

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

Your path through the collection lead along The Loop of the Sparta K-10, Backpack, Phase, Une étoile est-elle un document?, The Imaginary Edge of the Roadway, Neptune in opposition [18/20] – View of an interior, Saturn Stationary, Neptune in opposition [1/20] – Approach, Saturn Stationary, Inflation, Dust, Waybill, Mirror, Deneef ‘for ever’, Market, Une étoile est-elle un document?

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 25.01.2023 10:25, printed on _____ and contains 16 documents on 34 pages. (<https://the-documents.org/log/25-01-2023-5153/>)

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.decleenedecline.be / info@decleenedecline.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.



Flanders
State of the Art



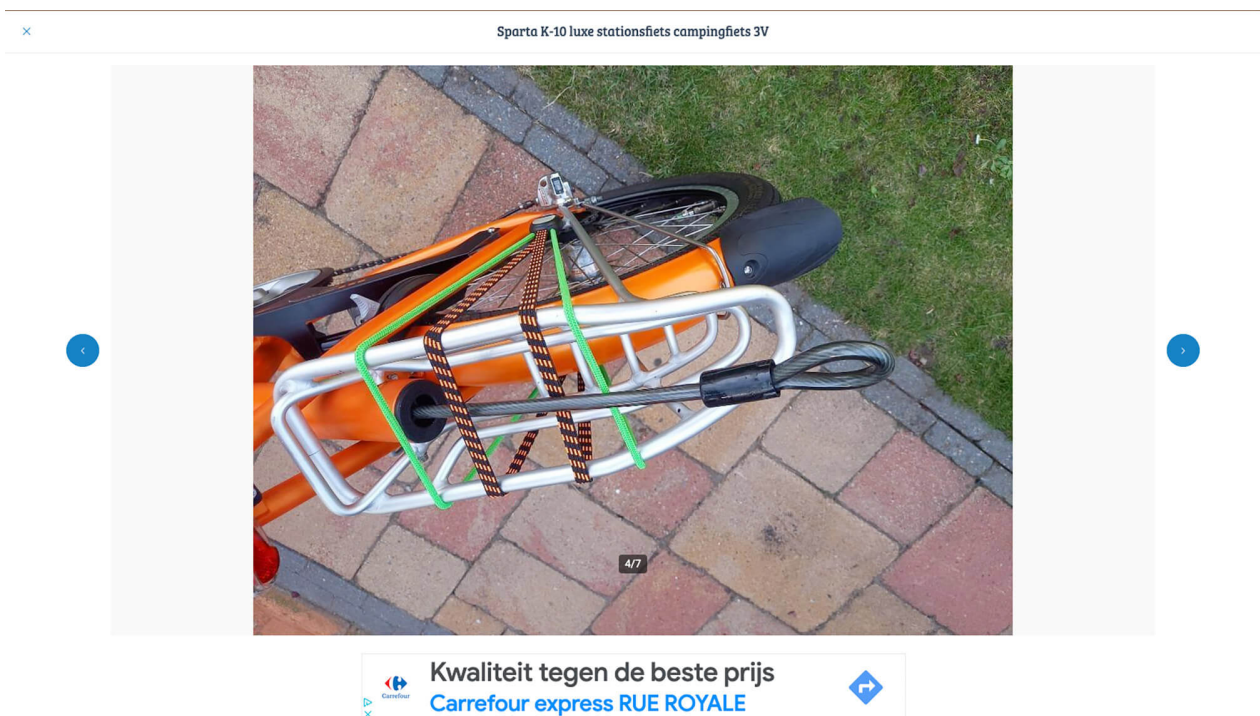
On 12 October 2022, I see a third orange Sparta K-10 listed on marktplaats.nl, after Tineke and Fred's. It is sold by one Fr from Zevenaar. Fr put the bike up for sale four days earlier. According to Fr, it is a 'luxury station bike' and 'camping bike'. He is asking 199 euros for it. Fr explains the bike as follows:

'Luxury sparta unisex bike with 3-speed shimano-nexus.
Striking specimen.
Looks like new.
Please note.....fixed price!
Ideal for station, camping or for some nice touring.
Equipped with:
Front and rear battery lighting
Handy front and rear luggage rack
All-terrain tyres
3-speed gearbox
Comfortable drifter saddle
Integrated cable lock
Large dingdong bell
A real eye-catcher'¹

According to Fr, the price is fixed, but on the website you can make an offer, albeit only from 199 euros. Fr's Sparta K-10 has three gears. The Sparta K-10s of Tineke, John and Fred that are still for sale do not have gears, the Sparta K-10s in Rue Verte in Brussels and on cyclonewebshop.be do not have them, and in the 2011 Sparta leaflet we did not see that option either. In short, we come across a Sparta K-10 with gears for the first time. There is a small typing error in Fr's explanation in Dutch – the t in *geïntegreerd* is missing – but those who like to browse on marktplaats.nl read smoothly over that. One of the photos of Fr's ad shows the loop attached to the back of the bike. You can clearly see how that loop forms the end of an integrated cable lock.

Notes

- 1 'Luxe sparta unisex fiets met 3 versnellingen shimano-nexus.
Opvallend design exemplaar.
Ziet er uit als nieuw.
Let op.....vaste prijs!
Ideaal voor station, camping of zo om lekker mee te toeren.
Voorzien van:
Batterijverlichting voor én achter
Handig bagagerek voor én achter
All terreinbanden
3 versnellingen
Verende zadelpen
Comfortabel drifter zadel
Geïntegreerd kabelslot
Grote dingdong bel
Een echte eye-catcher'
- 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.



		filename		
		Screenshot 2022-10-12 at 22-19-22		
		Sparta K-10 luxe stationsfiets		
type	date	campingfiets 3V – Fietzen Dames	size	author
		Damesfietsen – Marktplaats.png		
screenshot	23.01.2023		1,68 MB	Lars Kwakkenbos
category				
bicycle, economy, technology				

10:23:44

_44A6588.dng

At 13:26:43 I took a photograph of a concrete building without windows in an industrial zone just south of Brussels.

_44A6590.dng

At 16:46:15 I photographed a succession of office buildings in the same industrial zone.

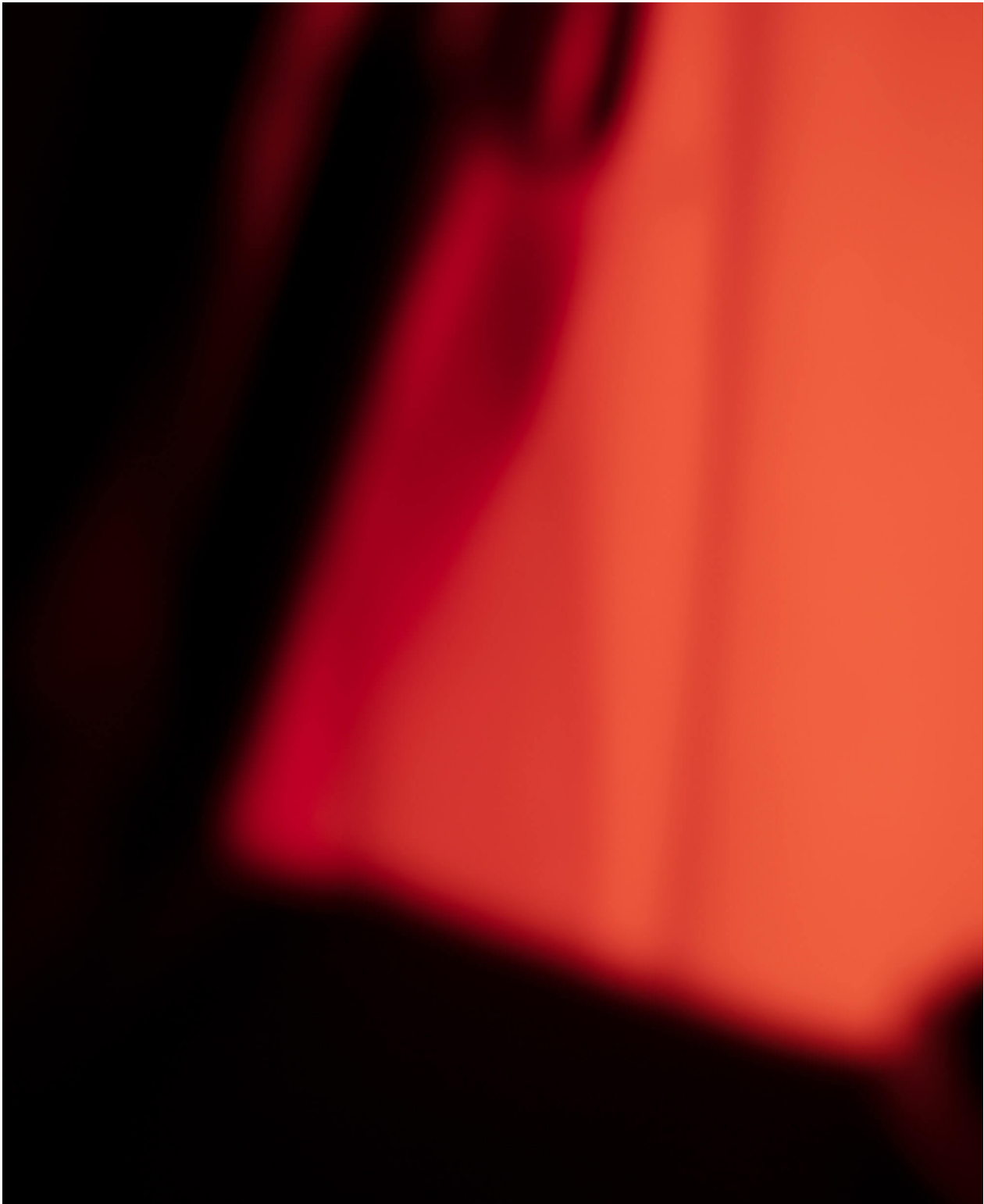
_44A6589.dng

I must have walked about 1 kilometer between the concrete building without windows and the section of the industrial zone with the offices. At 13:43:49, the camera, safely stored in my backpack, recorded 0.4 seconds of the 20 minutes it took me to get there.

In *The Snows of Venice*, Alexander Kluge wonders whether he can take the liberty to conjure up what the sky looked like on 31 December 1799, as Schiller made his way to Goethe's house. He goes on by saying that, historically, there's a 'LACK OF SENSORY ATTENTION AT CRUCIAL MOMENTS'.¹ There are exceptions, though, like the cameraman that was sent out to document the fireworks on New Year's Day 2000. The camera was turned on prematurely. The batteries were used up by midnight, but 'certain gray tones, however, filtered through the cracks of its protective case, conveyed the motion of the walking cameraman, the transportation. The incompletely shut, low-information container was documented exactly [...] To this day it provides inexact testimony as to the qualities of the leather of a twenty-first century carrying case and the precise sensitivity to light and dark demonstrated by a twenty-first century recording medium.'²

Sources

- 1 Lerner, B., Kluge, A. *The Snows of Venice*. Leipzig: Spector Books, 2018, p. 53
- 2 Ibid.



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	15.02.2022	_44A6589.dng	37,87 MB	Michiel De Cleene

category
architecture, data storage, mistake, packaging, technology

10:24:17

At the Tunis Institut National du Patrimoine, the sand-covered floor has traced Anne Teresa De Keersmaecker's movements to Steve Reich's *Violin Phase*. The venue empties out. It is dark and the way back to the hotel through the medina is labyrinthian and eerie. It has been a couple days since we arrived, and I have managed to make a mental image of the inner city by memorizing some waymarks – intersections, buildings, shops – coupled to a direction. Sometimes, a newly entered street would give out to such a waymark – a peculiar sensation: a flash of spatial insight, like a crumpled ball of paper unfolding. The narrow streets turn and turn. Some passages are closed at night. I must improvise a route, but the basic mental structure to do so is missing. Shopkeepers have moved their goods inside.

I have no sense of orientation. I can't estimate distances nor can I tell north from south. Everything is scaleless. My highly simplified scheme of the city's layout gets us to our destination. The functional interpretation of Tunis differs completely from the actual Tunis. It is a different city we crossed, and made while crossing.



type
photograph

date
25.05.2021

filename
_MG_1019.JPG

size
6,5MB

author
Arnout De Cleene

category
music, map/plan, sand, scale

10:24:40

In the introduction to her book *Qu'est-ce que la documentation?*, French 'documentalist' Suzanne Briet asks what a document is. In a scrappy scan of her book I found online I am highlighting almost everything she writes. Is a star a document? Briet says it isn't. But the catalogues and photographs of stars are. When I quickly opened the file with Apple's 'Preview' application to check the above paraphrase, the highlighted sentences were illegible.

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A Julien CAIN

DE tout temps la latinité et son héritage ont donné au mot *document* le sens d'enseignement ou de preuve. Le dictionnaire de RICHELET, comme celui de LITTRÉ, en apportent deux témoignages français. Une bibliographie contemporaine soucieuse de clarté a lancé cette brève définition :

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A notre époque de transmissions multipliées et accélérées, le moindre évènement, ou scientifique ou politique, lorsqu'il a été porté à la connaissance du public, s'alourdit aussitôt d'une « vêtture de documents » (Raymond BAYER). Admirons la fertilité documentaire d'un simple fait de départ : par exemple,

l'information de presse fait connaître l'évènement par des communiqués de journaux, de radio, par les actualités cinématographiques. La découverte fait l'objet d'une communication à l'Académie des Sciences. Un professeur du Muséum en fait état dans son enseignement. L'animal vivant est mis en cage et catalogué (jardin zoologique). Une fois mort, il sera empaillé et conservé (au Muséum). Il est prêté à une Exposition. Il passe en sonorisé au cinéma. Son cri est enregistré sur disque. La première monographie sert à établir partie d'un traité avec planches, puis une encyclopédie spéciale (zoologique), puis une encyclopédie générale. Les ouvrages sont catalogués dans une bibliothèque, après

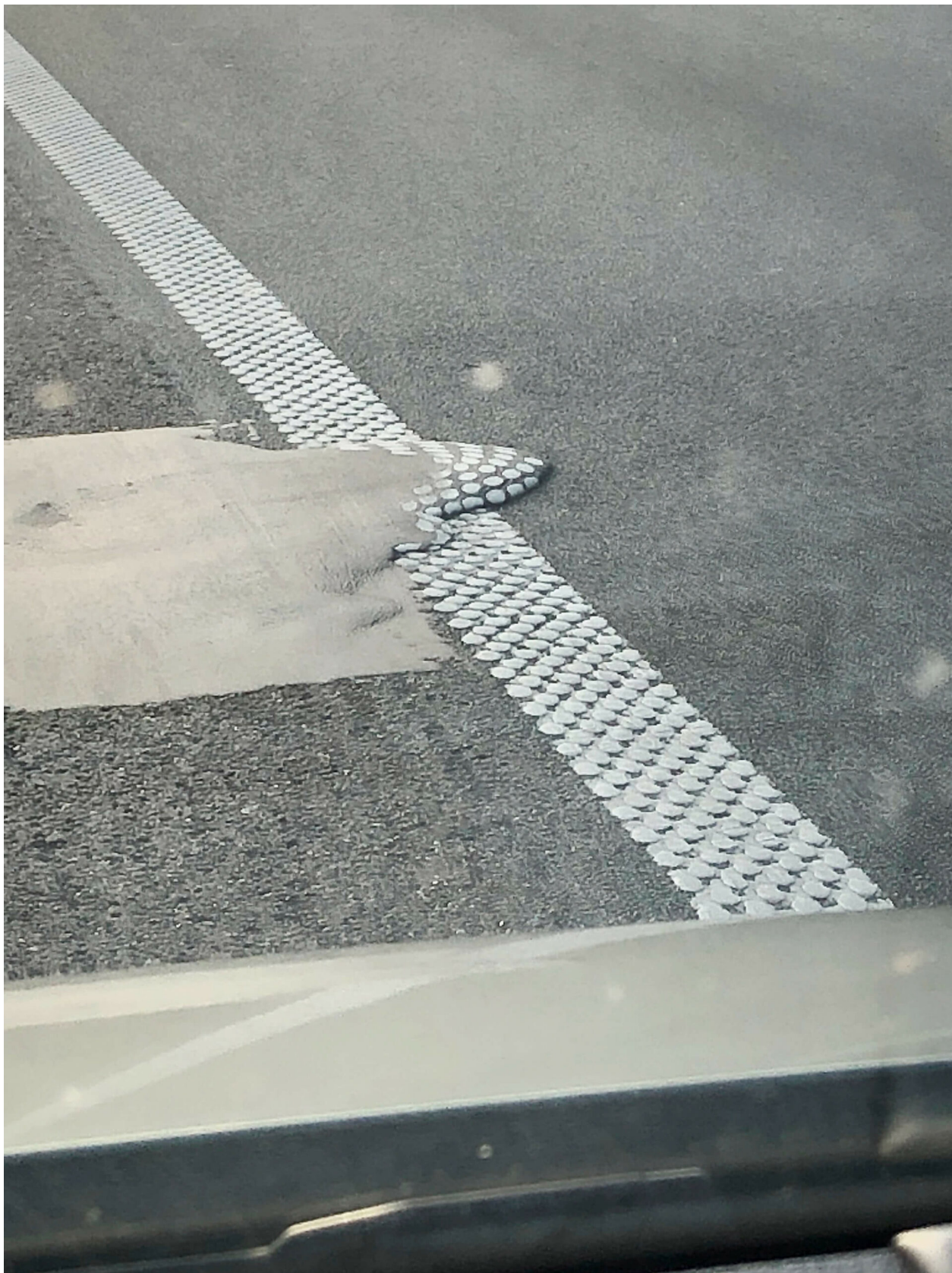
Article 75 of the Royal Decree containing general regulations for road traffic and the use of public roads, published in *Het Belgisch Staatsblad* on 9 December 1975, lists the rules for longitudinal markings indicating the edge of the roadway.

According to 75.1, there are two types of markings that indicate the actual edge of the roadway: a white, continuous stripe and a yellow interrupted line. The former is mainly used to make the edge of the roadway more visible; the latter indicates that parking along it is prohibited.

In 75.2, the decree focuses on markings that indicate the imaginary edge of the roadway. Only a broad, white, continuous stripe is permitted for this purpose. The part of the public road on the other side of this line is reserved for standing still and parking, except on motorways and expressways.

Sources

<https://wegcode.be/wetteksten/secties/kb/wegcode/262-art75>



type	date	filename	size	author
photograph	08.08.2021	IMG_7943.HEIC	659 KB	Michiel De Cleene
category				
automobile, government, parking, repair, sign				

10:24:48

An observer draws on experience, and *instantly* sees a female partridge. Cumulus clouds. The Southern pole star. It's the 'all-at-once-ness of virtuoso perception', Lorraine Daston writes: 'Sure, swift, and silent, "without pause for mental analysis," observation is grounded in long familiarity with the phenomena in question, be they curlews or streptococcus bacteria' (101).

Sources

- Excerpt from Towards Civil Dusk (De Cleene De Cleene, 2020)
- Daston, L. 'On Scientific Observation'. *Isis*, 99 (1), 2008, 97-110.



type	date	filename	size	author
video	03.10.2022	2020-06-11-2007_6-CapObj.mp4	106,19 MB	De Cleene De Cleene

category
architecture, astronomy, decoration, house, Neptune, technology

10:24:49

On May 23rd 2021, the planet Saturn appears to be stationary among the surrounding celestial bodies in the night sky.¹ This is an attempt to capture this planetary standstill.²

A telescope is set up in a pasture, near a forest edge, pointed to the south-southeast morning sky.³

Notes

- 1 The standstill is de facto inexistent. It's the moment when Saturn's apparent prograde motion turns to a retrograde motion. Since Earth completes its orbit in a shorter period of time than the planets outside its orbit, it periodically overtakes them, like a faster car on a multi-lane highway. When this occurs, the planet being passed will first appear to stop its eastward drift, and then drift back toward the west.
- 2 In astrology, Saturn's retrograde movement is generally a time of karmic rebalancing. Previous bad behavior could be punished. But hard work and responsibility could also be rewarded.
- 3 This is the third instalment of De Cleene De Cleene's Public Observatory. Thanks to Volkssterrenwacht Mira, Grimbergen.

Sources

- Briet, S. *Qu'est-ce que la documentation?* Paris: Edit, 1951.
- Gittelman, L. *Paper Knowledge. Toward a Media History of Documents.* Durham/London: Duke University Press, 2014.
- *Oxford English Dictionary Online.* Accessed on 13.05.2021.
- 'Saturn Retrograde May 23, 2021 – Karmic Love', *Astrology King.* Accessed on 15.05.2021.



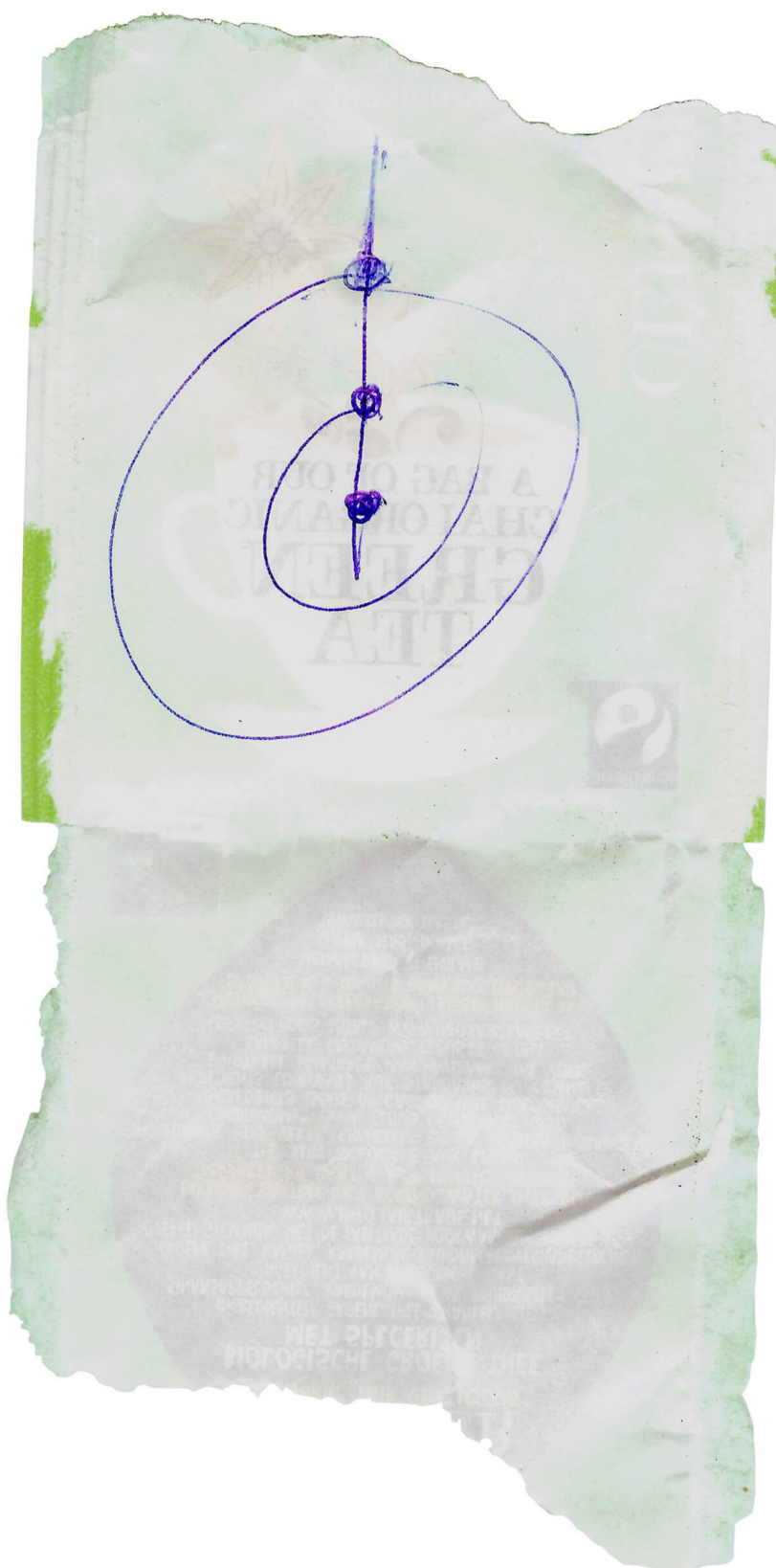
type	date	filename	size	author
video	22.05.2021	-	-	De Cleene De Cleene

category
astronomy, botany, landscape, mirror, music, tree

When the Sun, the Earth and one of the outer planets of the Solar System perfectly align, with the Earth positioned in the middle, the outer planet is said to be ‘in opposition’. It’s a moment of planetary approach and of optimal viewing conditions: the Earth and the outer planet are at their closest and brightest.

Notes

- *Neptune in opposition [1-20]* is part of ‘Documenting Objects’, a research project by Arnout De Cleene and Michiel De Cleene at KASK & Conservatorium, the school of arts of HOGENT and Howest. Their research is financed by the HOGENT Arts Research Fund. Previous research into this subject has amongst other things led to the documentary film *Towards Civil Dusk* (2020) and temporary public observatories at 019, Gent and Kunsthall Extra City, Antwerp.



type
scan

date
15.09.2022

filename
opp2.jpeg

size
2,8MB

author
De Cleene De Cleene

category
astronomy, encounter, map/plan, Neptune, physics

10:24:49

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- *Oxford English Dictionary Online.* Accessed on 13.05.2021.
- 'Saturn Retrograde May 23, 2021 – Karmic Love', *Astrology King.* Accessed on 15.05.2021.



type	date	filename	size	author
video	22.05.2021	-	-	De Cleene De Cleene

category
astronomy, botany, landscape, mirror, music, tree

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 EUR¹. 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.



type
photograph

date
02.01.2022

filename
_44A4714.dng

size
63,15 MB

author
Michiel De Cleene

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

10:24:49

Ten years ago, in November, I drove up to Frisia – the northernmost province of The Netherlands. I was there to document the remains of air watchtowers: a network of 276 towers that were built in the fifties and sixties to warn the troops and population of possible aerial danger coming from the Soviet Union. It was very windy. The camera shook heavily. The poplars surrounding the concrete tower leaned heavily to one side.

I drove up to the seaside, a few kilometers farther. The wind was still strong when I reached the grassy dike that overlooked the kite-filled beach. I exposed the last piece of film left on the roll. Strong gusts of wind blew landwards.

Months later I didn't bother to blow off the dust that had settled on the film before scanning it. A photograph without use, with low resolution, made for the sake of the archive's completeness.

The dust on the film appears to be carried landwards, by the same gust of wind lifting the kites.



type
photograph

date
06.09.2021

filename
LWT-Oudemirdum0002.tif

size
28,17 MB

author
Michiel De Cleene

category
architecture, archive, data storage, landscape, sea, wind

10:24:50

‘You see?!’

[The man points at the waybill¹ on the floor behind the glass door that closes off the abandoned and dismantled hall.]

‘It used to be here, I’m sure.’

[He looks around.]

‘I’m sure.’

[He turns towards me.]

‘Are you also here for the Leen Bakker?’² This used to be a Leen Bakker. I just looked it up on their website. They are open from 9 to 6 today.’

[He points at the waybill again.]

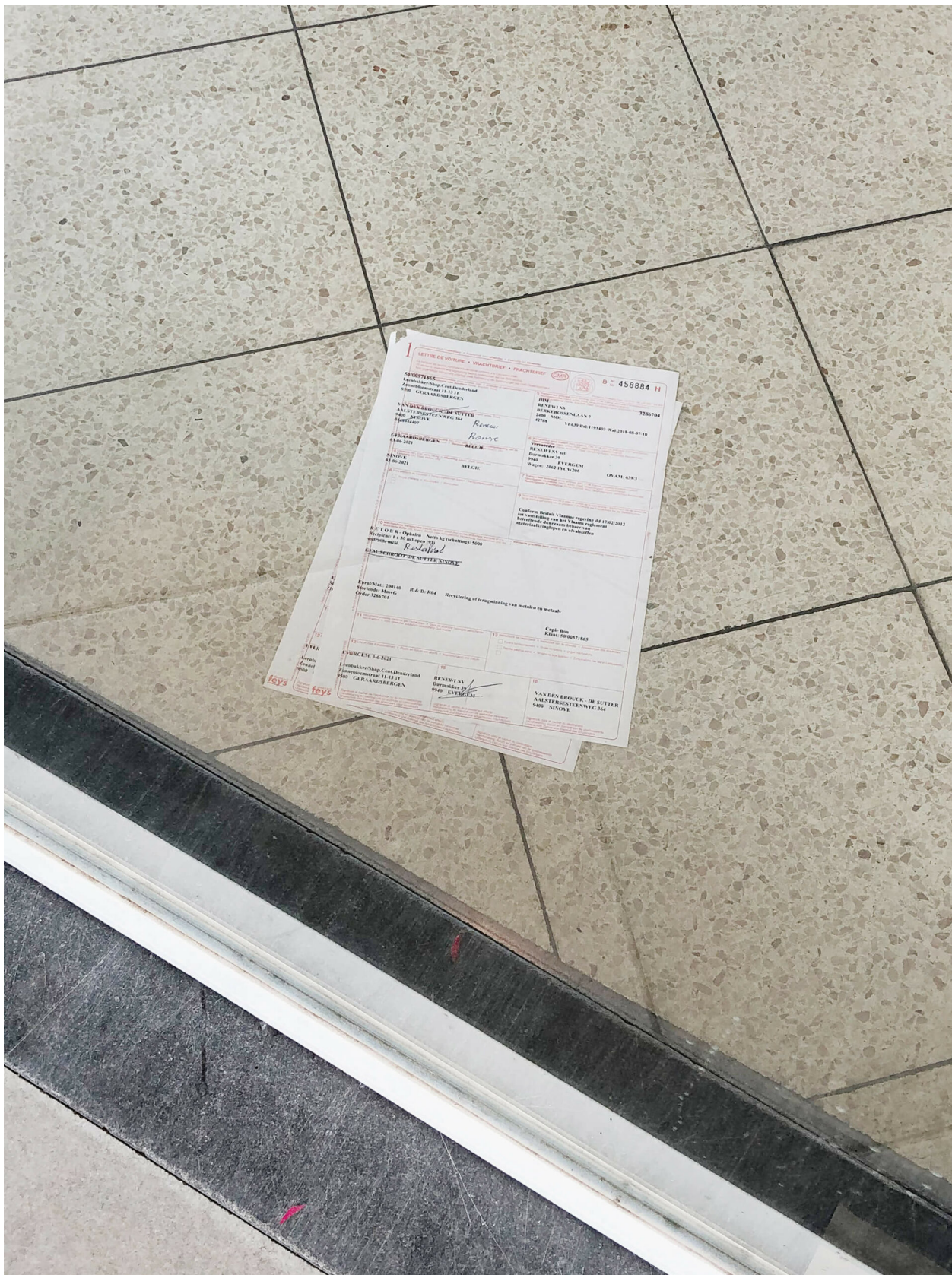
‘It was here. I remember well. It’s been years. But it’s here.’

[He walks away.]

‘I’ll look around.’

Notes

- 1 The waybill documents the transport of a 30m³ container filled with approximately 5000 kg of waste from this branch of Leen Bakker to a scrap processing company in nearby Ninove. They take care of scrap, both ferrous and non-ferrous metals. They also have a recognized depollution center for end-of-life vehicles.
- 2 A chain of furniture and interior stores with branches in the Netherlands, Belgium and the Caribbean part of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.



type
photograph

date
28.06.2021

filename
IMG_7499.HEIC

size
1,6 MB

author
Michiel De Cleene

category
decoration, economy, mistake, waste

10:24:50

On the online thrift shop 2dehands.be the homepage generates a ‘for you’ section. On November 9th this section listed, among other things, a picture of the sky on a patch of concrete. On closer inspection, it became clear that it was the sky’s reflection in a mirror with a red frame and four lightbulbs in it, the kind you might see at the hairdresser’s or backstage in a television studio or theatre. The seller estimates the mirror’s current value to be 45,00 EUR. The listing includes five photographs. In the fifth one, the object for sale reflects a bucolic landscape: a blue sky, white clouds, some trees and a fragment of a barn.



type	date	filename	size	author
screenshot	16.01.2022	Schermafbeelding 2021-11-09 om 20.54.40.png	2,92 MB	Michiel De Cleene
category				
economy, landscape, mirror				

10:24:53

The previous owners of the house we moved into, left us a piece of a newspaper that was used to clad the wall at the time the building was built, and which they found when they renovated the house. The sport-section of the socialist newspaper *Vooruit* is dated 18 November 1931. It features articles on cycling and soccer. Recently, we noticed the plaster is coming off the wall in one corner of the living room. With sufficient rain, it might reveal other events that happened on that 1931 November Wednesday.



type	date	filename	size	author
scan	20.02.2021	Document_2021-02-20_133700.jpg	1,7MB	Arnout De Cleene

category
archaeology, architecture, fissure, decoration, house, precipitation

10:24:53

K. says that the stall where he usually buys fruit has already been packed up. But he is not worried about the quality of the fruit the other vendor sells. He gestures encouragingly.

Five signs of type-1, eleven of type-2 and two of type-3 are visible. Four of type-2 (two visible, two deduced) and two of type-3 retain two vehicles.

Notes

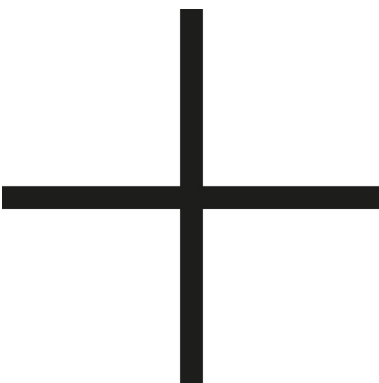
1.



2.



3.



- Márk Redele pursues projects that fundamentally relate to architecture and its practice but rarely look like architecture. www.markredele.com



type
photograph

date
26.12.2021

filename
market_.jpg

size
3,82 MB

author
Márk Redele

category
automobile, economy, food, fruit, landscape, manual, parking, precipitation, sign

10:24:53

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