

**DAVID BERGÉ**  
**SELECTED WORKS.**  
**2017**

**[WWW.DAVIDBERGE.BE](http://WWW.DAVIDBERGE.BE)**

# WALK PIECES



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

In a 'silent Walk Piece', David Bergé guides small groups of audience members for 100 minutes through the urban fabric, in silence.

Traversing a room in a museum without a floor; water spilling on your arm from a 'silent Walk Piece' that passes near a carwash; being into somebody's apartment at 7AM and facing a nineties unisex European-looking hotel facade across the street,...

Such moments in David Bergé's 'silent Walk Pieces' do not describe the urban by use of language. On the contrary: they diminish prosaic meaning; they abstract the urban space and turn the ordinary components of city life into colors, shapes, lights, reflections and movements. In this way, the walk becomes a platform for a self-constructed experience, employing the urban as raw material. As the audience number is reduced, the work gives the audience the power of being able to identify, without being identified.

# WALK PIECES



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



Vienna Footnotes at TQW, 90 min, 2010



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



Morishita walk, Tokyo, 21 min, 2012



Morishita walk, Tokyo, 21 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

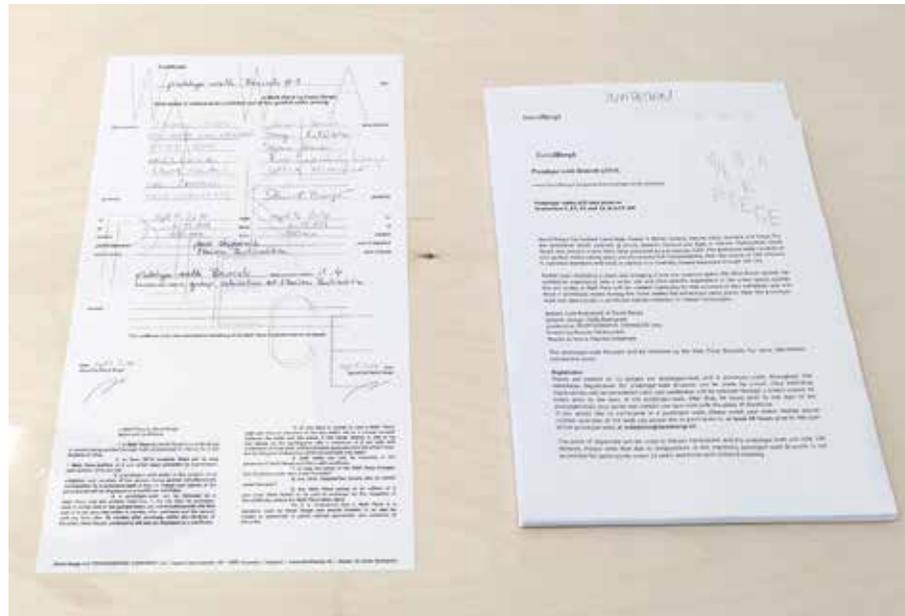
# WALK PIECES



Vienna Footnotes at TQW, 90 min, 2010



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



prototype-walk brussels at Maison Particulière, certificate exhibited, 2014

*By slightly alternating the situational context of existing content, my Walk Pieces trace the physicality of the urban space and make visible its layers: layers of both formal and informal urban development, of political decisions impacting public shared space, scars of time, weather, use and war, left like wounds in the urban texture, sometimes healed, sometimes still open. - David Bergé*

Since 2008, 'Walk Pieces' have taken place in Aalst, Ostend, Tbilisi, Tokyo, Istanbul, Berlin, Brussels and Vienna.

# 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.

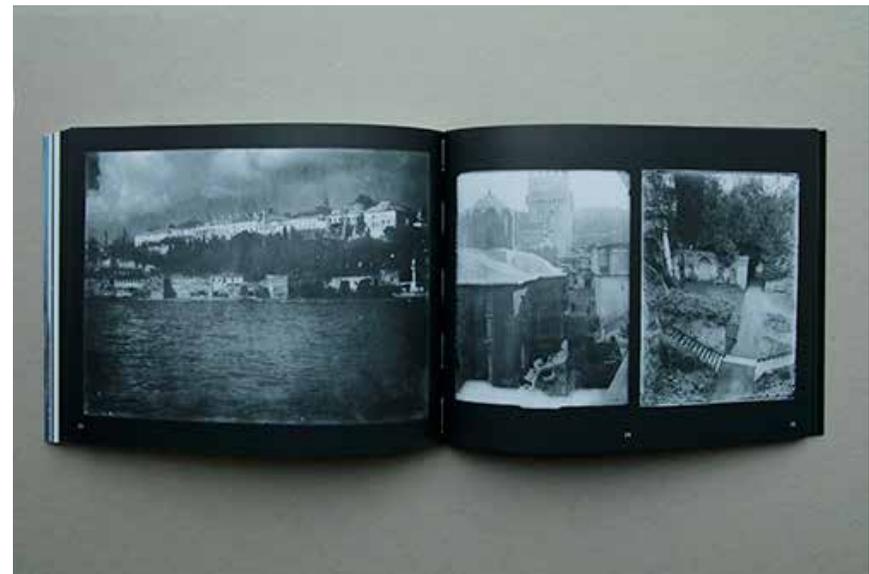
# FRAGILE CITY



*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



*Fragile City*, published by MER. Paper Kunsthalle, 2015

# 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



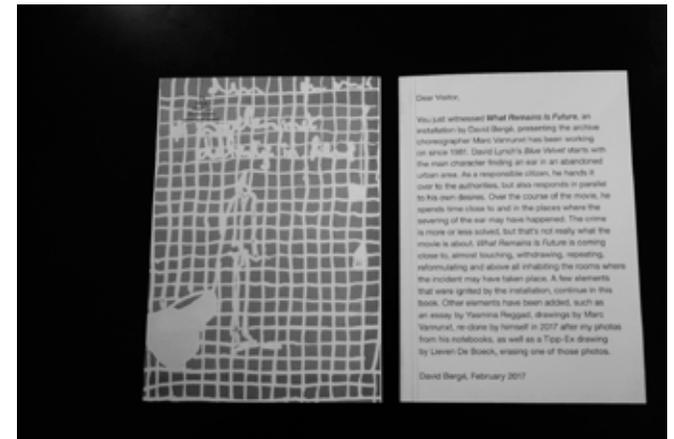
*A Distinct Effort*  
single screen installation, slideshow and synchronized text, 18 min, looped, 2017.

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* at Extra City Kunsthall, Antwerp, BE, 2 × 6 min, 2015

From 1938 onwards, a group of exiled Bauhaus artists lived and worked communally on Cape Cod (Massachusetts, USA). The Cape Cod Loop was created during a residency in one of these restored houses and is the result of David Bergé's attempt to wear the Kugel/Gips House. With a camera held tightly to his body, Bergé takes us into the low-lit entryway of the house, steadily gliding us through an anonymous, narrow hall and up a stair. Close, without being claustrophobic, the focus on the resolutely humdrum facets of this space, builds a sense of expectation.

## 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.*

In 'Celebrity Eclipse and other cargos' 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.

## **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.

In his work, Bergé asks how the body can be a central device to capture images and he invites his audience to share this experience. His work reveals and unfolds the complexity of urban space, rather than capturing it into one picture. Unlike other photographers, he doesn't freeze time, but opens it up. His material is organized time, which is manifested through 'silent Walk Pieces', durational photo-installations, performative talks and publications as continuations of actions.

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 produced by the organization 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 historical, political, social and climatic layers that con-

stitutes 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 'Soul Modern Express' (2018) 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

Extra-City Kunsthal, Antwerp, BE, 2017, 2016, 2015.  
STUK arts center, Louvain, BE, 2017, 2013.  
Z33 research at Atelier Bouwmeester, Brussels, BE, 2017.  
Wendy's Subway, New York, USA, 2016.  
Contemporary Art Center (CAC), Vilnius, LT, 2015.  
MER. Paper Kunsthal, Ghent, BE, 2015.  
NETWERK center for contemporary art, Aalst, BE, 2015, 2012, 2010.  
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 November 2017)