

ALMOST CINEMA 2009



TWELVE DAYS ON THE BORDER BETWEEN FILM, MEDIA ART AND MUSIC 6 - 17 October at Vooruit

Introduction Almost Cinema, organized by Vooruit Arts Centre and the Ghent Film Festival presents work from visual artists and performers whose work is intertwined with cinema. The audience at Almost Cinema will rediscover cinema with new and established artists showing exciting experiments or interesting reflection on cinema and its affiliates.

Curator **Eva De Groote** (Vooruit): "Almost Cinema interprets cinema in the broadest sense of the term. We don't oppose traditional cinema, but want to place ourselves on the sidelines of film. (...) What makes Almost Cinema so special is the fact that we dare to move away from basic cinematic principles such as projection, filmstrips and mediums. The artists at Almost Cinema shake up the principles of cinema or take them to the extreme."

The backbone of Almost Cinema is an **exhibition**

The exhibition winds its way through the Vooruit building, with contributions by Belgian artists **Hans Op de Beeck, Bram Vreven, Aernoudt Jacobs, Kurt D'Haeseleer** and international artists such as **Felix Hess, Jean-Noël Montagné, Pablo Valbuena** and **Juliana Borinski**. More information on the following pages.

You will also be able to enjoy an elaborate **live programme** at Almost Cinema, featuring:

Popular and hip drama by New York's **Nature Theater of Oklahoma** – *Rambo Solo*; a concert by **Oren Ambarchi & Stephen O'Malley** from Sunn 0))), who composed a score for **Alexis Destoop's** new project *Kairos* (as the film is not finished, the maker will show us some impressive selected footage for this performance), a new creation by pianist **Heleen Van Haegenborgh** and others – *Cinema Invisible* (premiere); Baltan Laboratories from Eindhoven (NL, founders include Telcosystems) was invited to present an evening programme with talks and performances (featuring **TeZ, Synchronator** by Gert-Jan Prins and Bas van Koolwijk, **Edwin van der Heide**). More information on pages 7-8.

Furthermore, Vooruit and KASK will organize a **symposium** at the occasion of the premiere of **Johan Grimoprez's** *Double Take* at the Ghent Film Festival. Fans of **music documentaries and film music** will find their way to Vooruit, too. *More information via Ghent Film Festival*. At the opening and closing night, Vooruit throws a **party!**

Agenda Almost Cinema musts for press

Tue 6 Oct	23:00	<i>De helaasheid der dingen</i> afterparty	Roy Orbison karaoke feat. special guests, jukebox hits from the 1960s / 70s / 80s and too much beer...
Wed 7 Oct	14:00-15:00	Press preview exhibition	Guided tour with curator Eva De Groote. The artists will be present.
Wed 7 Oct	20:00	Official opening exhibition	Public event. The artists will be present. With live dance performance.
Thu 8 Oct	22:30	Premiere <i>Cinéma Invisible</i>	Alternative audio drama, film without image... Improv.
Wed 14 Oct	20:00	<i>Kairos</i>	Live film music by Oren Ambarchi & Stephen O'Malley accompanied by images shot for Alexis Destoop's film.
15-17 Oct	20:00	<i>Rambo Solo</i>	Exhaustive retelling of David Morrell's <i>First Blood</i> and the film version by Nature Theatre of Oklahoma (OBIE Award-winning New York based performance group).

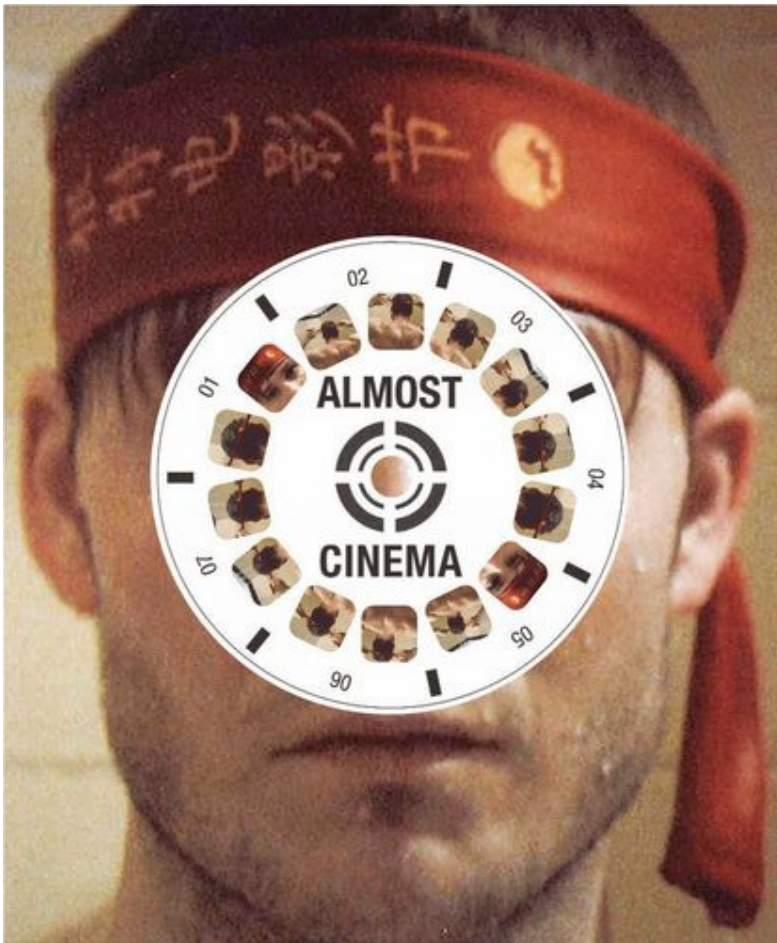


image Almost Cinema 09 after Rambo Solo (c) Mathias Timmermans

Exhibition Almost Cinema 2009

Featuring works by **Hans Op de Beeck** – *Celebration* (Belgian premiere); **Bram Vreven** – *Rays*; **Aernoudt Jacobs** – *Permafrost* (premiere); **Felix Hess** – *It's in the air*; **Jean-Noël Montagné** – *Je te parlerai dans un reflet de lumière*; **Pablo Valbuena** – *Augmented sculpture series* (created for Almost Cinema); **Kurt D'Haeseleer & Bérengère Bodin** – *Je connais des gens qui sont morts* (premiere of the installation and performance); **Juliana Borinski** – *LCD*.

In the Almost Cinema programme, curator Eva De Groote (Vooruit) investigates how cinema can break away from the screen. She invites visitors to step right into the middle of the cinema experience, and experience the dynamics of basic cinematic principles like light, sound, space and movement more intensely. And it is usually the small, simple or subtle things that amaze us: tiny ripples in the new film painting by Hans Op de Beeck, Bram Vreven's fascinating game of black and white fields and volumes or Felix Hess's flowing movement of small flags.

In his new installation, Aernoudt Jacobs experiments with the sound of cracking ice. Sound artist Felix Hess's intervention in the space makes the visitor spontaneously prick up his ears and observe in silence. Like this, Hess draws attention to the effect of silence instead of sound.

Since his projection on Den Haag's city hall last summer (part of today's art festival), Pablo Valbuena has continued to amaze audiences with "augmented spaces". His newest work for Almost Cinema, "extended series", places an aesthetic game with space centrally. The interactive installation by Jean-Noël Montagné confronts the visitor with the limitation of the feeling of space, as the inhabitants of (conflict) areas confronted with a separation wall experience on a daily basis.

Juliana Borinski tries to recreate the magic of pre-cinema in the movements of liquid crystals,

which can be found in modern computer and television screens. Kurt D'Haeseleer & Bérengère Bodin have created a moving landscape with inflatable objects in which live performances communicate with (the reflection of) video images.

Almost Cinema exhibition by Vooruit & Ghent Film Festival

6 until 17 October (Tue–Fri 18:00–00:00 / Sat–Sun 14:00–00:00 / Mon closed)

Press preview 7 October (14:00-15:00, please confirm your attendance)

Official opening 7 oktober (20:00, with live performance, public)

At Vooruit Arts Centre (Sint-Pietersnieuwstraat 23, 9000 Ghent)

More information www.vooruit.be

The works in the exhibition:

1. HANS OP DE BEECK – CELEBRATION (Belgian première)

Hans Op de Beeck is one of the biggest names in contemporary art. Instead of limiting himself to video art, he also creates sculptures, installations, pictures, animated films, drawings, paintings and short stories. His creations reflect on the difficult and problematic relation with time and space. He shows the audience non-existing, but recognizable places, moments, and extras that seem to have been plucked from daily life. Check out www.hansopdebeeck.com.

His video work Celebration (world premiere at Galleria Continua, San Gimignano, Italy, November 2008) is more like a painting than a film. Only subtle movements indicate that this is not a snapshot. Celebration shows us a strange display: we see a baroque dinner table set in the middle of the dry, barren desert, amidst rocks and cacti. Waiters and cooks are ready to welcome the guests. They stand still, with only the movement of the wind. The piece is a live painting, allowing the viewer to create his own story.

CREDITS Hans Op de Beeck, 'Celebration', 2008, 4' 38", full HD video transferred to Blu-Ray (16:9), colour, sound – courtesy Galleria Continua, San Gimignano – Beijing – Le Moulin; Galerie Krinzinger, Vienna; Xavier Hufkens, Brussels; Galerie Ron Mandos, Rotterdam – Amsterdam



2. FELIX HESS – IT'S IN THE AIR

It's In The Air (1995) is interactive in a delightfully simple way: the movement of air produced by the visitors sends a wave through dozens of tiny flags that appear to be floating just above the ground. The work visualizes the otherwise unseen changes in air pressure, making it the tiniest of almost cinema experiences.

Felix Hess is a Dutch scientist and artist who tries to reawaken our senses. He does this by making us aware of invisible phenomena. Hess transforms sound into light, and has made a CD recording of differences in air pressure. He's also known for his sound creatures, small devices that send out and receive sound signals without human interference, hereby reacting to each other and their environment (see the article in Dutch daily Trouw). Hess's work could already be admired at exhibitions and performances in the Kröller Müller museum, Boymans van Beuningen in Rotterdam, De Appel in Amsterdam, the New York Hall of Science, etc.

"Felix Hess redefines the relationship between art and technology in more than one way: he exposes and focuses on the sensitivity of technology towards its supposed reductionism, he consciously escapes the trend of standardization of technological design and is not tempted to make unscientific speculations that ignore the wonder of technically elaborate senses," said the

jury of a Dutch prize for art and technology (The Witteveen + Bos).

"All my work is interactive and very sensitive to what is going on in the direct environment. In fact, all my work is based on becoming aware of this sensitivity. Pictures and sound recordings cannot capture the essence of my work, they can't even come close to it. Most of my work consists of groups of small interactive electronic machines that are presented in the form of installations. They are extremely sensitive to what goes on around them. My work is about communication and sensitivity, about the relationship between sound and space. My 'machines' allow sound and space to speak for themselves. The main theme of my work is listening", Hess said in Dutch paper NRC Handelsblad (Dec 2002).

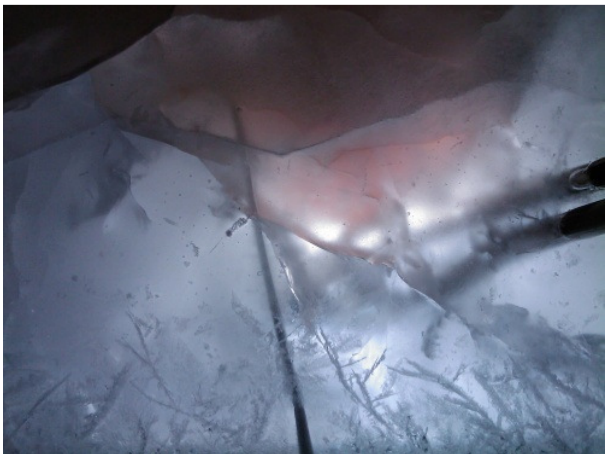


3. AERNOUDT JACOBS – *PERMAFROST* (premiere)

Permafrost is a new work by Aernoudt Jacobs. He developed a machine in which water slowly freezes and then thaws again. This process takes about an hour and results in a visual display and an amazing auditory experience. The cracking and bursting of the slowly forming and melting ice crystals is slightly amplified with special sound apparatus.

Permafrost visualizes the often problematic relationship between nature and technology and is a symbol for ecological phenomena such as the (accelerated) melting of the polar ice caps. At the same time, Jacobs uses this installation to research processes that are not audible or visible at first sight. He makes the visitor reflect on the complexity and layers of a natural process, translates it into something that we can experience consciously. (Happy New Ears festival in Kortrijk presents a try-out on 26 September.)

Aernoudt Jacobs is one of the many young Belgian artists at Almost Cinema. He is especially intrigued by sound and how it can be perceived and visualized. With the help of psychoacoustics, Jacobs investigates how perception can be influenced and how you can express sound physically, spatially and emotionally. Jacobs has previously worked extensively with field recordings (for Phantom Melodies at the 07 Courtisane festival in Vooruit, for example), where the memory or the context of a recording forms an interesting and complementary pattern for his work. Jacobs's work has been exhibited in France, Germany, Switzerland, Italy, Mexico, New York, Norway, Spain, Brasil and the Netherlands. More info on www.tmrx.org.



4. BRAM VREVEN – RAYS

Bram Vreven is a young Belgian artist who has been living and working in the Netherlands for several years. After his first steps in jazz, he left music to make sound installations. Over the years, the visual aspect has become more prominent in his work. His installation Rays (2008-2009) is the perfect example of that: six black strips slowly revolve around their axis and hereby create a fascinating graphic/kinetic display. When they revolve, the strips seem to change from flat two-dimensional figures into shapes with a volume, and back again.

According to Vreven himself, his installations are influenced by contemporary dance, music, nature, technology, science and their common characteristics rhythm, order, chaos and a flowing or non-flowing movement." More info: www.bramvreven.com.

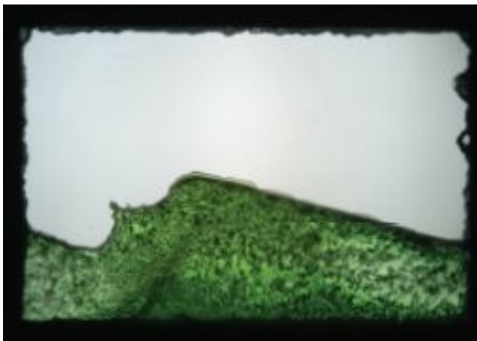


5. JULIANA BORINSKI – LCD

Juliana Borinski (photographer, installation and video artist, Brazilian working in Germany and other countries), erases the borders between video, experimental cinema, photography and performance. In LCD (2008) she shows the solution of liquid crystals in real time, a process that takes between 20 minutes and a few hours. The result is an abstract film of moving and melting particles. Gradually, changing landscapes appear, similar to lava lamp patterns.

Borinski's installation LCD (Liquid Crystal Display) is an enlargement of the natural process of crystallization as well as an ode to chemical techniques that have allowed us to capture images (i.e. photography and film). Liquid Crystals are still widely used in computer and TV screens. But this installation takes us far from these technical applications, to silence and the original magic of old optical apparatus. Check out www.khm.de/~juliana/Installations/I-LCD.html.

In her own words: "My expanded media installations often integrate basic new technology into historical media technics or physic experiments. Contrasting with the contemporary technological complexity and aesthetics, they propose very simple sensitive experiences, contemplation on abstract images, becoming again an interface between the spectator and the reality (and not between the spectator and the media)."



6. KURT D'HAESELEER & BÉRENGÈRE BODIN – JE CONNAIS DES GENS QUI SONT MORTS

The installation Je connais des gens qui sont morts presents a bizarre and unsettling display. Blow-up objects fill up with air, only to deflate moments later. In the process, plastic bodies coil in impossible positions, completely dependent on their 'breathing apparatus'. Glass panes, scattered in the space, catch the reflection of video images that amplify the chilling atmosphere of the work.

Visual artist Kurt D'Haeseleer & performer Bérengère Bodin found inspiration for *Je Connais...* in the book *Liquid Life* by Polish-British sociologist Zygmunt Bauman (en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zygmunt_Bauman). Just like the book that constituted the inspiration for it, the installation is a commentary on a society that is entirely focused on flexibility and change.

At regular times dancer Bérengère Bodin appears in the installation. She moves between the constantly changing landscapes of blow-up objects, using the manipulated objects and floating video images as ingredients for a bizarre mating dance.

Multimedia artist Kurt D'Haeseleer gained fame with his work for an array of theatre and dance projects, ranging from *LOD*, Anna Teresa De Keersmaecker and Peter Verhelst. His videos, installations and audiovisual performances could be seen at *Artefact* (Stuk, Leuven) *KRAAK* and *Courtisane* (Ghent) and at international festivals and exhibitions in Rotterdam, Tokyo, Montréal, Paris, Berlin, etc. He was also part of production company and artist collective *De Filmfabriek* for several years (other members included Peter Missotten) and is now setting up his own project.



7. JEAN-NOËL MONTAGNÉ – JE TE PARLERAI DANS UN REFLET DE LUMIÈRE

French media artist Jean-Noël Montagné draws inspiration from political dividing lines, like the border between the US and Mexico, Israel and Palestine, Europe and Africa (Ceuta & Mellila), North and South Korea, where walls, fences and barbed wire are aimed to keep out refugees.

Montagné projects video images of a beautiful horizon. But just like the people that are confronted with a separation wall and can't see which landscape lies beyond it, the spectator never sees the full picture. Twelve mirrors suspended in the middle of the projection field reflect the images so that the projection is scattered throughout the space. On top of that, the mirrors can rotate and react to the presence of visitors. When you approach, the mirrors will turn away, so you never see your own reflection.

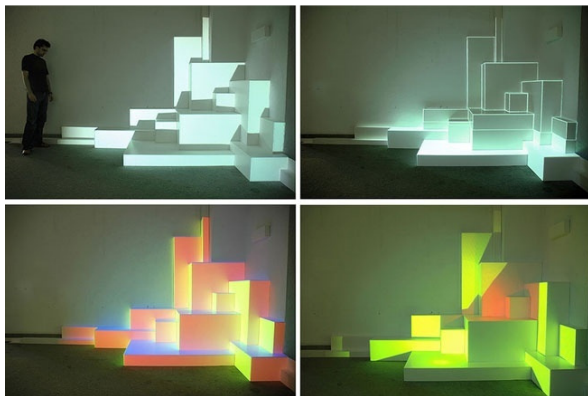
The installation gives you the impression of being confined by walls on every side. But the dynamic projection also presents a sharp contrast with the static situation of someone who is locked in or out by walls every day. Read more about Montagné politically aware work on Art Sensitif www.artsens.org.



8. PABLO VALBUENA – EXTENSION SERIES

One of the most exciting visual experiments at the Almost Cinema exhibition is the work of Pablo Valbuena. This young Spanish architect and artist manipulates space and plays with perception. Using precise light projections he brings small architectural details to life. Abstract geometric forms like tubes, power sockets and corners are put in the spotlight, adding dimension and making them tangible. On top of that, his work adds a mobile virtual extension to the space which the visitor is in, hence the name Extension Series.

Valbuena often works on the relation between space, time and perception. One of his most remarkable projects was his light projection on Den Haag's city hall (todaysart festival 2008). The work exhibited at Almost Cinema has been created especially for Vooruit. The work is a continuation of his 'Augmented Sculpture' project in Madrid (see pictures below). More about this work on: www.pablovalbuena.com.



Augmented Sculpture @ Madrid – Pablo Valbuena

Live programme Almost Cinema 2009

Wed 7 + Tue 13 - Fri 16 Oct	20:00 / 22:30	Kurt D'Haeseleer & Bérengère Bodin	<i>Je connais des gens qui sont morts</i> (dance performance)
Thu 8 – Fri 9 Oct	20:00	Kassys	<i>Good Cop Bad Cop</i> (filmic theatre)
Thu 8 Oct	22:30	Heleen Van Haegenborgh a.o.	<i>Cinéma Invisible</i> (alternative audio theatre / improv)
Fri 9 Oct	20:00	Baltan Laboratories presenteert	Inspiring Dutch lab for media arts and new technologies (talks and performances by TeZ, Synchronator and Edwin van der Heide)
Sat 10 Oct	21:00	Jef Neve Trio	Music from the album 'Soul in pictures' and from the films 'Dagen Zonder Lief' and 'De Helaasheid der Dingen', both by Felix Van Groeningen
Wed 14 Oct	20:00	<i>Kairos</i>	Live film music by Oren Ambarchi & Stephen O'Malley
Thu 15 Oct	20:00* / 22:30	Shigeru Umebayashi	Film music concert * 20:00 SOLD OUT
Thu 15 – Sat 17 Oct	20:00	<i>Rambo Solo</i>	Nature Theatre of Oklahoma is Rambo

Some more information:

KAIROS - Wed 14 Oct, Minard

Kairos is a short science fiction film by Belgian artist Alexis Destoop and American writer Aaron Schuster. Filmed mainly in the Australian outback, the movie deals with questions of time and landscape, colonization and desertification. The film follows the adventures of Larry Church, an agent of Collective Time Flow (CTF), a government organization created in the aftermath of the Great Temporal Catastrophe to take control of the passing of time and ensure that the population remains synchronized.

The evening at Vooruit highlights the unique soundtrack of the film, composed and performed by internationally renowned experimental musicians Oren Ambarchi and Stephen O'Malley. Their musical creation is an integral part of the Kairos universe, dramatizing the breakdown of time through a sonic texture which moves between repeating pulse and clashing dissonance.



CINÉMA INVISIBLE - Thu 8 Oct, Vooruit (Domzaal)

HELEEN VAN HAEGENBORGH E.A. AAN DE SLAG MET MATERIAAL UIT HET ARCHIEF VAN JASPER RIGOLE

With the arrival of CDs and mp3s, the glory days audio cassettes seem well behind us. However, old, self-made tapes remain a must-have for many a music lover. Pianist Heleen Van Haegenborgh, up-and-coming drummer Lander Gyselicnk, double bass player Kristof Roseeuw and electronica artist Jürgen De Blonde, a.k.a. Köhn still cherish the magic of the audiotape.

For their Cinéma Invisible project, Van Haegenborgh and her colleagues work with old audiotapes from the archive of visual artist Jasper Rigole. His 'International Institute for The Conservation, Archiving and Distribution of Other people's Memories' is a continuously expanding multimedia archive of found private documents.

For Cinéma Invisible, the musicians work with private recordings of, for example, a holiday. They create an audio drama, a film without pictures, where the audio material forms the basis for the musical improvisation. The musicians focus on the relation between text, music and silence as well as on the images that these convey. Visual artist Kelly Schacht takes care of the set design.



Heleen Van Haegenborgh

NATURE THEATER OF OKLAHOMA – RAMBO SOLO - Thu 15, Fri 16, Sat 17 Oct, Vooruit (Balzaal)

Young New York company Nature Theater of Oklahoma, which performed Poetics: A Ballet Brut at Vooruit last year, is one of the biggest stage revelations of the past years. Their performance Rambo Solo is as fascinating as it is simple. Ever since he was ten, Actor Zachary Oberzan has been obsessed with the film Rambo and First Blood, the book on which the film is based. Oberzan narrates the story in full detail with childlike enthusiasm. On the three screens behind him, you see the reconstruction recorded in his tiny New York apartment: the loft bed becomes the cliff Rambo dives from, the shower becomes a prison. When his memory fails him, Oberzan fills the gaps with creative variations. As his story unfolds, the difference between the movie superhero and the stage actor becomes more and more unclear.



Symposium Shot by Both Sides! Double Take

Thu 15 Oct, 10:00–18:00, Vooruit (Domzaal)

Organized on the occasion of the Belgian première of Double Take at the Film Festival Ghent and the exhibition Double Take Plus at bkSM in Strombeek and Mechelen, this international symposium explores some of the main issues of Grimonprez's film. Apart from including a screening of Double Take and a lecture by its filmmaker, the symposium deals with the work of Alfred Hitchcock, the visualizations of doubles and monuments, the oscillation between cinema and television, Cold War iconography and our contemporary culture of fear and catastrophe.

Speakers are: Johan Grimonprez, Tom Mc Carthy (Author of Remainder), Edwin Carels (KASK), Steven Jacobs (KASK, Antwerp University), Dany Nobus (Brunel University) and Jodi Dean (Hobart & William Smith Colleges, NY).

Full program on <http://doubletake.kaskprojecten.be/program>.



Press information on Almost Cinema

Press images, interview requests, press tickets, ... please contact
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