

OFF WORLD
&
PLAYTIME FILMS
present

— ARCHITBELGE —





ARCHIBELGE

a 3-part documentary series directed by Sofie Benoot, Olivier Magis and Gilles Coton, a coproduction with Playtime Films, VRT-Canvas and RTBF, with the support of VAF MEDIA, du Centre du Cinéma de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, Wallimage/Bruxellimage and Screen Flanders.

Is Belgium the most ugly country in the world? Belgium's urban landscape is pretty special, to say the least. On either side of the language border, on any road you drive, any city or region you cross, you will find a bizarre and intriguing form of urbanization that is so one of the kind, you won't find anything like it anywhere else in the world. Actually it's rather the lack of urbanization that is so unique and it is this particular aspect that is essential to Belgium's typical look. Our architectural landscape is hard to grasp, it is everything and nothing at the same time, a unique concept in itself.

The 3-part documentary series Archibelge approaches the typical phenomena of our Belgian architecture from within ourselves. Its starting point is always a Belgian individual who is surrounded by the fascinating diversity of buildings on a daily basis. We ask ourselves how it is possible that Belgium has evolved into what it looks like today and how we will have to proceed in the future, now that the building sites are becoming scarcer by the day.

Archibelge is a fascinating journey along the Belgian roads. We start in the countryside, travel through Brussels, and end up at the Belgian coast.



TECHNICAL DETAILS

International title	ARCHIBELGE
Format	HD - 3 x 52'
Spoken languages	Dutch - French - English
Versions	Dutch - French - English
Script	Sofie Benoot, Olivier Magis & Frederik Nicolai
Directed by	Sofie Benoot & Olivier Magis
Based on the original idea of	Gilles Coton
Production manager	Celine Strypsteen
Edited by	Tom Denoyette - Mathieu Piérart
Sound	Kwinten Van Laethem - Gedeon Depauw - Guillaume Berg - Rainier Buidin
Director of photography	Grimm Vandekerckenhove - Jonathan Wannyn - Joachim Philippe - Jean-François Metz
Music	Daniel Offerman
Grading	Michael Cinquin
In co-production with	Playtime Films - VRT Canvas - RTBF - Entre Chien et Loup
Producers	Eric Goossens, Frederik Nicolai, Matthieu Frances et Isabel de la Serna
With the support of	Flanders Audiovisual Fond - Le Centre du Cinéma de la Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles - Les régions de Bruxelles-Capitale et de Wallonie - Tax Shelter - Screen Flanders



ARCHITBELGE -

NATIONAL ROUTE



THE NATIONAL ROUTE is one of those many roads along which the Belgians live, pursuing their building dreams any way they want. By the roadsides, you will find Spanish-like haciendas and converted barns neatly next to one another. But it is behind these houses, in the backyards, where the Belgians like to live out their architectural fantasies. There they create their surreal and chaotic accumulation of outbuildings. We travel along the typical Belgian stone paved roads, along the ribbon building developments and the outbuildings. This trip shows us how the Belgians create their own building dreams and lets us see where that typical Belgian "craving to each build his own home" comes from.



Belgians prefer to build their houses on their own private plot of land, in the countryside, far away from the city. And thus the houses start rising along asphalted roads that now cut through these vast country fields. Rarely taking into account how the adjacent building looks like, the Belgian obstinately builds his own little dream house. And within this urbanistic chaos, the residents have developed a targeted creativity.



ARCHITBELGE

BRUSSELS IN SEARCH FOR ITSELF

BRUSSELS is a city where people come and go. The capital is seen as a work place rather than a place to settle in. Every morning, Brussels is flooded with employees on the way to their offices and every evening those same employees return to their homes outside the city. Brussels looks like a transit area, where the towering office buildings add to an aura of an uninviting, abandoned city.



Brussels is the supreme example of how politicians and building developers have left us with chronic urbanistic wounds. Working-class neighbourhoods had to make way for office buildings, concepts such as 'façadomy' and 'Manhattan on the Zenne' were born here. But we look at Brussels as a surreal collage of different visions and dreams that co-exist in daily life instead of an unsightly hotchpotch. So we focus on the initiatives of residents against what is forced upon them and we discover that Brussels residents are just flexible Belgians who repeatedly have to adjust to conditions imposed to them by the city

ARCHIBELGE -

WITH SEA VIEW



For the Belgians, THE COAST is a place for relaxation with a coffee and a sea view. It is one elongated city that stretches over 65 km and is often but 100 metres wide. The demand for apartments with a sea view have led to a whirling stream of consecutive building and demolition on our coastline. As tides come and go buildings fall and apartment blocks rise, creating an Atlantic Wall, where each temporary resident claims his own sea view.

We also reflect on the future of our coastline. It seems that our ultimate dream is to completely appropriate the sea to fulfil our own building whims. But... the sea is just not easily tamed.



DIRECTORS

Sofie Benoot has been studying film school in Brussels since 2003 and graduated in 2007 as a Master in audiovisual arts, at St-Lucas Brussels, specialized in documentary. Ever since, she's investing all her passion and talent into her very personal and precious projects. Her graduation film project *Fronterismo* (2007) won the VAF Wild Card Award at the Leuven International Film Festival and has been widely exhibited at international film festival. *Blue Meridian* was her first film project after graduating. It was one of the 13 projects selected for the first edition of FIDlab during FID Marseille 2009 where it won the first award. Meanwhile she enlarged her experience by working as a creative coordinator for 'Berlin', a renowned theater and film collective, and by being a production-assistant and assistant-director for different film and art projects. If there's any time left, Sofie gives guest lectures on documentary subjects she's been confronted with. Her latest film 'Desert Haze' (2014) was shown at Visions du Réel, Docville, Dok Leipzig, Camden IFF, Escales Documentaires, Signes de Nuit, Big Sky Montana, Cinéma Vérité & Docpoint Finland.

Olivier Magis graduated in 2004 in Film Production at Institut des arts de diffusion. His graduation film 'The Secret of the Gods' was shown at more than 65 European film festivals. In 2013 Olivier directed 'lon', that was shown in theaters and broadcasted in Belgium. His latest feature, 'Flowers in the Shadow', was released in 2014. Olivier is a known director working for ARTE and RTBF. When he has the spare time, he works as an assistant director in theater and circus. Olivier Magis gives also lectures about his passion, documentary, at the SAE Film Institute in Brussels.



OFF WORLD

Off World is an independent production company based in Brussels, capital of Flanders, Belgium and Europe. Off World's main goal is to produce international author documentaries. Over the last few years, the company has built up a large portfolio and a solid reputation as delegate producer and co-producer of many creative and original documentaries. Off World's trademark is a contemporary and wayward look on the world, which springs from the passion and talent of the documentary authors. Off World has build up a long term collaboration with renowned and distinguished documentary authors. However, Off World is also consistently investing in young filmmakers, as a creative investment for the future.

Today, Off World has a long-term collaboration with their national broadcasting companies VRT-Canvas, Lichtpunt and RTBF and national co-producers (Eklektik, Simple Production, Luna Blue Film...) Moreover, Off World co-produces internationally with foreign broadcasters and producers (Netherlands, France, Germany, Denmark, Poland, Spain,...).

Besides being a key player in the industry, Off World also works to usher Flanders into the global documentary industry. In 2009, the production company founded the professional organisation Flanders Doc along with fellow Flemish documentary producers. Flanders Doc unites creative forces in order to enhance the level of performance, professionalism and globalisation of the Flemish industry. Off World is also an active EDN member.

PLAYTIME FILMS

Playtime Films is a production company created in 2007 by three director-producers: Julien Bechara, Matthieu Frances and Gille-Ivan Frankignoul. Isabel de la Serna joined them in 2010. Since its creation, Playtime manages the production, directing and post-production of unique cinematographic works both in fiction or documentary field. The development of documentary and fiction projects is led by Isabel de la Serna and Matthieu Frances.

Playtime focuses on projects that are committed to strong social and political values, proposed by directors with a determined, creative and aesthetic vision. Since 2007, Playtime has produced nearly a dozen films (documentary, fiction and programs for Belgian and French broadcasters).

CONTACT

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