



La Biennale di Venezia

17. Mostra
Internazionale
di Architettura

Partecipazioni Nazionali

Pavilion of Belgium

At the 17th International Architecture Exhibition - La Biennale di Venezia

Composite Presence



Composite Presence © Bovenbouw Architectuur

Model landscape shows unique city-architecture relationship in Flanders and Brussels

This summer, Venice will host the Biennale Architettura 2021, the world's most important exhibition in the field of contemporary architecture. On the initiative of the Flemish Community and commissioned by the Flanders Architecture Institute (VAi), Bovenbouw Architectuur will present the exhibition Composite Presence in the Belgian pavilion. By means of 50 reference projects, curator Dirk Somers (Bovenbouw Architectuur) will show the contemporary city in Flanders and Brussels in all its complexity: 'Composite Presence embodies the love-hate relationship between architecture and city.'

Memory as a design studio

This is not the first time the Flanders Architecture Institute is producing an exhibition in the Belgian pavilion. Every four years since 2004 it has coordinated, alternately with the French Community of Belgium, the Belgian contribution. This year the theme 'Memory as a design studio' takes centre stage. 'After a century of belief in unbridled progress, it is evident that architecture as a discipline is in need of a rethink. This means it is necessary to redefine the bases of design so that memory plays a greater role', says Sofie De Caigny, director of the Flanders Architecture Institute, the commissioner of Composite Presence. 'The history of landscapes and places, of building and design traditions, of materials and ideas must form the frame of reference for new designs. Memory must become a design studio.'

'Dealing in a respectful and inventive manner with the city's historical layers leads automatically to different perspectives on society. In that sense, Composite Presence draws on the core of the discipline of architecture to answer the question posed by curator Hashim Sarkis: how will we live together?'

Sofie De Caigny, Flanders Architecture Institute,
commissioner of Composite Presence

Composite Presence

How can the city and architecture flourish together? This question is at the centre of the three-dimensional layout of a fictional yet recognizable Flemish urban environment. In the course of time, the informal city in Flanders and Brussels developed a unique relationship with its architecture. The staged urban landscape reveals how historical layers, morphological specificities and unforeseen clashes are an endless source of inspiration for contemporary architecture. For the Belgian pavilion, Bovenbouw Architectuur has designed a scenography that shows an urban landscape consisting of a series of models on a scale of 1:15. The models are laid out at table height and represent a linear, winding landscape of a typical Flemish urban environment.

Fifty projects compose the model landscape

Fifty different architecture projects of the past 20 years form the building blocks of this imaginary landscape. The selection shows a balanced architectural ecology in which different styles, functions and typologies come together. Many of the projects consist of refurbishments and adaptations that feature a spectrum of forms, times and textures. Whether the projects are modest repurposings or shiny new constructions, they all contribute to a cobbled-together yet balanced city. The selected projects also testify to the importance of the current policy in terms of urban planning and tendering. Many of the designs in this urban composition find their source in procedures set up by city architects, the Flemish Government Architect and related public institutions in Flanders and Brussels with the purpose of creating a high-quality urban environment. Together with the Team Flemish Government Architect, the city architects of Antwerp and Ghent have lent their assistance to the Composite Presence project. The catalogue delves into this particular aspect of architectural policy through contributions by, among others, Leo Van Broeck (former Flemish Government Architect), Christian Rapp (Antwerp City Architect), Kristiaan Borret (Brussels Government Architect), Edith Wouters (artistic director Ar-tur) and Peter Vanden Abeele (Ghent City Architect).

'The model landscape is a unique illustration of the energetic friction between urban planning and architecture in Flanders.'

Dirk Somers, curator Composite Presence

The Biennale Architettura 2021 in Venice and the exhibition Composite Presence in the Belgian pavilion will run from 22 May until 21 November 2021.

Composite Presence at Biennale Architettura 2021

22 May - 21 Nov. 2021

Tue. to Sun. - 10:00 to 18:00 - closed on Mon.

Preview & press days

20 May & 21 May 2021

Composite Presence | projects and architects

Organ loft for the Contius organ, Saint-Michael church, leuven	360 Architecten
Double house Kattenberg	Architecten Broekx-Schiepers
HOUSE VERBRANDE BRUG	architecten de vylder vinck taillieu
HUIS-ARTS	architecten de vylder vinck taillieu
Service building container park	architecten Els Claessens en Tania Vandenbussche
Social Housing Schaerdeke	Architectenbureau Bart Dehaene
Zoersel House	Arjaan De Feyter Interior Architects
Observation tower	Baeten Hylebos Architecten
BLAF tIG	BLAF architecten
Urban dwelling in Brussels	Bovenbouw Architectuur
Van Artevelde apartments	BULK architecten
house VDB	Collectief Noord Architecten
Provincial Youth and Nature Domain DE BOEREKREEK Sint-Jan-in-Eremo	COUSSÉE & GORIS architecten
Kioskplaats Police Station, Antwerp	De Smet Vermeulen architecten
Apostelhuizen Studio, Ghent	De Smet Vermeulen architecten
The Little Prince	Dhooge & Meganck Architectuur
Twaalfkameren	Dierendonckblancke architecten
Dambruggestraat	Dierendonckblancke architecten
Meir corner building	DMT architecten
One Room Hotel	dmvA
Maarschalk Gerardstraat 5	Eagles of Architecture
Olijftakstraat	FELT architecture & design
Elementary School Zarren	FELT architecture & design
De Nor	Frederic Vandoninck Wouter Willems architecten i.s.m. Dennis Tyfus
studio SDS	GRAUX & BAEYENS architecten
house L-C	GRAUX & BAEYENS architecten
Zegel	HUB
Office and apartment Bailleul, Ghent, 2003-2010	Marie-José Van Hee architecten
Woon- en werkunits Montigny Antwerpen	META architectuurbureau
LALO, reconversion and extension of garage to bikestore and residential units	murmuur architecten
OFFICE 229: Public Library	OFFICE Kersten Geers David Van Severen
Community center De Steen	ono architectuur
Prins Leopold	ono architectuur
Verzoeningstraat	Poot Architectuur
Chapel our lady of the Muizenhoek	PULS architecten
Youthcenter 'De Lichting'	RAAMWERK
The Majin House, care and support center for cancer patients and their loved ones	RAAMWERK & VAN GELDER TILLEMANN architecten
State Archives	Robbrecht en Daem architecten
Media Building	Robbrecht en Daem & Dierendonckblancke in i.s.m. VK & Arup
Masonry House	Schenk Hattori Architecture Atelier
Silos - Kanaal	Stéphane Beel Architects
walled house with winter garden	STUDIOLO architectuur i.s.m. Koen Matthys
Wolters House	tim peeters architecten
Broek	Tim Rogge Architectuur Studio
Extension city hall Langemark-Poelkapelle	Tom Thys architecten
Ryhove Urban Factory Ghent	TRANS architectuur stedenbouw
Youth Centre "Jeunes"	AgwA i.s.m. met Ferrière Architectes
RLN - revalidation centre	URA Yves Malysse Kiki Verbeeck
DC-V house and office	Vermeiren - De Coster Architecten
VDB Social Huising	VERS.A ARCHITECTURE

Commissioner:

- **Flanders Architecture Institute with Sofie De Caigny as director**

Sofie De Caigny is the director of the Flanders Architecture Institute (VAi). She obtained a doctorate in art history from KU Leuven in 2007. From 2006 until 2018 she coordinated the heritage department of the VAI, where she was responsible for the conservation, digitization, dissemination and publication of architectural archives. De Caigny writes about contemporary architecture in Belgium and has also curated exhibitions about the development of architectural culture in Flanders (Deutsches Architekturmuseum, Frankfurt, 2016). Since 2014 she has been the secretary general of ICAM (International Confederation of Architectural Museums).

Producer:

- **Flanders Architecture Institute**

The Flanders Architecture Institute is the main centre for information about architecture from Flanders and Brussels. It creates a platform for everyone who wants to make, share and experience architecture. Based in deSingel in Antwerp, the institute organizes exhibitions, lectures, debates, publications and events, such as the Flanders Architectural Review and the biannual Festival of Architecture. Moreover, the institute represents Flanders at international events such as the Biennale Architettura in Venice and is embedded in a global network of architectural organisations.

The Flanders Architecture Institute manages an exceptionally rich collection of architectural archives that is constantly expanding. Through the collection, the institute links the present, past and future of architecture. Furthermore, the Flanders Architecture Institute plays an active role in caring for design heritage. It charts this heritage, provides advice, and informs a wide audience through publications and exhibitions.

Curator:

- **Bovenbouw Architectuur**

Bovenbouw Architectuur is a young Belgian office, based in Antwerp. Dirk Somers, professor, manager and head designer leads a team of 18 talented European architects. Bovenbouw's work is characterized by an open minded and untimely approach to design, fully freed from the compulsive desire for avant-gardist action or preconditioned design. Bovenbouw explore a versatile and open design attitude that tries to reinvent a vocabulary specific to every situation. Their endeavour can be understood in a true classical sense, bringing together old and new ideas in an interesting blend of the everyday and the everlasting.

Composite Presence | colophon

producer & commissioner Flanders Architecture Institute
editors catalogue Sofie De Caigny, Maarten Van Den Driessche, Dirk Somers
curator and scenography Bovenbouw Architectuur

initiated by and with the support of the Flemish Government
with the additional support of Flemish Government Architect, City Architect of Antwerp and City Architect of Ghent

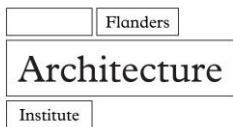
Contact Belgian pavilion

Nino Goyvaerts
Project Manager Composite Presence
Flanders Architecture Institute
E nino.goyvaerts@vai.be
M +32 (0) 497 80 78 36

Press contact

Egon Verleye
Communication & PR
Flanders Architecture Institute
E egon.verleye@vai.be
M +32 (0) 486 21 17 74

A production by



With the additional support of



BWMSTR
Team
Vlaams
Bouwmeester

Cultural Partner



Main Partners



DELEN
PRIVATE BANK

Additional partners:

Rockfon, Kubus, Gavra, Sto, Knauf

- **Exhibition**
 - **1.1**
Composite Presence - campaign image © Bovenbouw Architectuur
 - **1.2**
Composite Presence - floor plan © Bovenbouw Architectuur
 - **1.3**
Composite Presence - collage © Bovenbouw Architectuur
 - **1.4**
Composite Presence - axonometry © Bovenbouw Architectuur
 - **1.5**
Composite Presence - impression © Bovenbouw Architectuur

- **Installations (selection)**
 - **1.6**
Composite Presence, Bovenbouw Architectuur, 2020 © We Document Art
 - **1.7**
Composite Presence, Bovenbouw Architectuur, 2020 © We Document Art
 - **1.8**
FELT architecture & design, Elementary School Zarren, 2018 © We Document Art
 - **1.9**
DMT architecten, Meir corner building, 2006 © We Document Art
 - **2.0**
RAAMWERK, Youthcenter 'De Lichting', 2018 © We Document Art
 - **2.1**
Tim Rogge Architectuur Studio, Broek, 2020 © We Document Art
 - **2.2**
dmvA, One Room Hotel, 2015 © We Document Art

- **Commissioner**
 - **2.3**
Sofie De Caigny, director Flanders Architecture Institute © Dries Luyten

- **Curator**
 - **2.4**
Dirk Somers, Bovenbouw Architectuur © Klaas Verdrú

- **Producer**
 - **2.5**
Flanders Architecture Institute © Franky Verdickt