

Press release

If I Had Wings

Monumental Installation | Neighbourhood Dialogue | Art | Conversations



Brussels, 12 April 2018

A monumental installation on the Marolles elevator, starting point for a neighbourhood dialogue

Graduated from Helsinki Fine Arts Academy in 1983, [Kaarina Kaikkonen](#) is one of the most well known Finnish contemporary artists. Widely recognized for her sculptures and monumental installations. The [gallery Forsblom in Finland](#) represent her works which is are constantly being seen around the world. During the spring of 2018 her work is, for example, presented by the Kunsten Museum of Modern Art, Alborg, Denmark. In Belgium, an art collective in Antwerpen, [Anna3](#), proposes also an installation by the artist during the summer 2018.

The environment is one of the most important themes in her work. The recycled materials that she uses stand for transience and fragility. In addition, people and identity are central. Recycled materials such as clothing, shoes, toilet paper and packaging testify to a human story and refer to their users.

Culture and arts as a source of innovation and improvement

Designed by [ifa laboratory](#) and the local association Arts Lab Brussels, "If I Had Wings" proposes discussion platforms in collaboration with artists. ifa laboratory considers the artistic perspective important in the role of local development as artists can bring unexpected ideas and innovative approaches that can start conversations on very diverse subjects.

Ifa laboratory is a facilitation firm proposing services in cultural strategic relations and innovation processes in companies.

Through the programme "Neighbourhood Dialogue", ifa laboratory proposes three artistic approaches as tools of community development within the Marolles.

The installation "If I Had Wings" will last five months, from 17 April to 3 September 2018.

A participative artwork

After consulting local people in the neighbourhood, ifa laboratory and Kaarina Kaikkonen decided to create the artwork « if I Had Wings » on the Marolles elevator. During research the team heard the nickname « the social elevator ». The elevator is used by people from various walks of life. The location is very symbolic and linked to the debate on the neighbourhood identity, having the imposing Palace of Justice, looking down from the hill over the Marolles.

"This work is meant to give a joyful feeling for the passers-by. The elevator and the bridge are together a very masculine and cold technical structure. The artwork, If I Had Wings is made of t-shirts and short sleeved shirts, donated by partners and people in the Marolles and beyond. The artwork adds a smiling and soft, warming feminine touch. The elevator dreams to have wings, to be free, to fly with passengers" says the artist, **Kaarina Kaikkonen**



The artwork « If I Had Wings » is made of recycled t-shirts, collected in partnership with strategic partners and with volunteers from the neighbourhood. Around 1300 t-shirts are collected in order to create the work.

Questions about the past, present and future in the neighbourhood – an inclusive approach

The installation reflects upon many different people and communities living and working in the neighbourhood. Talks and debates will happen during the time of the installation, in collaboration with various partners in the neighbourhood. The conversations will be created with different people and entities in the area and address questions like the history of the Marolles, its present community and the evolution. The question of the future is fundamental: how do people picture what's ahead for the neighbourhood?

"The location for the installation connects two parts of the city with different social aspects and history. This second project of the Neighbourhood Dialogue aims to spark conversations on the past, present and future of the Marolles. How can we as individuals impact our own situation, society and neighbourhood? How stuck are we with perceptions of people and places? Are we doing enough to open up our eyes and see people for what they truly are?" ask **Johanna Suo**, director ifa laboratory.

A public event and inauguration on 17 April 2018

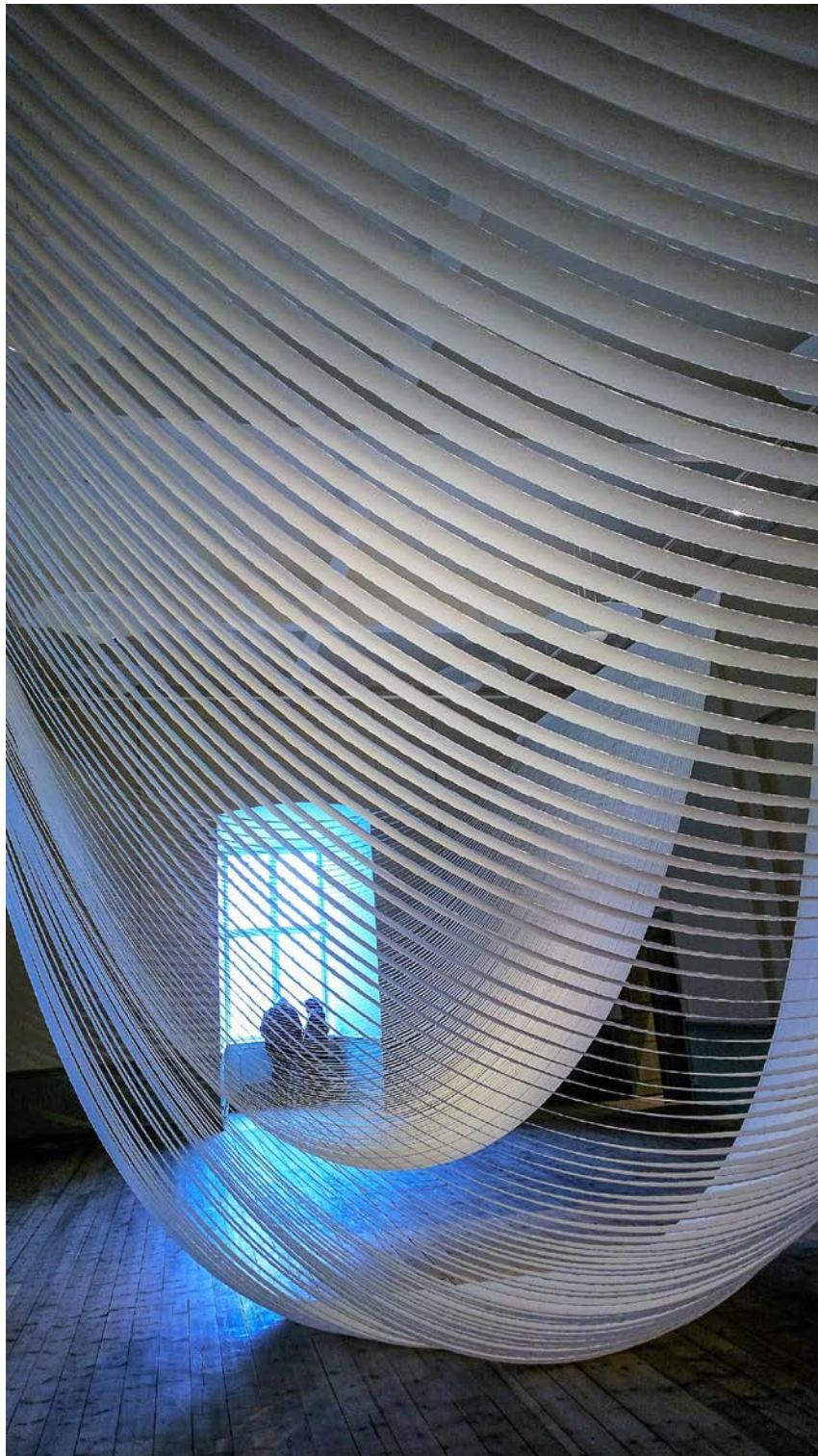
The inauguration of the artwork will take place on 17 April in the presence of the artist, the minister Pascal Smet Brussels Capital Region, the alderman Karine Lalieux from the City of Brussels, the Ambassador of Finland to Belgium, Timo Ranta, the project team and many more.

We're waiting for you!

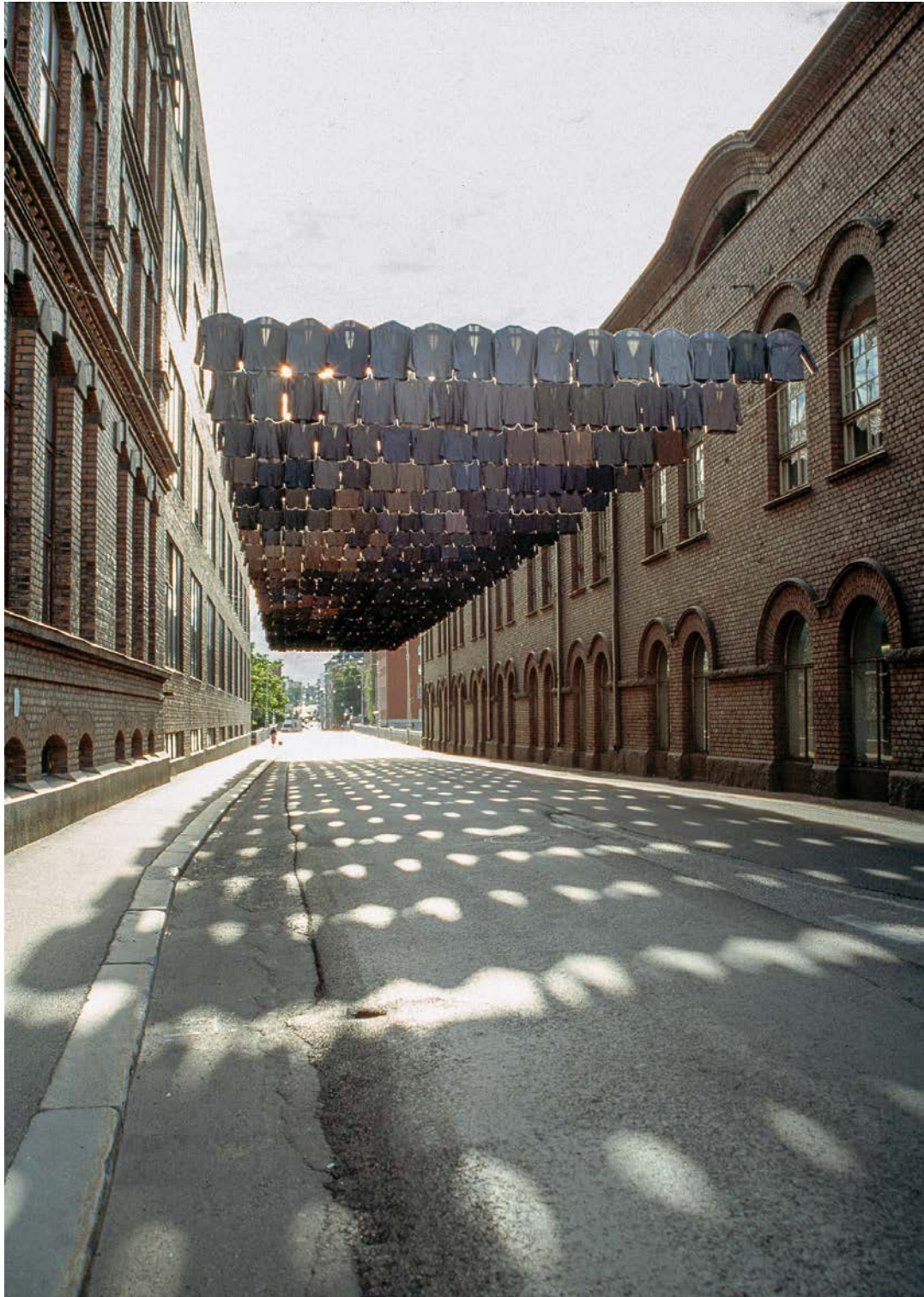
Course of the day

- 6pm opening by the artist and the project partners
- Cocktail
- 8pm end of inauguration

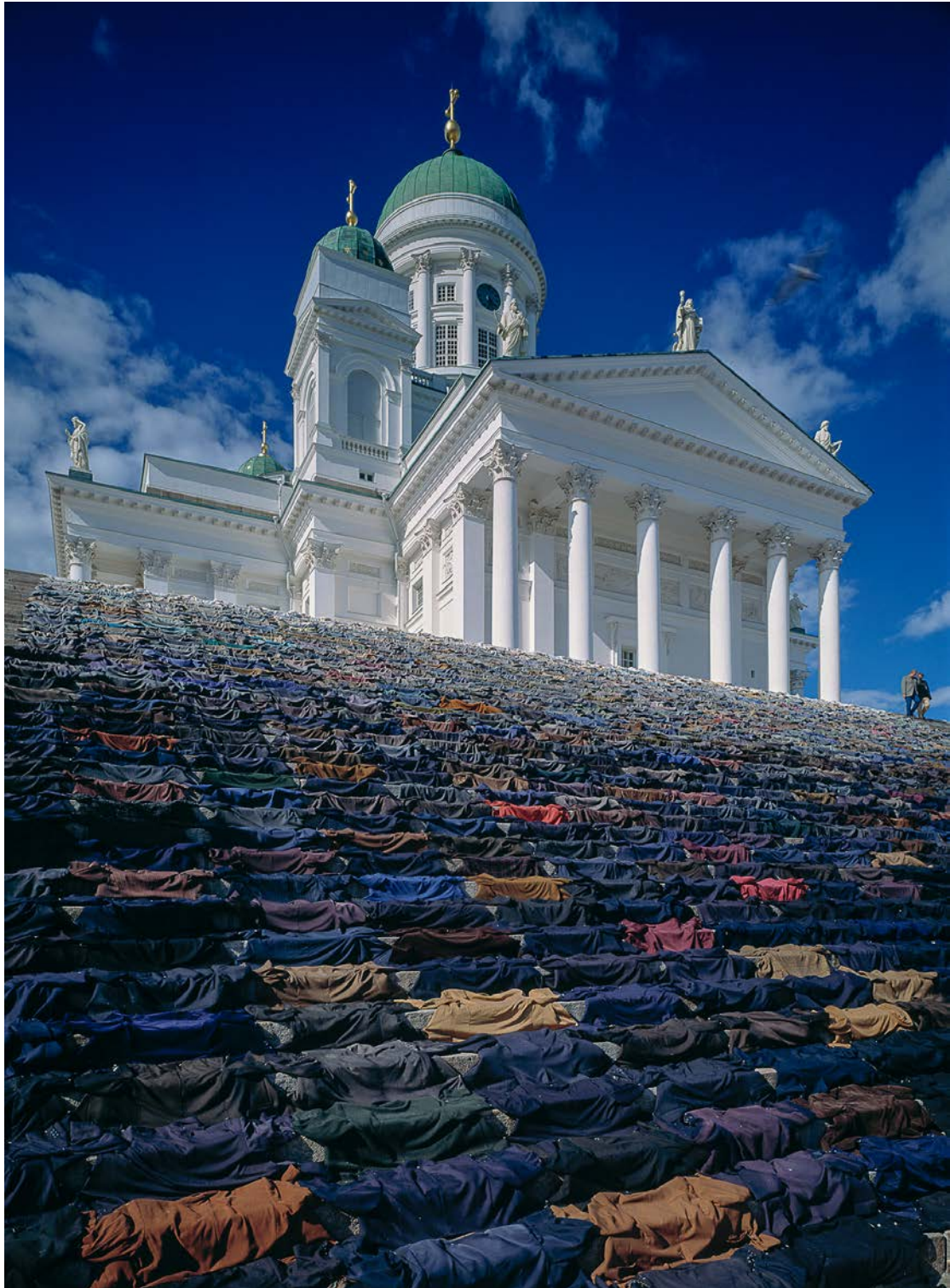
Previous installations by Kaarina Kaikkonen



My Outline, Uppsala Art Museum, 2017 - Copyright Kaarina Kaikkonen



Shadow, Tampere 1999 - Copyright Kaarina Kaikkonen



Way, Helsinki cathedral, 2000 - Copyright Kaarina Kaikkonen



Partners

Conception by Ifa laboratory. Management by Arts Lab Brussels.

In collaboration with locals of the Marolles, les ateliers des Tanneurs, la Cour du jeu de Balle, elementary school Emile André, EODP European Observatory for Democracy and Peace, Centre Culturel Bruegel, Maisons des Jeunes le 88, Le Foyer des Jeunes, Bar L'ascenseur, La Régie des Bâtiments, Le Marseillais du Jeu de Balle, Les Petits Riens.

With the support of Brussels Capital Region, the city of Brussels, COCOF, Finnish Institute to the Benelux, Embassy of Finland in Brussels, VisitBrussels, STIB/MIVB, Brussels Mobility, Helsinki Café,

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