
Paradise Kortrijk 2021

26 June - 24 October 2021



Triennial for
contemporary art

June 26 -
October 24, 2021

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INTRODUCTION

From **26 June to 24 October** 2021 the second Kortrijk Triennial will take place: **Paradise Kortrijk 2021**.

Paradise Kortrijk 2021 is the successor to **Play Kortrijk 2018**, the interactive art event that transformed the city of Kortrijk three years ago into a playground of contemporary artworks at various indoor and outdoor locations in the city, and which was a real success with more than 175,000 visitors.

The second edition maintains the recipe for success - a **dynamic and free urban exhibition** with **interactive works** of art by an ambitious list of **Belgian and international artists** in various **indoor and outdoor locations** in the **city of Kortrijk** - and focuses on the utopian dream of paradise. The project draws inspiration from our zeitgeist and is a reaction to our current living environment, which sometimes seems miles away from a hopeful, positive and utopian environment.

“Our arts festival Paradise will attract hundreds of thousands of visitors to Kortrijk. As alderman for culture, I am convinced that we really have a bazooka here, one that will give our trade and hospitality industry new perspectives. It is the second edition of our triennial. Play, the first one, was a hit. Installations by the world’s best artists will be on display in the most surprising places in the city.”

- **Alderman for Culture Axel Ronse**

Curators **Hilde Teerlinck** (Han Nefkens Foundation) and **Patrick Ronse** (Be-Part, Platform for Contemporary Art) selected **32 contemporary artists** - including 9 Belgians - who each present their own interpretation of the Paradise concept. Among the artists are many familiar names, such as **Berlinde De Bruyckere, Jeremy Deller, Kendell Geers, Ugo Rondinone** and **Yoko Ono**. But Paradise 2021 also dares to push the boundaries of contemporary art and shows the work of fashion designer duo **Viktor&Rolf**, scenographer **Albert Dubosq** and choreographer **William Forsythe**, among others.

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These artists are given the freedom to express a personal and critical view about how they see and interpret paradise. Artists have the power to engage us on a personal level and mirror our situation or condition, so that we can set our mind in motion and act differently.

The Kortrijk triennial invites these contemporary artists to participate and reflect on modern questions. What are meaningful values today and how can we construct a better society? By installing artworks in the heart of the dynamic city, the significance of the artists' vision becomes present in public. The **participative element is crucial** in the project: through an active experience, interaction is activated by the visitor. Through this experience, the visitor is offered the opportunity to modify their way of thinking, both about themselves and about our current society.

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PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

Albert Dubosq (BE) (1863–1940)

Art Labor Collective (VN, lives and works in Saigon, Ho Chi Minh City)

Aziz Hazara (AF, lives and works in Ghent and Kabul)

Berlinde De Bruyckere (BE, lives and works in Ghent)

Bruno V. Roels (BE, lives and works in Ghent)

Choi Jeong-Hwa (KR, lives and works in Seoul)

Constant Nieuwenhuys (NL) (1920–2005)

Dora García (ES, lives and works in Barcelona and Oslo)

Jacob Dahlgren (SE, lives and works in Stockholm)

Jaro Varga (SL, lives and works in Prague)

Jeremy Deller (UK, lives and works in London)

Joris Van de Moortel (BE, lives and works in Hoboken)

Josep-Maria Martín (ES, lives and works in Barcelona)

Klaas Rommelaere (BE, lives and works in Antwerp)

Kendell Geers (ZA, lives and works in Brussels)

Lhola Amira (ZA, lives and works in Cape Town)

Lily Van der Stokker (NL, lives and works Bilthoven and Amsterdam)

Luc Deleu (BE, lives and works in Berchem, Antwerp)

Michelangelo Pistoletto (IT, lives and works in Torino)

Olaf Nicolai (DE, lives and works in Berlin)

Robert Devriendt (BE, lives and works in Bruges)

Ryan Gander (UK, lives and works in Suffolk and London)

Sanam Khatibi (IR, lives and works in Brussels)

Sarah Ortmeyer (DE, lives and works in Vienna)

Sarah Westphal (DE, lives and works in Ghent and Germany)

Stief DeSmet (BE, lives and works in Bachte-Maria-Leerne, Deinze)

Sven 't Jolle (BE, lives and works in Melbourne)

Toshiko Horiuchi MacAdam (JP, lives and works in Nova Scotia)

Ugo Rondinone (CH, lives and works in New York and Zürich)

Viktor&Rolf (NL, lives and works in Amsterdam)

William Forsythe (US, lives and works in Frankfurt am Main in Hesse)

Yoko Ono (JP, lives and works in New York)

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PARADISE AND UTOPIA: ANCIENT PHILOSOPHICAL CONCEPTS

There are many different paths to paradise, all highly personal. For some, this can mean reaching the gates of heaven, entering the Garden of Eden or walking in the Elysian Fields. For others, it can mean any place or state of ultimate happiness. Prosperity, fulfilment and exceptional satisfaction are recurring elements in every religion and myth. The word paradise primarily poses the general question of how we can make a better society for each and every person.

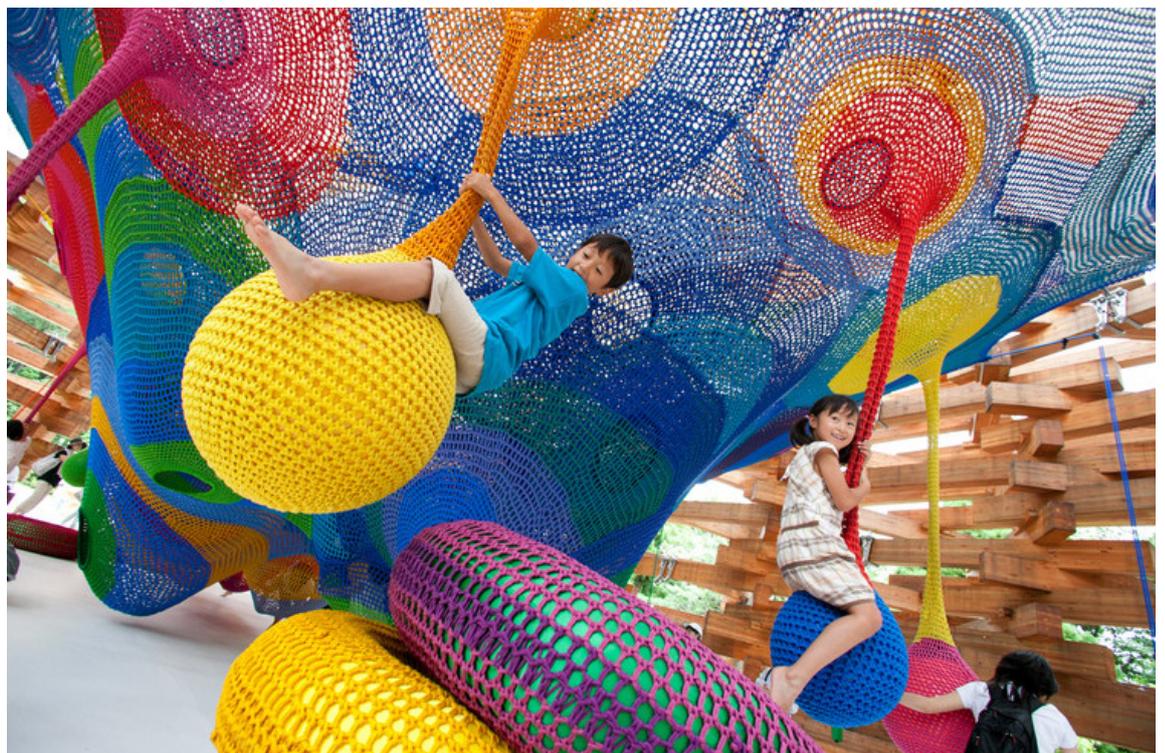


© Sarah Ortmeier, KOKO (I-III), 2015. Courtesy the artist and Dvir Gallery Tel Aviv/ Brussels

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QUEST FOR A BETTER SOCIETY

Since the publication of Thomas More's *Utopia* in 1516 (Leuven), the word *utopia* has become synonymous with paradise and its allusions: the ideal, the unrealistic and the unattainable. The title of the publication is a pun of the Greek words *eu-topia* meaning 'good place' and *ou-topos* meaning 'no place'. Many academics have researched the philosophical concept of *utopia*: the search for an imaginary, perfect society. Well-known writers and sharp-minded thinkers have dedicated texts to analyzing this theme: Thomas More, Plato, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, Friedrich Nietzsche and Walter Benjamin amongst others. They all agree on one single fact: we can only achieve a certain 'dream state' by earning it. In order to cultivate ideals and desires, utopians strongly believe a great deal of our time should be withdrawn from the service of the body and devoted to the utter freedom of the mind. For centuries, they have been analyzing and constructing new social and political models providing scope for reaching paradise.



© Toshiko Horiuchi MacAdam, *Harmonic Motion II*, 2013-2021. Courtesy the artist, Interplay Design & Manufacturing, nc.

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UTOPIAN FUTURE MODELS

From North to South, from East to West, from all corners of the world, from philosophers to poets, from architects to artists, people from all of history have been haunted by the human need to imagine, to trace and define an ideal world.

Nonetheless, our society currently seems to be driven by a combination of fear and anxiety. We have been brutally awakened by the imminent changes in our climate, projecting a catastrophic, dystopian future. The idea of a possible extinction of the human species becomes – for the first time – a tangible vision of the future. Negativity appears to be occupying our dreams and taking over the role of belief and hope. This overwhelming tsunami is a hot topic, present worldwide



© Olaf Nicolai, HOW TO FANCY THE LIGHT OF A CANDLE AFTER IT IS BLOWN OUT, 2019. Courtesy Galerie EIGEN + ART Leipzig/ Berlin

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NEED FOR CREATIVE SOLUTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

More than ever, we need creative, utopian thinkers. For time, artists have developed and analyzed countless ways of constructing paradise, offering artistic alternatives. They have raised questions about rural and social development, the high rate of nature loss and the impact of technological advancement on our lives and current environment.

Many of us are urban people. For us, the city has become our new natural habitat, a place conceived and designed by architects and urban planners whose reflections are based on the basic concepts of utopia. For time, people have been creating an ideal urban context responding to the current needs of society, guaranteeing a better life. This is very time-related and can swiftly change with migration and the enormous growth of population (for an example, people who are forced to move from places predominated by war, conflicts or climate change).



© William Forsythe, Nowhere and Everywhere at the Same Time No. 3, 2015. Courtesy the artist. Collection MMK Museum für Moderne Kunst, Frankfurt

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NATURE VERSUS NURTURE

The climate crisis emphasizes the fundamental differences between nature and nurture. The rapidly collapsing ecological systems are at the top of political agendas. Are we too late, or do we still have time? In our current environment, we have to deal with rules relating to ecology and world economy. It is only through respect, sustainable solutions and responsible behavior that our universe might become a perfect home. Climate change is an urgent matter that requires global collaboration and action.

The near future holds the promise of a new narrative, a reality where science and other high-tech solutions will solve critical, global, social and individual problems. Since the 17th century, utopia has naturally relied on science and new developments. The close intertwining of scientific progress and the <ideal> has emerged as a quintessential ideology of modernity. Scientific development and technology have, and will always have, a deep impact on contemporary life.



© Ugo Rondinone, CRY ME A RIVER, 1997. Vanhaerents Art Collection, Brussels

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CULTURAL CAPITAL OF EUROPE IN 2030

Kortrijk has a rich cultural history and today still counts numerous cultural players. With respect for what is and with a resolute view of the future, the city joins forces with partners and inhabitants. With one common ambition: to become European Capital of Culture in 2030.

This ambition is translated into a supported long-term strategy with a powerful action plan. The city of Kortrijk thereby continues to build on the dynamics surrounding the recognition of Kortrijk as a UNESCO Creative City of Design. Together with this worldwide network of design cities such as Berlin, Singapore and Montréal, Kortrijk uses creativity as a lever for the sustainable development of the city and region.



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THE CURATORS

Hilde Teerlinck
1966
Assebroek-Brugge [BE]
Lives and works in
Barcelona.

Hilde Teerlinck is an independent curator. She has gained a reputation for curating exhibitions with a strong international character. In 2022 she is curating the Belgian Pavilion for the Venice Biennale with artist Francis Alÿs. From 1994 to 1999, Teerlinck was artistic director of the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion in Barcelona, where she invited renowned artists such as Jeff Wall, Panamarenko, Ulrich Meister and Thomas Ruff to create site-specific interventions. Afterwards, she moved to Perpignan, France, to set up an art gallery there, where she organised several exhibitions of emerging international talent. In 2002 she became director of the Centre Rhénan d'Art Contemporain (CRAC Alsace) in Altkirch. From 2006 to 2014 Teerlinck was director of FRAC (Fonds Régional d'Art Contemporain) Nord-Pas de Calais in Dunkirk. In 2015 she was one of the four curators of Beaufort Outside the Borders. Currently she works as CEO for the Han Nefkens Foundation in Barcelona.

Patrick Ronse
1962
Beernem [BE]
Woont in Brugge, werkt in
West-Vlaanderen.

Patrick Ronse (1962) lives in Bruges and works as artistic director and coordinator of Be-Part, Platform for contemporary art in South-West Flanders. He studied Art History and Archaeology at the University of Ghent and from 1990 to 1999 was the communications manager for the PMMK-Oostende (now: Mu.ZEE) and the Municipal Museums of Bruges. He was part of the communication team of Bruges 2002, Cultural Capital of Europe from 1999 to 2002. Ronse was responsible for the founding of Be-Part in 2004 and is to this day the driving force behind the platform, which since early 2018 has also been active in Kortrijk, in addition to Waregem. For Be-Part he curated solo exhibitions with Navid Nuur, Rinus Van de Velde, Ante Timmermans, Dirk Zoete, Pieter Vermeersch, Charif Benhelima and Polly Apfelbaum, among others. In 2015 he was co-curator of Beaufort and in 2018 he curated the first edition of the Triennial in Kortrijk (PLAY) together with Hilde Teerlinck. Since 2014 he has been a member of the Arts Commission of the Flemish Parliament.

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PRACTICAL INFORMATION

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Organised by the city of Kortrijk and Be-Part
Curators Hilde Teerlinck and Patrick Ronse

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