

Connecting nature and stopping time

# In Between

Tom Peeters

Paradise is within our reach, but we've almost forgotten that... I read that in the press release of *In Between: Inner and Outer Landscapes*, the new exhibition and experience trail in and around Gaasbeek Castle and the Groenenberg estate. But I didn't take it too seriously until I got there and actually felt the meaning behind the statement as I strolled around the opulently decorated historical rooms of the brick castle, the nearby museum garden - a real Garden of Eden - and spacious woodlands.

More than 30 contemporary artists, local and international, have started a conversation with nature here, offering an antidote to our hectic lifestyles.

I am lucky, as the weather is excellent and I have plenty of time. Time is all you need here. In return, you get silence, introspection and harmony. Ghent-based curator Joris Capenberghs has selected artists with a healthy appetite for the moment and the crossroads where art and

nature meet.

The tour starts in the castle with a video by Flemish artist Michaël Borremans. In almost every room, an artist is interacting with the environment inside, often making references to the world outside. You can only read the subtle word sculptures by Fred Eerdeken, made out of wrinkled copper wire, when the light falls on them, revealing the text on the wall behind. You can recognise mountains, meanwhile. In the installation made of marble and grains of rice by German artist Wolfgang Laib.

The links between the artists' works and nature often have a mystical or even spiritual quality. Take "Montcanus", an installation by German artist Angela Glajcar. Opposite a weaving loom, she meticulously rips apart white glass fibre into wafer-thin threads and eventually gathers them into something translucent that's seemingly floating in the space but still looks a bit like a hammock. Don't



"Fivers and Tides" by British environmental sculptor Andy Goldsworthy

try to use it as one: The calmness the mental level.

artist is striving for is reached at a To see "Aqua Verticals" by Ghent

artist Johan Opstaele, you first need to find the St Gertrude Chapel. It takes a while, descending through the woods. Four vertical screens obliterate your view of the altar, showing a video of moving water. Each one is different. "It's my way to visualise emotions and stay in the moment," Opstaele explains. He selected the material from 190 hours of recordings made of water from his boat. By showing the water vertically where you would expect it to be horizontal, he makes a direct connection to the real spring underneath the chapel.

One of the trail's hidden treasures is the museum garden. It's not just the two sculptures by Flemish artist Koenraad Tinel and the five piles of Eucalyptus branches (in the greenhouse) by the English artist Aeneas Wilder that seek our attention here, it's also the infinite sorts of apples, pears, berries, grapes, lettuce, cabbage and more. For the first time, I felt what Eve must have felt in her Eden. It's worth a trip to Gaasbeek for this experience alone.

Until 3 November

Gaasbeek Castle, Kasteelstraat 40, Gaasbeek (Flemish Brabant)

► [www.kasteelvangasbeek.be](http://www.kasteelvangasbeek.be)