The voyage starts with *Le lieu de la pensée*, where creation begins. In this first space, Xavier Noiret-Thomé proposes a display as a mise en abyme of the painter’s gesture and his thoughts. In these sometimes-monumental art pieces, Noiret-Thomé paints the gesture of the painter, his studio, his inspiration, his quest for inspiration as so many elements constituting the “meta-painting”, a reflection on painting itself.

**L’empereur des Cyclopes**, 2019
The Emperor of Cyclops
XAVIER NOIRET-THOMÉ

This “mashup” (collage) stems from the encounter between an enamelled metal paella dish and a convex mirror surmounted by an eagle evoking Marcel Broodthaers’ *Miroir d’époque Regency* (1973), *Musée d’Art Moderne, Département des Aigles* (1924, Brussels, Belgium - 1976, Cologne, Germany). While the paella pan is reminiscent of Broodthaers’ famous mussel casserole, the convex mirror refers to Jan Van Eyck’s *Arnolfini Portrait* (1434) where the painter represents himself in the centre in the reflection of the mirror, resulting in a questioning of the actual subject of the painting: the painter or the spouses? The semi-spherical mirror also evokes the world in which the very spectator is represented, reflected by the mirror.

**CURATOR : CARINE FOL**
The meeting between Xavier Noiret-Thomé and Henk Visch triggered a fundamental discussion on the place of sculpture and painting in the exhibition space. In the chapter *Le miroir du monde* (the mirror of the world), two clusters of Henk Visch’s sculptures - greatly varying in format, material and content - are surrounded by Xavier Noiret-Thomé’s abstract and figurative paintings.

Henk Visch’s sculptures draw their substance from psychoanalysis and the unconscious. They overcome the aesthetic and constraining conventions of the representation of reality and of the body. In this chapter with surrealist echoes, colours and painted shapes rub shoulders with voluminous figures, fragile constructions and three-dimensional collages. These artworks all work as many reminiscences of the body, the environment, the thought, in a constant echo with the experiences lived in reality and the act of painting or sculpting. Made up of various materials - bronze, canvas, rope, wood, metal, paper, coins - the works of the two artists clash and dialogue.

Henk Visch asserts his sensibility for the space in which his works are placed by steering the connections between them. In a dialogue with Xavier Noiret-Thomé’s paintings, the experience of space becomes a cosmogony for body and mind. The body of the work and the body of the spectator bring a new impetus, that of imagination.

An assemblage of dozens of silver paint-coated pages of the Belgian newspaper *Le Soir*, a blue monochrome painting covered with coins in a reference to the European flag, and several paintings with very different themes reflect the world as it is ironically apprehended and scrutinized by Xavier Noiret-Thomé. As Henk Visch puts it: “A figurative sculpture does not have to be realistic, but it will bring together a series of information. For example, it will not talk about the person depicted, but about feelings. As far as I’m concerned, a figurative sculpture can thus be abstract.”
Too late for the grave, 2006
HENK VISCH

“It’s strange, but I always want to be on time for an appointment, which proves quite difficult. There’s only a small chance of being exactly on time. Usually you’re either late or early. If you arrive too early, you have to wait and if you are late, you’ve missed something..., and it’s annoying. There’s only one appointment I’d like to be late for: death. If I’m too late... I’ll live longer”.

Le carrousel II, 2008
XAVIER NOIRET-THOMÉ

As part of an exhibition at Mechelen’s Garage in 2008, Xavier Noiret-Thomé went through his collection of postcards and selected thirty or so images to make a large mural of several meters entitled Le Grand Mur (The Great Wall). The artist painted silver rectangles onto the wall itself, all the while respecting the dimensions of the original artworks he chose. He then added freehand-painted black frames. Carousel II proceeds in the same way, the reproductions of works are covered with silver paint. Images disappear, while the titles and references of the works remain on the back of the cards arranged on a display, forming a double ready-made.

Les joueurs (première partie), 2020
The Players – First Game
FILM VAN JOACHIM OLENDER

For his exhibition at CENTRALE, Xavier Noiret-Thomé invited film director and video maker Joachim Oleder to create a filmic object around his oeuvre. Drawing his inspiration from a game invented by Xavier Noiret-Thomé in the 1990s, Les joueurs (première partie) features a card game between friends. Four artists engage in a “postcard war”, with reproductions of works of art, thus revisiting a tiny part of the history of painting.

LA VITRINE DU DÉJÀ-VU
Noch einmal, 1990
HENK VISCH

Henk Visch’s bronze leg is an unlimited edition; each time the artist sells the work, he immediately creates a new one. Thus the sculpture - called Noch Einmal (once again) in reference to its reproducibility - will follow the artist throughout his life. In the words of Henk Visch, the work symbolizes the continuity and humility of existence. When viewed from the side, the sculpture reveals the profile of the famous bust of Nefertiti (ca. 1351–1334 BC), thus offering a double reading and a new reference to art history.

Autoportrait à la sorcière, 2019
Self-Portrait of a Witch
XAVIER NOIRET-THOMÉ

In Autoportrait à la sorcière, Xavier Noiret-Thomé represents an image of his own reflection in the mirror of the artwork L’empereur des Cyclopes. Moving around the exhibition, the spectator finds himself in front of this representation of another piece of the artist that evokes the effect of déjà vu. In this self-quotation, the history of art is suggested as in a mise en abyme. The title of the work is inspired by the convex mirror called “witch’s mirror” or “witch’s eye”. The title also evokes the divinatory ability of the witch to predict events. Visitors who have walked past the display case will already have seen the work even before visiting the exhibition. A loop is thus created in the exhibition itself as well as between the inside and the outside of the location.
In the chapter *Le corridor des voyants*, Xavier Noiret-Thomé reproduces Vincent Van Gogh’s *Self-portrait with Bandaged Ear* (1889) by placing the work in front of a representation of an African mask. After having revisited this often referenced, represented and copied work of intense pictorial power, Xavier Noiret-Thomé wanted to pay homage to Van Gogh. This audacious gesture reveals the artist’s freedom in the face of the diktats and trends of the artistic world. As such, he re-joins Henk Visch, since both artists fiercely assert their freedom.

*The Corridor of Seers*

**The Seer**

**Le voyant**, 2019

**XAVIER NOIRET-THOMÉ**

This work is a representation of a Central African Pende mask kept at Tervuren’s Africa Museum. The deformed face symbolises the effects of an epileptic seizure inflicted by sorcerers or spirits. The use of black and white - representing good and evil - increases the distorting effect of the face. The work is entitled *The Seer* in a reference to the epileptic who enters a trance in connection with the world of the invisible, accessing information unknown to others. Enhanced with fluorescent yellow paint, the gaze is hypnotic, almost electric.

*The stolen painting*, 2010-2019

**HENK VISCH**

“The cat is a very observant animal that watches everything. It is a witness. *The stolen painting* refers to the theft of a painting, an event witnessed by a cat. But how can it tell me about what it’s seen? By taking the shape of a painting itself, obviously!

Each year, I try to paint something. I think it’s fantastic to make a painting and look at it, but I’m never satisfied with the paintings I make. I really can’t do it. It angers that I can’t paint and I’d rather blame someone else: my painting was stolen! And the cat is my witness! But now, the cat has become an image that constantly reminds me that I can’t paint.

I made a larger version of this work, which I called *De Getuige* (the witness), which sits next to the courts of law in The Hague, the seat of the International Court of Justice.”
The show ends on the platform overlooking CENTRALE’s salle des colonnes. Opposite, the word OPERA is painted matt black on a silver background. As a statement, the word OPERA, a synonym for learned culture in the French language, meaning “work”, “labor” but also “oeuvre”, is in a dialogue at the bottom of the “metaphysical pit” with Henk Visch’s Nightlife, a monumental sculpture of a hare whose head is crossed by lines drawing fluorescent eyes. The viewer is reflected in this giant triptych as if in a mirror, and thus confronted with the question of the work itself.

**OPERA, 2005**

**XAVIER NOIRET-THOMÉ**


Xavier Noiret-Thomé is a visual artist. From 1990 to 1995, he studied at the École régionale des Beaux-Arts de Rennes before earning a residency at the Centre d’Art contemporain du domaine de Kerenguëhenec. In 1996, he was laureate of the Villa Medici extra muros. From 1996 to 1997, he joined the residencies of Amsterdam’s Rijksakademie. In 1999, he obtained a workshop at the Paul Gauguin Museum in Pont-Aven. In 2001, he was awarded the Levis award on the occasion of the Young Belgian Art Prize at Brussels’ Palais des Beaux-Arts. And in 2005, he was laureate of the Académie de France in Rome and obtained a residency at the Villa Medici. Since the beginning of his career, he has had many solo and group exhibitions. His work is part of several public and private collections. Since 2005, Xavier Noiret-Thomé is professor in the painting section at La Cambre art school in Brussels.

The use of chromium (the colour) has become a recurring element in the work of Xavier Noiret-Thomé, one that always takes an iconoclastic dimension of partial destruction that simultaneously reveals other elements. More than a colour, chromium paint is a material that captures light and erases the painter’s gesture, making it disappear. Smooth or in relief, the painting becomes almost photographic. As a student, Xavier Noiret-Thomé was a graffiti fan. Chromium, a colour commonly used by graffiti artists, also echoes Xavier Noiret-Thomé’s past as a graffiti artist who constantly makes “low” and “high” culture coexist in his work.

**HENK VISCH**


Henk Visch is a sculptor, draughtsman and graphic artist who lives and works in Eindhoven. His artistic career began after his studies at the Royal Academy of Art and Design (department of graphic art) in Hertogenbosch (NL), which he completed between 1968 and 1972.

He enjoys an international career and has shown his work in such renowned exhibitions as the Dutch Pavilion at the 1988 Venice Biennale or Kassel’s Documenta IX in 1992. His art pieces can be found in numerous private collections and international museums. In parallel, he also developed an important academic career. From 1984 to 1987, Henk Visch was a lecturer at Amsterdam’s Rijksakademie van Beeldende Kunsten and from 1987 to 1991 at Maastricht’s Jan van Eyck Academy. From 1995 to 2001, he was professor at Stuttgart’s Staatliche Akademie der Bildende Künste and from 2005 to 2017, at Münster’s Hochschule für Bildende Künste. He has been awarded several prizes: that of the city of Darmstadt in 1991; that of the Noord-Brabant department of Prins Bernhard Cultuurfonds in 2001 and also the Jeanne Oosting Prize in 2018. Visch also produces illustrations in the Volkskrant in collaboration with Kader Abdolah for many years.
MAX KESTELOOT
GOOD LOST CORNERS
places that appeal to me

EMILIEN SIMON
Forests and skies

Justine Bougerol
Strata

Akiko Ueda
One More Glance (Painting)
Oil on canvas, 2019

CENTRALE.box
Place Sainte-Catherine 16 Sint-Katelijneplein — Bruxelles 1000 Brussels
Entrée libre | Gratis toegang | Free entrance
AGENDA

SEPTEMBER

02.09.2020 — 18:00 > 20:30
Opening PANORAMA
XAVIER NOIRET-THOMÉ & HENK VISCH

02.09.2020 — 18:00 > 20:30
Opening GOOD LOST CORNERS
places that appeal to me
MAX KESTEOOT
CENTRALE . box

02.09.2020 — 18:00 > 20:30
Opening Interstices
JUSTINE BOUGEROL
CENTRALE . lab

06.09.2020 — 11:30
Sunday @CENTRALE
Free guided tour (FR or NL) included in the entrance ticket

16.09.2020 & 30.09.2020 — 14:00 > 16:00
Workshops @CENTRALE
With the artist
CAMILLE VAN HOOF

1.10.2020 — 14:00 > 16:00
Workshops @CENTRALE
With the artist
CAMILLE VAN HOOF

21.10 & 22.10.2020 — in the morning and in the afternoon
Performance and workshops by
AYELEN PAROLIN & LEA PETRA
for young audiences

21.10.2020 — 19:00
Performance
AYELEN PAROLIN & LEA PETRA

24.10.2020 — 11:00
Meet the artist
XAVIER NOIRET-THOMÉ

24.10.2020 — 14:00
Screening of the film Les joueurs (première partie) by Joachim Olender, about the work of XAVIER NOIRET-THOMÉ

OCTOBER

04.10.2020 — 11:30
Sunday @CENTRALE
Free guided tour (FR or NL) included in the entrance ticket

23.09.2020 — 12:30
CENTRALE Cinema – Carte blanche
XAVIER NOIRET-THOMÉ
(with Centre du Film sur l’Art)
Anemic Cinéma
Jackson Pollock by Hans Namuth
Bram Van de Velde by J-M Meurice
Nielle Toroni by Elsa Cayo

07.10.2020 — 13:00
Between classes
Free visit for teachers & associations

11.10.2020 — 15:00
Presentation of the exhibition catalogue (La Lettre volée editions) and meeting with
XAVIER NOIRET-THOMÉ, HENK VISCH,
CARINE FOL & DENYS ZACHAROPoulos

NOVEMBER

02.11 > 05.11.2020
Workshop 8-12 ans with the artist
MARION FABIEN

18.11.2020 — 14:00 > 16:00
Workshops @CENTRALE
With the artist
MARION FABIEN

18.11.2020 — 19:00 > 22:00
Ars Musica

25.11.2020 — 18:30 > 20:30
Opening Forests and skies
ÉMILIEN SIMON
CENTRALE . box

25.11.2020 — 18:30 > 20:30
Opening DÉJÀ-MAIS-VU
AKIKO UEDA
CENTRALE . lab

DECEMBER

02.12.2020 — 14:00 > 16:00
Workshops @CENTRALE
With the artist
MARION FABIEN

05.12.2020
Jazz Concert
STEVE HOUBEN & STEFAN KREMER TRIO

06.12.2020 — 11:30
Sunday @CENTRALE
Free guided tour (FR or NL) included in the entrance ticket

09.12.2020 — 12:30
CENTRALE Cinema – Carte blanche
XAVIER NOIRET-THOMÉ
(with Centre du Film sur l’Art)
Francis Picabia ou l’auberge espagnol
by Yves Fouacs
L’horrible, bizarre et incroyable aventure de monsieur Tête
by Jan Lenica

12.12.2020 — 11:00
Meet the artist
HENK VISCH

16.12.2020 — 14:00 > 16:00
Workshops @CENTRALE
With the artist
MARION FABIEN

JANUARY

03.01.2021 — 11:30
Sunday @CENTRALE
Free guided tour (FR or NL) included in the entrance ticket

06.01.2021 — 14:00 > 16:00
Workshops @CENTRALE
With the artist
MARION FABIEN
WITH THE KIND COLLABORATION OF:
**XAVIER NOIRET-THOMÉ, HENK VISCH,**
De Garage (Malines).
With the support of: Maison Lefebvre,
Tout pour les artistes à Bruxelles.

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