

Press release // Exhibition

CÉCILE MASSART

SARCOPHAGI – RADIOACTIVE WASTE

>> 18 February until 25 April 2021

@ BOTANIQUE, Brussels

Although it came to an end two thousand years ago in the year -30 before our time, many mysteries of Ancient Egyptian culture remain unsolved. High-level radioactive waste produced in the last decades and stored underground will take hundreds of thousands of years to decompose. With that in mind, how can we communicate the necessary information about this new landscape in a lasting manner? Through her work, Cécile Massart has been trying to answer that very question for the past 25 years. With *SARCOPHAGI*, her proposal is that a **nuclear culture** be created which is alive and active and which is reactivated with every new generation in order to maintain the memory and allow it to survive the development of human civilisations.

In order to do this, nuclear management agencies must provide the relevant information in various formats and using various channels. Here, different forms of art come into play and it is this idea which has led to her exhibition at the Botanique, which showcases archived material from nuclear research centres, drawings, paintings, photos, videos and installations. On the night of the opening, the artist is joined by various experts: engineers from ONDRAF-NIRAS (Belgian National Bureau for Radioactive Waste and Fissile Material) and the SCK-CEN (Belgian Nuclear Energy research Centre), philosophers, journalists, artists, etc. – so that they might share the fundamental concepts of this culture with the public.

In 2000, with the “Future Reality - Belgian Site in 2020” project, Cécile Massart addressed the issue of Time and shared her concerns about the management of low-level radioactive waste in Belgium. Now, 20 years on, ONDRAF-NIRAS has begun determining a location in Dessel and planning the construction of facilities to store this waste above ground. In her exhibition at Botanique, Cécile Massart invites us to learn more about the situation in Belgium.

Two books have been published alongside Cécile Massart’s exhibition at Botanique: *SARCOPHAGI - RADIOACTIVE WASTE*, by the Editions La Lettre volée

Cécile Massart is a Belgian artist living in Brussels. She uses different artistic mediums: drawing, engraving, installations, photography, video and publications. Since 1994 the main focus of her work has been the identification of storage sites for radioactive waste in the countryside. Her intention is to raise awareness among the public, politicians and those in charge of radioactive waste storage management agencies in these areas as to their ethical responsibility.

www.cecilemassart.com

<https://botanique.be/en/exhibition/cecile-massart-sarcophagi-radioactive-waste-2021>