

# Leuven, 2012

## A Project for Artefact Festival

### February 13–24, 2013

## Kunstencentrum STUK, Leuven

ROTOR IN COLLABORATION WITH  
ROBERT SUERMONDT

*Care for the environment began as an activist's concern, evolved into a civil movement, and is now widely embraced by governments. European cities, regions and nations have ambitious targets to reduce their ecological impact. The business world has followed suit. Sustainability, a loosely defined term, sets the moral tone. A curious, almost suspicious consensus presides over society.*

Leuven has committed to become climate neutral. The municipality, the university, businesses and organizations have pledged that by 2030 the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> emitted will not exceed the levels absorbed by plants within the city limits. Rotor, with Robert Suermondt, has documented the contemporary efforts to shape tomorrow's sustainable society.

For one month, Koen Berghmans from Rotor took pictures of the Climate Week Leuven, the Steering Committee Leuven Climate Neutral, various companies, research institutes and local organizations. Out of the nearly 3,000 images made, Rotor selected 16 scenes that were subsequently translated into paintings by Robert Suermondt. These works are staged here in a set of stretched canvases.



A project by Rotor:  
Maarten Gielen,  
Lionel Devlieger, Koen  
Berghmans, Tristan  
Boniver, with help from  
Benjamin Lasserre

Documentary photography:  
Koen Berghmans

Paintings:  
Robert Suermondt

*Single-family home in Heverlee.* In 2006 the Flemish government extended its system of fixed price certificates for 'green energy' to include photovoltaic energy, leading to a boom in investments in solar cell installations on rooftops of both industrial and residential buildings. The controversial policy—it has now been phased out—had led to an increase in the energy prices and allegedly had been too profitable for part of the investors.



*Demonstration of an Internorm window frame during an open house for “ecobuilders”.*  
The product combines wood, foam and aluminum and claims maximal thermal insulation for minimum maintenance.



*The meeting room of Photovoltech in Tienen, a manufacturer of solar cells.*

This spin-off from the Leuven-based Imec (Interuniversity Microelectronics Center) filed for bankruptcy in 2012. The inrush of very cheap solar cells from China is blamed for the collapse of the photovoltaic manufacturing industry in Europe.



*The 'energy pruners - the ecoteam' after the scan of a house.*  
During such a visit the team performs a series of small upgrades and provides tips for lowering the energy bills.



*Parents and kids give a hand at the Garden Enjoyment Day in the school De Klare Bron.*  
The event is part of the 'Condor' project, acronym for Creative Trajectory Towards Sustainable Education in Leuven.



Alcove for foldable bikes at Futureproofed, an environmental consultancy agency.



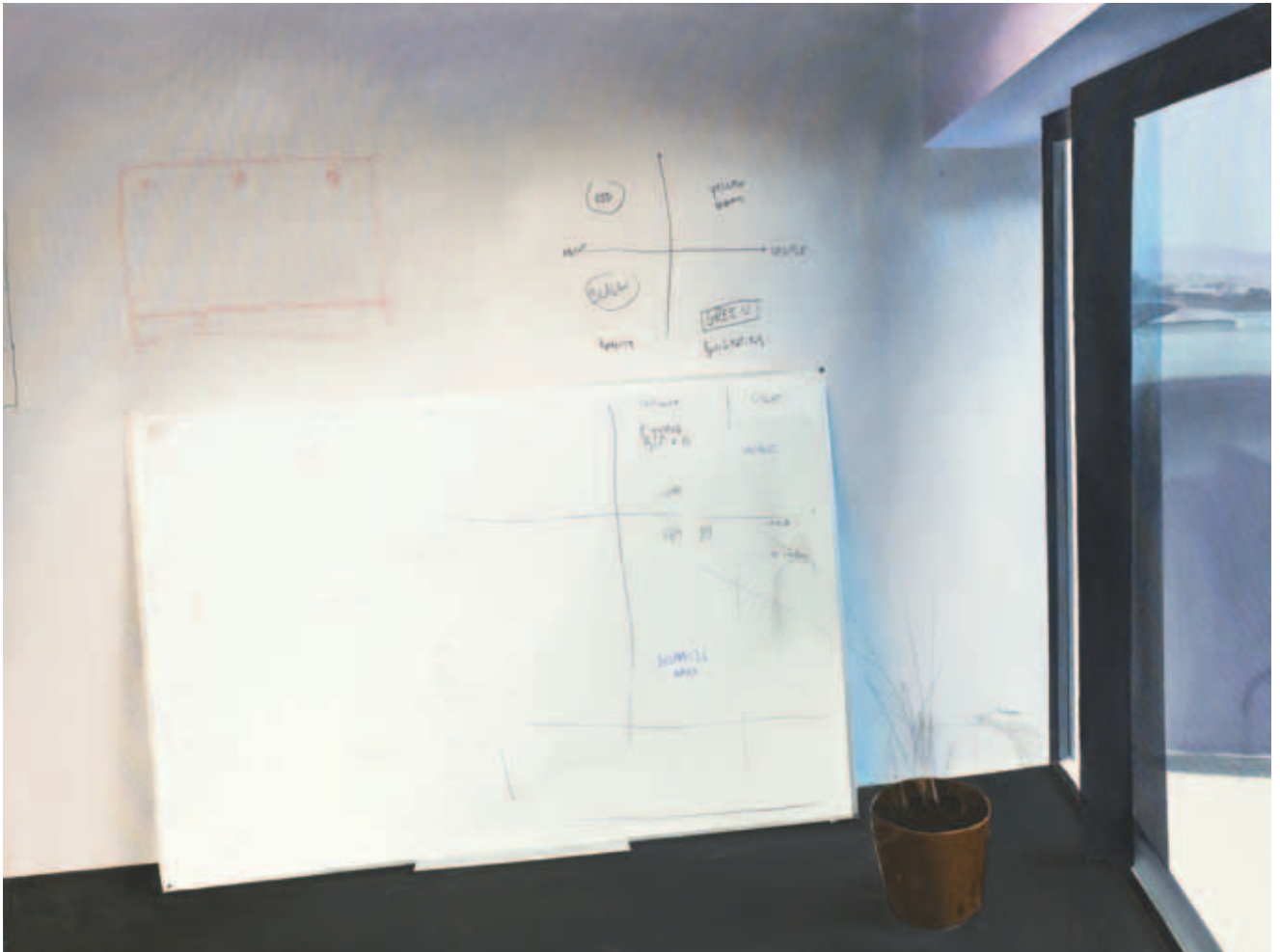
*The straw-bale theater of OPEK (Openbaar entropot voor de Kunsten).*  
A «truth window», or an intentional opening in the wall finish reveals the inner straw core.



*Samples of fly-ash at the KULeuven.*

The University's research cluster on Sustainable Inorganic Materials Management is investigating how to blend fly-ash, a powdery waste product from the combustion of coal, into a series of building materials.





Meeting space at Futureproofed, a consultancy firm specialised in sustainable solutions.



After the first meeting of the seven thematic cells, steering committee of Leuven Climate Neutral 2030, in the chapel 'Romaanse Poort'.



*De Wakkere Akker, an initiative for Community Supported Agriculture in Herent. In exchange for a fixed fee, members obtain the right to harvest fresh produce.*





*Open house during the Leuven Climate Week.*  
The homeowner talks about her sustainable renovation project.



*Green roof of the BioPlanet supermarket on the Tiensesteenweg.*

Vegetated roofs are considered beneficial because they absorb rainwater, provide insulation and a habitat for wildlife while they mitigate the heat island effect.



*The meat, delicatessen and veggie counter of the BioPlanet supermarket.*



*Sorting line for building and demolition waste at De Coninck.*

Workers manually remove plastics, plaster, non-ferro and wood from crushed rubble, as an overband magnet removes the ferrous metals. What is left is considered inert waste.