

DAVID BERGÉ
SELECTED WORKS.
2018

WWW.DAVIDBERGE.BE

WALK PIECES



prototype-walk brussels at Maison Particulière, 100 min, 2014

In my Walk Pieces, I guide small groups of audience through urban space in silence over 100 minutes. Walks have passed through a museum without a floor, in the proximity of containers being offloaded from trucks, through narrow alleys and over large squares, through the bedroom of an art collector and behind the stage of an opera.

My Walk Pieces capture the urban fabric in its different layers. They describe urban space and make visible its layers. Layers of both formal and informal urban development, of political decisions impacting public and shared space. Scars of time, weather, use and war, left like wounds in the urban texture, sometimes healed, sometimes still open.

Being guided in silence, this work introduces another kind of perception to the bodies taking part into it. For a given duration of time, audience members do not exchange verbally and refrain from taking pictures. This work creates a potentiality for the complexity of urban layers to be negotiated, where sensory awareness is heightened not through blindfolding or by privileging one sense over another, but through encouraging silence among mobile, proprio-receptive bodies.

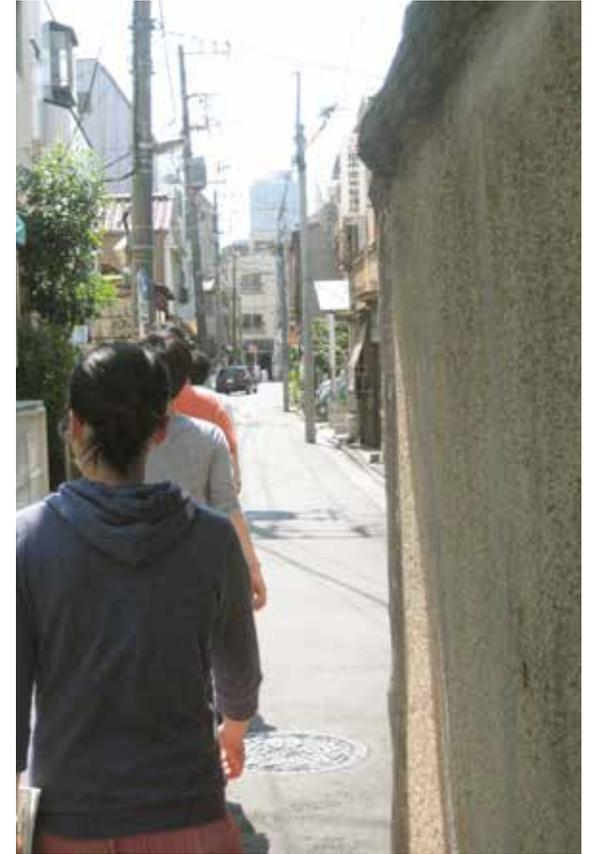
WALK PIECES



prototype-walk brussels at Maison Particulière,
100 min, 2014



Morishita walk, Tokyo, 21 min, 2012



Morishita walk, Tokyo, 21 min, 2012

WALK PIECES



AalstWalk at NETWERK center for contemporary art, 106 min, 2012

“David Bergé cut the urban fabric and re-stitched it together by means of our act of walking. We traversed the city diagonally, against and beyond its normal coordinates, its normal divisions in space, and slightly beyond the separations between public and private functions.”

Tülay Atak, participant.

“This carefully composed, highly personal and radical work invites the participants on a journey through urban space through the eyes of the artist. Referencing both the White Cube and the parameters of Public Art, David turns the tables on the institutionally legitimated production of meaning by focussing on the apparently non-significant, minor aspects of the city scape.” Ruth Noack, participant

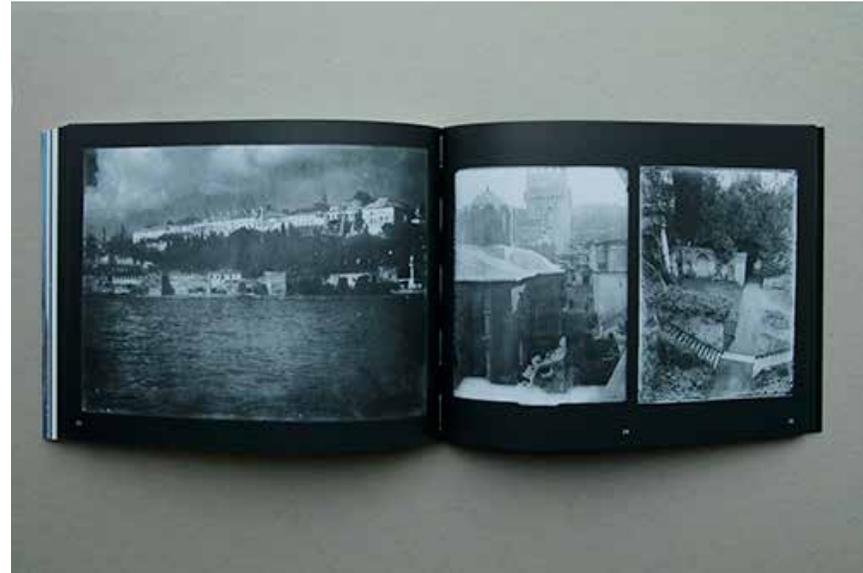
FRAGILE CITY



Fragile City, published by MER. Paper Kunsthalle, exhibited at NETWORK center for contemporary art, Aalst, 2015

Fragile City looks at the contemporary condition of 5 cities today through the historic model of *Voyage d'Orient* undertaken in 1911 by August Klipstein and Charles-Édouard Jeanneret (the future Le Corbusier). **Fragile City** joins together unpublished photographs from the 1911 journey with Bergé's photographs from 2011, as well as essays by Tülay Atak and Elke Krasny. **Fragile City** is a visual, critical and historical reflection on contemporary urbanization.

FRAGILE CITY



THE VOYAGE PIECE



The Voyage Piece at Recyclart, Brussels, 21 min, looped, 2014.

'The Voyage Piece' is a spatial installation which displays the photos taken by August Klipstein and Charles-Édouard Jeanneret (the future Le Corbusier) throughout their Voyage d'Orient of 1911. The piece introduces a sequence in the totality of the archive projected over three synchronized loops. 'The Voyage Piece' collects, projects and introduces a temporality to these photographs and extends the space depicted in the photographs by making use of the space in between the screens.

A DISTINCT EFFORT



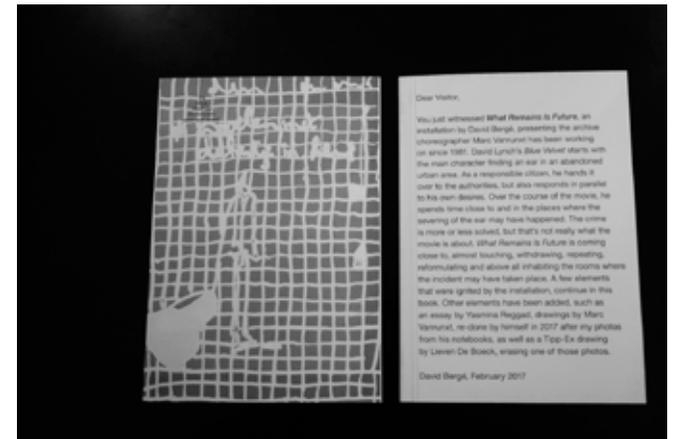
A Distinct Effort
single screen installation, slideshow and synchronized text, 18 min, looped, 2017.

text and voice (via wireless headsets) by David Bergé
with photos by August Klipstein &
Charles-Édouard Jeanneret.



In this installation, Bergé combines a selection of images from the same archive and recorded prose, *A Distinct Effort* slowly uncovers an early twentieth-century desire for spatial understanding rather than photographic representation—an approach to space which feeds into David Bergé's ongoing interest in non-optical photographic strategies for perceiving and navigating relations within urban environments.

WHAT REMAINS IS FUTURE



What Remains Is Future is an installation and a book by David Bergé responding to the since 1981 ongoing archive of choreographer Marc Vanrunxt (BE, 1960).

For the installation *What Remains Is Future*, artist David Bergé spatially activates, transforms and recomposes elements of Vanrunxt's

archive to turn them into a multi-layered tactile experience. Archival photographs are projected and then erased by light. Movement instructions found in the notebooks, commented on by Bergé, intertwine with music and rescaled replicas of scenographic objects designed for Vanrunxt over the years by Anne-Mie Van Kerckhoven, Koenraad Dedobbeleer, Kristof van

Gestel, Katleen Vinck and David Bergé himself.

Approaching the archive as a resonance, David Bergé, long time friend and collaborator of the choreographer, creates a space for the audience to capture its echoes in their own pace. Visitors to the installation received the book *What Remains Is Future*.

THE CAPE COD LOOP



The Cape Cod Loop and The Berchem Loop at Extra City Kunsthall, Antwerp, BE, 2x6 min, 2015

From 1938 onwards, a group of exiled Bauhaus artists lived and worked communally on Cape Cod (Massachusetts, USA). I made The Cape Cod Loop during a residency in one of these restored houses by walking a loop inside the house, spanning over two floors, with a camera held tightly to my body. When presenting this work at Extra City Kunsthall, I created a second loop, The Berchem Loop, which was the result of a 6 minute loop through the exhibition building, re-walked every day of the exhibition. Two times 6 minutes.

THE CAPE COD LOOP



The Cape Cod Loop projected on exterior wall, CAC vilnius, 2015



The Cape Cod Loop at Extra City, Antwerp, 2015

CELEBRITY ECLIPSE Y OTROS BARCOS



Celebrity Eclipse y otros Barcos, performance version, 23 min, 2017.

Celebrity Eclipse and other Cargos is a performative piece conceived with Nibia Pastrana in proximity of the harbor of San Juan, Puerto Rico. We recited the names of the cargo ships travelling through the sea passage, such as TROPIC EXPRESS, ATLANTIC CONVEYER, ENDURANCE AND OCEAN EAGLE. The sun is about to set and ships slowly recede from view. Currently under redevelopment.

THE AMBIEN PIECE



The Ambien Piece at Gallery Objective Correlative, Tokyo, 360 min, 2012

The Ambien Piece, co-authored with Trajal Harrell, is a performative piece created in reference to the frequent public sleeper residents of Tokyo. With the aim of making visible this layer of the urban space into the gallery space, we have taken the sleeping pill – Ambien – and slept in the gallery for 6 hours. The performance, as well as the movement of these bodies, is controlled by a pill and not a human authority. During that time, one could see two sleeping bodies holding hands, moving (un-) consciously in front of a gallery audience.

DAVID BERGÉ - ABOUT

David Bergé looks at photography through the lens of the body.

Rather than employing only the optical application of the camera, his work revolves around the gaps in space and time that have emerged through the invention of photography.

His work reveals and unfolds the complexity of layers urban space can consist of. The material he works with is organized time, which has so far been finding its form through 'silent Walk Pieces', durational photo-installations, performances and publications. In his 'Walk Pieces', he guides small groups of audience through urban space in silence over 100 minutes. They capture the urban fabric in its different layers. His works describe urban space and make visible its layers. Layers of both formal and informal urban development, of political decisions impacting public and shared space. Scars of time, weather, use and war, left like wounds in the urban texture, sometimes healed, sometimes still open.

David Bergé currently lives in Athens and Brussels where his work has received support from government funding bodies. He holds an MA from the Dutch Art Institute (2017) and an MFA from LUCA Brussels (2005). His work is being supported by the organization Platform 0090 (Istanbul/Antwerp).

Some Notes on the work of David Bergé by Laura Herman

David Bergé looks at photography through the lens of the body; an engagement with the medium that points directly to the performative qualities of taking pictures – an exploration of the interplay between self and the world. While this approach might reveal hidden relationships between the viewing subject and his environment, foregrounding the performative also means to understand the role of the viewer in the (un)making of space. Bergé is not especially interested in questions of representation – in solidifying time into images – but rather in understanding how the act of looking, traversing, framing, composing, or pointing to is deeply entrenched in dynamics of appropriation and articulation. Over the past few years, Bergé has developed a series of projects that tease out the status of the (walking) body as a tool for navigating, experiencing, embodying the many temporalities of the urban environment. The ‘silent Walk Pieces’, for example, fit into a long history of walking, which one might argue is everyone’s history (even though this history is fraught with racialised and gendered divisions). While walking allows us to engage with the specific outcomes of mobility such as colonialism, migration, and progress, as a visual rather than transportational activity it has also propelled many artists and writers to travel (not necessarily toward a destination) and engage with the sensorial qualities of landscapes. It is through this prism that Bergé approaches his ‘silent Walk Pieces’. In silence and over a period of 100 minutes, he guides his audience through the knitted texture of histori-

cal, political, social and climatic layers that constitutes the urban fabric. A carefully carved out passage through a blend of particular smells, textures, sounds, and light intensities opens up the senses. Moving from one place to another, the embodied experience translates into a profusion of affects and desires, which soon enough become the subject of the walk.

From 2014 on, Bergé has begun working with the archive of photographs taken by Charles-Édouard Jeanneret (who would later come to be known as Le Corbusier) and August Klipstein during their Voyage d’Orient in 1911. These included: images of vernacular architectures and tombstones, a shot of Istanbul going up in flames, a photo of Turkish army cavalry in the open plain, a distant view of a cathedral in Hungary, and a picture of Jeanneret on horseback. By electing not to use a tripod, the two men took these photographs by supporting their cameras with their own bodies and directing them at objects and landscapes, thus placing the human body central to the experience of place. Departing from their invisible presence implied in these photographs, Bergé formulated three angles proposing different readings of the archive, from the spatial and temporal relationships enclosed in the images, passing through a contemporary reading of the historical trope of the voyage, to finally end with a subjective narrative as a way to interpret the experience surrounding Klipstein and Jeanneret’s picture taking.

In ‘The Voyage Piece’ (2014), the images are projected in three life-size parallel loops, accentuating the temporal and spatial relations in and between the photographs. The enlarged images then reveal what underlies the seemingly mere documentation of a journey through the East: the privilege of travel and exploration, but also the appropriation of the territory for self-understanding – an avant-garde approach to the relationship between the body and the environment that prefigures Le Corbusier’s concept of ineffable space.

If pre-existing images can be read to reconstruct events and offer insight into bygone times, they can also be contrasted with present-day experiences. What can we learn from former modes of looking at and walking through the built environment? In *Fragile City* (2015), a book conceived in collaboration with Tülay Atak and Elke Krasny, the unpublished images of *Voyage d'Orient* are confronted with Bergé's photographs taken in 2011– a reflection on the contemporary condition of the city through the act of traveling as knowledge production.

'A Distinct Effort' is the third chapter in the series of works. Combining a selection of images and recorded prose, the work slowly uncovers an early twentieth century desire for spatial understanding rather than photographic representation through the subjective interpretation of the artist – a narration which again feeds into Bergé's ongoing research into non-optical photographic strategies for perceiving and navigating relations within urban environments.

To conclude, it is useful to touch upon two recent works Bergé is currently (further) developing. In 'Celebrity Eclipse y otros barcos' (2017), conceived in collaboration with Nibia Pastrana, Bergé presents yet another way in which he approaches the performance of photography. In proximity of the harbor of San Juan, Puerto Rico, Bergé and Pastrana recited the names of the cargo ships travelling through the sea passage, such as Tropic Express, Atlantic Conveyor, Endurance, and Ocean Eagle. The sun is about to set and ships slowly recede from view. The performance makes visible images that are both ephemeral and temporary – they straddle the line between nature and modernity, tradition and progress, the rural and the urban. This line, however, is quickly wiped out again as the ships

pass from sight.

The upcoming work 'Metropolitan Mountains' (2019) addresses the relentless city expansion in Seoul, South-Korea, that violently slices into virgin forest. Departing from the confrontation between the slow pace of old-growth forests and the accelerating pace of modernisation, Bergé intends to bring together the rhythm and choreography of two colliding times and spaces in text and image, restaging the experience of living through conflicting temporalities.

august 2017

CV DAVID BERGÉ

SELECTED PRESENTATIONS

Archiv der Avantgarden, Staatliche Kunstsammlungen Dresden, DE, 2018
Extra-City Kunsthall, Antwerp, BE, 2018, 2016, 2015.
Z33 research at Atelier Bouwmeester, Brussels, BE, 2017.
STUK arts center, Louvain, BE, 2017, 2013.
Wendy's Subway, New York, USA, 2016.
Contemporary Art Center (CAC), Vilnius, LT, 2015.
MER. Paper Kunsthalle, Ghent, BE, 2015.
NETWERK center for contemporary art, Aalst, BE, 2015, 2012, 2009.
Maison Particulière, Brussels, BE, 2014.
Recyclart, Brussels, BE, 2014.
Kulturni Centar Beograda, Belgrade, SRB, 2013.
Kunsthau Muerz, Muerzzuschlag, AT, 2012.
The Body Arts Laboratory, Tokyo, JP, 2012.
TanzQuartier Wien, Vienna, AT, 2012, 2010.
Workspace Brussels, BE, 2009.

SELECTED WORKS

Walk Pieces (2008-present)
took place in Berlin, Ostend, Vienna,
Istanbul, Aalst, Tokyo, Brussels,
Vilnius and Tbilisi.

The Voyage d'Orient series (2011-present)
The Voyage Piece, 2014.
Fragile City, 2015.
A Distinct Effort, 2016-2017.

The Ambien Piece (2012)

COMMISSIONED WORKS

What Remains Is Future (2017)

ARTIST RESIDENCIES

Platform 0090, Antwerp, BE, 2017–2021.
Saari Residence, Hietamäki, FI, 2017.
Beta-Local, The Harbor, San Juan, PR, 2017.
GeoAIR, Tbilisi, GE, 2016.
Cape Cod Modern House Trust, Wellfleet, USA, 2014.
Q-02, Brussels, BE, 2014.
MONSOON, BOZAR, Brussels, BE, 2013.
Goethe-Institut, New Delhi, IN, 2011.
In Transit Festival, Haus der Kulturen der Welt,
Berlin, DE, invited by André Lepecki, 2008, 2009.
Prisma Platform, Mexico-City, MX, 2009.

GUEST LECTURES, ARTIST TALKS

Center of Contemporary Art (CCA) Tbilisi, GE, 2016.
School of Art, Architecture and Design, Leeds Beckett
University, UK, prof. Teresa Stoppani, 2016.
Srishti School of Art, Design and Technology,
Bangalore, IN, 2015.
National Gallery of Modern Art, Bangalore, IN, 2015.
Ghent University, Ghent, BE, prof. Johan Lagae, 2014.
LUCA School of Arts, Brussels, BE, Aglaia Konrad, 2014.
Apass post graduation program, Brussels, BE, 2014.

GRANTS, STIPENDS

Kone Foundation, Finland, 2017
Research grant (traject subsidie), VGC, BE, 2015.
Pianofabriek Kunstenwerkplaats, Brussels, BE, 2014–2015.
Research grant, Vlaamse Overheid, BE, 2014, 2012, 2011,
2010.
Project grant, Vlaamse Overheid, BE, 2013.
Travel grant, Vlaamse Overheid, BE, 2013, 2012, 2009.
Research grant, Goethe-Institut, New Delhi, 2011.

EDUCATION

2015–2017
MA Dutch Art Institute, Arnhem, NL.

2001–2005
MFA LUCA School of Arts, Brussels, BE.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Performer in *Used, Abused, and Hung Out to Dry*,
Trajal Harrell, MoMA, New York City, USA, 2013.
TOURISTS, hosting of evening at Wohnung Miryam
van Doren, artist run space, Jack Hauser, Vienna,
AT, 2011.
Projections as set design for Marc Vanrunxt's
EXTRACTION, Kaaithheater Brussels, BE, 2009.
Slideshow projections in Trajal Harrell's Showpony
and Quartet for the End of Time, Danspace and
DTW, New York City, USA, 2007–2008 and
the Barbican, London, UK, 2017.

CURRENT RESEARCH

Practicing photography without taking pictures,
research in the framework of the Dutch Art
Institute (DAI), curated by Gabriëlle Schleijsen and
tutored by Sarah Pierce, Rebecca Sakoun,
Tirdad Zolghadr, Ruth Noack, Marcelo Rezende
and Rachel O'Reilly, in Arnhem, Eindhoven,
Jakarta, Mechelen and Salvador de Bahia, Brazil,
2015-2017.

(update January 2018)
www.davidberge.be