

MONSTER CHETWYND (°1973, UK)

Interlaces interactive performances, sculpture, painting, installation art and video. Her work contains elements of traditional games, popular culture and surrealist cinema. In her anarchistic performances a motley crew of cultural references appears: from Dante to Karl Marx, from drag acts to Star Wars.

16 *Folding House 2, 2018* (version Middelheim Museum)

*On June 1st this 'house' is part of the performance **Free Energy Workshop 2** in Antwerp's Central Station. *Folding House* will be displayed as an autonomous sculpture in the museum as from June 2nd.*

As the title suggests, this is a nomadic house: a structure in recycled material that can be set up and transported rapidly. In that respect it is a simple but futuristic-looking means of transport. Seen from a Baroque perspective the construction could also be a greenhouse, a writer's cabin or a ruin. The artist made the sculpture using recycled windows and the most basic metal scaffolding. The cyclic movement of energy and recovered materials is essential for Chetwynd, both in the sculpture and the performance.

BRUCE NAUMAN (°1941, US)

Has been a pioneer since the 1960^s in terms of electronic media, installations, video art, sculpture and neon works. Nauman researches systematically what it means to be 'consciously human'. He devotes special attention to the organisation and control of (social) behaviour, empathy and how the human body relates to its surroundings.

17 *Diamond Shaped Room with Yellow Light, 1986-1990/2018*



Nauman describes his Diamond Shaped Room as inhospitable. But he installs the work on such a conspicuous location that it incites you to enter the work nevertheless. Maybe on the other side someone did exactly the same. And yet real contact seems impossible because the artist controls the environment tightly. He asks us to collaborate but subsequently allows us very little. This way he confronts us with our hopes and expectations, and with the influence we think we (should or may) have.

“The bright yellow light can blind you for a moment upon entering. Colour and form can lead to confusion. You don’t want to stay very long in this space.” — Bruce Nauman

This sculpture stays in the Middelheim Museum. It is the most recent acquisition for the Middelheim collection and was purchased with the support of the Middelheim Promotors vzw, Ackermans & van Haaren, L.I.F.E.nv and Mathieu Gijbels nv.

Hortiflora

MONIKA SOSNOWSKA (°1972, PL)

18 **Stairs, 2018** (new creation)

The work *Stairs* causes a dislocation of the landscape, a contrast with the surroundings. Possibly it is a reference to exotic flowers, such as the tulip, which were very popular in the Baroque era. Or maybe weeds, but they wouldn’t be tolerated in a Baroque garden. The work is set up somewhat discreetly in the woods, as a silent witness to a forgotten civilisation, another culture or another era. The same theme and interpretation are applicable to the sculpture ***Fence, 2010***.

WILLIAM FORSYTHE (°1949, US)

19 **Backwards (13, 5, 23, 7), 2018** (new creation)

20 **Circuit (hexagonal), 2018** (new creation)

Inversion, 2018 (edition, for sale in the **museumshop**)

One of Forsythe’s themes in dance is ‘destabilisation’, something that is avoided in the classical ballet but accepted in contemporary

dance. This work too is a ‘choreographic object’, a metaphor for the uncertain times in which we live. Just as it was during the Baroque era, the crisis nowadays is never far away.

LOUISE LAWLER (°1947, US)

Started her career in the 1980^s by taking pictures of other artists’ works. In doing so she demonstrated her interest in the way art is exposed in private and public collections. She likes to play off the art world against itself, but criticizes in a mild manner. Lawler provokes the powers that be in the art world and condemns the glorification of art objects and the marketing of (mostly male) artists.

21 *Birdcalls*, 1972-1981 (on loan) in **Het Huis**

In this sound piece, Lawler imitates a parrot reciting the names of important western artists: her critic on the fact that the art world is dominated by the white male. Artificial bird sounds are also to be found in the Baroque garden, where *automatons*, functioning on air pressure, imitate bird sounds.

WILLIAM FORSYTHE (°1949, US)

22 *Underall II/III*, 2018 (new creation)



As with the *Floor instruction*, Forsythe gives an assignment that requires both mental and physical engagement. Do you follow the instructions hesitantly? With full enthusiasm? Half-heartedly? Or do you prefer to remain a spectator? The choice is yours ...

“In the best case my work does not intend to choreograph the visitors. In fact the visitors choreograph themselves.”

— William Forsythe

ANDRA URSUTA (°1979, RO)

23 **Scarecrow, 2016** (on loan)

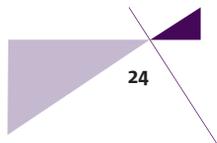
“Scarecrow resembles the goal post of an unknown urban sport (it has been described as a basketball hoop for a game that cannot be won, because it can't be played), a billboard, and also a barrier that simultaneously attracts and blocks outsiders. Despite its current political overtones, I think it resonates with the notion of landscape as social platform, or even as a tool for social control.” — Andra Ursuta

24 **Nose Job, 2018** in **Rubenstein**

The broken nose is reminiscent of the remainders of an antique statue. The positioning in this part of the garden, the design of which was inspired by the Rubens garden, refers to Rubens' love for antique Roman sculptures, which he collected and traded in. According to the legend he even had a pantheon style circular room in his house for them.

MONIKA SOSNOWSKA (°1972, PL)

25 **Fence, 2010** (on loan) in **Dodoenstuijn**: zie **Stairs** p.22





THE ARTISTS IN TOWN

Location:

Nachtegalenpark, sports field Middelheimlaan

JEREMY DELLER (°1966, UK)

Is a conceptual video and installation artist. He investigates, amongst other things, the function of cultural signs – such as uniforms, slogans and inscriptions as a symbol of identity and a 'belonging to' – in the public space. He has a critical approach to our society but always with a sense of humour. *Sacrilege* is an object and therefore an atypical work for this artist. Deller is better known for his performances and events.



26 *Sacrilege*, 2012 (on loan)

Can only be visited – and used – during the opening weekend, from June 1st to June 3rd

In the Baroque era, people were willing to travel far to visit an extraordinary garden, because they knew a unique experience awaited them there, something they could share with other visitors. The experience also advanced their position in the world.

Stonehenge has been a magnet for visitors for a very long time. Unfortunately, the site became something of a tourist trap, where visitors are forced to follow a predetermined route with the obligatory exit through the gift shop. Cultural and spiritual world heritage reduced to a product, sold in our experience economy. To Deller the social aspect of *Stonehenge* is crucial: for centuries it has been a popular meeting place, used for ceremonies and celebrations. With his 'sacrilege' more than anything else he wanted to realise an unexpected project and experience.



Location:
Central Station, Antwerp

MONSTER CHETWYND (°1973, UK)

Free Energy Workshop 2, 2010 - 2018 (recreation)
**Performance during the opening weekend
on Saturday June 2nd**

The performance is based upon the figure of Nikola Tesla (1856-1943), one of the major inventors of 'electricity'. Unverified statements on technique and science later in life cost him a fair amount of his reputation as a genius. Now he is mainly known through Elon Musk's electric cars that bear his name. The participative performance, with props and costumes made by the artist and her extensive entourage, is Chetwynd's personal vision on Tesla's ideas. She interrogates the spectators on the energy cycle. Folding House is part of the installation. After the performance it will be moved to the Middelheim Museum for the duration of *EXPERIENCE TRAPS*.



Location:
De Coninckplein, Antwerp

RECETAS URBANAS, since 2003, collective formed by architect Santiago Cirugeda (°1971, ES)

For the last twenty years the collective has filled the public space with participative building projects, based upon the inhabitants' and users' needs. It often concerns affordable, mobile building constructions made from recycled material. The users play a decisive role at each stage: when designing, during the construction process and for the maintenance of the creation. With these 'recipes for the city', citizens not only assume their responsibility, they also take matters into their own hands. But 'spontaneous' as they may seem, projects like this one are always preceded by an intensive period of legal investigation, participation and technical preparation.



Montaña Verde, 2018 (new creation)

At the invitation of the Middelheim Museum and the Green Department of the city of Antwerp, Recetas Urbanas creates a natural sculpture on De Coninckplein. The project forms a part of *EXPERIENCE TRAPS* as a research into the possibilities and limitations of city ornaments and arch designs. But it also takes into account the botanical species that were cultivated and used in the Baroque era for their nutritious or healing qualities.

In Rubens' time embellishments were meant to show the city at its very best. Architect Santiago Cirugeda and his colleagues want 'to get to know the heart of the Antwerp citizen'. The artist likes to 'seduce' as well but if the neighbourhood doesn't support this green romance, De Coninckplein will remain grey.

Unlike Rubens – who kept a firm grip on projects – Recetas Urbanas goes in search of models of participation in this hyperdiverse society. Together, the collective and the local community investigate how a green public space can contribute to a liveable city.

Text editing:

Tin Vancutsem

Curators of the exhibition:

Sara Weyns en Pieter Boons

RELATED EVENTS

11/08/2018 – Middelheim Museum – ‘A Midsummer Play’

🕒 2pm

New Performance *Monster Chetwynd: Pomegranate Promenade*

Monster Chetwynd presents a new creation that she describes as ‘real entertainment as a ridiculous journey through the garden as a memory theatre.’ *Pomegranate Promenade* is a spectacular, surprising and committed performance.

🕒 3pm

Book presentation: exhibition catalogue *EXPERIENCE TRAPS*

The exhibition catalogue, compiled by Boy Vereecken and Laura Herman, can be regarded as a Baroque theatre play: you can elaborately (re)read the story of the exhibition by means of various characters and themes that stroll through the Baroque garden, like a lexicon. Vereecken, Herman and some of the artists taking part in the exhibition present the exhibition catalogue to you.

🕒 4pm

Film premiere: Ulla von Brandenburg, *Le Soleil te regarde II*

During the opening weekend, Ulla von Brandenburg appeared on the stage of her theatre sculpture *Le Soleil te regarde* in a performance that she developed together with actor Benoît Résillot. The 16mm film of the event was thoroughly edited into an autonomous video that will premiere here.

MORE EVENTS ON OFFER TO THE PUBLIC IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE EXHIBITION:

Introductory film:

on view in the entry hall of the Middelheim Castle, Dutch/English.
Also available on www.middelheimmuseum.be and on ARTtube.be

Free tours for individual visitors: (in Dutch)

- no reservation required.
- Every 2nd Sunday of the month from 2pm till 4pm: 10th June, 8th July, 12th August and 9th September. Separate guides for adults and families with children aged 6 to 12.
- On Thursday 21st June, 19th July and 16th August, from 6pm till 8pm, a guide for adults is available.
- The guides will be waiting for you at the reception desk in the Middelheim Castle.

Group visits:

- also for schools and associations (in Dutch, French, English, German, Spanish, and Italian).
- Reservation: Visit Antwerpen, 03 232 01 03 or www.visitantwerpen.be

Workshop for adults: De Ultieme Barok (in Dutch)

- 17th August in MAS|Museum aan de Stroom, 18th August in Middelheim Museum, both days from 1pm till 5pm.
- More information on www.middelheimmuseum.be

Course for adults: Hedendaagse kunst en barok (in Dutch)

- More info on www.amarant.be

SUMMER WORKSHOP for children on the Baroque (in Dutch)

- More info and other activities on www.vakantieateliers.be

ANTWERP
BAROQUE
2018
**RUBENS
INSPIRES**

PRACTICAL INFORMATION

MIDDELHEIM MUSEUM

Middelheimlaan 61
2020 Antwerp
T 03 288 33 60
E middelheimmuseum@stad.antwerpen.be
www.middelheimmuseum.be

Free admission

Reduced mobility? Reserve in advance your electric cart or one of our three wheelchairs. Adapted toilet available.

OPENING HOURS

May and August: 10am – 8pm
June and July: 10am – 9pm
September: 10am – 7pm
Visitors are welcome up to a half hour before closing time.

CLOSING DAYS

Closed on Mondays

The artwork of Bruce Nauman was purchased with the support of:



De Voordenkers



and the Middelheim Promotors



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Media partners of the Middelheim Museum:



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