



Playgroundfestival

For eleven years now, the M - Museum in Leuven, just east of Brussels, has been staging a festival devoted to performance practices that extend and shift the relationship between exhibition and live art. It offers a three-day program of works that draw as much upon the musical, choreographic, or theatrical arts as upon the visual ones. The pieces are presented at the Museum and at STUK, a structure dedicated to the performing arts.

« ... »

The Playground spectator is continually confronted with the question of where to be looking and what to perceive. The fact of the performers' direct address, immediately establishes a convention that falls outside typical frames of live performance, but also distances itself from the timeless aesthetic reception of the exhibition space.

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At the entrance to *Extra Shapes* (a collaboration between DD Dorvillier, choreography; S. Roux, music; and T. Dunn, lighting), the audience was instructed to change viewpoints for each repetition of the 17-minute performance. The stage was divided into three strips: one for the dancers, one for the speakers, and one for the lights. The almost didactic exercise was a perilous one, but the resulting experience excelled as a demonstration of a collaboration between three separate mediums, recomposed in each iteration through the exploration of different forms of reception. The performance format made it possible to impose a repetition, revealed to be rich in cognitive and emotional perspectives on how an experience is constructed. The rigor of the work's framework – the spatial separation of each medium and the changing of audience perspective – brings to light a play with codes and formats, calling into question norms of collaboration between the arts, and complex realities of perception.

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