

BELGIAN  
**SPIRIT**

Brussels Flanders Wallonia



Hong Kong BODW 2011  
Press file

# Summary

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# Introduction

Brussels Invest & Export, Design Vlaanderen, FIT (Flanders Investment & Trade), WBA (Wallonie-Bruxelles Architectures) and WBDM (Wallonie-Bruxelles Design/Mode) have joined hands in a project to promote the Belgian architecture, design and fashion sector. This project shall take place within the framework of the deTour programme, which is part of the Business of Design Week (BODW) in Hong Kong. The “Belgian Spirit” project presents 30 design studios or designers through a playful installation which is made up of t-shirts. This selection fits in with a more extensive presentation of the Belgian architecture, design and fashion sector via a website which is devoted to the most dynamic actors in these three sectors. Moreover the design studios and designers can join an economic mission to Hong Kong in order to develop their local business network.

## BODW\*

Since 2002 the Hong Kong Design Centre organizes the BODW (Business of Design Week). It constitutes the most important event for the Asian sectors of design, innovation and branding and each year it attracts the major players in this field to Hong Kong, the gateway to China. One of the ambitions of the BODW is to couple creativity to economic development. This yearly event includes expositions, a panel discussion, the presentation of the HKDC Annual Awards as well as a whole series of exchange programmes and networking opportunities for designers, executives and managers, teachers, other professionals and the broad public.

Thanks to the participation of international leading players – individual designers as well as companies – the BODW serves as a great source of inspiration, stimulating the exchange of ideas and experiences and offering great opportunities for economic development.

On the fringes of the fair taking place in the Hong Kong Convention and Exhibition Centre (HKCEC) from 28 November until 3 December, the local association The Ambassadors of Design presents a programme by artistic director Chris Ng with the theme Useless/ Eco/ Recycle. The events of the deTour programme all take place from 26 November until 11 December in the former police headquarters on Hollywood Road, in an area with many modern art galleries.

\* (Business of Design Week) of Hong Kong

# Belgian Spirit

“Belgian Sprit” as the project is named, refers to a common underlying theme which is present in the work of the Belgian designers. This theme is rooted in a fertile soil of creativity, it is based on the transmission of knowledge and knowhow and exchanges between older and newer generations and between various disciplines and different cultures. After all their work comes about in a multicultural nation which is constantly looking to find a balance between all kinds of differences. This balance characterizes both the typical Belgian singularity and its power. “Belgian Spirit” not only stands for a certain style or Belgian identity, it also reflects a state of mind which is very well understood in a country like China, since it has always had a tradition in which balance and harmony have an important role to play.

## Concept

The three commission members Li Mei Tsien, Sébastien Cruyt and Marie Pok have opted for a non-classical exposition. In the old police headquarters they will put a playful and interactive installation on display with references to popular Hongkongese cultural practices. This installation is composed of basic ‘Made in China’ cotton t-shirts printed with designs from architects, designers and fashion designers. Each t-shirt shall be printed with a distinctive design, draft or sketch from one of the selected candidates, accompanied by a label which contains detailed information about the design studio or designer as well as their contact details. This concept is the Belgian answer to Ai Wei Wei’s and Rei Kawakubo’s installation in the shop-window of Dover Street Market for Comme des Garçons.

Totally in line with the Chinese shopping culture, the public will be invited to try on the t-shirts and to buy them if they like them. Consequently the installation is equipped with two fitting rooms and a supply of t-shirts for sale. Moreover the visitors will be offered the opportunity to have their picture taken dressed in the t-shirt of their choice. In that way they kind of become ambassadors for the Belgian design. The pictures can be viewed on the website and will be projected in Hong Kong and in Belgium.

On top of that the website shall contain a “landscape” which holds a presentation of the portfolios of various actors from the three sectors (architecture, design and mode), whether they have been selected to feature in the t-shirt installation or not.



# The selection

On 1 September a call for projects was issued amongst professionals from the world of architecture, design and fashion. In order to present a broad and versatile overview of the outstanding quality of these sectors in Belgium, the selection contains twelve architects, twelve designers and six fashion designers. They have been selected on the basis of their experience, their ability to innovate, their inspiration and the originality of the image to be printed on the image.

# Belgian landscape

## Architects

adn architectures  
Atelier d'Architecture Galand  
AWAA for cwarchitects sprl  
Bureau d'Architectes Emmanuel Bouffieux sprl  
Bureau d'architecture Vers Plus de Bien Être, V+  
BOB361  
BURO II & ARCHI+I  
Clerbaux-Pinon  
Conix Architects  
corbacreative sprl  
Crepain Binst Architecture  
D44 architecture  
Delices Architects  
DETHIER ARCHITECTURES SA  
FREDERIC HAESEVOETS ARCHITECTURE  
helium3 architectures  
I-D Identity Designers (Ensemble + DAD)  
IN BETWEEN ARCHITECTURE SPRL  
Laboratory for Explorative Architecture & Design Ltd.  
LOW architecten  
L.O.A.D. architecture MADe alchimie créative s.p.r.l.  
Martine De Maeseneer Architects (MDMA)  
MSA  
NFA (Nicolas Firket Architects)  
NG ARCHITECTE/DESIGN  
Philippe Samyn and partners architects & engineers  
SID Studio Architects  
SPECIMEN ARCHITECTS  
Town Planning Design & Architecture - Witkowski V.O.  
Vanden Eeckhoudt-Creyf architectes  
WHY  
wollaert architecten bvba

## Designers

.rad product  
Achilles Associates (Achilles Engineering Services)  
ATELIER 4/5  
Atelier Blink  
awardt by wies&els  
BIHAIN furniture & interior design  
Caroline Dobbs  
deFact studio  
Elisa Lee  
GIOVANNI BIASIOLO  
HAUTRE COUTURE  
hugo meert ceramics vof  
Knifeforging  
La Baronne Python  
Laboratorium 4337 bvba  
LOUDOR DESIGN  
Maarten De Ceulaer Design Studio  
Marleen Mertens  
Mathias van de Walle  
MAXIMALdesign  
NathalieDewez  
nicolas bovesse design studio  
Nora De Rudder Design  
NOX DESIGN  
OBLIQUE  
Pauline Gorelov  
Peter Ceursters  
PIECEOFCHIC  
Quentin de Coster  
Raphaël Charles Studio  
Ria Lins  
Rondelez Katrien  
Siegfried De Buck  
Signum  
STRATEGIE DESIGN  
Studio Peter Van Riet  
Tamawa  
Twodesigners  
V2W Architectes  
Van de Velde Willy  
Krizalid Studio  
Venlet Interior Architecture bvba

## Stylists

Annamie Verbeke  
Assia Kara  
BEAULOYE FLORENCE  
Carine Gilson Lingerie Couture  
Esther Fourez  
Fashion designer  
HJ  
Isabelle Azais contemporain jewelery  
JEROME RUGGIERO (JEROME DESS SPRL)  
Lady Violette  
Les Bijoux de Marie France  
mei lee  
Michael Guérisse O'Leary  
Petite Chérie - Obéron  
Sehubabe  
The Cookie Therapy - Belgian Fine Accessories  
The Idealists  
Valérie Berckmans  
Vanessa Cao  
www.kristofbuntinx.com  
Vanden Eeckhoudt-Creyf architectes  
WHY  
wollaert architecten bvba



# Sélection T-shirt

## Architects

BOB 361  
Conix Architects  
Crepain-Binst  
DETHIER ARCHITECTURES  
Laboratory for Explorative  
Architecture & Design  
LOW  
Martine De Maeseneer  
Architects (MDMA)  
NFA (Nicolas Firket  
Architects)  
Philippe Samyn  
SPECIMEN ARCHITECTS  
Vanden Eeckhoudt - Creyf  
V+ (Vers plus de bien-être)

## Designers

Achilles  
Nathalie Dewez  
Michaël Bihain  
Raphaël Charles  
Marko Galovic  
Knifeforging  
LOUDOR DESIGN  
Maximal Design  
Hugo Meert  
Peter Van Riet  
Piece of Chic  
Danny Venlet

## Stylists

Kristof Buntinx  
Cookie Therapy  
Carine Gilson  
Jean-Paul Knott  
The Idealists  
Annemie Verbeke

**All individual presentations of these design studios can be  
downloaded on the website [www.belgianspirit.be](http://www.belgianspirit.be)**

# Concept scénographique

The scenic design represents the idea of the “Belgian Spirit” through a three-dimensional installation which reflects the specificity and the power of Belgian creativity on the international scene. It mirrors a culture of dialogue and a long-standing practice of looking for the right balance.

The exposition’s scenic design consists of a free-standing structure which represents the search for balance thanks to the Tensegrity principle, an architectural term which is said to have been coined in 1949 by Richard Buckminster Fuller. This structure is built up from aluminum tubes and cables which keeps in balance through a combined action of tension and compression forces. The term “tensegrity”

refers to the ability of structures to maintain an uptight position thanks to the interaction between these two opposed forces. Each individual element in the structure is partly responsible for the balance of the structure as a whole and all changes in one of the powers present requires an immediate need for the other parameters to adjust in order to keep the whole of the structure in balance. This scenic design as such constitutes a poetic metaphor for the “Belgian Spirit”.

Every single printed t-shirt in this structure is presented to the visitors as an example of the many facets of the Belgian creative landscape.

## Long terme

Next to being a market on its own, Hong Kong also forms the gateway to China. The ultimate goal of the Belgian Spirit 2011 project is to provide architects, designers and fashion designers with interesting commercial and economic opportunities. That is why this first participation of the three Belgian regions in the BODW Off-programme shall coincide with an economic mission which is open to all actors of the three aforementioned sectors. Moreover, as from the end of the year, the three regions will submit their application to become a guest of honor at the BODW 2013. That would imply a very important Belgian presence at both the fair as in the forum. It would also carry with it various exchanges and all kinds of concerted actions, especially with regard to schools and universities.

In that prospect Belgian Spirit aims at leaving a lasting mark, in particular via the website and the contacts that are made in Hong Kong.

**For more information, please send an e-mail to: [info@belgianspirit.be](mailto:info@belgianspirit.be)**

**Images can be downloaded at [www.belgianspirit.be](http://www.belgianspirit.be) and can be obtained by simple request via [info@belgianspirit.be](mailto:info@belgianspirit.be)**