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## PROFILES OF PAROXYSM

Faculty of Architecture/Engagement:

### LEGACY

Curated by Gisèle Gantois

GOING PUBLIC LECTURE SERIES Nr. 20

Online lecture:  
Wednesday December 9th 2020  
17:30 - 19:00 PM

KU LEUVEN

The GOING PUBLIC program of the Faculty of Architecture is a series of lectures, exhibitions and publications organized throughout the year highlighting certain themes and topics that are important within each of the 4+1 Engagements: Urban Cultures, Mediating Tactics, Craftsmanship, Legacy and The Brussels Way.

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# HILDE BRAET

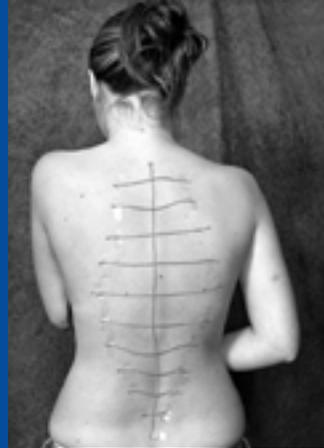
For Hilde Braet, photography is the recurring thread throughout her life. After graduating as an agricultural engineer she assisted for years the portrait photographer Rony Heirman. Meanwhile, she studied photography at the Royal Academy of Fine Arts. Afterwards she further specialized in technology and content in the Czech Republic (Prague), Switzerland (Basel), Netherlands (Apeldoorn) and France (Arles).

As further exploration of the medium of photography, she studied Cultural Sciences (Visual Culture) at the VUB. After completing this training with her thesis: *"Aspects of ethical photography. Research into the possibilities of the medium photography to contribute to emancipatory processes, resilience and well-being"* she won the Max van der Kamp thesis prize for this research.

## PERSONAL CHALLENGES



- Integrating art photography and commissioned photography
- Revealing what you do not see at first sight and capturing them in pictures
- Empowering people through Instrumental Photography



To visit her web page, [click here](#).

The philosophical concept of paroxysm, derived from visual culture, will be linked to some of the 'hard-core' heritage projects of the *Rietveld Architecture-Art-Affordances (RAAAF) Studio* and to some of the artistic and engaged work of Braet herself.

## R A A F

RAAAF operates at the crossroads of visual art, architecture and philosophy. The experimental studio started in 2006. RAAAF makes location- and context specific work, which derives from the respective backgrounds of the founding partners: Prix de Rome laureate Ronald Rietveld and philosopher Erik Rietveld. Through a unique working method based on multidisciplinary research with scientists and craftsmen, RAAAF's real-life thinking models link local qualities with the past, present and future.



To visit their web page, [click here](#).



BUNKER 599

*In a radical way this intervention sheds new light on the Dutch and UNESCO policy on cultural heritage. At the same time, it makes people look at their surroundings in a new way. The project lays bare two secrets of the New Dutch Waterline (NDW), a military line of defence in use from 1815 until 1940 protecting the cities of Muiden, Utrecht, Vreeswijk and Gorinchem by means of intentional flooding.*



# PROFILES OF PAROXYSM

*Paroxysm is about extremes, about trying to escape from a category in which one is willy-nilly caught*

Paroxysm refers to the questioning of the border (mutually exclusive) pairs of concepts such as action and crime, love and hate, pleasure and pain, peace and war, inside and outside, the norm versus the exception to the norm.

Paroxysmal images move on the razor's edge. They investigate the line between madness and genius, eroticism and pornography, between human and inhuman. They question entrenched categories and force to push the custom look. The severity of borderline experiences, the inner explosion and often last attempt to escape it are the hardcore, the explicit hard pit of the imaginary core that is constantly questioned and shifted.

The search for an alleged essence from the need for certainties is undermined. After all, there are no essences. Essences are pushed forward characteristics that one prefers, for one reason or another.

So there are many essences in function of subjectivity.

Nobody understands "everything" from semiotics. Especially when signs precisely contemplate the ambiguity of life and the world and have a layered meaning, and then as changing codes.

Paradoxically, "hardcore" (hardcore porn, hardcore punk, hardcore heritage) will liberate people in an anarchist way, stimulate thoughts and soak off stuck opinions. During tight-rope dancing, all senses are fully focused.

Paroxysm and hardcore stimulate the haptic, tangible experience into the square and into the zenith.

*"The paroxysm is found in visual images and projects pregnant with contradictions. It's not one or the other but the simultaneity of two opposites: the one and the other.*

*Through a cultural-philosophical reflection on paroxysm, new meanings are created supported by new texts.*

*The last word is never said."*

