

DAUWENS & BEERNAERT
GALLERY

Press release

To kill a Mockingbird

(Spaar de spotvogel)

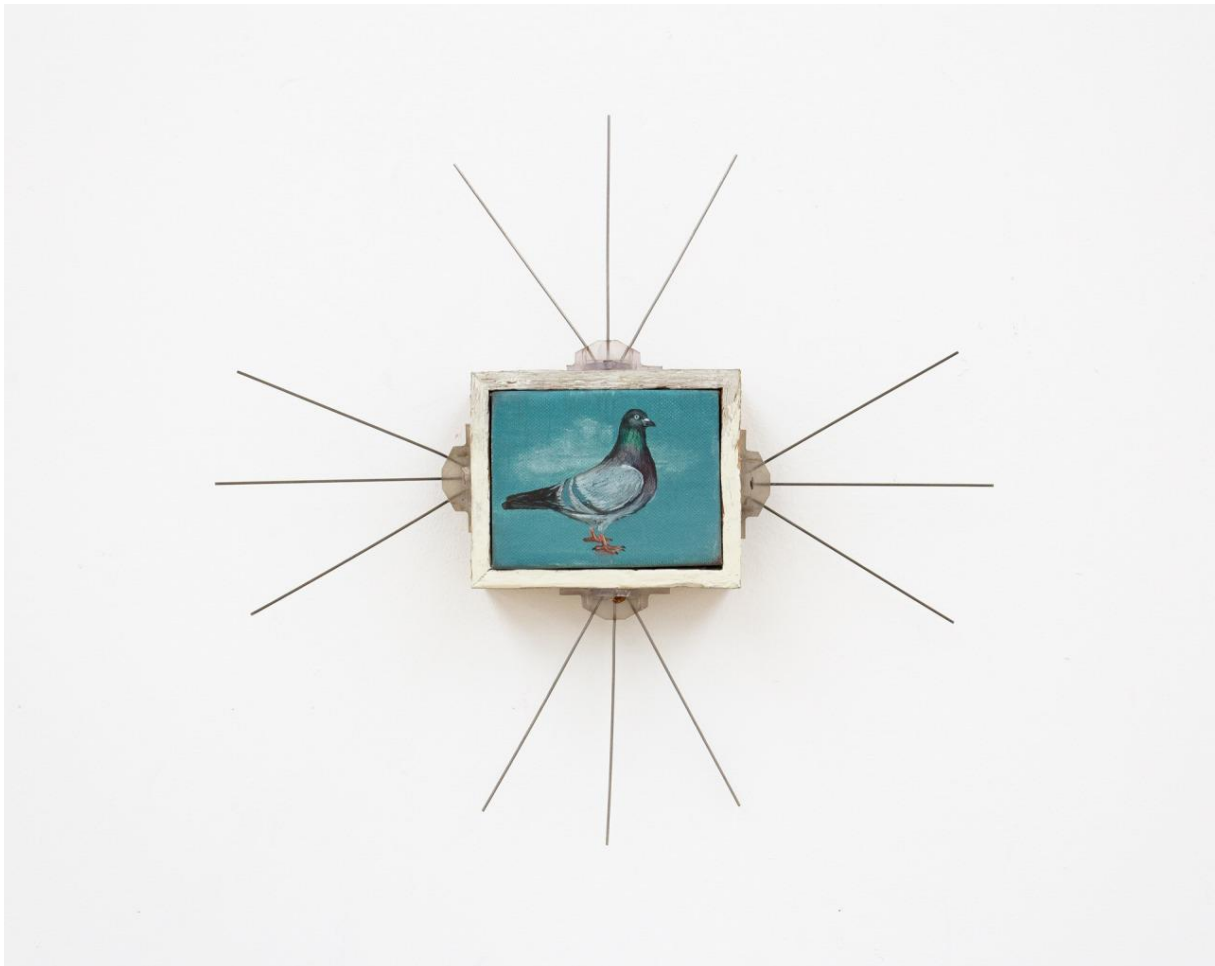
10.01.2018-16.03.2019

TOON BOECKMANS | ISA DE LEENER | CHARLOTTE VANDENBROUCKE | LOIC VAN ZEEBROEK

Vernissage: 10.01.2018 as of 6 PM

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Z.T., Isa De Leener, oil on canvas - mixed media - 34 x 36 cm, 2016.

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*“Shoot all the bluejays you want, if you can hit ‘em,
but remember it’s a sin to kill a mockingbird.”*

*“Schiet zoveel blauwe gaaien als je wil, als je ze raken kan,
maar onthoud dat een spotlijster doden een zonde is.”*

(Atticus in *To Kill a Mockingbird / Spaar de spotvogel*, Harper Lee, 1960).

Dauwens & Beernaert Gallery is honoured to present the group exhibition:

‘To kill a Mockingbird / Spaar de Spotvogel’

The exhibition features paintings and installations by four young graduates from Saint-Lucas School of Arts, Ghent: Toon Boeckmans (°1993, MFA Mixed Media), Isa De Leener (1993, MFA Painting), Charlotte Vandenbroucke (1993, MFA Painting) and Loïc Van Zeebroek (1994, MFA Painting).

The exhibition lends its name from Harper Lee’s Pulitzer price winning *Bildungsroman* from 1960. Growing up and the loss of (childhood) innocence (symbolized by a mockingbird) is a prominent theme in Harper Lee's novel.

The exhibition title both refers to the participating artists’ age, their first steps in a commercial art world (does this involve a loss of innocence?), as well as to the central themes of the exhibition: the metaphorical potential of birds and other animals, the *homo ludens* and the importance of the play element of society.

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Z.T.(Leeuw), Isa De Leener, oil on panel - 16.5 x 12 cm, 2015.

Isa De Leener's paintings exhibit a wonderful and poetic strangeness that further frustrates ready classification. His paintings often (literally) extend beyond the borders of the canvas and operate as three-dimensional objects. *Z.T. (Duif)*, the frontispiece of this exhibition text, refers to ancient paintings of the annunciation whereby the Holy Spirit is shown in the form of a dove, coming down towards Mary on beams of light. Whereas the Holy Spirit is typically represented as a peaceful white dove, Isa De Leener depicts an ordinary pigeon, a feral and street bird. The rays of light are on their turn replaced by bird spikes that are typically used to deter pigeons. Deterrence becomes protection and the sacred becomes the profane. Other works have a political and heraldic dimension. *Z.T. (Leeuw)* is a painterly representation of the official flags of the Flemish Community. Painted in swift brush strokes, an idealized symbol that is used to represent a nation, political ideology or population is reduced to its banal essence: an exotic animal that only lives in sub-Saharan Africa and that has basically nothing to do with Flanders.



Toon Boeckmans *Quiet Talks & Summer Walks* - mixed media - 2018.

Toon Boeckmans' projects include installations, videos, paintings, and drawings. His work defies ready classification and is often both dystopian as well as humoristic. Toon's multifaceted works are often centred around observations of, and engagements with, the poetry of the profane, the momentary, the *homo ludens* and non-verbal communication. Toon Boeckmans' work is sometimes based on found objects that he transforms through minimal yet intelligent interventions, giving these objects new meanings, connotations and narrative. He deprives these objects from their original teleology and setting and brings them together in a new context which enables new possibilities and unconventional conventions. Bird footprints on billiard chalk suggest a present absence or absent presence of a billiard player and an unidentified passer-by. An installation featuring a dark blue billiard cloth and white pins suggests a universe of new possibilities and undiscovered territories. A used dishcloth is mounted on stretcher bars that are typically used to mount paintings. Toon Boeckmans puts the banality of everyday life on a pedestal by means of a subtle intervention. Many of Toon Boeckman's works investigate the play element of society and communication. *Quiet Talks & Summer Walks* features for example twenty horses from five chess games positioned on an improvised merry-go-round. Whereas the rules governing the play of the game of chess are strictly regulated, Toon Boeckmans' installation allows for new strategies and invite the spectators and players to develop their own narrative.



Loïc Van Zeebroek, Z.T. Oil on canvas 90 x 110 cm, 2018-2019.

Loïc Van Zeebroek's paintings question the construction of the pictorial image, from figuration to abstraction and vice-versa. *To kill a mockingbird* features two recent landscape paintings (2018-2019) in which painting nature becomes the very nature of the painting. The paintings of Loïc Van Zeebroek create a vacuum; a space without pressure. With a historically charged medium - painting - he manages, through a careful form of cherry picking and elimination to create spaces for contemplation. His works depart from romantic landscape painting, self-made and found educational geographic images. He strips these sources of inspiration from their initial teleology and adjectives and creates in this way, both in his figurative and monochrome work, spaces for reflection and introspection. If you listen well to his work, you can hear the silence.

Work by the artist is held in the collection of Museum Voorlinden and established private collections from Belgium, the Netherlands, Dallas and Switzerland. An in situ project will be on view from 11 January until 15 March 2019 at CC Strombeek.



Charlotte Vandembroucke's transcendental paintings strength lies in their insistence on ambivalence. With her individual and unconventional adaption of the abstract code, Charlotte creates a pictorial space of seductive emptiness, contrasts between light and dark, lightness (of being) and darkness (of being). Her paintings radiate warmth and solemnity through subtle gradients and structural manipulations of uncommon surfaces and materials such as graphite powder. Charlotte's paintings are a subjective response to the cascade of emotions and events that make up life. Her paintings operate as poetic distillations of big subjects in which the viewer is always capable of locating himself.

ABOUT DAUWENS & BEERNAERT GALLERY

Dauwens & Beernaert is a contemporary art gallery founded in 2015 by Laurence Dauwens (1986, MA Art History) and Joris Beernaert (1984, BA Philosophy and MA of Laws). The gallery is located in a former bank building built in 1876. The location has a rich history hosting high profile shows, including artists such as Andy Warhol and Donald Judd. Dauwens & Beernaert's focus is on young emerging artists. In the primary sector the gallery covers a broad spectrum of contemporary artistic practices, from figurative paintings to video work and minimalistic to conceptual work. The gallery regularly participates in international art fairs such as Artissima, Art Brussels and Art on Paper.

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