

PRESS RELEASE

***Installation on De Singel square criticizes subjective way of looking at greenery***

# “Greenery doesn’t need to be privately owned to enjoy it”

The young Belgian-Chinese architecture office Generiek kicks-off the first edition of *Table Setting*. This brand new exhibition series enables young architects to share their ideas on public space. The square in front of De Singel is their playground, a series of tables are the framework of a constantly changing play. In *Table Setting #1* Generiek explores the relationship between greenery and domesticity. The result is a green installation, in collaboration with textile designer Sofie Van Aelbroeck.

***Table Setting #1 Generiek***  
***Exhibition*** | from 01.04.2022 to 12.06.2022  
***Open*** | 7 days a week, around the clock

***Vernissage*** | 31.03.2022 at 8pm

*De Singel square, Antwerp (BE)*

## **Heaven is a Place on Earth**

“With this installation we are hoping to create a small temporary collective heaven on earth.”, the architects of Generiek claim ironically. In *Table Setting #1* they explore the subjective relationship between greenery and domesticity. A well-maintained garden or lawn in a (sub)urban context often reveals a household’s social status. Within a domestic context, nature is more than a simple piece of greenery, it is laden with a symbolic narrative. These individualised natural landscapes are artificial. They are carefully modelled, the personal ideals of what an earthly paradise might look like. Richard Leung, cofounder of Generiek: “In the end gardens are not natural. With this installation we want to make explicit the subjective way people look at greenery today.”

Generiek’s exhibition and installation question these individualised pieces of nature. A patch of grass functions as a relaxation area, set against a background of printed and stitched textiles. A wall of stacked tables forms the exhibition framework and functions as a support for the fabric. The central question is: ‘What role does architecture play in the subjectification of gardens?’ Generiek makes a clear statement: “Our installation is a critique

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on the individual way of handling greenery. As architects we strive to design and use greenery in a more collective manner. We hope that the people who visit the exhibition will appropriate the green space we've created on the square of De Singel.", explains Lando De Keyzer, cofounder of Generiek.

### **Tafelzetting**

Table Setting is the new exhibition series for young architects in Flanders and Brussels of the Flemish Architecture Institute and De Singel. It is the next stage within a tradition of young architecture in De Singel. Established names have found a platform to show their early oeuvre since the 1980s ('Young Architecture in Belgium' in 1988 and '35m<sup>3</sup> of young architecture' in 2005). Even today, young architects are challenged to determine their own position in relation to the discipline, complex spatial situations and social issues. The forecourt of De Singel depicts the cacophony in which young architects start their own practice. The multiform boundaries of the asphalt plain form the perfect backdrop for the exhibition series. Every architect who exhibits there has a set of tables with attributes, designed by Laura Muyldermans. The tables are not only an installation in which the designers show their work, but also challenge them to take a spatial position on the forecourt.

### **Generiek**

Generiek is an architectural office based in Ghent (BE) and Shanghai (CN). It was founded in 2016 by Lorenz Adriaens (1988-2021), Lando De Keyzer and Richard Leung. Generiek's projects adopt a generic grammar of typologies and techniques as a guide to claim and create spaces from specific contexts. Leung: "Our generic approach of architecture is the idea of working with an organizing framework, rather than treating architecture as an object." Working at different scales – from furniture to urban and territorial planning – Generiek uses these projects as a means of observing and interrogating how the built environment affects our way of life and vice versa. Theory and research are therefore a core aspect of the methodology with which Generiek works. This rigorous thought process is accompanied by active involvement as critics and judges at universities around the world.

**Sofie Van Aelbroeck** is a textile designer based in Ghent (BE). Her studio's main interest is the creation of contemporary textile objects by deconstructing and reassembling found materials. Richard Leung: "The banner piece Sofie Van Aelbroeck made for this installation is a collage of different fabrics and textile techniques, which says a lot about the connection between her work and ours. Just like us she collages and composes different found pieces to create something new."

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### Quotes

- *“Our generic approach of architecture is the idea of working with an organizing framework, rather than treating architecture as an object.”*  
- Richard Leung, architect (Generiek)
- *“Architecture is always contextual, it is itself, a reaction on a specific condition. At the same time it is a composition of space that we like to approach as ‘generic’ or ‘not specific’.”*  
- Lando De Keyzer, architect (Generiek)
- *“When we first visited the grey square of De Singel, it was immediately clear that it missed a destination. Because of that we wanted to appropriate the square by installing a contrasting green island.”*  
- Lando De Keyzer, architect (Generiek)
- *“Our installation is a critique on the individual way of handling greenery. As architects we strive to design and use greenery in a more collective manner. We hope that the people who visit the exhibition will appropriate the green space we’ve created on the square of De Singel.”*  
- Lando De Keyzer, architect (Generiek)
- *“Greenery doesn’t need to be privately owned to enjoy it.”*  
- Richard Leung, architect (Generiek)
- *“By adding an artificial green space on the square of De Singel we hope to open up the discussion on how to appropriate greenery.”*  
- Richard Leung, architect (Generiek)
- *“In the end gardens are not natural. With this installation we want to make explicit the subjective way people look at greenery today.”*  
- Richard Leung, architect (Generiek)

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## Table Setting #1 Generiek

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**production** Vlaams Architectuurinstituut en De Singel

**composition** Generiek

**textile design** Sofie Van Aelbroeck

**installation design** Laura Muyldermans

**curator series** Petrus Kemme

**with the support of** the Flemish Community

### exhibition

Friday 1 April 2022 → Sunday 12 June 2022

De Singel, Desguinlei 25, 2018 Antwerp

open Monday → Sunday / 24 hours

free of admission

### opening

Thursday 31 March 2022 – 20:00 h

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*Table Setting is made possible by:*



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