

WEAR SUNSCREEN

“Ladies and gentlemen,
of the class of ‘99
Wear sunscreen.
If I could offer you
only one tip for the future,
sunscreen would be it.”

That’s how 'Everybody’s Free (To Wear Sunscreen)' starts, the song with parlando lyrics by director Baz Luhrmann (Moulin Rouge, Elvis, The Great Gatsby, ...) in 1999. Intended as advice for young people, the lyrics are based on a famous essay by Mary Schmich, columnist at the Chicago Tribune.

The exhibition starts from the various themes cited in the text: wear sunscreen! Don't worry about the future! Dance! Stretch! Respect your elders! Don't mess too much with your hair! The lyrics thus bring together in the villa international artists reflecting on the song's impact with a wide range of techniques.

A delightful Nineties revival, 25 years on.

Curator

Pieter Jan Valgaeren is a curator, researcher and lecturer. From his background in art history and law, he specialised in new media, hybrid art forms, technology and intellectual property.

As artistic director of Stadstriënnale Hasselt-Genk, he created 'Trademarks' (2016), 'Screen It' (2020) but also several projects such as 'Celibataire Divas' (2019) or 'Me, Myself and I' for BIP festival Liege (2020). In 2023, he curated the successful 'La Isla Bonita' at Villa Les Zéphyrus and 'CTRL-X' for Alt 1000+ festival in Switzerland.

Artists

Polly Pollet

What would we be without sunscreen on hot summer days? Polly Pollet makes subtle drawings, often simply with bics. Literally (and almost figuratively) she plays with illusion and meaning layer by layer, with memories of Greek beaches and with the 'new' prudishness of our 'visual thinking' online and offline.

Lucy + Jorge Orta

Sunscreen should protect us from sunburn or skin cancer but ... has a gigantic impact on marine life. In several places around the world like The Great Barrier Reef, corals, the lungs of the sea, are so affected that several beaches no longer allow tourists.

This work reflects on our impact below sea level, where plastic and exploiting red coral turn the bottom into a desert.

Jamie Titterton & Janine Rewell

For his graduation project, art student Jamie Titterton offered his body as a 'light-sensitive canvas'. Submissions came in from all over the world, but in the end it was Finnish graphic designer Janine Rewell whose pattern was 'burned in' to Jamie's body. It was applied in stencil form before Jamie took on several tanning sessions without protection ...

Joëlle Dubois

Joëlle Dubois' intimate portraits give an insight into her generation. Strong women, stripped of all stereotypes, seem present from your gaze but are themselves engrossed in their smartphones or each other. In conversation or just chilling out while smoking, they give an insight into their lives, without wanting to give much away. The heartbeat of a proud, searching but conscious Generation Z.

Larry Clark

In 1995, the film world was briefly turned upside down. 'Kids', a teen drama drenched in sex, drugs and rock 'n roll was so raw and pure that censorship struck. The actors were just themselves and the screenplay was little more than their street life portrayed with loose camera work. Just before social media and smartphones, Clark managed to capture Generation X, with all their dreams in total purity and rawness, not yet through their own camera but loosely through his.

Frieke Janssens

Floating in infinity, model Daphne Agten seems almost weightless. Very conscious and present, she stretches her arms without giving us a glance. As photographer Frieke Janssens' muse, she makes you look, shamelessly and honestly. The actress shines this year in 'Holy Rosita' where she very consciously chooses to embrace and discuss the beauty of all bodies and stages of life.

Musketon

Artist Bert Dries has been sailing his very own course for years. As a graphic designer, he knows better than anyone how to take you into his cosmic and humorous universe. A pair of typical '90s trainers, a pair of 'anatomically' correct buttocks, you can't think of a better conversation starter. This little sculpture can handle big discussions, about beauty, expectations, (reciprocal) fashion, taste, ...

Bart Stolle

The future is always a bit uncertain, but the dynamics in Bart Stolle's work invariably make you believe in a positive outcome. His work slows down and lets you slow down, his visual language is somewhere between the logic of a computer and the power of the human mind. A boost in times of techno-negativism and the fear of AI doomsday scenarios.

Alexandra Crouwers

The end of the world ... or just barely? This video work takes you into Alexandra Crouwers' digital universe, somewhere between fact, fiction, bluff or compassion. In her research, she reflects on our relationship with technology, nature, our ecosystem and the symbiosis between man and machine. The work is a mirror, makes you think humbly about our time here on earth, how to care for yourself, others and the world.

Matilda Skoglösa

As the youngest of the company, Matilda Skoglösa has already understood in this self-portrait how important stretching can be! Both physically and mentally, the work exudes peace and balance. In soft sandy tones, she balances on a high stool, a golden frame almost silently breaking the

composition. Her flawless skin, her sharp infinity gaze ... only the different nail polish colours seem to give the picture a form of authenticity and balance everything.

Elen Braga

An important thread in Elen Braga's work is exploring the limits and possibilities of the human body and mind. Here you see her on the beach in Ostend, where she is 'drowning' in dreams of a future shrouded in symbols of the past. The tapestry shows that constant search of man, being able to land between past and present, guided by expectations of others.

Noemi Iglesias Barrios

On 'Landscapes of Affection', you recognise all kinds of symbols and signs that contrast tightly with the cobalt blue of the porcelain, which looks suspiciously like the size of a smartphone. Noemi abstracted, recoded and recycled the messages she sent back and forth with her lover, in a landscape of love, sorrow, dreams and passion. She recycled the expressive cobalt blue dye, one of the most requested and contested raw materials for making smartphones, from old phones.

Vlad Sololov

With a style all his own, Vlad Solovov belongs to a young generation of iconoclasts. Working as a photographer for Fuse, Tomorrowland and Café d'Anvers, among others, he is one of the most privileged witnesses of the development of the festival landscape in Belgium. His images leave much to the imagination, dealing sometimes abstractly and suggestively but very poetically with the dynamics of the environment, with the light, sound and dancers.

Amandine Grulois

Amandine Grulois is a photo therapist from Ghent. She uses the medium to depict people in all their diversity, beauty and complexity. In front of the lens, stories, joys, sorrows and personalities unfold into intimate portraits. Her device sends and receives, with ordinary people being actors of their own lives. This series embraces dancing as letting go, celebrating your life and body, if only in your own living room.

Elke Desutter

Elke Desutter's compositions are an adventure to look at. You recognise all kinds of bodies or at least body parts. Crumpled, folded but stately as sculpture. Stripped of their personality, they seem to become one with their finiteness and temporality.

Gender, origin or sexuality are no longer an issue; all those photographed abstractly surrender part of their bodies to the artist. Objectified, you recognise the universality of the aged body that still knows or needs beauty, softness and mildness.

Marrie Bot

In her award-winning but widely discussed series, 'The Beloved', Marrie Bot explored the experience of intimacy and sexuality among people aged 50-84. The results are very intimate, direct but also telling photos of something that is still a bit of a taboo. With her photos, Marrie Bot respectfully makes the subject discussable, without seeking the sensational, by placing it in the everyday life of those portrayed.

Sara Bomans

The subtlety of these drawings has nothing to do with the pencil or marker but with human hair. For years, Sara Bomans has managed to convince people to grow their hair so that she can use it for her artworks. Her oeuvre centres on her own body, at all stages of life. You can feel the love-hate relationship she has with her body in the subtlety with which she makes the stories drawn with her hair come to life.

Antoine Schneck

For years, Antoine Schneck has travelled the world in search of poignant protagonists to photograph, often among indigenous (original) tribes in remote areas. Using his self-developed technique of a black background and longer exposure, he manages to create razor-sharp photographs in which every detail becomes visible. Often, those portrayed are the respected elders of the community. He was able to activate this portrait of 'Morgolene' through the well-known NFT platform Danae with musician Hugues Hervé, full of respect for the portrait's ceremonial function.

Ick Reuvis

A couple, just walking away from the wedding cake, suddenly find themselves in the middle of a boxing ring subtitled 'Union Match'. Artist Ick Reuvis created this comical piece during the wedding party of artists Sara Bomans and Remco Roos, where the couple had invited all attendees to make art together. For all its simplicity, this relic, including a glass bell jar, is perhaps one of the raunchiest depictions of what a marriage can entail.

A SUMMER OF ART

BILL & JAMES

30.03.24 > 01.09.24

Church of Our Lady, Leffinge

William Sweetlove is best known for his large, striking animal sculptures in plastic. But Sweetlove is much more than that. Discover it at his second exhibition 'Bill & James' in Leffinge's imposing church.

SCULPTURAL

Architectural Works

02.07.24 > 31.08.24

K.E.R.K.

Sculptures by contemporary artists are displayed in the church of Sint-Pieters-Kapelle. Works by Nick Ervinck, Anton Cotteleer, Katleen Vinck, ...

BEAUFORT

27.03.24 > 03.11.24

Enjoy various art projects on the coast during this eighth edition of the art triennial. In Middelkerke in the Normandpark you will find the Gazing Ball by the artist couple Orta and on the beach between Middelkerke and Westende you can climb on Jef Meyer's artwork.

Art in Middelkerke and Westende

Take a walk on the beach between Westende and Middelkerke and be surprised by the surroundings. In the sculpture park you will find the splashing yellow of Nick Ervinck's 'Olnetop', Wim Delvoye's 'Caterpillar + Flatbed trailer', Ivars Drulle's 'I can hear it' and Simon Dybbroe Møller's 'The Navigator Monument'. All works with a link to the art triennial.

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