

Bridge. Playground kanal Brussels, Belgium

BRIDGE is a temporary site-specific installation, being part of the Playground Kanal city festival in 2014. This socio-cultural festival focuses on the canal zone in Brussels and tries to transform this barrier, through a series of activities, both socially and spatially, into a binding element. The organization initially invited Gijs Van Vaerenbergh for the design of a scenography for the festival main location at the B-post building, situated on the axis of the Brussels North railway station and the site of Tour & Taxis. Instead, Gijs Van Vaerenbergh proposed to construct a temporary pedestrian bridge, physically embodying the ambitions of the festival, namely creating a connection between both sides of the canal. This intervention took place on the exact same location where for many years procedures have been running to construct a permanent bridge. Despite the different attempts, these strive for a connection between the two banks suffers from the complexity of the administrative and political context, causing to halt the project.

The temporary bridge of Gijs Van Vaerenbergh is the result of earlier projects, experimenting

with the unconventional use of building cranes. For BRIDGE the duo stripes the typical cranes of their functional usage and place them horizontal over the canal. A connection is made between the Brussels North station and Picard Street, and between the festival centre and other lively spots in the city. Right on the epicentre in-between the city of Brussels and its harbor.

BRIDGE can be seen as work of active urbanism, sculpture, installation, intervention and performance. BRIDGE was only on location for two days, but serves as a 'model' for spontaneous but essential constructions. The parts of the tower crane were rented, only the hinges were custom made.

BRIDGE serves as a model for a not yet realized bridge. Like in other projects, Gijs Van Vaerenbergh questions spatial, historical and social situations through temporary and real size constructions.

A short fragment of a movie of BRIDGE can be found here: <https://vimeo.com/156856392>

