**org is an online platform, collecting, describing, presenting and generating documents of all sorts. It documents documents.**

**Your path through the collection lead along** Nap, May 7th, 1992, Interviews with residents of Sandersleben, no specific location, 2023 [2], Detail of a wall, Salzmünde (Saxony-Anhalt), June 2023, United Until Tomorrow, Flint, Red Skirt Popular on the Street, 300 year old seaweed, Roofing (3) – Simon, tu me manques, Room 3, Raisins, Inflation, I64.762/EDK/YDW, 12:13, Flashlight in a dark corner of the Oval Room, A Sparta K-10, Rue Verte, Brussels, Room 3, Vérandah

**What constitutes a 'document' and how does it function?**

**According to the *Oxford English Dictionary*, the etymological origin is the Latin 'documentum', meaning 'lesson, proof, instance, specimen'. As a verb, it is 'to prove or support (something) by documentary evidence', and 'to provide with documents'. The online version of the *OED* includes a draft addition, whereby a document (as a noun) is 'a collection of data in digital form that is considered a single item and typically has a unique filename by which it can be stored, retrieved, or transmitted (as a file, a spreadsheet, or a graphic)'. The current use of the noun 'document' is defined as '*something* written, inscribed, *etc*., which furnishes evidence or information upon any subject, as a manuscript, title-deed, tomb-stone, coin, picture, etc.' (emphasis added).**

**Both 'something' and that first 'etc.' leave ample room for discussion. A document doubts whether it functions as something unique, or as something reproducible. A passport is a document, but a flyer equally so. Moreover, there is a circular reasoning: to document is 'to provide with documents'. Defining (the functioning of) a document most likely involves ideas of communication, information, evidence, inscriptions, and implies notions of objectivity and neutrality – but the document is neither reducible to one of them, nor is it equal to their sum. It is hard to pinpoint it, as it disperses into and is affected by other fields: it is intrinsically tied to the history of media and to important currents in literature, photography and art; it is linked to epistemic and power structures. However ubiquitous it is, as an often tangible thing in our environment, and as a concept, a document *deranges*.**

**the-documents.org continuously gathers documents and provides them with a short textual description, explanation, or digression, written by multiple authors. In *Paper Knowledge*, Lisa Gitelman paraphrases 'documentalist' Suzanne Briet, stating that 'an antelope running wild would not be a document, but an antelope taken into a zoo would be one, presumably because it would then be framed – or reframed – as an example, specimen, or instance'.**
**The gathered files are all documents – if they weren't before publication, they now are. That is what the-documents.org, irreversibly, *does*. It is a zoo turning an antelope into an 'antelope'.**

**As you made your way through the collection, the-documents.org tracked the entries you viewed. It documented your path through the website. As such, the time spent on the-documents.org turned into this – a new document.**

**This document was compiled by ____ on 02.02.2025 16:50, printed on ____ and contains 17 documents on 37 pages. (https://the-documents.org/log/02-02-2025-6515/)**

**the-documents.org is a project created and edited by De Cleene De Cleene; design & development by atelier Haegeman Temmerman.**

**the-documents.org has been online since 23.05.2021.**

**Notes**

- De Cleene De Cleene is Michiel De Cleene and Arnout De Cleene. Together they form a research group that focusses on novel ways of approaching the everyday, by artistic means and from a cultural and critical perspective.
  www.decleenedecleene.be / info@decleenedecleene.be
- This project was made possible with the support of the Flemish Government and KASK & Conservatorium, the school of arts of HOGENT and Howest. It is part of the research project *Documenting Objects*, financed by the HOGENT Arts Research Fund.

**Sources**


- Briet, S. *Qu'est-ce que la documentation?* Paris: Edit, 1951.
- Gitelman, L. *Paper Knowledge. Toward a Media History of Documents.* Durham/ London: Duke University Press, 2014.
- *Oxford English Dictionary Online*. Accessed on 13.05.2021.




It’s time to have a nap. I tilt the window over its middle axis to let the butterfly out. A breeze ruffles the drapes. Now, it sits on the glass and throws an enormous shadow on the yellow cloth.

the-documents.c

# Nap



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 06.01.2025 | _MG_9406.JPG; _MG_9429.JPG | 6,1 MB; 10,2 MB | Arnout De Cleene |

category
animal, cloth, decoration, encounter, family, scale, wind

**16:46:55**

the-documents.c



On May 7th, 1992, an anonymous photographer records the ice cellar, a stone’s throw from my parents’ house. It’s a beautiful day in spring. Quite a bit of wind, it seems. A Thursday. Surely, I am at school. Third grade kindergarten. It houses bats.

The photograph is part of an online heritage inventory, maintained by a government department. On the same day, the photographer took a photograph of the orangery, the entrance gate to the allotment, and the castle.

**Sources**

- https://id.erfgoed.net/afbeeldingen/264680



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 26.12.2024 | Wachtebeke_Puyenbrug_5_ijskelder_full.jpg | 565 KB | Arnout De Cleene |

category
architecture, archive, family, government, wind

16:50:26

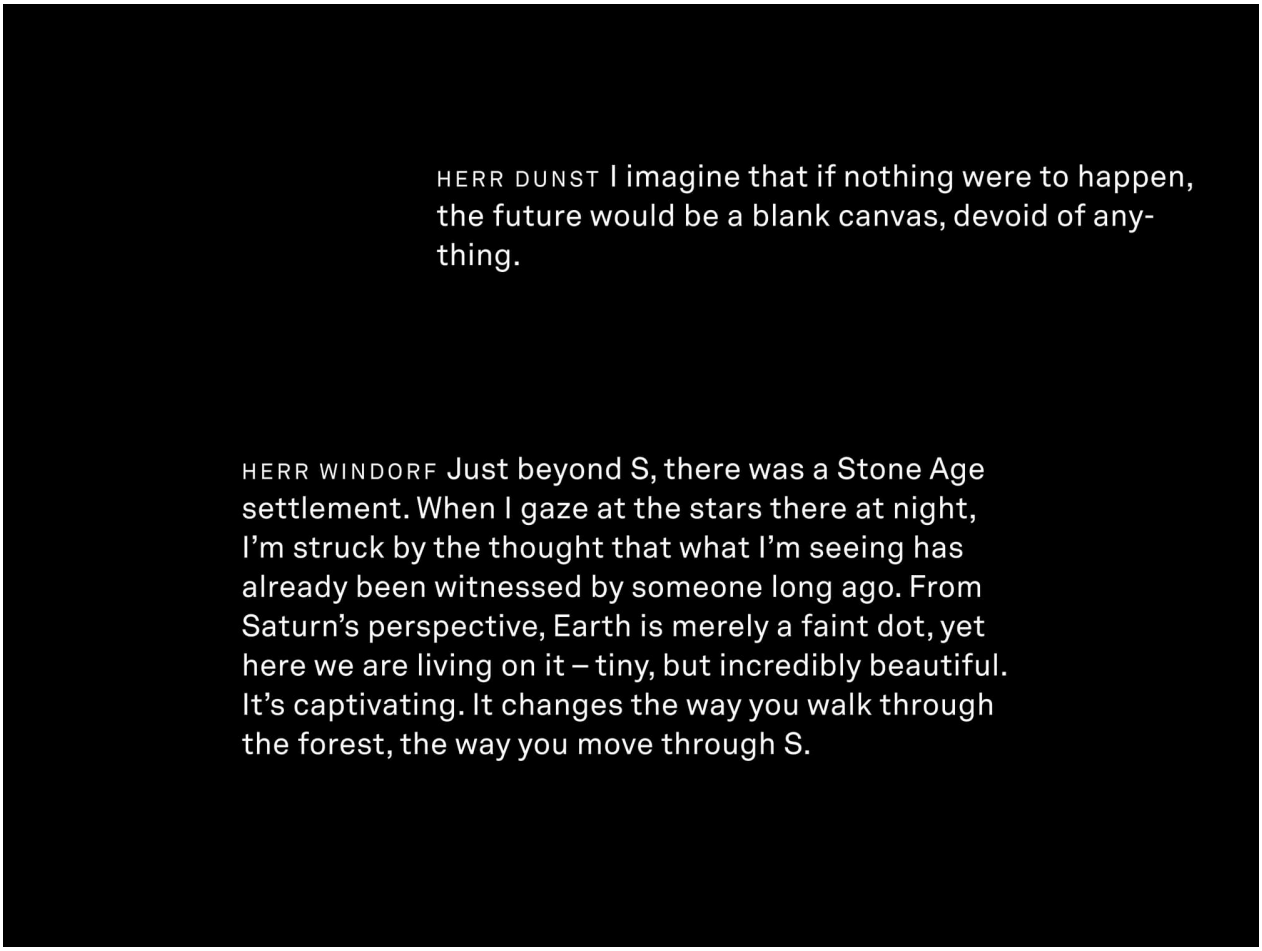
Freely adapted from interviews with residents of Sandersleben (Saxony-Anhalt). Three-act play. The first two acts take place in the present day; the third is set in the future.

From Act 2 ‘The Inhabitants’, Scene 5, ‘Living Differently’.
Characters: MR DUNST club member I, MR WINDORF amateur astronomer

**Notes**

- Stills from text animation *S. Anders Leben. Eine Handlung in Gesprächen/S. Anders Leben – Living Differently: An Act in Conversations*
- Stephanie Kiwitt (1972) is an artist based in Halle (Saale), Germany. Utilizing a large number of images, various perspectives and also textual elements, she is known for her insightful photography that explores spaces emblematic of contemporary phenomena. Over the past three years, she has focused on evolving habitats in rural areas, photographing traces of transformation and conducting interviews in Saxony-Anhalt, the region she moved to in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, Kiwitt was a guest lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

# Interviews with residents of Sandersleben, no specific location, 2023 [2]




| type | date | filename | size | author |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| collage | 14.06.2024 | 2-Stone Age.jpg | 108 KB | Stephanie Kiwitt |

category
archaeology, astronomy, encounter, landscape, Trigger

**16:50:27**

Bricks and stones of various origin (aerated concrete blocks, clinker bricks, quarry stones).



**Notes**

- From *Fortlaufend/Ongoing*
- Stephanie Kiwitt (1972) is an artist based in Halle (Saale), Germany. Utilizing a large number of images, various perspectives and also textual elements, she is known for her insightful photography that explores spaces emblematic of contemporary phenomena. Over the past three years, she has focused on evolving habitats in rural areas, photographing traces of transformation and conducting interviews in Saxony-Anhalt, the region she moved to in 2020. From 2018 to 2020, Kiwitt was a guest lecturer at the LUCA School of Arts in Brussels.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

# Detail of a wall, Salzmünde (Saxony-Anhalt), June 2023



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 11.06.2024 | CF015874.jpeg | 54 MB | Stephanie Kiwitt |

category
architecture, brick, fissure, repair, rural area, Trigger

**16:50:27**

*United Until Tomorrow* (1951) is based on the real-life events that took place at Shanghai's Shenxin No. 9 Cotton Mill where workers led a factory-wide strike in 1948 to protest salary arrears against the background of escalating inflation. Shot at the original location of the strike, the film shows the entrance of the cotton mill transformed into a literal and ideological battlefield where workers gain class consciousness and fight to reclaim their rightful place as owners of the factory. In one climactic scene, the workers even seal the factory gate from the outside to prevent the products of their labour from being expropriated by Kuomintang forces.

Located at No. 128, Aomen Road, Shanghai, Shenxin No. 9 Cotton Mill belonged to the system of mills managed by Shenxin Textile Company, a private enterprise founded in 1915 by Wuxi-bred industrialist brothers Rong Zongjing and Rong Desheng. Following the Communist takeover of Shanghai, the cotton mill was nationalised in the 1950s and placed under the management of the Shanghai Textile Industry Bureau. With the subsequent launch of the economic reforms, the bureau was restructured into a holding company in 1998 amidst the deindustrialisation of the city. While many iconic buildings in the Shanghai Bund area today can be seen in the film, little remains of the original architecture of No. 9 Cotton Mill where the Shanghai Textile Museum is now located.

**Notes**

- Ho Rui An is an artist and writer working in the intersections of contemporary art, cinema, performance and theory. Through lectures, essays and films, his research examines the relations between labour, technology and capital across different systems of governance in a global age.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

# United Until Tomorrow




| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| collage | 05.06.2024 | uniteduntiltomorrow.jpg | 4,37 MB | Ho Rui An |

category
architecture, economy, factory, government, strike, Trigger

**16:50:29**

A cigar box, standing at the back of a shelf next to the heating installation, with in it silex-like stones with what seem to be traces of prehistoric usage.

In the garage, there were papers (the archive of O. Clemminck) and objects (stones, tiles) left to us by a man who had worked at the city archive. He was an acclaimed expert on our village's history.[1]

**Notes**

1 A recent study by professor Philippe Crombé at Ghent University states that during the last Ice Age, in the region where I grew up, there was once a great lake, with, at the shores, proven presence of prehistoric man. As a kid, we dug up shells with a toothbrush, and set a perimeter with plastic tape. The former presence of a tavern where my parents now live, and the restaurant which still serves seafood at the other side of the road, prevented accurate dating.

# Flint



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 11.10.2021 | _MG_7417.JPG | 6,5MB | Arnout De Cleene |

category
archaeology, animal, collecting, archive, family, house, landscape, mistake, waste

**16:50:30**

Set in the fictitious Shanghai-based Dafeng Cotton Mill, *Red Skirt Popular on the Street* (1984) follows the story of an enterprising model worker as she navigates the challenges of young adult life, from workplace conflicts to choosing what clothes to wear on her days off. In the reflection of the emerging consumer consciousness of the Reform era, many of the film's key moments happen not on the factory floor, but in the changing room where the workers seek to express themselves through their choice of dress. To this end, the film can be regarded as a document of the fashion trends being introduced into the country at the time, as best observed in the spellbinding array of colours on display as the workers leave the factory at the end of a day's work.

The textile mill used as the setting for Dafeng Cotton Mill is Shanghai No. 1 Cotton Mill. Originally occupied by the no. 13 and 14 mills of the Japanese-owned Naigaiwata Company, the mill was formally established as the China Textile Construction Company Shanghai No. 1 Cotton Mill after the Second World War. It was located at the T-shaped intersection on Changshou Road, with the gate facing Jiaozhou Road. At that time, the area on the north side of Changshou Road extending from No. 1 Cotton Mill formed a continuous industrial zone encompassing many other factories and warehouses, all of which have since been converted into the private residences and creative parks.

**Notes**

- Ho Rui An is an artist and writer working in the intersections of contemporary art, cinema, performance and theory. Through lectures, essays and films, his research examines the relations between labour, technology and capital across different systems of governance in a global age.
- In spring 2024 the-documents.org and Trigger co-publish a series of online articles with a focus on the meeting ground between photography and the document.

# Red Skirt Popular on the Street




| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| collage | 05.06.2024 | redskirt.jpg | 4,89 MB | Ho Rui An |

category
architecture, conflict, economy, factory, fashion, Trigger

**16:50:31**

This stack of seaweed was offered by Henning, a farmer of the wonderful island of Laeso. This matriarchal pirate island, north of Denmark, is known for its tradition of building roofs from the seaweed growing in the surrounding salty water. Back in time, women would harvest and slowly weave the material around wooden beams from shipwrecks. This time-consuming process and technique of building shelters from what comes from the sea engaged the population in working together, building a ritual around each construction. Then those wild, yet full-of-care roofs, conserved in salt, would last for hundreds of years.

When I arrived on his land, Henning told me about how he restores those old beauties, weaving fresh seaweed around old beams and pressing the collected old material into insulation panels for new buildings. We talked about the clay of his land and how seaweed can become a material for ceramics in the process of making glazes.

**Notes**

- Clementine Vaultier’s interests, although trained as a ceramist, are in the warm surroundings of the fire rather than the production it engenders.

# 300 year old seaweed




| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 06.09.2022 | clementine_300_yo_seaweed.JPEG | 1 MB | Clémentine Vaultier |

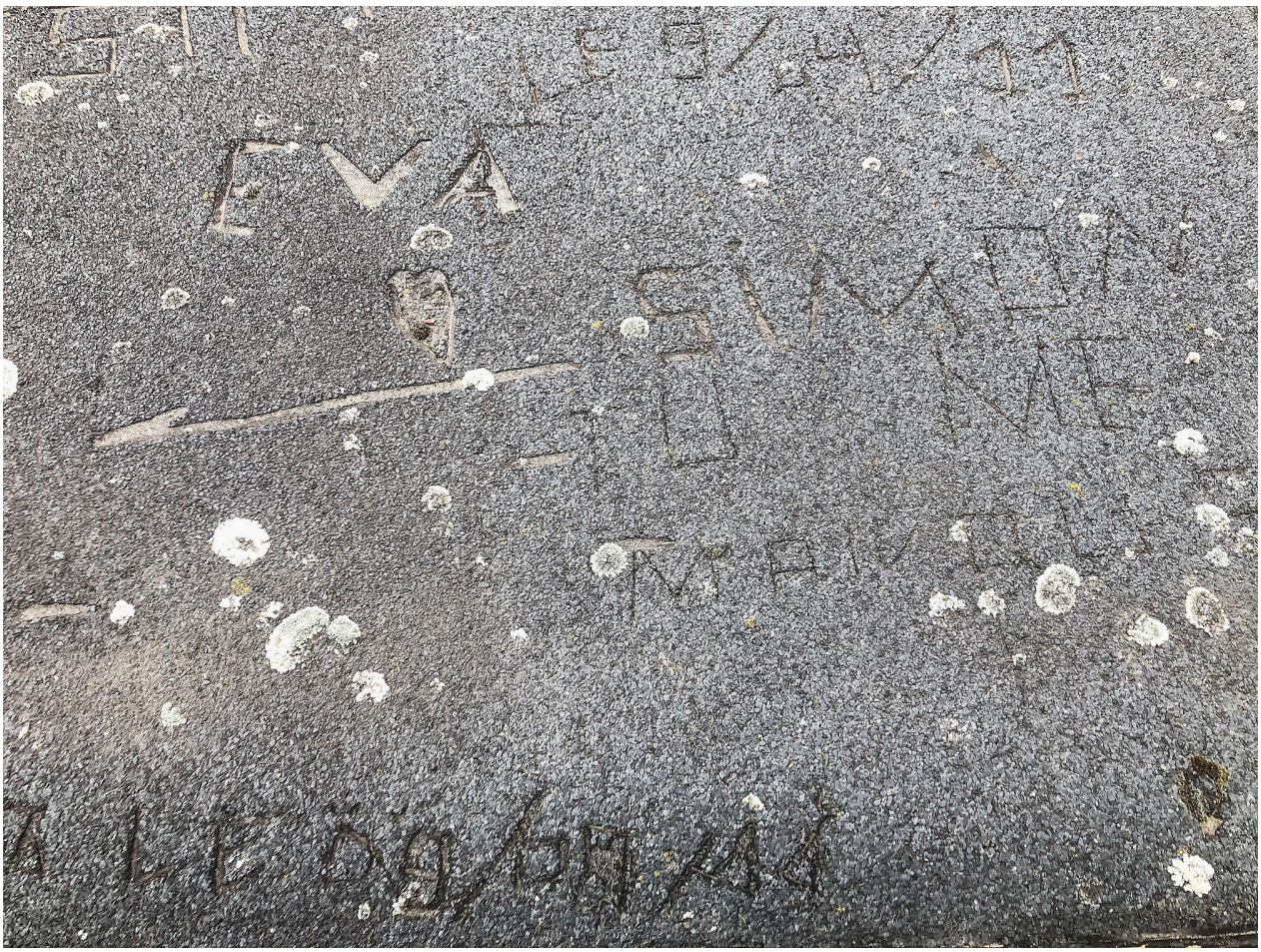
category
architecture, encounter, house, repair

**16:50:33**

In what order and by whom the various texts and drawings were carved into the soft roofing is unclear. To the right of ‘EVA’, a heart symbol and an arrow (pointing to the left), the roofing reads ‘SIMON TU ME MANQUES’.

The short sentence usually – yet hastily – translates to ‘Simon, I miss you’. However, in French the ‘you’ (tu) is the subject and has an active role, whereas the ‘I’ *(me)* is the direct object. In short: by his not being there, Simon actively effectuates hurt to the one who carved this text.

# Roofing (3) – Simon, tu me manques



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 14.04.2021 | IMG_6512.jpeg | 4,50MB | Michiel De Cleene |

category
automobile, decoration, fissure, parking, roofing, sign

**16:50:34**

A square photograph with an Arabic and French text underneath it is mounted on a foam board, in turn mounted on a sheet of plexiglass. The picture in the middle is flanked by a photograph of and a text about the tumuli of Umm Jidr (left) and the excavations at Abou Saybi (right). They are mounted on the West wall of Guest Room 3 at the Qual'at Al-Bahrain Site Museum, Seef, Bahrain.

Necropolises make up the main archaeological testimonies of the Tylos period (4th century BC – 3rd century AD). The urn in the photograph contains the remains of several babies. They most likely fell victim to an epidemic. The size of the ruler next to the urn remains unspecified.

**Notes**

The photograph of Room 3 was made while in mandatory self-isolation after flying to Bahrain from Frankfurt and waiting for the result of a Covid-19 test.



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 11.12.2020 | _44A7372.dng | 49,3MB | Michiel De Cleene |

category
archaeology, Bahrain, epidemic, scale, decoration

**16:50:36**

the-documents.c

When I grew up, my parents told me that the number of raisins in the local baker’s raisin bread attested to the result of the most recent soccer match of KAA Gent. A victory was celebrated by throwing more raisins into the dough than usual, a loaf following a painful loss was hardly a raisin bread at all.

The baker retired long ago. Today my two-year-old son picked out all the raisins from his slice of bread. KAA Gent’s last game was a tie against Union.

# org Raisins




| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 30.12.2021 | IMG_9810.HEIC | 1,2 MB | Michiel De Cleene |

category
family, food

**16:50:37**

A 250 meter walk away from the seaside. A sign states in Dutch and French:
‘!!! NO PARKING !!!
Wrongly parked cars will be chained and only released upon payment of a € 40 parking fee’

The 40 EUR parking fee the sign threatens to charge is communicated by a relatively new sticker stuck on an older sign. Underneath the three black characters (€, 4 and 0) on a white background, there’s a relief: 7 characters declaring a parking fee of 1500 BEF.

1500 BEF equals 37,18 EUR[1]. In changing currency, the fee increased by 7,58%.

**Notes**

1. The Belgian franc was the currency of the Kingdom of Belgium from 1832 until 2002 when the Euro was introduced. 1 EUR is worth 40,3399 BEF.

# Inflation




| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 02.01.2022 | _44A4714.dng | 63,15 MB | Michiel De Cleene |

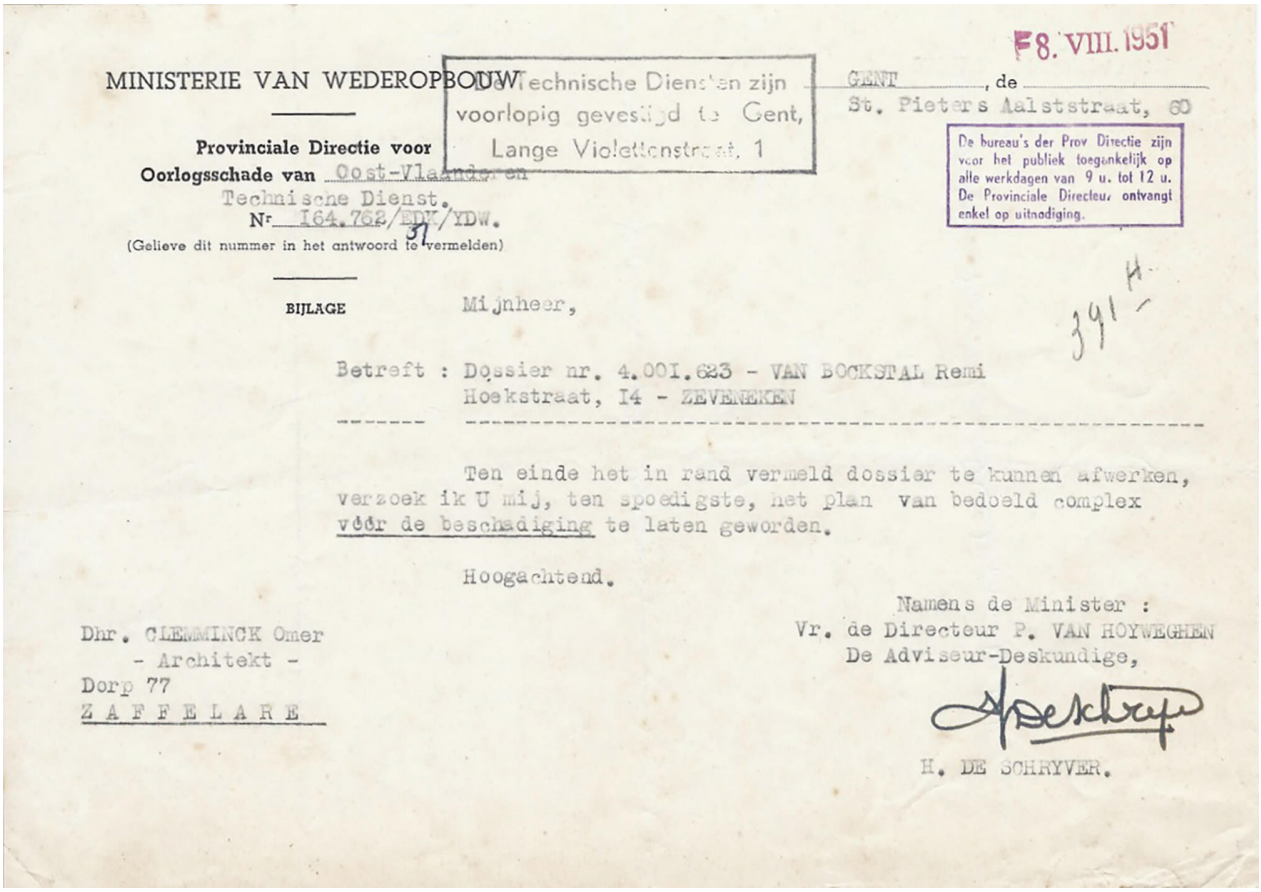
category
automobile, brick, economy, parking, sea, sign, sticker

**16:50:38**

An architect in Z. receives a reminder. ‘Please send, as soon as possible, the plans of the construction before the damage.’ The reminder was sent by the Ministry of Reconstruction, in 1951. The architect’s address in Z., as mentioned in this file, is nowadays a house adjacent to Saloon Redbarn, a hall used for activities organized by a club of country and western-aficionados.

**Sources**

Semi-translucent paper, typoscript, stamps, handwritten notes and signature, from the archive of architect O. Clemminck, file ‘Remi Van Bockstael’



MINISTERIE VAN WEDEROPBOUW

Provinciale Directie voor
Oorlogsschade van Oost-Vlaanderen
Technische Dienst.
Nr. I64.762/EDK/YDW.
(Gelieve dit nummer in het antwoord te vermelden)

De Technische Diensten zijn voorlopig gevestigd te Gent, Lange Violettenstraat, 1

GENT, de 8. VIII. 1951
St. Pieters Aalststraat, 60

De bureau's der Prov Directie zijn voor het publiek toegankelijk op alle werkdagen van 9 u. tot 12 u. De Provinciale Directeur ontvangt enkel op uitnodiging.

BIJLAGE

Mijnheer,

Betreft : Dossier nr. 4.001.623 - VAN BOCKSTAL Remi
Hoekstraat, I4 - ZEVENEKEN

Ten einde het in rand vermeld dossier te kunnen afwerken, verzoek ik U mij, ten spoedigste, het plan van bedoeld complex vóór de beschadiging te laten geworden.

Hoogachtend.

Namens de Minister :
Vr. de Directeur P. VAN HOYWEGHEN
De Adviseur-Deskundige,

H. DE SCHRYVER.

Dhr. CLEMMINCK Omer
- Architekt -
Dorp 77
ZAFFELARE

| type | date | filename | size | author |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| scan | 14.12.2020 | Ministerie_van_wederopbouw.pdf | 1MB | Arnout De Cleene |

category
architecture, house, archive, map/plan, O. Clemminck, government, insurance

16:50:40

During a two hour tour, H.V. (head of the science collection) guided us from the library to the observatory and back. Along the way, he touched upon various rarities: one hundred ninety-five volumes of the Encyclopédie Méthodique (according to H.V. the most complete copy left in the world), the severed summit of Mont Blanc (‘Actually de Saussure brought back a triangular piece of rock from just below the snow line near the summit’), an original copy of the publication on the infamous Lügensteine (‘These date back to the time before the hoax was unveiled’)…

In guiding us from room to room, H.V. piled oddity upon curiosity. He showed a particular interest in all things fish-related.

**Notes**

- First published in: De Cleene, M. *Reference Guide*. Amsterdam: Roma Publications, 2019

# 12:13, Flashlight in a dark corner of the Oval Room


EL AMARNA
EL AMARNA
EL AMARNA

This bike regularly pops up on the streets of the Brussels neighbourhood where I live. On 4 June 2021, it stands in Rue Verte, in front of the entrance to the Reine Verte Park. The park is built on one of the steepest slopes in Brussels. That condition required a clever park design, in which you can hang out or walk from Rue Verte to Rue des Palais, up, or vice versa, down. The park is well cared for by city services.

The bike is an orange Sparta K-10. It has a remarkably low entry and high handlebars. As a result, it seems to be a comfortable bike, albeit one whose body posture while cycling is not geared to the gradient of our neighbourhood, in which it usually stands. Moreover, it has no gears and the saddle is very slanted.

**Notes**

- Lars Kwakkenbos lives and works in Brussels and Ghent (B). He teaches at KASK & Conservatorium in Ghent, where he is currently working on the research project ‘On Instructing Photography’ (2023-2024), together with Michiel and Arnout De Cleene.

# A Sparta K-10, Rue Verte, Brussels




| type | date | filename | size | author |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| photograph | 13.01.2023 | 20210604_081159.jpg | 5,09 MB | Lars Kwakkenbos |

category
bicycle, landscape

**16:50:44**

A square photograph with an Arabic and French text underneath it is mounted on a foam board, in turn mounted on a sheet of plexiglass. The picture in the middle is flanked by a photograph of and a text about the tumuli of Umm Jidr (left) and the excavations at Abou Saybi (right). They are mounted on the West wall of Guest Room 3 at the Qual'at Al-Bahrain Site Museum, Seef, Bahrain.

Necropolises make up the main archaeological testimonies of the Tylos period (4th century BC – 3rd century AD). The urn in the photograph contains the remains of several babies. They most likely fell victim to an epidemic. The size of the ruler next to the urn remains unspecified.

**Notes**

The photograph of Room 3 was made while in mandatory self-isolation after flying to Bahrain from Frankfurt and waiting for the result of a Covid-19 test.



| type | date | filename | size | author |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| photograph | 11.12.2020 | _44A7372.dng | 49,3MB | Michiel De Cleene |

category
archaeology, Bahrain, epidemic, scale, decoration

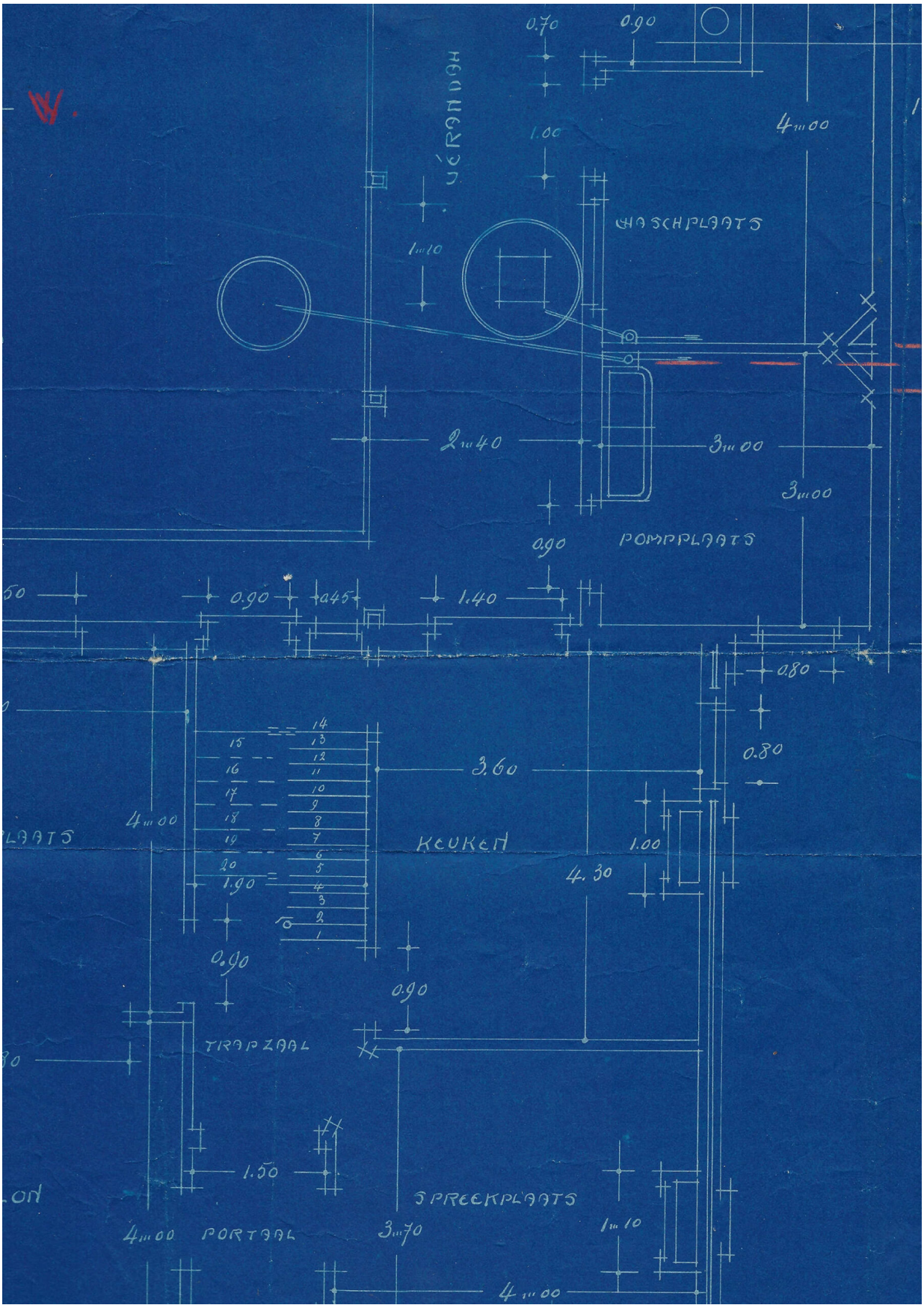
**16:50:45**

In the archive of the architect O. Clemminck, there is a piece of a plan of a building in a suburb in Gent. It presents the ground floor. There is a kitchen, a salon, an eating place, a meeting place. The missing part would have stated the exact address, the name, and maybe the profession of the owners. The plan of the first floor might have given an indication of the number of (anticipated) family members, based on the number and size of sleeping rooms.

At the southern edge of (the plan of) the lot, O. Clemminck has drawn a laundry room that gives out to a *vérandah*. The spelling of the Dutch word – nowadays written as *veranda* – is remarkable, as is its etymology, which is unclear and a matter of debate among scholars. The word might have Portuguese (*varanda*: railing) and Catalan roots (*baranda*: barrier), maybe also origins in the Lithuanian Žemaitan dialect (*varanda*: loop plaited from flexible wings) and might also be traced back to a Sanskrit root (*varandaka*: rampart separating two fighting elephants).

The *vérandah* O. Clemminck proposes is 2,40 meters by, at least, 2,80 meters.

# Vérandah




| type | date | filename | size | author |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| scan | 28.12.2021 | Foto_2021-12-27_194400.pdf | 7,2MB | Arnout De Cleene |

category
architecture, archive, family, house, map/plan, O. Clemminck

**16:50:48**