

TRIENNALE
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Atelier Bow-Wow: Canal Swimmer's Club Langerei, at the Carmersbrug

The architecture firm Atelier Bow-Wow is located in Tokyo, an extremely densely populated metropolis with an agglomeration of over 35 million inhabitants. It is all too aware of the importance of a liveable public space. For the occasion of the Bruges Contemporary Art and Architecture Triennial 2015, Atelier Bow-Wow created an alternative public space with a social dimension. The firm installed a floating platform on the Langerei. The Canal Swimmer's Club functions as a start and finish location for competition swimmers but also has a wider purpose: it is a meeting place where you can sunbathe, relax and attend all kinds of events. The project was executed in collaboration with the Bruges architecture workshop Dertien12.

Canal Swimmer's Club

Over the past decades, Atelier Bow-Wow has grown into one of the most innovative architecture firms in the world. They are especially well known for their micro homes, which they integrate into the densely populated Japanese capital. Atelier Bow-Wow investigates and infiltrates the urban fabric. Momoyo Kaijima and Yoshiharu Tsukamoto, the firm's founders, observe the city, location and the behaviour of local users of the space when they create a project. The role of the resulting urban intervention is as instigator of new more interactive behaviours and a heightened consciousness of the space.

Atelier Bow-Wow designs buildings and structures that reinforce socially favourable outcomes in the city and provide room for the unexpected. For Bruges, it created a free space in the waters of the strictly regulated, historic centre. The architecture duo was fascinated by the spot on the Langerei where it is crossed by the Carmersbrug (bridge). They saw a great opportunity to carve out a new public space that would reflect the relationship between human behaviour and that of water. The result was the Canal Swimmer's Club, a sort of lounge that floats on the water. It is a new type of architecture that extends the urban space to incorporate a place of peace, removed from the busy city centre. While appearing to be a playful intervention, the piece is demonstrably critical of the institutionalisation of space in the city.

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The platform offers locals and visitors the chance to enjoy Bruges together in a unique way. The lounge was designed as a tranquil meeting place where people can relax and enjoy the attractive backdrop and waters of an authentic quarter of the city. Furthermore, regular events will take place that are in keeping with the location: intimate concerts, lectures, etc. But above all, this is a place to swim. Whereas previously only members of Bruges swimming clubs were allowed in the canal, this year everyone can swim in the Langerei on Saturday and Sunday afternoons. A safe paddling pool has been created in the pontoon and there are a few changing rooms. Life guards keep an eye on things.

Construction

The Canal Swimmer's Club consists of two sections, one on each side of the Carmersbrug. These platforms are joined by a third that forms a path leading under the bridge. One can swim from one of the platforms, while the other forms the lounge due to the danger posed by passing sightseeing boats. The structure is in steel with wooden decks. The entire piece was produced in a workshop and then assembled on the canal. The platform is designed to be taken apart and then reassembled every summer.

Local collaboration

Atelier Bow-Wow worked in partnership with the Bruges architecture workshop Dertien12, founded by Peter Bernaerts, Lennart Claeys and Tom Gantois, for the construction of the floating platform. One of their responsibilities was to source local alternatives for materials that are not available here. Dertien12 shares Atelier Bow-Wow's sense of social engagement and its vision of architecture as so much more than simply the placing of buildings – including its role in bringing people together.

www.dertien12.be



Atelier Bow-Wow

Atelier Bow-Wow was founded in 1992 by **Yoshiharu Tsukamoto** (1965, Kanagawa, Japan) and **Momoyo Kaijima** (1969, Tokyo, Japan). It studies the complex, often brutal logic of urban growth and creates architectural designs and studies that investigate the position of artifice and randomness within urban public spaces. Its practice is based on the concept of behaviorology, the study of functional relationships between 'behaviour' and the variables that determine the environment.

Architectural behaviorology is instrumental in integrating different levels of design: from furniture to architecture and urban planning. Atelier Bow-Wow positions projects within an ecosystem of behaviours that contribute to the spatial whole. It takes into account the interface between consumers, architecture and the natural elements that will impact on the building. This creates architecture that is unique to a specific place.

The Solomon R. Guggenheim Foundation in partnership with the BMW group commissioned Atelier Bow-Wow to design the BMW Guggenheim Lab, which was installed in Berlin, New York and Mumbai. These modular spaces are used to provide hothouses for new ideas, experiments and projects on urban living.

www.bow-wow.jp

westspacejournal.org.au/article/summer-2013/atelier-bow-wow/

<http://archinect.com/features/article/56468>

Visitor Information

20.05 - 18.10.2015

Langerei, at the Carmersbrug (corner of the Potterierei and Carmersstraat), 8000 Bruges

Open Tuesday – Sunday 9.30 am - 10 pm

Accessible to wheelchair users

#CANALSWIMMERSCLUB

Swimming in the canal

- General public: 1 July - 31 August, Saturdays and Sundays 1 pm to 6 pm
- Swimming training for members of pre-registered swimming clubs:
 - 1 July to 31 August: Tuesdays and Thursdays 6 pm to 9 pm, Saturdays 9 am to 12 pm
 - 1 September to 15 October: Tuesdays and Thursdays 6 pm to 8 pm, Saturdays 9 am to 12 pm

Swimming in this canal is forbidden at all other times and banned in the other Bruges canals.

Changing rooms are available and lifeguards present at the hours permitted for swimming.

Swimming is permitted subject to proper water temperature and quality.



For further press information

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Bruges Contemporary Art and Architecture Triennial 2015
20 May – 18 October 2015

What if the five million tourists who visit Bruges annually were to stay? What if a small, preserved, historic city should suddenly become a megapolis? This is the premise for the Bruges Contemporary Art and Architecture Triennial 2015. Eighteen international artists create new works that form an art trail through the city centre. Three indoor exhibitions provide the opportunity to further explore and contextualise the topics. Bruges will be transformed into Egg Urb: the Triennial cracks the Bruges 'egg' in order to reinvent the city from the inside out.

Information and programme: www.triennalebrugge.be
Facebook: Triennale Brugge 2015
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