

Portrait of the artist

Nick Ervinck

NICK ERVINCK (Roeselare, °1981) is a contemporary Belgian artist whose work includes massive installations, handmade and 3D printed sculptures, ceramics, prints, drawings, computer graphics and animation films.

In 2003, Ervinck obtained a master's degree in Mixed Media at the KASK (Royal Academy of Fine Arts in Ghent). Since then, he has specialised in computer modelling and applied new 3D techniques to materials that belong to both high tech and low tech. By pushing the possibilities of digital media to the limit, he created architectural and sculptural forms that were previously unthinkable and unfeasible. Computer-aided designs transformed traditional boxes into blob-like forms and were integrated into a wide variety of architectural landscapes, from hospitals to rooftop venues (WARSUBEC). While developing these technologies, he taught at various Belgian art schools (2004-2012) and returned to the KASK, now Hogeschool Gent, as a visiting professor in 2009. That same year, he moved into an old car workshop and transformed it into his personal studio. For the past ten years, he has been running his own laboratory here (Studio Nick Ervinck), where he designs and creates his projects using the latest innovative 3D technologies from market leaders such as Materialise and Stratasys, assisted by half a dozen technicians and assistants.

The resulting sculptures conjure up visually hybrid worlds that function as crossovers between a liquid and a solid dimension, between an organic and a virtual experience. Sculptures share both a classical and a futuristic imagination, but also sci-fi, manga and video games flow seamlessly into Ervinck's work. His shiny, bright yellow blob sculptures are sometimes monumental in size, sometimes intimate and biomorphic, but you can always sense a desire to express the unknown future in a form and material that can only be grasped in an exploratory way.

Ervinck actually designs separate spheres and worlds that evoke different realities and thus invariably make us question the kind of reality we think we know so well. The images he displays as an artist are at once cryptic and seductive, always recognisable at some point, but at the same time also utterly incalculable. Are they mythical worlds in which ancient warriors, cyborgs and demons continue to dwell, or are they futuristic, even pandemic and transhumanist scenarios with which he wishes to confront us? In either case, he likes to work out these metamorphosing images in series that fertilise and question each other, think of his LINE MUTATION, SKIN MUTATION, PLANT MUTATION, HUMAN MUTATION and recently of his MASK MUTATION that plays a cosmic game with vibrating energetic lines and colours.

Translated into the idiom of mixed media languages, which are designed by computer but usually still finished by hand, historical elements from a distant past resurface to question the present and future in a critical and innovative manner. In this respect, his works recently exude a socially critical atmosphere that responds to the danger zone created by the anthropocene.

Because he deeply admires Henry Moore's work, he has collaborated intensively with the Henry Moore Foundation and published a monograph focusing on their shared aspirations (2019). Incidentally, a common thread throughout his work is his fascination with 'negative space', as Henry Moore and Barbara Hepworth experienced it from their classical conception of art.

His works have been bought by art collectors from all over the world and were the subject of solo and group exhibitions in many museums and galleries, e.g. Brakke Grond, Amsterdam; Paparazzi, The Hague; Museum Beelden aan Zee, Scheveningen; Ron Mandos, Amsterdam; S.M.A.K., Ghent; Gallo-Roman Museum, Tongeren; Museum Dr. Guislain, Ghent; Middelheim Museum, Antwerp; Vanhaerents Art Collection, Brussels; Museum M, Leuven; Museum of Fine Arts, Ghent; NRW-Forum, Düsseldorf; Ars Elektronica, Linz; Open Studio, Hermann & Wagner, Berlin; Kunstverein, Ahlen MARTa, Herford; Musée Paul Valéry, Sète; Art Autun, Autun; In Situ, Saint-Guilhem-le-Désert; Château de Foix, Foix; Carrousel du Louvre, Paris.

Outside Europe, Ervinck has participated in exhibitions at UNArt Center, Shanghai; MOCA, Shanghai; Art & Science Lab Axiom, Tokyo; Oya Stone Mine, Tokyo; Northern Arizona University Museum of Art; Chambers Fine Art, New York; The Baker Museum Artis-Naples, Florida; Highlight, San Francisco.

In 2019, at the request of the city government of St. Petersburg, Florida, he was commissioned to create a public sculpture in bronze, OLNETOPIA. In 2020, the Chinese government asked him to create ANLUNIK for the Shenzhen Convention and Exhibition Center in Shanghai. In 2021, a major solo exhibition (*From knight to Cyborg*) is planned for him at Häme Castle, organised by the National Museum of Finland. Besides his 50 works inside and outside the museum, a new monumental installation will also be presented here. A voluminous monograph on the main themes of his recent work MASK MUTATION, LINE MUTATION, PLANT MUTATION, HUMAN MUTATION and SKIN MUTATION is in preparation as a follow-up to this solo exhibition.

In mid-2021, his ceramic work will be exhibited for the first time on a large scale in the Adornes Domain in Bruges. During his solo exhibition OXYMORON, it will be complemented by a large relief that will rest on the tomb of the founding progenitor of the Adornes family and thus enter into dialogue with the historical heritage of the Jerusalem Chapel.

From 2021 onwards, Nick Ervinck will also have the deconsecrated St. Peters Church in Sint-Pieters-Kapelle, part of the coastal town of Middelkerke, at his disposal for eight years to organise art events, based on his own work as well as that of his fellow artists.