

Z33
PRESS
RELEASE

See-through church by Gijs Van Vaerenbergh opens

Church sculpture is part of larger art in
public space project in Limburg, Belgium.

9 September 2011



**Pit – art in the public space of
Borgloon (Belgium)**

**Z33 – house for contemporary
art**

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Extra info + interview requests

Gijs Van Vaerenbergh, a collaboration between young Belgian architects Pieterjan Gijs (Leuven, 1983) and Arnout Van Vaerenbergh (Leuven, 1983), have built a see-through church in the Belgian region of Haspengouw. The church is a part of the Z-OUT project of Z33, house for contemporary art based in Hasselt, Belgium. Z-OUT is an ambitious long-term art in public space project that will be realised on different locations in the Flemish region of Limburg over the next five years.

The church is 10 meters high and is made of 100 layers and 2000 columns of steel. Depending on the perspective of the viewer, the church is either perceived as a massive building or seems to dissolve - partly or entirely - in the landscape. On the other hand, looking at the landscape from within the church, the surrounding countryside is redefined by abstract lines.

The design of the church is based on the architecture of the multitude of churches in the region, but through the use of horizontal plates, the concept of the traditional church is transformed into a transparent object of art.

Reading between the lines is a project by the duo Gijs Van Vaerenbergh, a collaboration between young Belgian architects Pieterjan Gijs (Leuven, 1983)



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and Arnout Van Vaerenbergh (Leuven, 1983).

Since 2007, they have been realizing projects in the public space that derive from their architectural background, but clearly display an artistic intention. As such, their projects do not always originate from the customary commission and carry a large degree of autonomy. Their primary concerns are experiment, reflection, a physical involvement with the end result and the input of the viewer.

Reading between the Lines

Gijs Van Vaerenbergh, a collaboration between young Belgian architects Pieterjan Gijs (Leuven, 1983) and Arnout Van Vaerenbergh (Leuven, 1983), made a see-through church in the Belgian region of Haspengouw. The church is a part of the Z-OUT project of Z33, house for contemporary art based in Hasselt, Belgium. Z-OUT is an ambitious long-term art in public space project that will be realised on different locations in the Flemish region of Limburg over the next five years.

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The church is based on the architecture of the multitude of churches in the region, but through the use of horizontal plates, the concept of the traditional church is transformed into a transparent object of art.

The project is called 'Reading between the Lines' and can be read as a reflection on architectural themes such as scale, ground plan etc., but the project also emphatically transcends the strictly architectural. After all, the church does not have a well-defined function and focuses on visual experience in itself (one could even consider it to be a line drawing in space). At the same time, the construction demonstrates that this visual experience is in effect a consequence of the design, due to the explicit reference to the various stages of its conception: the design drawing, the model... Moreover, as the church does not fulfil its traditional function, it



can be read as a heritage related reflection on the present “emptying-out” of churches in the area (and their potential to re-use them in an artistic context).

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Borgloon (region Haspengouw)

Borgloon is a city in the sub-region of Haspengouw, sometimes referred to as the Flemish Tuscany.

Haspengouw is a typical culture landscape, designed by human hands according to the local needs. **pit** zooms in on three recurring themes in the region.

First of all, we have the religious patrimony. In and around Borgloon, there are a lot of little parish churches. Because of the declining number of church-goers, these churches are falling into disuse more and more often.



The future of these emptying churches is a current issue which several of the artists in **pit** address.

Other artists focus on the agrarian-economic landscape of Midden-Haspengouw. The changes in the economic situation of the area cause an increase in commuters and sleeping villages, but also leads to new forms of tourist accommodation..

The cultural and historical patrimony of the region is also a source of inspiration for **pit**. In the area of Borgloon, you can find such patrimonial remnants as the 'Romeinse Kassei' (Roman road) and the 'Fruitspoor' (Fruit trail). These trails both ensure easy access and are interesting routes to follow, as they represent the historical value of the region.

Z-OUT

art in public



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space

Pit – art in the public space of Borgloon-Heers is a Z-OUT project of Z33 – house for contemporary art. Z_OUT originated from the conviction that Limburg has plenty of room to offer for art in the public space.

Z33's Z-OUT project introduces art in public space that enters into dialogue with its surroundings, both formally and content-wise. On different locations in the area, Belgian and international artists challenge passers-by and visitors to consider their surroundings differently. After all, a landscape embraces a multitude of stories that are not always perceptible at first sight. All this fits Z33's mission perfectly: to encourage visitors to look differently at every-day objects.

Z-OUT runs over a period of several years. In the upcoming years Z-OUT will embark upon other landscapes and regions in Limburg, such as the mining landscape in Beringen, the Maasland, the bi-pole Hasselt-Genk and the Zuid-Willemsvaart.

pit – art in the public space of Borgloon-Heers is a Z-OUT project of Z33.

Z33 is an initiative of the Province of Limburg

Z-OUT is supported by the Flemish Government fund for cultural infrastructure

Z33

HOUSE FOR CONTEMPORARY ART

Z33 is a house for contemporary art. Since 2002, Z33 creates projects and exhibitions which encourage the visitor to take a different look at everyday objects. It is a unique laboratory and a meeting place for experiment and innovation where one can visit groundbreaking / pioneering exhibitions featuring contemporary art and design.

Z33 does not have its own collection but it has a permanent exhibition



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programme , consisting of three large and three smaller exhibition projects every year. Alongside the exhibitions at Z33, Z33 also organizes the Z-OUT project. This is a large project that brings contemporary art into the open space in Limburg, Belgium. On the initiative of Z33, Belgian Limburg has successfully put itself up for the organization of Manifesta 9 in 2012. The name Z33 is derived from her location, Zuivelmarkt 33, the historical beguinage in the city of Hasselt.

Pictures

**High Res pictures
available at
www.z33.be/press**

All pictures:

Reading between the Lines,
Gijs Van Vaerenbergh, 2011
(photo: Kristof Vrancken/Z33)



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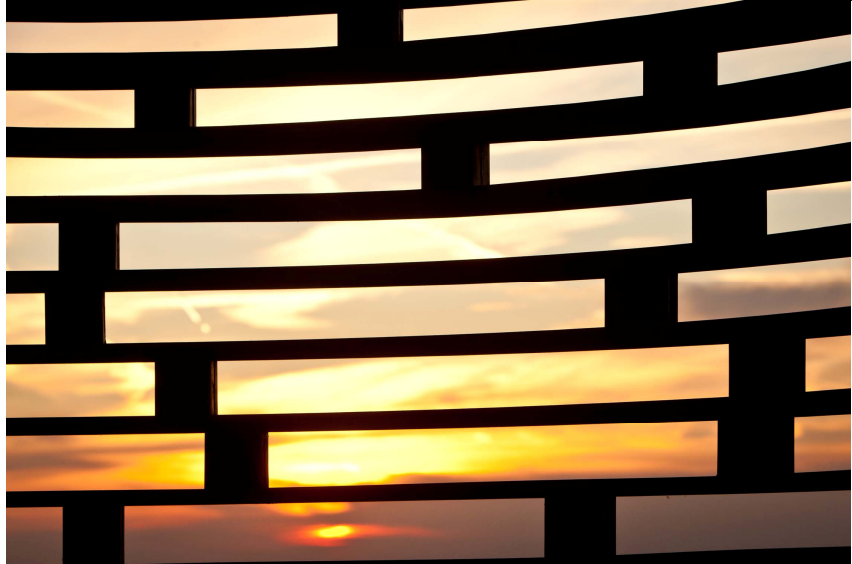


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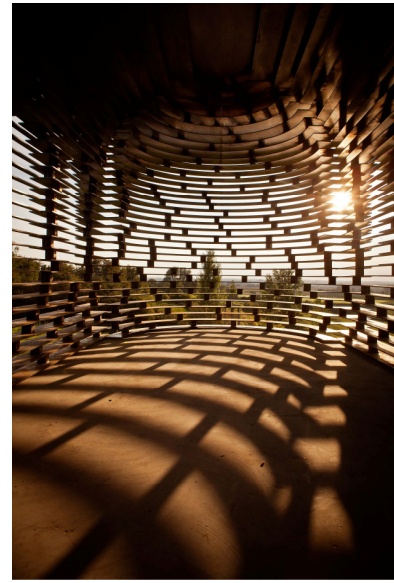
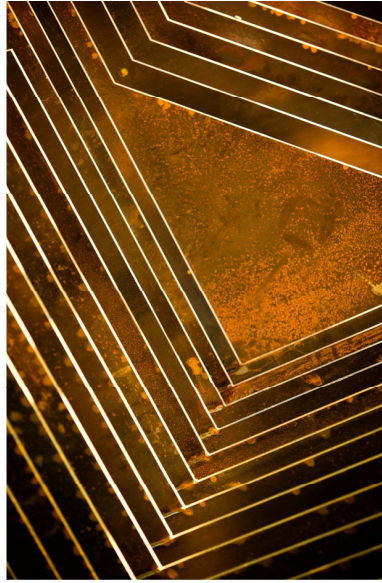


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