

The Marnix Gallery

Carla Arocha & Stéphane Schraenen: Segue

Segue Carla Arocha & Stéphane Schraenen

Carla Arocha (b. 1961, Caracas) and Stéphane Schraenen (b. 1971, Antwerp) developed their artistic practice independently until they decided to collaborate in 2006. In a time when identity politics increasingly dominates the discourse, it is particularly compelling to observe how these two artists — despite their differing backgrounds, training, and generations — translate shared interests and fascinations into a collective body of work.

As a duo, they have developed a practice that extends beyond the sum of their respective trajectories. Their oeuvre is not only the result of an ongoing dialogue between two artistic minds, but also a direct engagement with space — both conceptually and architecturally.

Arocha & Schraenen challenge perceptions of space, reflection, and reality itself. Their work critically examines the illusions and complexities of contemporary visual culture.

“We are not just making one work after another. The way we develop a piece is closely related to its temporary surroundings,

meaning that something shapes and forms itself within it. We capture the environment and react to it, addressing the given parameters, shapes, measurements, architectural structure, and imperfection. Therefore, each time the work looks completely different. Some pieces, like the mirror works, have a semi-fixed structure. For example, they can be altered in height or width. We can work in a large horizontal space or a small vertical room; it doesn't matter. Many of our works are nearly amorphous. We allow them to function in different iterations, giving them different lives. We're not just reshaping the environment; we're also reshaping the mind. We interact with how you enter and experience the space. The most interesting thing is how it relates to one's experience of life. For example, if you drink a glass of water every day, one day it's cold, and the next day it's not. Maybe you don't want cold water; maybe you want it warmer. It's like how things keep moving and changing.”

Arocha & Schraenen's works are never static nor hermetic; instead, they are defined by a formal and dynamic reflection on the environments in which they are installed, both indoors and outdoors. “We capture a space, or fragments of it, and our work emerges in response.” The inspiration for *Segue* arose immediately during the artists' visit to the Marnix Gallery. Within this setting — already marked by constant movement, with cars passing by, people walking by, entering and exiting the building — the artists introduce an additional layer by using the windows as a central device, effectively turning the gallery inside out.

“It's an exhibition space where one wall is windows and the other is stone, so you can't hang anything on it. We thought it would be interesting to use the whole window and cover it with a stripe pattern.

A moiré emerges from the overlap of two striped layers—an effect created by their interaction. It never seems to sit on the surface of anything; rather, it feels like something we place inside our heads.”

The outside experience is countered by a set of mirrored windows inside that reflect the colored walls and parts of visitors' bodies as they walk around the space. “We have a database of about 100,000 photos that we use as a source of inspiration. These were photos of windows on construction sites just after they were dismantled. It's interesting to bring them to the back wall inside the room and make them the center of the movement inside.”

The ensemble of works, activated by the viewer, continuously interact with one another in shifting ways. They engage the audience in an optical play and a physical experience, subtly disorienting perception. The work of Arocha & Schraenen reminds us that nothing in this world is static; everything is in motion.

In these turbulent times, the artists suggest that disruption does not necessarily lead to collapse or despair but can instead open the mind to unexpected and stimulating perspectives and experiences. “We want to provoke questions,

and we hope that people will wonder, ‘What's the point of this?’ Or, at least, what am I seeing? What is happening?” If that fails and they just think it's beautiful, that's also fine.”

— Kathleen Weyts

“The Marnix Gallery” gives tangible form to ING Belgium's ambition to offer a space that is openly accessible to all. A place where people come together to experience art in a unique way — through reflection, relaxation, and the sharing of knowledge. This vision is embodied in the concept “Open Space, Open Mind,” which captures the essence of ING Belgium's artistic philosophy.



Wall (blue), 2026, Painted wall with shelves and **Marnix** (img_21-img_45), 2026, Color pencil on paper. **Window Set (1-3)**, 2022, Mirror and aluminum, 10 panels, various sizes



Wall (violet), 2026, Painted wall with shelves and **Floop**, 2022, Nitrile rubber. **Untitled (Chair Type I)**, 2024, Stainless steel



Segue, 2026, Self-adhesive vinyl cutout on windows and walls