

# WANDER LUST

www.stefaanvanbiesen.com



## *Works from the road* [drawings - installations] **Stefaan van Biesen**

[the Go-between] Museum Nogueira da Silva [University of Minho] Braga Portugal 2010-2011 [curator Geert Vermeire] > [Growing Silence] Goethe-Intitut Athens Greece 2011 [curator Geert Vermeire] > [Handwritings] 'Anatomia da Escrita' National Museum Brasilia Brazil 2012 [curator Geert Vermeire] > [Sensitive Islands - We become panoramic] Bienal Internacional do Livro e Literatura Brasilia Brazil 2012 [curator Geert Vermeire] > [Sensitive Islands] [SinfoSaramago] Casa dos Bicos [coordinator Simona Vermeire & curator Geert Vermeire] José Saramago Foundation Lisbon Portugal and Museum Nogueira da Silva [University of Minho] Braga Portugal 2012, Art Borgloon Belgium 2012 > [Wander Lust] Gallery S & H De Buck Ghent Belgium 2013 > [Passeio Branco] Spaziergangwissenschaft / postdoctoral research and project Simona Vermeire, University of Minho Braga Portugal [curator Geert Vermeire]. A cooperation José Saramago Foundation and Fernando Pessoa Museum Lisbon 2015.



[Transmutações da paisagem] Encontros da Imagem - Tibaes Braga Portugal 2010.  
Curator Geert Vermeire.



Contribution cover Ensor project '*Skulls, skeletons & bones*' Ostend Belgium 2010.



Study on paper attribute performance 2010.



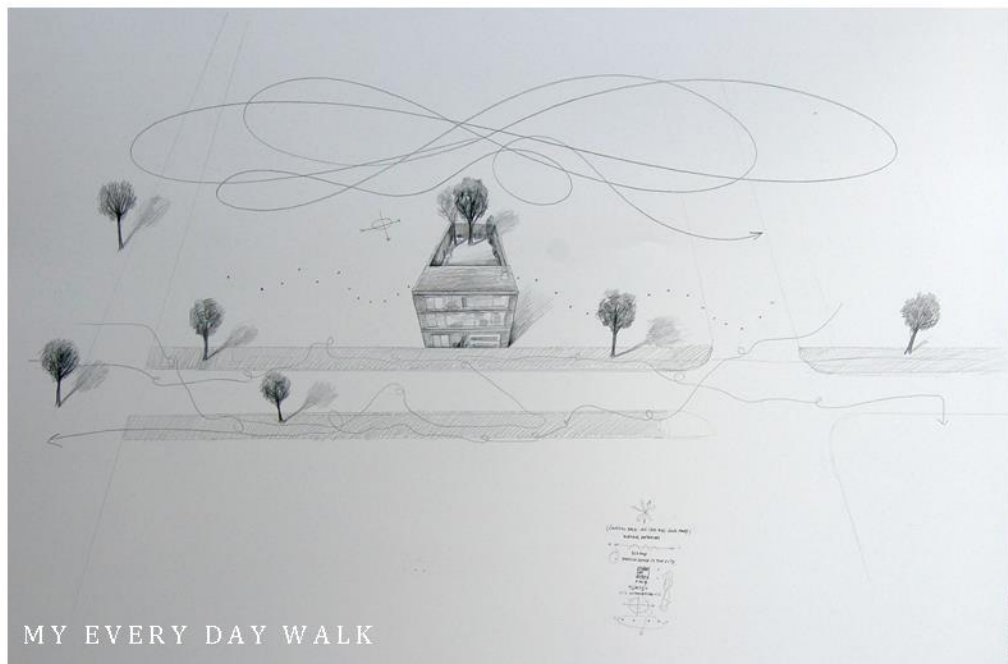
THE GO-BETWEEN [How long is now?]

Performances Museum Nogueira da Silva [University of Minho] Braga Portugal 2010.



WERELDSTEDE / SLEEPER

Installation / performance with Julie Snauwaert - Garden Museum Nogueira da Silva.



[How long is now?] Museum Nogueira da Silva - University of Minho Braga Portugal 2010.



[An urban ritual] Spaziergangwissenschaft Belgium 2012.

A photograph showing a person's lower body and hands. They are wearing dark trousers and black shoes. They are holding a white felt bag with a rainbow-colored stripe (red, yellow, green, blue) running vertically down the side. The bag has a small yellow tag with a logo. They are also holding a rolled-up white paper. The background is a grey cobblestone path.

# Spaziergangwissenschaft

Stefaan van Biesen

## Travel Mate Urban Floorcloth attribute

**Wander Lust -** *White walk: a promenadography.*

A literary approach of the oeuvre of Stefaan van Biesen by Geert Vermeire and Simona Vermeire.

*"Most people don't see what's going on around them. That's my principal message to writers: for God's sake, keep your eyes open. Notice what's going on around you!" (William S. Burroughs).*

Stefaan van Biesen's exploration of the (urban human) space, by means of walking as a sensorial and kinesthetic experience, joins a recent scientific and aesthetical development, the Spaziergangwissenschaft (the science of walking or promenadology), introduced in the nineties at the University of Kassel in Germany by the sociologist and urbanologist Lucius Burckhardt (1925-2003). The promenadology implies the participation of residents, in a kinesthetic aesthetics, with small or as small as possible interventions in the urban fabric. Walking becomes an observing stimulus related to space. A cognitive dimension of the urban space articulates itself in a personalized urban layer, by means of a somatic choreography. *"The body as a motor is, in this way, a map-making body: the places where it passes through, there it organizes itself as a map. And the map, revealing the body through the places where it passed, appears as a metaphor of knowledge (of the relation between body and place)". (Paulo Silva, 'O Lugar do Corpo').*

Stefaan van Biesen is one of the important artists, at an international level, who investigates promenadology on an aesthetic way (by means of plastic work, multimedia, installations and performances, contextualized in social projects). His artistic oeuvre has an affinity with the work of another famous walker, Fernando Pessoa. The plastic corpus of Stefaan van Biesen is an important artistic comment on a Pessoa-logical vision. We integrate for example his oeuvre in a critical analysis of the literary representation of the city of Lisbon, which leads to a joint project with the artist: the project "White walk" (2014-2015), a doctoral, artistic and literary research of Lisbon by means of the phenomenology of the walk. *"If the image is text, then the body is space. If texts can create images, then spaces can change bodies and vice versa"*. (Markus Hallensleben).



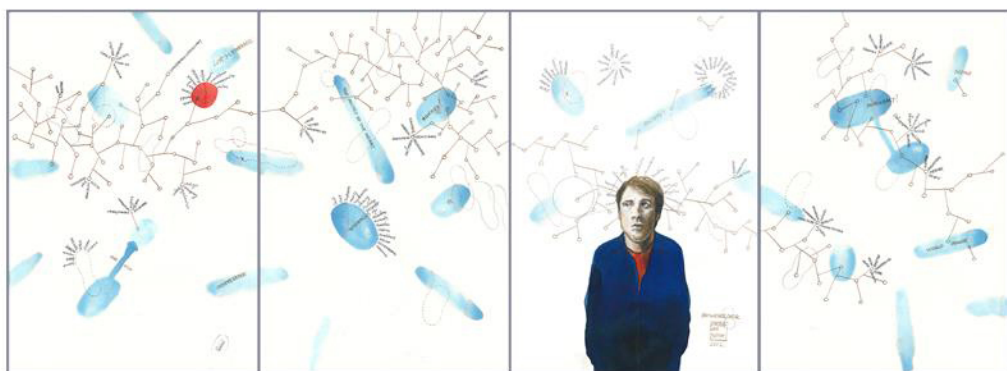
The literary reading of the kinetics of the body in the city, in this case by means of an urban research of the oeuvre of the Portuguese writers José Saramago and Fernando Pessoa related to the plastic dimension of the oeuvre of Stefaan van Biesen, doesn't mean a rift with the daily perception, but follows the emancipatory and intimate logic of a new association between the epidermis of the urban space and its sensory somatic potential.

On this way the derive through the city presents a broadened consciousness-raising of the senses. A cross-pollination that magnifies the phenomenological scheme of the city: *"La relation de l'homme qui marche à sa cité, à ses rues, à ses quartiers, qu'il les connaisse déjà ou les découvre au fil de ses pas, est d'abord une relation affective et une expérience corporelle. Un fond sonore et visuel accompagne sa déambulation, sa peau enregistre les fluctuations de la température et réagit au contact des objets ou de l'espace. Il traverse des nappes d'odeurs pénibles ou heureuses. Cette trame sensorielle donne au cheminement au fil des rues une tonalité plaisante ou désagréable selon les circonstances. L'expérience de la marche urbaine sollicite le corps en son entier, elle est une mise en jeu constante du sens et des sens."* (André Breton).

The promenadology becomes an instrument for social observation of the city. To “caption” (Gilles Deleuze) the urban reality in sensory meanings, emphasizing the feeling, refers to a multimodal body in a physical implication in the city space.

The kinetics of the surprised body during the daily walking in the plastic dimension of Stefaan van Biesen refines the perception and broadens it in relation to the own urban biotope. Prefabricated representations are ruled out in favor of a mental urban image, constructed with the complete sensoriness of the body. The artist returns the body to the city as a place of sketching of the daily existence and where morphological and emotional realities are mapped out.

The pedestrian dynamics, refining the image of the city by means of a promenadological stylistics, proposes itself as an archive of urban atmosphere, history and events, and goes into a sensory map of organic reflection about urban space.



## DAILY WALK CONSTELLATIONS

Stefaan van Biesen replaces the actual “visual turn” with a “sensorial turn” and this leads to a reconstruction of the city in olfactory, haptic, visual, aural, gustative and kinesthetic landscapes. He regards the walks as a “footnote” of the veined skin (Deleuze) of the city, full of folds where the urban heartbeat reaches the surface. The stylistics of the drawings of Stefaan van Biesen suggests the social microclimate and the patina of the lived city.

The deterritorialization, the dynamization of the space by means of urban nomadism creates a new urban ontology. On this way the incarnation of the city receives an answer in a three-dimensional perception of space, from the depth of the contours and from the sensory protuberances of the urban morphology.

The voice of the city resounds in the oeuvre of Stefaan van Biesen, as a literary manifestation and as graphein of the body, a promenadographic space. It develops itself as an interactive scheme of an aesthetic urban environment, reconstructed in a spiritual-poetic and in an utopic dimension.

This utopic dimension, in the form of “the Dürer connection”, manifests itself in an explicit connection with the Renaissance and a fascination for the (spoken and written) word.

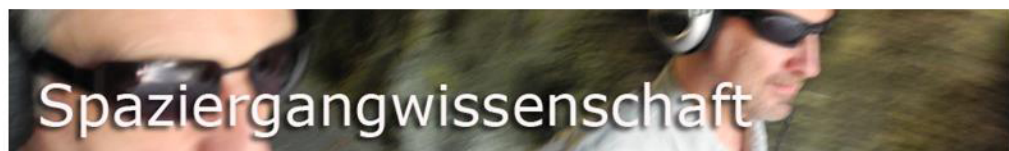
Stefaan van Biesen refers to the nomadic aspect of the Renaissance artist, traveling around in Europe with their works, looking for connections with the places where they passed through and with the residents. Artists, scientists and philosophers in the Renaissance exchanged ideas in an interdisciplinary way and in an atmosphere of friendship, during mutual visits and during their travels. They created a network of solidarity and affinity.

A continuous exchange of ideas and interdisciplinary collaborations are at the center of the creative process of Stefaan van Biesen. The works, which originate from it, invite to new dialogues and invite new people to affinity, to find themselves in others. Central axis of this creative movement is the artistic interdisciplinary project “the Milena principle”, continuously active since 2003, in the meantime active in 20 countries inside and outside of Europe, and as well by means of a (web)community of artists, writers and academics. [www.themilena.com ].

Stefaan van Biesen invites, following the line of the Renaissance and in the shadow of the Romanticism, to dwell on the wonder of the language, the writing and the speech, which is translated in an utopic desire to a society where words unites people, but as well in an awareness of vulnerability. Words only point out, even when poetry tries to raise above their borders there stays a deficit that touches you and that lets you behind with less words as before. But eventually it is the gesture of the writer that becomes infinite.

Stefaan van Biesen lays this particular gesture in walking. He describes roads and he is described by roads. He draws paths and paths entail his work. They meander, constantly different. And they leave a track of wonder, in a listening and in a whispering. It is a track that lingers in the spectator, simultaneously reader and listener, of the work of Stefaan van Biesen and that he carries with him, becoming a fellow walker.

Text adapted from “*Passeio Branco. A cinética sensorial cidadina*” written by Simona Vermeire and supplemented with fragments of “*Letters of a poet*” (to Stefaan van Biesen) by Geert Vermeire.

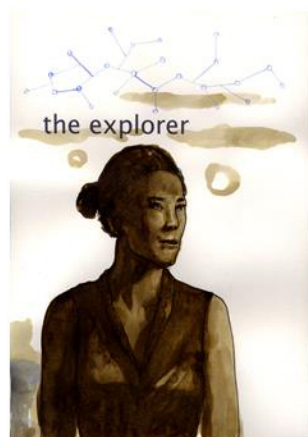
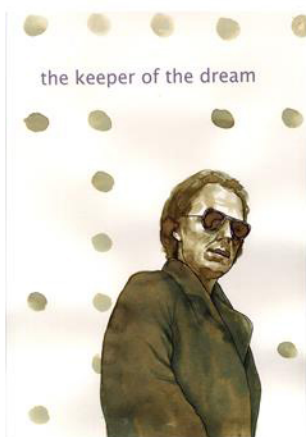
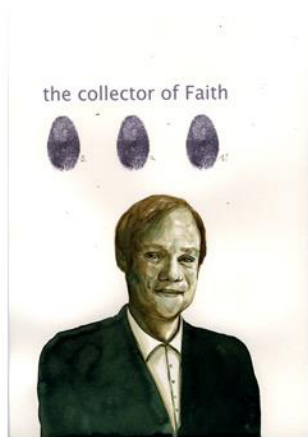


‘Passeio Branco’ is a postdoctoral research and project by Simona Vermeire, University of Minho Braga Portugal [curator Geert Vermeire]. A cooperation José Saramago Foundation and Fernando Pessoa Museum Lisbon 2015.

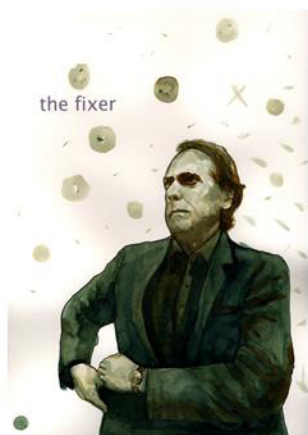




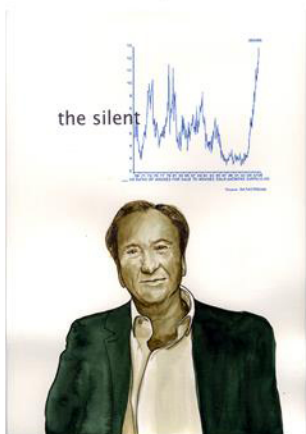
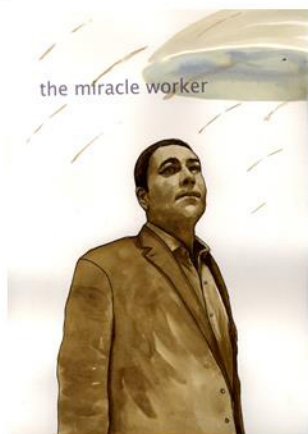
the worshipper



[ARCHETYPES] S & H De Buck gallery Ghent Belgium 2013.



[THE DURER CONNECTION]



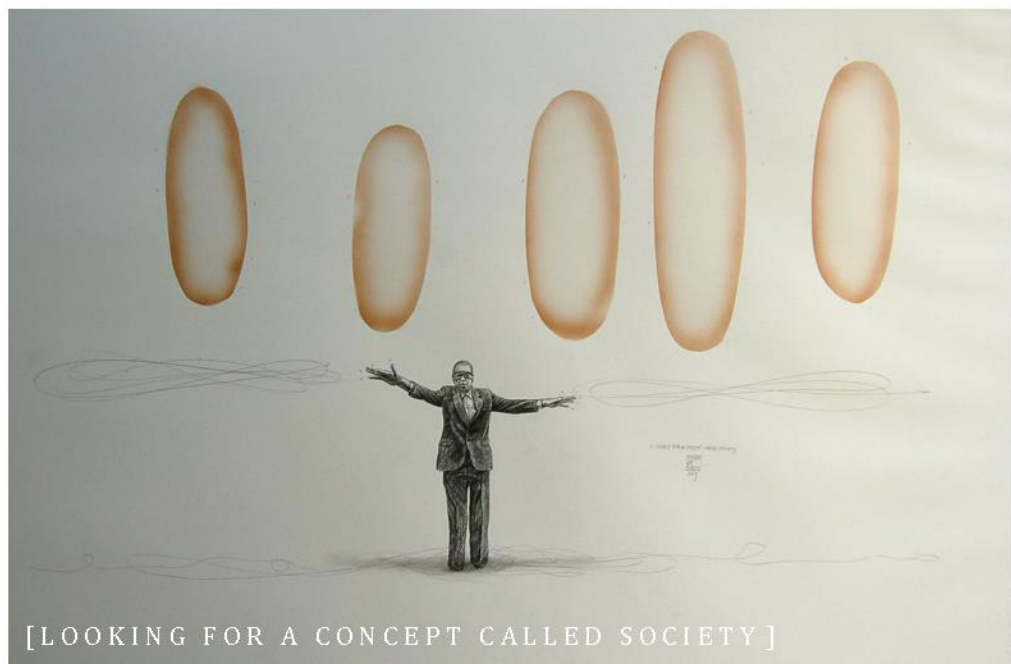




Video performance Museum Nogueira da Silva - University of Minho Braga Portugal 2012.

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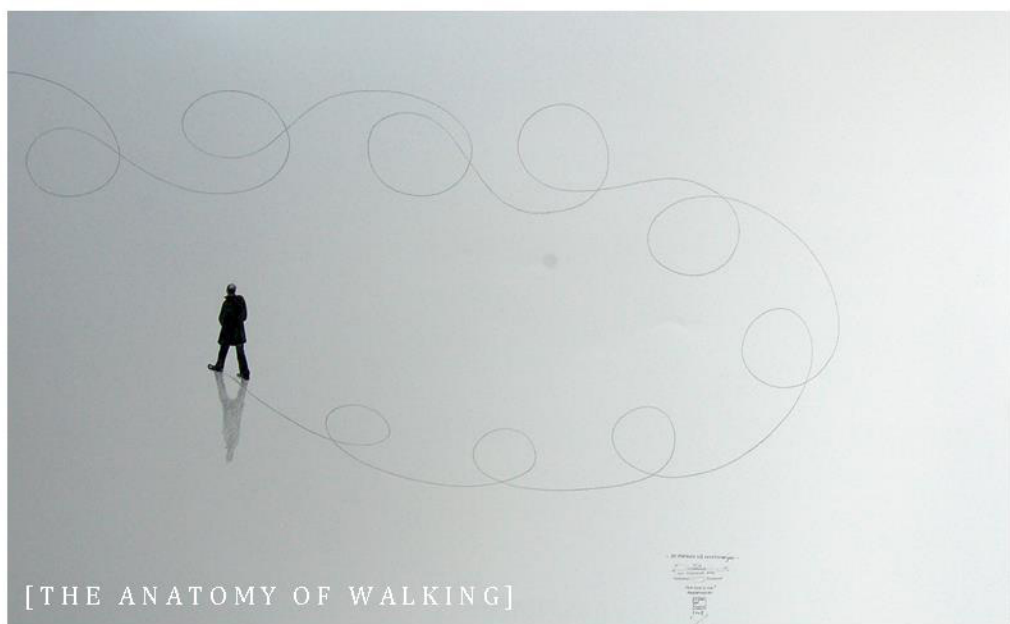
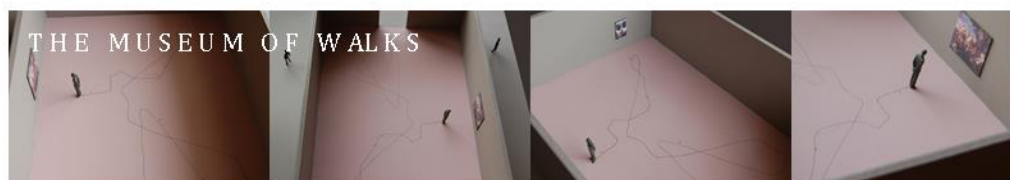




## SPAZIERGANGWISSENSCHAFT

THE SCIENCE OF WALKING - THE ART OF WANDERING



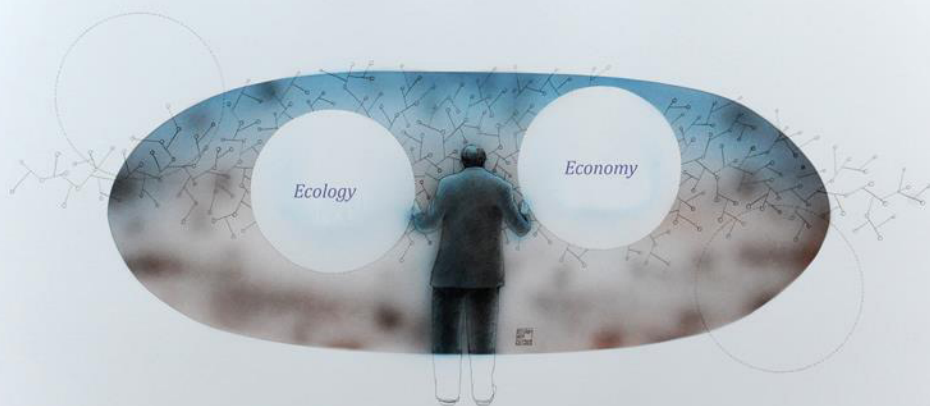




[FLY WAYS] water color and pencil. S & H De Buck gallery Ghent Belgium 2013.



[EARTHLING]



[ECOLOGY > < ECONOMY]



[THE COMPETITION]



[NEW WAYS OF SILENCE]



[UNHEARD]



[The Go-between II]

Museum Nogueira da Silva Minho University Braga Portugal 2011.

