

---

**17 APRIL  
— 2014**

Press release  
for immediate release

POPOSITIONS  
— 2014

P

*“What is the  
burgling of a bank  
compared to the  
founding of a new  
bank?”*

(Bertolt Brecht)

## *POPPOSITIONS 2014: An assembly of galleries and hybrid spaces at the Dexia Art Center, detailed programme revealed.*

---

From 24 until 27 April 2014, POPPOSITIONS will assemble a selection of galleries, collectives, non-profits and other initiatives in the Vanderborcht building, former Dexia Art Center. Conceived as an experiment with the art fair format and an alternative to the white cube environment of standard fairs, POPPOSITIONS holds an itinerant initiative within Brussels, remobilising locations for each edition.

Occupying the premises of a bank that went bankrupt and was then bailed out by the Belgian national government, POPPOSITIONS will explore the critical potential of site-specificity. In line with the previous editions, it aims to establish an edgy alternative to the city's art fair frenzy. Following a dynamic of constant renewal, this year's POPPOSITIONS is profiled as an assembly of galleries and hybrid art spaces, accompanied by a programme of panel talks and performances.

### **BACKGROUND**

---

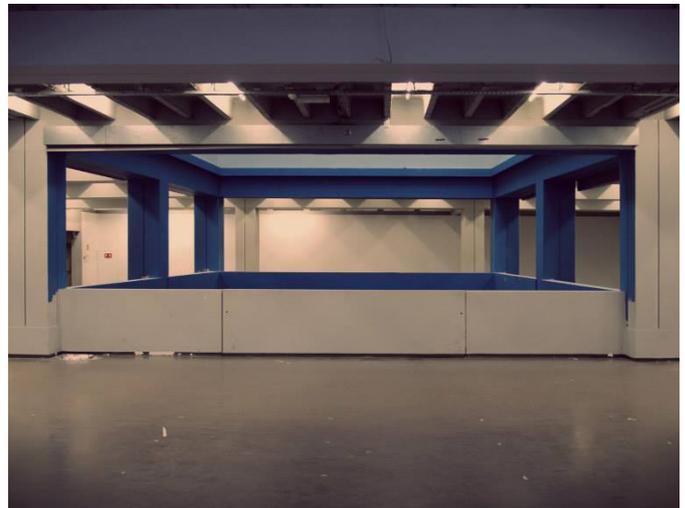
Criticising the art world's commercial excesses certainly comes as no surprise in times of crisis. Even contemporary art guru Charles Saatchi, in a 2011 opinion piece, described the art world as "hideous" and "vulgar": during London's Frieze Art Fair, he did not fail to state that "art fairs are not fair to art". His position is rather symptomatic of an irony or sarcasm that lives amongst most of the contemporary art world's members. This cynicism, according to thinkers such as Sloterdijk and Žižek, has turned into a ruling ideology. Instead of being subversive or critical, cynicism has become a way of playing the game in the most efficient way. Everyone is well-aware, but no one seems to care.

In an attempt to come to terms with the times, POPPOSITIONS will - implicitly and explicitly - address different issues that are currently at stake. How do we avoid cynicism? Is there still a genuine possibility of critique or subversion, and, if so, what would it consist of? How do we activate this critical potential? What is to be called 'public' these days, and how do we (re-)claim it? Do forms of self-organisation and itinerancy constitute a viable alternative? POPPOSITIONS 2014 takes as its tagline a notorious quote from Bertolt Brecht's 1928 Threepenny Opera: "What is the burgling of a bank compared to the founding of a bank?"

### **LOCATION**

---

The third edition of POPPOSITIONS will take place at the former Dexia Art Centre, within the premises of a bank that capsized during the 2011 debt crisis, as one of the first casualties in Europe. Notorious for its monstrous speculation, "zombie bank" Dexia was also known to have the largest private art collection in Belgium, with as much as 4,500 masterpieces in stock, worth an estimated 200 million.



POPPOSITIONS 2014  
Dexia Art Center

Due to the subsequent nationalisation of Dexia, the art collection was obtained by the Belgian government. By the end of 2012, when Dexia had been bailed out by the government and changed its name to Belfius, the idea was brought up in the press to start selling some of its masterpieces due to austerity measures. Shortly thereafter, a Brussels-based group of collectors offered to buy the whole lot for 75 million euro. The proposal was met with fierce criticism. An alternative suggestion was to accommodate the collection in a museum of modern art that has yet to come. Today, the Belfius art collection can be visited once a month through a preregistered guided visit.

## PARTICIPANTS

**10/12 (BE):** Petko Ognyanov (BG) / **Abel Nicosdriou Project (BE):** Lukas Hoffmann (CH) - Aggtelek (ES) / **Abilene Gallery (BE):** Leo Hoffsaes & Louis Clais (FR), Raphaël Lecoquierre (FR), Sébastien Bonin (Be), Benjamin Hugard (FR) / **Bec Zmiana (PL):** Richard Grandmorin (FR), Hubert Czerepok (PL), Marian Misiak (PL) / **Buenos Tiempos, Int.:** Überknackig, Marnie Slater, Alberto Garcia del Castillo / **Cimatics (BE):** Felix Luque Sanchez (ES), Dries Depoorter (BE) / **D+T Project (BE):** Federico Martinez Montoya (MX) / **Jeune Création (FR):** Benoît Pype (FR), Marion Brusley (FR), Margaret Dearing (FR), Rémi Uchêda (FR) / **Les Commissaires Anonymes (FR):** Hannes Bernard (SA), Guido Giglio (BR) / **Millington Marriott (UK):** Erchen Chang, Kitty Clark (UK) / **Museo Apparente (IT):** Alessandro Sau (IT), Enrico Piras (IT) / **Outlandish (BE):** Hana Mileti (BE/HR) / **PARK (BE):** Caroline Van den Eynden (BE), Pascal Petrus (BE) / **Raumte (DE):** Joachim Beens, Karina Beumer, Karolien Chromiak, Winnie Claessens, Sara Clissen, Valerie de Ghellinck, Kylian van der Have, Alex Herzog, Jonathan Huygens, Pieter Jennes, Liesje De Laet, Karina van Leengoed, Rogier de Maker, Mathias Mu Unbekannt, Maxime Peeters, Yasmin Van der Rauwelaert, Dennis Ramaekers / **Rosa Brux (BE):** Jeanne Gillard (FR), Nicolas Rivet (FR) / **SECONDroom (BE):** Roeland Tweelinckx (BE), Kris van Dessel (BE), Thomas Raat (NL), Odilon Pain (FR), Geraldine Gliubislavich (FR), Sofie Hassaerts (BE), Marcus Bering (DE), Marc Van Tichel (BE) / **SILS (NL):** Robert Bresson (FR), Marte Eknæs (NO), Kym Ward (UK), Jean-Charles de Quillacq (FR) / **Stilll Gallery (BE):** Egon van Herreweghe (BE), Dominique Somers (BE) / **Showroom supported by Actionfields (BE):** Timo van Grinsven (NL) / **Temple (FR):** Nicholas Gottlund (US)

## IN PARALLEL WITH

A mobile café **Broer Bretel, El Turco**'s vegetarian buffet, Pop-up restaurant by **Joris Vermeir, Halo Press** editions.



Erchen Chang, Millington Marriott, 2014

## PROGRAMME

### Thursday 24 April: 12PM - 8 PM

**5 PM - 8 PM: Performance:** Federico Martinez Montoya, "Double Trust Saving Transfers." performed by Nadia Guerroui (D + T Project)

### Friday 25 April: 12PM - 1:30 AM

**8 PM:** late night opening

**6 PM - 10 PM: Performance:** Federico Martinez Montoya, "Double Trust Saving Transfers." performed by Nadia Guerroui (D + T Project)

**7 PM: VIP Dinner** Joris Vermeir (on reservation)

**8 PM - 11PM: DOCUMENT** Listening lounge (1st Floor): Dj performance: Davon and Posea Le Foulek  
**11 PM - 1:30: DJ set** TBC (in POPPOSITIONS Café)

### Saturday 26 April: 12PM - 8 PM

**11 AM:** Brunch Joris Vermeir (on reservation)

**12 PM:** POPPOSITIONS opens to the public

**2 PM: Panel Talk:** "What is the burglary of a bank compared to the founding of a bank? On cynicism and other ways of behaving in the art world" - Matteo Lucchetti (curator) Dessislava Dimova (independent curator, writer and researcher), and Alberto Garcia Del Castillo (curator), moderated by Pieter Vermeulen (independent curator).

**3 PM - 8 PM: DOCUMENT** Listening Lounge:

Dj performance: LuvGang

**7 PM: VIP Dinner** Joris Vermeir (on reservation)

**8 PM:** POPPOSITIONS closes to the public

**9 PM: VIP Dinner** Joris Vermeir (on reservation)

### Sunday 27 April: 12PM - 8 PM

**11 AM: Brunch** Joris Vermeir (on reservation)

**12 PM:** POPPOSITIONS opens to the public

**2 PM: Panel Talk:** "There ain't such a thing as a free lunch. Self-organisation: its possibilities, challenges and limits" - Nathalie Hartjes (artistic director Nieuwe Vide, Haarlem), Nico Dockx (artist) and Katrien Reist (co-founder JUBILEE), moderated by Pieter Vermeulen (independent curator).

**4 PM: Panel Talk:** "Kunst = Kapital? On money, bubbles and pleasure." Conversation between Alain Servais, (collector), and Hans Abbing (artist, economist, sociologist), moderated by Pieter Vermeulen (independent curator).

**6 PM: Performance:** BUREN "Have you rearranged the flowers?"

**8 PM:** POPPOSITIONS closes to the public

---

## PANEL TALKS

---

### WHAT IS THE BURGLING OF A BANK COMPARED TO THE FOUNDING OF A BANK? ON CYNICISM AND OTHER ART WORLDLY ATTITUDES.

Saturday, April 26th, 2014 at 14:00

**Participants:** **Dessislava Dimova** (independent curator, writer and researcher), **Matteo Lucchetti** (independent curator, curator visible), **Alberto Garcia del Castillo** (independent curator, Komplot)

**Moderator:** **Pieter Vermeulen**

Criticising the art world's commercial excesses certainly comes as no surprise in times of crisis. Even contemporary art guru Charles Saatchi, in a 2011 opinion piece, described the art world as "hideous" and "vulgar". His position is rather symptomatic of an irony or sarcasm that lives amongst most of the contemporary art world's members. This cynicism, according to thinkers like Peter Sloterdijk and Slavoj Žižek, has turned into a ruling ideology. Instead of being subversive or critical, cynicism has become a way of playing the game in the most efficient way. In this context, Žižek refers to Bertolt Brecht's famous quote "What is the burgling of a bank compared to the founding of a bank?". The question here is whether cynicism is an inevitable survival strategy in the art world of today, or that there are ways to criticise the status quo from within. How do we turn the art world's inherent critique into something constructive, and envision a different future? How to think and behave differently?

### THERE AIN'T SUCH A THING AS A FREE LUNCH. SELF-ORGANISATION: ITS POSSIBILITIES, CHALLENGES AND LIMITS.

Sunday April 27th, 2014 at 14:00

**Participants:** **Nico Dockx** (artist and curator), **Nathalie Hartjes** (artistic director De Nieuwe Vide, Haarlem; coordinator gallery programme De Appel arts centre), **Katrien Reist** (co-founder & coordinator JUBILEE)

**Moderator:** **Pieter Vermeulen**

The number of self-organised entities in the arts clearly seems to be on the rise for some time now, ranging from artist and curatorial collectives and production offices to artist-run organisations and other non-profit art spaces. But what do these forms of self-organisation have in common, and which lessons can be drawn from it? Do they provide a viable way out of a climate of economic precarity, or are they rather the victims of neo-liberal austerity measures? And are there any decent alternatives to the dominant gallery model? The recent publication *Self-organised* (Open Editions, 2013) will function as a backdrop for this panel talk.

### KUNST = KAPITAL? ON MONEY, BUBBLES AND PLEASURE.

Sunday, April 27th, 2014 at 16:00

**Participants:** **Hans Abbing** (economist and visual artist, author *Why Are Artists Poor? The Exceptional Economy of the Arts*), **Alain Servais** (art collector)

**Moderator:** **Pieter Vermeulen**

In the past few decades, the art world has mainly been "blinded by economic fireworks", as Duchamp so aptly put it, dominated as it is by the neo-liberal mechanisms of the art market. And even in the current aftermath of the economic crisis, contemporary art is still doing relatively well as a product of financial investment. But does it hold true that the heydays of commercial grandeur are behind us, or, stronger even, that its speculative bubble is about to burst? And if we're really living through these "end times", what are the future perspectives in terms of collecting, both on a public and private level?



POPPOSITIONS 2013, Brass

---

## POP-UP RESTAURANT ON STAGE

---

POPPOSITIONS invites vegetarian chef Joris Vermeir to serve you snappy, zesty and refreshing dishes on stage within the exhibition space. Dinner on Friday at 7 PM during the late night opening, Saturday at 7PM or 9 PM and Brunch on Saturday and Sunday at 11 AM. 20 euros for three course meal.

Friday 25 April, 7 PM during the late night opening  
Saturday 26 April, 7 PM or 9 PM  
Brunch: Saturday 26 & Sunday 27 April, 11 AM

Book your seat: [mail@poppositions.com](mailto:mail@poppositions.com)

---

## TEAM

---

POPPOSITIONS was born from the initiative of Liv Vaisberg, who rounded-up fellow pioneers Edouard Meier, Pieter Vermeulen and Ibrahim Öztas to remodel the format of an art fair by introducing the vital need for critical reflection. Arriving from various backgrounds, eager to join their diverse energy and experiences, they were shortly thereafter joined by an ever-growing team of like-minded volunteers to help flourish and challenge the quality of art production, presentation and spectatorship during Art Brussels. Aleksandra Eriksson, Marie Valette and Bart Verschueren are key driving forces regarding the organisation and conceptualising of the event. The team of volunteers includes Julien Keita, Eva Menga, Wouter Pauwels, Maxime Dendraën, Kristen Livera and Angela Donksoi. Lastly, a group of curators meets to maintain POPPOSITIONS' concept and to carry out the selection of participants: Thomas Arsac (independent curator, 303 Gallery NYC), Guillaume Bleret (artist), Patrick Carpentier (artist), Matteo Lucchetti (independent curator, Visible Award), Samuel Saelemakers (curator, Witte de With museum) and Pieter Vermeulen (independent curator).



POPPOSITIONS Dinner 2013, Brass

---

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION:

---

**24 — 27 April,**  
during Art Brussels,  
from 12:00 until 20:00

*Late night opening curated by DOCUMENT during Gallery Night on Friday 25 April 2014.*

Former Dexia Art Center - Rue de l'Ecuyer 50  
Schildknaapstraat - 1000 Brussels, Belgium

**ADDENDUM - Press tour**  
**6:30 PM on Wednesday 23 April 2014.**