

In 2013, the City of Ghent invited Ayşe Erkmen (Istanbul, 1949) and Ann Veronica Janssens (Folkestone, 1956) each to design a permanent sculpture for the Korenmarkt in the centre of the city. From early in 2016 these two artworks will share this open space. S.M.A.K. is taking the opportunity to invite the makers and their work to the museum and, in the form of an exhibition, will examine where their oeuvres meet and intersect.

Ayşe Erkmen and Ann Veronica Janssens are sculptors of approximately the same generation. In both their cases, sculpture goes beyond the three-dimensional nature of the artwork and the spatial relationship between the work and the viewer. Their work is founded on a shared fascination for the hidden world of ordinary things. Both artists study this with considerable commitment and scientific precision, though each from a different angle. Ayşe Erkmen has built up an international reputation by means of situationist interventions, (mostly) in architectural spaces. Her projects result from incisive analysis of the immediate surroundings, with all the physical, practical, historical, cultural, political and philosophical significance they contain. Ann Veronica Janssens owes her reputation to the research she carries out into the peculiarities of human perception. Her sculptural interventions show the results of scientific experiments with no useful purpose that involve such intangible phenomena as light, colour and sound. Despite their intellectual starting point, Erkmen and Janssens never produce overly ponderous work. After all, they present reality, with a rebellious approach and perfect design, from an unexpected angle.

Ann Veronica Janssens and Ayşe Erkmen opted for a single exhibition as the location for their encounter, and created it in mutual consultation. Under the open, infinitely interpretable and somewhat absurd title A, they present new and existing sculptures, installations and interventions in a display that is akin to the relationship between the two sculptures on the Korenmarkt. For this purpose they have developed a series of individual rooms adjacent to each other and in which views from one room to another bring about dialogue between the two oeuvres. They have included documents, material samples, sketches and photos that were part of the creative process leading to the two sculptures for the Korenmarkt.

The artists give the museum an important role, both as architecture and as an institution. By means of simple sculptural interventions in the existing rooms, they achieve a substantial impact with far-reaching implications. They leave the discovery of possible interpretations and ways of experiencing them to the public. The works of Erkmen and Janssens balance between object and event. They are performative, are experienced personally by every visitor and are consequently variable. When the artists set up a physical or mental barrier in front of the viewer they have one important aim in mind: to break down routine thought or behaviour and make the invisible visible,

thus making possible a new view of reality.

The artists also incorporate part of the museum's current programme into the context of their exhibition. They are integrating Sol LeWitt's Wall Drawing No. 36 into their collective project, a work from the S.M.A.K. collection that the museum is showing for almost a year. As part of the changing presentations that have accompanied this wall drawing for the past few months, Erkmen and Janssens make new links with LeWitt's oeuvre on the basis of several works they have selected from the museum's collection.

The exhibition is accompanied by a book published in association with MER. Paper Kunsthalle, with articles by Guillaume Désanges, Philippe Van Cauteren and Jan Verwoert.

*(This document was automatically generated by Contemporary Art Library.)*