

## EXHIBITION GUIDE

Joëlle Tuerlinckx

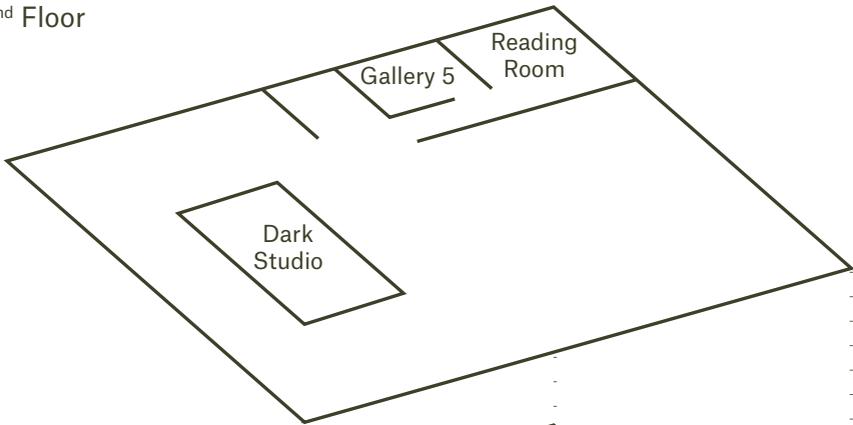
# WOR(L)D(K) IN PROGRESS?

*7 December 2013 – 16 March 2014*

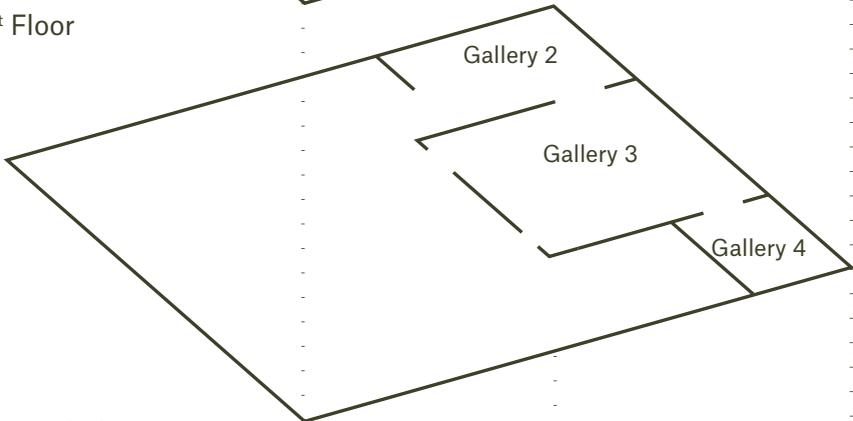


# GALLERY PLAN

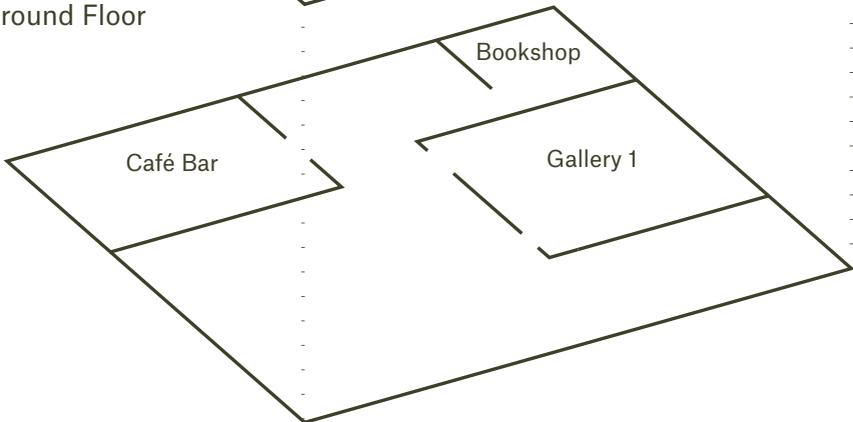
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor



1<sup>st</sup> Floor



Ground Floor



# INTRODUCTION

Belgian artist Joëlle Tuerlinckx, born 1958 in Brussels, has developed a unique artistic language over the past 20 years. Fascinated by the poetics of the everyday and the beauty of found objects, such as crumpled waves of wrinkling paper or the shimmering surface of dried ink, she transforms these different elements into elaborate displays, together with photographs, sculptures and architectural installations. Her exhibitions resemble contemporary cabinets of curiosities: spaces filled with encyclopaedic collections, where every detail is considered, inviting comparison and reflection, often in a very humorous way. While each of the exhibition spaces has a distinct character, the exhibition centres on a set of basic elements such as the line, the point, the circle, and their multiplicity of meaning.

*WOR(L)D(K) IN PROGRESS?* is the first major solo exhibition of this hugely influential artist in the UK. The show is a retrospective covering over 20 years of Tuerlinckx's work, including many loans from private and public collections. It is also an original presentation of a large-scale, continually evolving project in which older work is reworked into new. Taking up all of Arnolfini's exhibition spaces and spilling out in to other areas of the building, the exhibition includes several hundred pieces, many of which consist of numerous component elements.

*WOR(L)D(K) IN PROGRESS?* is the third part of a series of exhibitions, which started at WIELS in Brussels (*WOR(LD)K IN PROGRESS?*, 2012–2013) and Haus der Kunst in Munich (*WORLD(K) IN PROGRESS?*, 2013). Each exhibition concentrates on a specific aspect of the artists' practice – the work, the world, and at Arnolfini: words, as means of communication and of creating order within the world.

A new publication accompanies the exhibition: *WOR(L)(D)(K) IN PROGRESS?*, 344 pages, 280 b/w images, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther König, £32, exhibition price: £25.

# GALLERY 1

Joëlle Tuerlinckx's work is concerned with the memories that objects evoke, both personal and in relation to collective experiences. In many instances, collections express memories that are more-or-less consciously constructed, from stones collected as private souvenirs to museums, established to narrate the histories of people and culture. Tuerlinckx is interested in what happens to the status of objects when they are collected and preserved, and the conventions that have been traditionally used to present, and thereby define, what has (and what has not) a cultural value. Familiar museum display conventions such as vitrines, glass cases and educational panels are deliberately included in the exhibition, but they are used in unconventional ways. Spatial volumes are reduced to empty painted frames, camouflaged against the floor; titles are written directly on to the walls in the artist's own handwriting; and a puppet gallery steward sits reading in the gallery space

Tuerlinckx's work can be seen in the tradition of Institutional Critique, which has since the 1960s investigated the impact of the institutional framing of art, in the work of Michael Asher or Dan Graham, for example, or in a more witty fashion by Tuerlinckx's compatriot Marcel Broodthaers (1924-1976). While the vitrines and cabinets that Tuerlinckx uses in her installations become aesthetic objects in themselves, the twigs, rods, stones, papers, towels, jars and other ephemera collected and displayed; play with the hierarchies of value that we attribute to different objects, suggesting an awareness and enjoyment of their material charm.

*"an exhibition is, first and foremost, an experience of space - space composed, perhaps, of objects of space - that proposes action, or reaction, as a means of reflection, of thinking our human condition"* (Joëlle Tuerlinckx, *Lexicon*, 2012)

Basic visual elements such as lines, circles and dots, are a recurrent focus in Tuerlinckx's work. These appear frequently in drawings and collages, but also as physical objects, such as wooden bars, round cut-outs, demarcations in tape or rope, or drawn diagrams over found images or around objects. In Gallery 1, the artist presents a selection of works from very different periods of her life, arranged in categories of geometrical shapes, to illustrate a kind of artistic vocabulary. One work on the floor consists of a line connecting two stones, which were collected by the artist at different locations and at different times. While the line in the space literally measures a physical distance, it also symbolically represents the connection between the two locations, like a map of different moments or a timeline. Also in Gallery 1, Tuerlinckx presents what she considers her first artwork - a little fish cut from paper with circle drawn around it. What distinguishes this childhood drawing for the artist is the drawn circle, which creates a context for the fish - a glass bowl in this case, or in a wider sense, a world in which it lives.

## GALLERY 2, 3 & 4

In Gallery 2, and continuing Gallery 3, a large series of collages is presented which contain found images as well as drawings made by the artist. Like the objects she uses in her installations, these found images can be seen as collections, which, juxtaposed with her drawings, pull together different elements – men, women, language, and numbers. Tuerlinckx's way of working resembles the logic of the Internet; using analogue means she searches by formal criteria, zooming in occasionally, as with the large poster of a photograph taken by the artist of an advertisement for women's underwear.

In many works, Tuerlinckx refers to the signs and systems that standardise the world in order to allow communication, such as paper size formats, numbering systems or explanatory diagrams. The geometrical forms in the work allude to the eye's schematic perception of space, as a foundation for how we go on to attribute meaning to what we see. The post-impressionist painter Paul Cezanne (1839–1906) believed in the reducibility of form to cylinders, spheres and cones, from which he constructed his paintings. Tuerlinckx refers to Cezanne with three shelves on which she presents objects such as bottles and metal tubes. These are designed and constructed by the installation teams of her exhibitions, and modelled after photographs of furniture in Cezanne's studio. A new shelf at Arnolfini holds a selection of containers with the colours used in her exhibitions, as a kind of basic materiality of her presentations. Some of these colours re-appear in the galleries, such as a grey that matches the floor of Arnolfini's exhibition spaces; or the dark pink, a seeming odd and awkward colour which was produced by matching paint to a roll of paper towel, which covers the walls of Gallery 4.

*'an exhibition is ... a perpetual redefinition of things, a sort of permanent refutation...'* (Joëlle Tuerlinckx, Lexicon, 2012)

An interest in temporality is another important aspect of Tuerlinckx's work. While many projects are initially conceived of as being site-specific, their documentation – images, physical remnants, or artists' books – often become an integral aspect of the work, therefore developing an evolutionary process for future presentation. The large series of discs, titled *ronds*, in Galleries 3 and 4 are sections of wall works and architectural installations, literally cut from temporary walls or other materials, which the artist has taken from previous exhibition spaces. With materials going otherwise to waste, these works are souvenirs of previous installations; they are also a sculptural work in themselves.

## GALLERY 5

In front of Gallery 5, a series of oversized books are presented in a vitrine. These books are created from large sheets of paper that were initially nailed to walls in earlier shows, covering the spaces from floor to ceiling as a 1:1 copy of the surface of the space. A similar work is now presented in Gallery 5, in which fluorescent paper is pinned to the wall with the yellow surface facing inwards so that we see only a reflection of the paper at its corners. The books give the previously used paper a new form, translating the space literally into an established, if slightly ill-fitting, archival format. Gallery 1 is also covered with paper, which is in this case printed with a brick pattern taken from the artist's studio. The studio also appears in Gallery 3 through a blue line, which marks the height of Tuerlinckx' working space in Brussels.

Some works highlight the historical function or past use of a particular venue – a pub table in a vitrine, for example, was originally produced for an exhibition at WIELS in Brussels, a former brewery. It is shown with a glass of beer, which slowly decays over the course of the exhibition, presenting a different scale of time and memory. For the exhibition at Arnolfini, Joëlle Tuerlinckx has produced a new audio work, which plays throughout the galleries. The audio piece combines texts by the artist, restaged with employees of Arnolfini, along with atmospheric sounds from the harbourside.

In the Reading Room, a special selection of further book projects by the artist is on view. Tuerlinckx also decided to integrate a work with materials from previous exhibitions, artificially aged with tea as if to give them more historic gravity. Further information about specific works can be found in a lexicon that the artist has created as a series of stock terms for her practice. This is included in the catalogue of the exhibition, and in parts on the following pages. These are not straightforward definitions, but rather poetic statements, reminiscent of notebook entries that convey the nature of a complex and long-term artistic research process.

Additional works are presented in the circulation spaces. The Dark Studio will be opened on selected dates to present a spatial work based on a stroboscopic light which creates an intensely sensorial experience.

To support the exhibition, an edition by the artist has been produced, which is presented in front of the Bookshop.

# ARTIST BIOGRAPHY

Joëlle Tuerlinckx was born in Brussels in 1958, where she still lives. Her work was shown widely on an international level, with solo exhibitions amongst others at Haus der Kunst in Munich (2013), WIELS in Brussels (2012-13), the Reina Sofía in Madrid (2009), Mamco - Musée d'art moderne et contemporain, Geneva (2007), The Drawing Center, New York (2006), The Power Plant in Toronto (2005), the Renaissance Society, Chicago (2003), and a major presentation at documenta 11 (2002).

## EVENTS

### Film Screenings

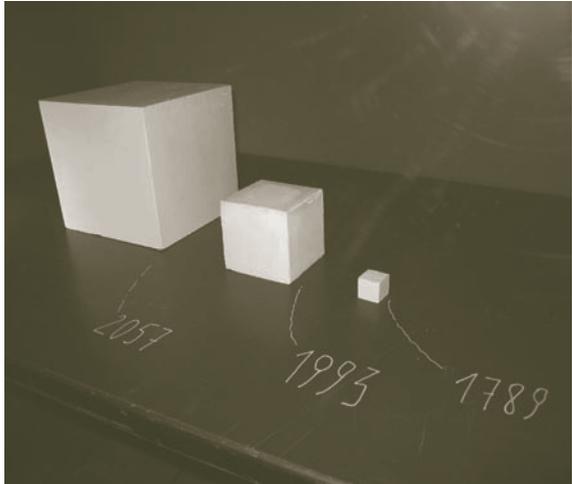
*Thursdays 12 December 2013, 16 January and 13 February 2014, 6.30pm, free*

Films by Joëlle Tuerlinckx: ABSTRACT Film(s), STUDY Film(s): AMERICAN, CHICAGO, KOREAN STUDY Film(s), STRETCHED Film(s), WAITING Film(s), REALITY BLOCK Film(s).

### Exhibition Tours

*Every Saturday, 2pm, free*

The free tours of our galleries are led by a member of staff or an invited guest and are a chance to hear personal interpretations and insights.



(Image top) Joëlle Tuerlinckx, *Étude Préliminaire rapportée pour 'P-PAR' (Pixel-Pâtres Haute Définition 'Grand public')*, 2008-2011. Installation view WIELS, Brussels 2013. Photo Joëlle Tuerlinckx. (Image bottom) Joëlle Tuerlinckx, *L'Heritage*, 2012. Photo Joëlle Tuerlinckx



# JOËLLE TUERLINCKX: LEXICON (EXCERPT)

AQUARELLE [WATERCOLOUR] designates works on paper, water- or pigmentbased, or based on various ingredients (chocolate, ...). usually made using water 'found on the spot' (stream, lake, faucet), these can also be found under the name: local Watercolours.

BACs d'ARCHIVEs / BACs d'EXPOSITIONs [ARCHIVE DISPLAY / EXHIBITION DISPLAY] display to be affixed to the wall or set on the floor. each contains an organized set of 'exhibition remainders', which vary in their genus (they are composed using the materials specific to each exhibition they represent), and vary also in their species: thus, one is as likely to find a letter, or piece thereof, as a paper ball, an image, a booklet or an extract from the documentation offered by the museum. the BAC d'EXPOSITION is itself a metonymy: it is like the most representative part (even if it is sometimes a chance construction using found elements) of, and a 'memorial' for, a vaster set of objects, subjects and spaces. it constitutes a selective memory of an entire exhibition proposal.

BARRE de COULEUR [COLOUR BAR] found colour bar (sticks used to mix colour in a pot).

BOULE, BOULETTE [BALL, PELLET] BOULEs and BOULETTEs prepared, fashioned, made onsite, during the mounting of an exhibition. more often than not, the BOULETTEs are made using found materials or residues left on the floor. these are then spread out, arranged in a certain way on the floor, on a tabletop, or even in an exhibition display case. with every new exhibition, the arrangement respects how they had been packed up and kept, the storing away itself keeping the memory of the specific sites evoked in the wording of the title. the latter in effect indicates the places where the balls of the categories BALLs and PELLETs were made. in certain, rarer, cases, there are two places of production.

COLLECTION FONDAMENTALE [FUNDAMENTAL COLLECTION] the unique, never-undertaken collection of objects: of stones — picked up in a city's landscape, or the countryside's, during an exhibition (to explore the ground), received, and, very rarely, bought. the stones are sometimes used to define the ground of the exhibition (a cobblestone from Brussels on the floor of MAMCO, in Geneva), and exploited for their tint, origin, and age on the TABLEs-PAYSAGE, on the PLATEAUx-PAYSAGE, on the PLANCHEs-COULEUR for their power, among other things, to dilate space-time

OBJET (voir aussi VOLUME d'AIR, OBJET OBJET) [OBJECT (see also VOLUME d'AIR, OBJET OBJET)] by object, I understand a visible and palpable manifestation of my thought. at bottom, these are tools that help me see, and which I end up naming and grouping under the generic term OBJECT. examples:

Bars, Sticks, Volumes, Balls, Pellets, ... ('collection LIVRET# INVENTAIRE des/ of NOMS pour/for MATIÈRES/MATÉRIAUX, 1988-2002') among these, the VOLUMES d'AIR return regularly, under the name VOLUME or OBJET d'AIR.

ONE PIXEL ou/or THE SINGEL PIXEL we can understand thereby, detached from all the thousands of pixels that compose the image ('The Pixel Screen Ballet', 'Atlas Eclipticalis J. Cage, Atlas Eclipticalis', deSingel Internationaal Kunstcentrum, Antwerp (BE), 2010), a pixel of radical autonomy (title of an exhibition at the Netwerk/Centrum voor Hedendaagse Kunst, Aalst (BE), 2011). the pixel, once projected, paradoxically adapts itself to every given context, until it exhausts the forms (plinth, moulding, curtain fold).

ROND: the large dimensions

rond: the smaller sizes

SALLE-THÉ [TEA-ROOM] (see the SALLE X ANS d'ÂGE) a tea-treated room, so that it looks as if it had been yellowed by time. this classic procedure for artificially accelerating the aging process, used by museums in the restoration of artworks, is here applied to the architecture: the walls are painted (covered, distempered) with tea, either entirely, or only up to a certain height from the ceiling, thereby accentuating the *possibility of applying it to an angle of the room*.

SURCOLLAGE [OVER-COLLAGE] it's when a drawing, a gouache, an ACQUARELLE, a PAPIER SOLAIRE (marked by time) is glued to the bottom of multiple 'mats', each of which is itself made of history: a page from a notebook of a previous publication covered by the GRIS NEUTRAL 'Chicago 2003', or by the yellow post-it 'SMAC 2000', or by the pink 'Présent absolument' Vienna 2007, ... the SURCOLLAGE, in an excessive mise-en- abyme of the bottom below the pattern, attempts the study of its incidences, of how the bottom exalts, reveals or disturbs the balanced motif by the sudden advance of a new background. beyond the central pattern of the collage, the SURCOLLAGE condenses parallel times (narratives), of which each 'mat' can stand bail for. seen from the angle of sculpture and its tradition, the SURCOLLAGE is nothing other than a pedestal. it assembles two or more moments of works, studio periods that are a priori without relation, which it fixes by the successive layering (touches) in a tray of assembled works (sculpture).

VOLUME d'AIR [AIR VOLUME] a parallelepiped structure, made out of various materials, that can be placed on a BASE, a BASE BARRÉ, and can receive the thinnest BARRES de MESURE or BARRES de DESTINÉES. the VOLUMES d'AIR are called 'volume' or 'air volume' or 'object', or 'air object'. they are geometrical volumes, 'ideas themselves' of objects, materialized through the sole means of their edges. they are made of materials 'borrowed' from the premises of exhibition itself: glass from the windows, PVC from conduits and pipes, metal from a clothes line, bamboo from the garden ... all in thin sections of 1,2, or maximum 5mm.

## Photography Policy

Please feel free to take photographs of the exhibition for your own private use.

Reproduction is not permitted. Please share your impressions of the exhibition via Facebook, Instagram or Twitter:

#JoelleT @arnolfiniarts



## Reading Room

If you would like to learn more about the exhibition, there are further resources and exhibition guides available in the Reading Room on the 2<sup>nd</sup> floor.

## Bookshop

In the bookshop you can find a selection of publications for sale that relate to the current exhibitions.

## Access

We aim to make all visitors welcome. There are parking spaces for people with disabilities outside our main entrance, access via Farr's Lane. Our galleries are wheelchair accessible.

## Stay in Touch

To join our free mailing list send us an email to [boxoffice@arnolfini.org.uk](mailto:boxoffice@arnolfini.org.uk) or visit [arnolfini.org.uk](http://arnolfini.org.uk). You can also follow Arnolfini on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter: @arnolfiniarts.

Portable seating and transcripts of video works are available on request.

## Large print versions of this guide are available at Box Office

Exhibition spaces open: Tuesday to Sunday and Bank Holidays, 11am – 6pm  
Admission to exhibition spaces is free.

Arnolfini, 16 Narrow Quay,  
Bristol BS1 4QA  
[arnolfini.org.uk](http://arnolfini.org.uk) / @arnolfiniarts

Supported by



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The exhibition is part of a series of retrospectives by the artist and has been produced in collaboration with WIELS, Brussels, and Haus der Kunst, Munich. The exhibition was conceived with the assistance of Francesca Chiacchio, Bieke Criel, Frie Depraetere, Thomas Desmet, Christoph Fink, Alice Gadrey, Valentijn Goethals, Quentin Gubin, Cristian Valenzuela.

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