



centre
de
création
contemporaine
olivier
debré

lieven de boeck

breaking free

7 november 2025 - 31 may 2026

press release

summary

3 - 5 intention

6 - 7 artist statement

8 - 10 interview between lieven
de boeck and
isabelle reiher

11 associated program

12 - 17 lieven de boeck

18 - 19 the CCCOD

breaking free

intention

7 november 2025 -
31 may 2026

opening 6th november 2025
nef

curator & texts:
Isabelle Reiher

To close out the year 2025, CCCOD invites Belgian artist Lieven de Boeck to create a solo exhibition designed specifically for the Nef of the art center. True to his performative approach, the artist imagines in Tours a "parade - exhibition" that integrates the event-based nature of artistic gesture and the political power of encounter. The exhibition does not present itself as a finished form, but rather as a space to be activated, experienced, and reawakened by the presence of bodies — those of the art center's team and of the public.

Building on his long-term project The Archive of Disappearance, a reflection on forms of erasure, voluntary refusal, and reappearance within the artistic field, Lieven de Boeck continues his exploration of the political and affective stakes of a queer aesthetic. What is queer art today? How does it question binary modes of representation? Can it disrupt normative logics of visibility, productivity, and legitimacy? And most importantly: when and how can queer art appear — or choose to disappear — within our societies?



Studio LDB+ Queering Activation Ostend ©Antoine Doetsch

National press | Agence Alambret Communication • Emilie Harford | emilie.h@alambret.com • +33(0)1 48 87 70 77 • +33(0)6 85 29 06 02

Regional press | CCCOD - Tours • Léna Loizon | l.loizon@cccod.fr • +33(0)2 47 70 23 22 • +33(0)6 82 44 87 54

CCCOD • exhibition *breaking free* • curator : Isabelle Reiher • from 7 november 2025 to 31 may 2026

breaking free

intention

exhibition realized with the
support of the Wallonia-
Brussels Federation and
Flanders



Drawing on the historical figure of **Brazilian artist Hélio Oiticica** (1937–1980) and his iconic **Parangolés** — cape-sculptures made from repurposed fabrics, created in the 1960s as acts of joyful disidentification and social liberation — Lieven De Boeck proposes a political and affective re-reading. The goal is not to reconstruct, but to reactivate these gestures under new latitudes, with other bodies, different rhythms, and new urgencies.

To this end, **the artist has designed seven costumes for seven queer identities**, each bearing a specific chromatic composition inspired by contemporary queer flags. These costumes — the seven Parangolés — have already been activated in previous parades. Here, they are displayed as **silent witnesses to those past activations**, their presence imbued with the memory of bodies in motion. Though still, they resonate throughout the exhibition space, **serving as the conceptual foundation for all the works on view** and, more broadly, for the exhibition as a whole. These queer figures exist within a discontinuous temporality — one of appearances, disappearances, and slowness. The artwork comes into being only through its activation, in the fleeting interplay of presence and absence, in the opportunity offered to each person to become a co-author.

The exhibition transforms the Nef into a fluid and plural space, shaped by mobile sculptural forms and performative events, creating unexpected moments of exchange between the works and the visitors. The color codes of queer identities give rise to a non-verbal language where bodies, emotions, and multiple belongings intertwine — letting art contaminate life, and life contaminate art.



breaking free

artist statement

The Archive of Disappearance: Between Visibility, Refusal, and Reappearance



My practice has long revolved around **questions of visibility, authorship, and the fluid spaces between public and private**. Over the past two decades, I have developed a body of work that cuts across architecture, language, and performance, and is now framed within **a research-led, queer methodology** I call "The Archive of Disappearance".

Since 2009, this concept has served as both a container and a proposition. It began with a conversation around erasure and absence in my installations—works that hid as much as they revealed, often structured like archives but resisting the logic of closure. Over time, this archive grew—not as a collection of finished pieces, but as **a shifting constellation of performances, letters, diagrams, and embodied gestures**. Together, they formed a practice shaped by refusal: the refusal to be legible, productive, or permanently visible.

In recent years, this refusal has taken on new meaning. My current research, a PhD "in and through practice", reconsiders **disappearance as a queer and political gesture of self-exclusion**. Drawing on personal experience—growing up queer in environments that demanded self-erasure—I began to see disappearance not as loss, but as strategy. Just as queer individuals withdraw to survive and reappear when the moment allows, artworks too live through cycles of latency and reactivation. **The question becomes not just what is art, but when is art allowed to appear?**

breaking free

artist statement

This is not a purely theoretical inquiry. It is grounded in making. Through projects such as The Dictionary of Space, Public Space L.E.T.T.E.R.S., Making Things Public, and Image Not Found, I have developed typologies of exhibition and participation that foreground absence, translation, and fragment. **In these works, I privilege activation over presentation, inviting others—dancers, students, visitors—to recompose the work anew.** This research recently culminated in *Breaking Free*, a publication and manual for reanimating disappeared artworks, co-written through performance, memory, and collaborative authorship.

In reactivating Parangolé Capa 21, Xoxoba—first in spontaneous interventions at documenta fifteen, and later in art institutions and fairs—I explored queer time as embodied practice. These performances were not restagings, but affective propositions: **temporary gatherings of fabric, voice, and presence that opened up spaces of collective uncertainty.** Moving slowly, sidestepping spectacle, they suspended the rules of recognition and replaced them with sensual drift and shifting affiliation. It was not about reproducing a work, but about twisting it into new rhythms—queering its form, letting it unfold again in altered states.

The Archive of Disappearance is not about preserving history. It is about **staying with disappearance—making space for delay, contradiction, and potential.** I do not seek to restore lost works or fixed identities. I want to create conditions in which something can reappear differently—queerly—again and again.

Let's go queer—not to fill the archive, but to trouble its frame. To disappear, not as retreat, but as resistance. And to reappear—on our own terms, in our own time.

”

breaking free

interview

interview between Lieven de Boeck and Isabelle Reiher / July 2025

Lieven, what led you to work on the relationship between queer identity and art? How would you define queer in this context?

This project was born out of my own experience. Very early on, I had to practice a form of self-erasure in order to survive in a normative environment. This act of erasure, which I now recognize as queer, became a driving force in my approach to art. Queer, in this context, is not a fixed identity, but a critical method. It is a way of shifting frameworks, of disrupting norms—particularly those that govern visibility, productivity, or even temporality in art. I am quoting José Esteban Muñoz here: “we are not yet queer.” Queer is a becoming, an ethical practice, a way of inhabiting the world differently.

This research and exhibition project began with the figure of Brazilian artist Helio Oiticica and the reactivation of his participatory cape sculptures called Parangoles. Can you tell us why you chose to work on this figure from art history?

Helio Oiticica embodies a radical practice that connects art, politics, and sensuality. By reactivating his Parangoles—capoes designed to be worn while dancing—I wanted to experiment with another form of queer presence in public space. Oiticica, as a queer artist in an authoritarian society, created works where art is not just something to be looked at: it is something to be experienced, shared, and traversed. These capoes are not just objects; they are invitations to live an experience—a queer temporality, a joyful resistance.

breaking free

interview

The exhibition raises fundamental questions about the relationship between the artist and the public: what is the artist's position? Are they the author of the work? What relationship to the other does the work elicit? How do your general approach and this project in particular challenge the notion of the author's autonomy in art?

In this project, I do not position myself as the sole author of the work. My role is that of a "proposer," to use Lygia Clark's words. The work only fully exists through the activation of others—performers, visitors, diverse audiences. The author becomes a vector, a catalyst for a shared experience. This shift calls into question the artist's autonomy: the work becomes co-produced, situated, and fluid.

Since the very beginning of your artistic career, you have been interested in the codes and norms that govern our societies and relationships between people. These conceptual tools allow you to establish the foundations for new interpretive frameworks that are then transposed into the field of art. Here, you use universal color codes associated with different queer identities to create works that invite visitor participation. Can you explain this dynamic and how it plays out between the works in the exhibition?

The colors of queer flags have become tools for costume design, but also floating signs of identity. In using them, I didn't want to illustrate or confine identities, but rather to activate a shifting visual grammar in which everyone can recognize themselves or lose themselves. The colors become entry points, invitations to interact with the works, to project oneself onto them, to move freely within them. It is a nonverbal language that connects bodies, emotions, and multiple affiliations.

breaking free

interview

Throughout your recent research, you ask the following question: can art be a place that allows for queerness and critical questioning of neoliberal heteronormative society? How would you answer this question?

I believe so, but under certain conditions. Art can offer spaces for breathing, friction, and emancipation. But these spaces must be constructed with care, resisting their appropriation. The refusal to produce for the sake of producing, the refusal of the spectacular, are forms of queer resistance. Art then becomes a place of slowing down, of collective reinvention. As Isabelle Alfonsi writes: "Queer artists open up paths that are already there, but still invisible."

Many citizens today are claiming a right to laziness, considering the large number of contradictory demands we face and the urgent need to slow down. Do you see your artistic practice as part of this movement?

Yes, in the sense that I work with a slow, non-linear temporality. My artistic work is based on a process rather than productivity. It takes time to listen, to doubt, to take detours. This "right to laziness" is a form of disobedience to the neoliberal logic of efficiency. It allows for the creation of intervals—moments that are useless but intensely alive.

Could "Uniting art with life" be your motto?

Yes, but only if it is not understood as a total fusion. I would rather say: let art contaminate life, and vice versa. What I'm looking for are tipping points—where artistic practices can transform the ways we are together, move, and touch each other. For me, art is not a refuge; it's a testing ground for living differently. A place of loss and reunion, of disappearance and reappearance.

breaking free

associated program

- **thursday 6 november 2025 at 7 p.m.**

performance on the evening of the opening : *Becoming*, with Lieven De Boeck, Vanasay Khamphommala and Maxime Aubert.

- **wednesday 27 may 2026**

parade through the urban space, in collaboration with students from the Lycée Choiseul in Tours.

- **upcoming:**

public presentation of an original choreographic piece, created in connection with the exhibition's artworks by the class students of the MJC in Joué-lès-Tours.



Studio LDB+ Parade *What's Going on?* Trouble Festival Brussels,- Botanique ©Collin Delfosse

lieven de boeck

biography

Lieven De Boeck (b. 1971, Belgium) is a multidisciplinary artist working across performance, architecture, language, and textile.

His practice explores visibility, authorship, and the politics of presence through a queer and research-led methodology he calls The Archive of Disappearance. Over the past two decades, De Boeck has developed a body of work structured less around objects than around actions, propositions, and embodied gestures. Often privileging activation over presentation, his works invite others—dancers, students, visitors—to participate in ephemeral, performative reconfigurations.

His ongoing PhD in and through practice at Université libre de Bruxelles rethinks disappearance as a political and queer strategy of self-exclusion and reappearance. This research culminates in *Breaking Free*, a two-part publication and manual for reanimating disappeared works through collective memory, performance, and collaborative authorship.

De Boeck has exhibited widely, including at documenta fifteen, Sarasota Art Museum, Untitled Art Miami, and FRAC-PACA. His solo exhibitions and performances span institutions across Europe and North America, including Witte de With, Meessen De Clercq, and Fonderie Darling. He has held residencies at CIRVA, ISCP, Jan van Eyck Academie, and NAIRS Foundation.

Central to De Boeck's recent work is the reactivation of textile-based actions inspired by queer temporalities and collective embodiment. Twisting historical references into new rhythms, his work resists fixed narratives, exploring instead a choreography of latency, refusal, and potential.

He currently teaches at ENSAV La Cambre and is appointed professor at Marshall Rice University's Faculty of Architecture in Houston and Paris.



lieven de boeck

exhibitions

personal exhibitions (selection)

- 2025** *The Vitrine, Queer Labours of Display*, NICC, Brussels
- 2024** *Cliquer ici pour accepter tou(te)s*, Contemporary Art Center Emergent, Veurne
- What's your name again?*, El Gallery, Aalst
- Être présent-absent*, Vitrine Fondation Mons 2025, Mons
- 2022** *Where did it go?*, Gallery Whitehouse, Lovenjoel
- 2021** *The curator is absent*, Projet space Whitehouse Gallery, Lovenjoel
- 2019** *The border is a state of Mind*, Gallery Meessen De Clercq, Brussels
- 2017** *I am I*, Galerie Meessen De Clercq, Brussels
- 2016** *Objet Trouvé*, Museum Dhondt-Dhaenens, Deurle
- Image not Found*, FRAC PACA, Marseille
- 2015** *Let us be US, again and again and always*, Fonderie Darling, Montréal
- 2014** *Défense D'afficher*, Maison Grégoire, Brussels
- Let us be US, again and again.*, CC Bruges / Bogardenkapel, Brugge
- 2013** *Modulor Mikado LDB*, Gallery Meessen De Clercq, Brussels
- Image not found*, Gallery Meessen De Clercq, Brussels
- 2010** *L'Archive de la Disparition*, Gallery Meessen De Clercq, Brussels
- Under the surface*, Kunstraum, Munich 2009
- 2009** *Public Space / L.e.t.t.e.r.s.*, Extra City Kunsthall, Antwerp
- 2007** *Making Traces*, Projects Lmak, New York
- Lieven De Boeck & Boris Rebetez*, Gallery Micheline Szwajcer, Antwerp
- 2004** *Making Things Public*, Melly Institute, Contemporary Art Center, Rotterdam

lieven de boeck

exhibitions

collective exhibitions (selection)

- 2024** *Des exploits, des chefs-d'oeuvre – L'Heure de gloire*, FRAC-SUD, Marseille
- 2023** *Entrée de dialogue une tarte et un presse-agrume*, Mudac, Lausanne
- 2022** *A Celebration of Trees*, Southampton Contemporary Art Center, New York
- 2021** *Inaspettamenti. Arte Povera*, Cloud Seven, Brussels
- 2020** *World without end*, Galerie Hugh Lane, Dublin
- 2019** *Par Hasard*, La Friche la belle de Mai, Marseille
The Watchers, Shelley & Donald Rubin Art Foundation, New York
- 2018** *Un Furnace a Marsiglia*, Le Stanze del Vetro, Venice
- 2015** *Des écrits aux écrans*, Centre Culturel Municipal de Saint-Raphaël, Saint-Raphaël
Où commence la journée ?, LaM – Lille métropole musée d'art moderne, d'art contemporain et d'art brut, Lille
Variations LeCorbusier, CIAC, Château de Carros
- 2014** *Museum scale 1/7*, The Baker Museum, Naples (Florida)



Studio LDB+ Parade *What's Going on?* Sarasota Art Museum ©Bradley Wester



lieven de boeck

publications

monographs and art books

- upcoming** *LDB+, Breaking Free, l'exposition : une archive vivante en mouvement*
Publisher: Set-margins, Eindhoven, Artist Magazine
- 2025** *LDB+, Breaking Free, Queer Temporality and Collaborative Art*
Publisher: Set-margins, Eindhoven, Artist book
LDB+, Breaking Free, The Circus, Embracing Fluidity in Art and Identity
Publisher: Set-margins, Eindhoven, Artist Magazine
- 2017** *Lieven De Boeck, X, Independence of Character*
Novel figures perpetrating disappearance. Inscriptions by Lieven De Boeck
Publisher: Onomatopee, Eindhoven, Monography
- 2009** *Lieven De Boeck, Public Space, L.e.t.t.e.r.s.*
Publisher: Onomatopee, Eindhoven, Artist book
- 2007** *Lieven De Boeck, T.e.x.t.s.*
Publisher: Onomatopee, Eindhoven
- 2004** *Lieven De Boeck, Housing*
Publisher: Jan Van Eyck Academy, Maastricht, Artist book
- 2003** *Lieven De Boeck - John Murphy, Traces, Memory and Space*
Publisher: Jan Van Eyck Academy, Maastricht, Artist book

the cccod



Maurizio Nannucci, *Listen to your eyes*, 2010, fnac 10-1055, collection du CNAP, 2018-2023. Photo F. Fernandez, CCCOD - Tours

Right in the historic centre of Tours, with its contemporary architecture designed by the Portuguese agency Aires Mateus, the Centre de Création contemporaine Olivier Debré is somewhere the public can come and make discoveries, share knowledge and experiences in an open setting. A contemporary art centre, it is also a multidisciplinary culture venue which engages with all local stakeholders in its ambition to explore new ground.

The CCCOD is now the custodian of a donation of works by the painter Olivier Debré who lived in Touraine from early childhood. Hosting a historic collection within a contemporary art centre throws up a whole host of unique possibilities for building bridges between past and present creation.

All year round, our Visitors' Department organises a wide range of activities for young and old alike, tailoring their options to suit individuals and different groups. An exciting and intriguing programme of cultural events can be enjoyed alongside the exhibitions, including conferences, encounters, performances and film screenings – all designed to awaken your senses and broaden your knowledge.

With an ambitious exhibition programme, the CCCOD is forging ever closer ties with its region whilst exploring international creation. Pioneering, inquisitive and ever mindful of the issues that matter today, it looks ahead with the artists who are constantly questioning our world in a different way.

practical information

lieven de boeck
breaking free
7 november 2025 - 31 may 2026

curator: Isabelle Reiher

press contacts

National & international : Agence Alambret Communication
Emilie Harford : +33(0)6 85 29 06 02 | emilie.h@alambret.com

Regional : CCCOD
Léna Loizon : +33(0)2 47 70 23 22 | +33(0)6 82 44 87 54 | l.loizon@cccod.fr

getting here

Jardin François 1^{er}
37000 Tours
T +33 (0)2 47 66 50 00
F +33(0)2 47 61 60 24
contact@cccod.fr

5 minutes by tram from Tours train station,
stop Porte-de-Loire
1h10 from Paris by TGV
via the A10 motorway, exit Tours Centre

opening hours

wednesday-sunday 11am - 6pm
saturday until 7pm

entry fees

8,50 € (full price)
5,50 € (reduced price)
free access under 18

CCC OD LEPASS

unlimited access to exhibitions and events
valid for 1 year
27 € single pass
45 € duo pass
12 € for students / 7 € PCE

free access

the bookstore - shop

Mailys, our bookseller, offers a wide selection of books specializing in art, architecture, and design, as well as books and games for children, postcards, and goodies...
Open Wednesday to Friday from 2pm to 6pm, and Saturday from 11am to 1pm and 2pm to 6pm.
07 85 93 42 93 / librairie@cccod.fr

facilities

the CCCOD is accessible to people with disabilities.
2 accessible parking spaces for people with reduced mobility (PRM) at Jardin François 1^{er}.
Bicycle parking and car parking available at Porte-de-Loire, Place de la Résistance, and Rue du Commerce.
On-site services include: elevators, accessible toilets, stroller storage, baby changing facilities, and a wheelchair (available at reception upon request).

The CCCOD is a cultural equipment of Tours Métropole Val de Loire.
Its achievement was made possible thanks to the State and territorial collectivities support.

