

There are at least five good reasons to visit the BPS22 this summer! The museum is presenting two big exhibitions in its spacious premises: the first solo show of street artist ELNINO76, a collective exhibition combining artists from Belgium and Quebec and two additional exhibitions showcasing Mail Art and the printed image, as well as an outreach project in the learning space of the Little Museum.

As an early indication of a 'return to normal', the hermetic seal between indoors and outdoors is cracking and street art is moving inside, to the BPS22 walls. In the Pierre Dupont Hall (white cube), the Charleroi street artist **ELNINO76** presents **Jolly Roger**, his first solo exhibition in a gallery. Consisting entirely of new productions, the exhibition is primarily conceived around the pirates' black flag and the artist's symbolic talisman is examined in several sculptural and pictorial works reflecting on the vanities.

The second big exhibition this summer 2021 is **Lettres de Misarchie, Charleroi-Chicoutimi**, located in the museum's Great Industrial Hall. To evaluate the exchange of artists in residence between the BPS22 and the BANG art centre in Chicoutimi, Quebec, this exhibition brings together **three French-speaking Belgians and six French Canadians from Quebec, nine artists** who use their fantasies to question reality and present other possible worlds. The exhibition is curated by Pierre-Olivier Rollin and designed around the central figure of **Denys Tremblay**, the well-known performer and theorist of the 'really-made', which he defines as an artistic act inserted into real life and simultaneously recognised as art (fiction) and an actual event (real). He accomplished such an act in spectacular fashion in 1997 by convincing the citizens of the Anse-Saint-Jean commune to officially elect him 'King of Anse' under the name Denys the First.

Alongside these two main exhibitions is **MERCI FACTEUR!** [Thank you, Mr Postman!] **Mail Art #3** extends the series dedicated to the BPS22 Mail Art archives. This third phase is devoted to the correspondence of **Metallic Avau**, one of the first graffiti artists in Belgium, and **Ben Tripe**, the multi-faceted artist from Charleroi.

Papier Carbone [Carbon Paper] makes another comeback to the museum's walls. Cancelled for the second year running, Charleroi's famous printed image festival has transformed itself and is now an exhibition: **ÉTÉ CARBONE, La Colonie de vacances** [Carbon Summer, The Holiday Camp]. The festival had a free rein in inviting four Belgian and French collectives to exhibit, they are: **Le Marché Noir, Silex Éditions, Femixion** and **Team Grafik**.

Press conference: THURSDAY, 17 June, 11:00 a.m.

With the exhibition's curators and artists ELNINO76 and Marie-Andrée Pellerin (Quebec).
Registration: CARACAScom, 0495.22.07.92, info@caracascom.com

Press visits: FRIDAY 18 June, by appointment

Registration: CARACAScom, 0495.22.07.92, info@caracascom.com

ELNINO76. Jolly Roger

This summer the BPS22 welcomes the first solo exhibition of street artist ELNINO76 (Charleroi, 1976). Located in the Dupont Room, it primarily consists of new productions. Highly active on the Belgian graffiti scene since the 1990s, here the artist displays the range of his talent by drawing on the notorious pirate flag, the Jolly Roger.

ELNINO76 started drawing as a child. He got his first skateboard, an aluminium cruiser, around the age of eight. He discovered graffiti through skateboard culture. This is a dive into a rich graphical universe but also the opportunity for many meetings and first journeys. The artist essentially honed his technique and his style in the world of Belgian graffiti, always within the group dynamic so essential to his practice. He is also a member of several street art communities: KSA (Brussels), ICS (Charleroi) and OBNP in Brazil. ELNINO76 studied art, but his real education came from the Californian magazine *Transworld Skateboarding*, along with the streets, abandoned lots and work experience.

The artist's pseudonym - ELNINO76 - is derived from the combination of 'el niño', the Spanish for child or kid, and 1976, the year he was born. For him it is about keeping the adult world at arm's distance. The name also suggests the climate event caused by significant temperature changes, warming the surface of the Pacific Ocean, used by the artist to highlight his approach as a disruptive element.

Consisting entirely of new productions, the exhibition is built around the Jolly Roger: the skull and crossbones set against a black background and the flag used by pirates. The artist expresses his approach to piracy as a quest for freedom, travel and camaraderie, as well as through graffiti-linked rules and codes giving rise to marginalised practices often associated with vandalism.

The skull and crossbones is a recurring image that ELNINO76 pursues in his work like a mantra, reminding us that we must live life to the full, here and now. The pirates' symbol is also used in major productions to examine the subject of the vanities. These bear witness to the panoply of techniques used by ELNINO76, as well as the feat of his artistic works which tend to merge into a sports-like performance due to their scale. The exhibition also reveals the artist's abundant graphic universe, peopled with cartoon characters he both subverts and reinterprets.

Curator: Nancy Casielles, BPS22

Download artwork from:

<https://caracascom.com/en/exposition-1-elnino76-jolly-roger/1158.html>

LETTRES DE MISARCHIE. Charleroi-Chicoutimi

Beneath the title *Lettres de misarchie, Charleroi-Chicoutimi* the BPS22 evaluates the first cycle of residential exchanges with the BANG art centre in Chicoutimi (Canada) under the auspices of the CALQ (Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec [Quebec Council of Arts and Letters]). Originating from the observation that an artistic residence in a foreign country is initially based on a fantasy of 'elsewhere', the exhibition infiltrates itself into the potentialities created by fantastical projections meeting actual lived experience to suggest the shapes of imaginary lands.

In 2016, the BPS22 and the BANG Art now centre (Chicoutimi, Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean) signed a partnership to exchange residencies under the auspices of the CALQ (Conseil des arts et des lettres du Québec). Every year for three years BANG welcomed a French-speaking artist from Belgium for a two-month artistic research residency, while an artist from Quebec was invited to a similar residency in Charleroi. At the end of the first cycle, the enthusiasm of the artists and the different partners led the protagonists to extend the experience to a four-year cycle (2020-2023) with three-month stays, currently on hold due to the pandemic.

While the residencies focussed on research and there was no requirement to present results at the end of the stay, it soon became evident that, even in its early stages, the work undertaken deserved to be shown. In 2019 therefore, BANG offered the *Horizons* exhibition, showing the French-speaking Belgian artists who took part in the first three residencies: Maxence Mathieu (1992, Charleroi), Philippe Braquenier (1985, Mons) and Hélène Petite (1983, Namur). As to the artists from Quebec, Marie-Andrée Pellerin (1986, Québec), Mathieu Valade (1979, Montréal) and Sara Létourneau (1985, Saguenay), they were included in the exhibition called *Espace Texte Matière* [Space Text Matter] held by BANG in 2020, accompanied by Julien Boily (1979, Saint-Gédéon de Grandmont) and Cindy Dumais (1978, Dolbeau), two other artists from Saguenay strongly associated with the residency exchange agreement.

The curatorial statement for *Lettres de misarchie, Charleroi-Chicoutimi* arose out of the visit to the *Horizons* exhibition, coupled with an understanding of the work produced by the artists from Quebec during their residencies in Belgium. The works shared the desire to construct new worlds, some of which have a foothold in reality, from where they drift towards diverse fictional forms (Hélène Petite, Mathieu Valade, Marie-Andrée Pellerin, Sara Létourneau), while others are entrenched from the start in the fantasies of the artists who, pushed to the extremes of their designs, radically question reality (Maxence Mathieu, Philippe Braquenier). The artists' residencies seem to have fed the fantasy of an 'elsewhere' elicited by the experience of the visit and ultimately embodied in the specific shape of imaginary lands. Some focussing on the morphology of the realms, others on myths, certain communities of beings, political organisations and even diplomatic models.

The title of the exhibition *Lettres de misarchie, Charleroi-Chicoutimi* alludes to two literary works. One is *Persian Letters*, Montesquieu's epistolary novel that recounts the experiences of two Persian travellers in Europe (1721). Using the device of fictitious letters, the author develops a critique of western society, seen through the eyes of imaginary travellers. The other is *Voyage en misarchie* [Travels in Misarchy] by Emmanuel Dockès (2017) who, through the experiences of a traveller lost in an imaginary land, describes a country where the political regime is misarchy, a neologism invented by the author from the Greek 'miso' (hate) and 'archos' (the power). Both books set out the possibility of imaginary worlds, such as those developed by the artists who, each in their own way and from their own perspective, formulate new possibilities for re-constructing our world.

As a way of supporting this approach, the exhibition's curator and director of the BPS22, Pierre-Olivier Rollin, also invited the Quebec artist Denys Tremblay (1951, Chicoutimi), who lives in Saguenay, to participate in the project. Denys Tremblay is a performer and theorist of 'peripheral

art', just as the cities of Chicoutimi and Charleroi are peripheral, in other words free from all dominant 'metropolitan' rationales, and of the 'really-made', which he defines as an artistic act inserted into real life and simultaneously recognised as art (fiction) and an actual event (real). An act that he actually accomplished in 1997 by convincing citizens of the Anse-Saint-Jean commune to officially elect him 'King of Anse' under the name Denys the First. He abdicated equally officially in 2000.

More than an exhibition reuniting the participants in a cycle of residencies between Charleroi and Chicoutimi, *Lettres de misarchie* is intended as a voyage through artistic proposals which, while completely fictitious, nevertheless take a critical look at our world today.

ARTISTS: Julien **Boily**, Philippe **Braquenier**, Cindy **Dumais**, Sara **Létourneau**, Maxence **Mathieu**, Marie-Andrée **Pellerin**, Hélène **Petite**, Denys **Tremblay**, Mathieu **Valade**.

Curator: Pierre-Olivier ROLLIN, BPS22

Download artwork from:

<https://caracascom.com/en/exposition-2-lettres-de-misarchie-charleroi-chicoutimi/1159.html>

MERCI FACTEUR! Mail Art #3. Metallic Avau and Ben Tripe

For the third exhibition in its cycle dedicated to Mail Art in francophone Belgium, the BPS22 brings together two artists from different generations. Metallic Avau (Brussels, 1945) and Ben Tripe (Charleroi, 1963). The two artists express different aesthetic approaches, characteristic of their times.

Trained as a librarian, Roger Avau started his career as an art critic for the cultural journal *Spectacles*, where he met another Roger, namely Roger Jouret. While the latter became internationally famous under the name Plastic Bertrand, Roger Avau chose the pseudonym Metallic Avau, which he then used to sign his graffiti. He was also a pioneer of street art in Belgium, wielding a canister since the mid-1970s.

Together with his wife, Violette Wynants, he went on to publish *Aérosol*, the first fanzine dedicated to this style still largely unknown at the time. With artwork based on collage and diverse inspirational texts, *Aérosol* concentrated the first reflections about what would later become street art and reported on art - an outrageous interview with Andy Warhol - and social issues such as the appearance of independent radio stations. The publication also showcased Mail artists and their work. A tireless activist for Mail Art, as well as graffiti, Metallic Avau maintained a correspondence with artists throughout the world and organised several exhibitions of Mail Art in Belgium.

A self-taught artist, Ben Tripe (real name Benoît Piret) has devoted himself since the 1980s to collage, painting, music, writing and Mail Art. Especially close to the desk-top publisher Ghislain Olivier (1947-2009, founder of *Éditions de l'Heure*), they together produced several publications under the name Otto Rivers. He was also close to the artist Thierry Tillier, whose archives were on show during the cycle's first exhibition; both were members of the esoteric group *Réseau 666*. Ben Tripe left Europe for Los Angeles in the 1990s, where he worked in completely unrelated professions from walk-on roles in films to French teacher.

On his return to Belgium, he developed his work as an artist, combining personal memories with social concerns but never abandoning Mail Art. At the time, he sustained a substantial correspondence with artists around the world, including historic figures such as Ryosuke Cohen (Brain Cell) and Giovanni StraDa who, like himself, shared a taste for dialogue. Rather than envelopes or letters, Ben Tripe and his correspondents preferred to send different documents, collages, cut-out advertisements, photocopies, little objects and so on, which formed a myriad of small parts to put together, like the pieces of a vast planetary jigsaw.

Curator: Pierre-Olivier ROLLIN, BPS22

Download artwork from:

<https://caracascom.com/en/exposition-3-merci-facteur-mail-art-3-metallic-avau-ben-tripe/1160.html>

ÉTÉ CARBONE. LA COLONIE DE VACANCES

The Papier Carbone festival summer exhibition

Created in Charleroi in 2016, the *Papier Carbone* festival comprising different events and a fair aims to showcase artists, publishers and collectives working with the printed image and desk-top publishing. Cancelled for the second year running, *Papier Carbone* has reinvented itself and is now ÉTÉ CARBONE, an exhibition at the BPS22.

Responding to the museum's offer of a free rein, the festival team decided to invite four Belgian and French collectives that utilise and approach the printed image from poetic, political, particular and/or quirky perspectives.

On the BPS22 stage, the exhibition *Été Carbone. La colonie de vacances* offers you the work of the collectives: **Le Marché Noir** (Rennes, FR), **Silex Éditions** (Rabastens, FR), **Femixion** (Brussels) and **Team Grafik** (Brussels-Antwerp). An encounter with diverse worlds and a multitude of techniques.

- **Le Marché Noir:** www.lemarchenoir.org
- **Silex Éditions:** www.silexeditions.com
- **Femixion:** www.instagram.com/femixionfanzine
- **Team Grafik:** www.grafik.brussels

ÉTÉ CARBONE is a partnership between the *Papier Carbone* festival, the BPS22 and Le Vecteur.

Download the artwork/BPS22 Google Drive link

<https://caracascom.com/en/exposition-4-ete-carbone-la-colonie-de-vacances/1161.html>

ÉTÉ CARBONE is also **The Maxi Kiosque**, a huge library of self-published books and fanzines, on display at the V2 gallery at Vecteur from 9 July to 21 August.

Also to be discovered in The **Little M**useum at the BPS22

ET SI LE FACTEUR PASSAIT CHEZ VOUS...?!

The Little Museum is a space for learning, where exhibits are displayed at a child's eye-level. During the long months of lockdown, children received letters from the BPS22 and played the postal correspondence game. In summer 2021, these same children's creations are showcased on the walls of the *Petit Musée* (Little Museum).

More information: <https://www.bps22.be/en/exhibitions/et-si-le-facteur-passait-chez-vous>

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Download artwork: <https://caracascom.com/en/les-expositions-d-ete-du-bps22/1157.html>

Exhibitions on display from 19 June to 12 September 2021.

Tuesday to Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Closed on Mondays and 24, 25 and 31 December and 1 January

Closed when exhibitions are being set up or taken down.

INDIVIDUAL ENTRANCE FEES

Adults: €6/Senior citizens: €4/Students and job seekers: €3/under 12 years: free.

GROUP ENTRANCE FEES

On request in consideration of the health conditions in force.