

# Guy Schraenen

**Guy Schraenen** (UK) is the founder of the *Gallery Kontakt*, the publishing house *Guy Schraenen éditeur* and the *Archive for Small Press & Communication* (A.S.P.C.) and an international known curator, publisher and advisor. Furthermore he is the author of essays and various publications. His many activities are mainly focused on artists' publications of the various international avant-garde and independent art movements from the late 1950s until the 1980s.

## 1 Biography

### 1.1 *Galerie Kontakt*

In 1965 Schraenen founded the *Galerie Kontakt* in Antwerp, which existed until 1978.<sup>[1]</sup> In the beginning the program was aimed to the field of Lyrical Abstraction and Constructivism. The gallery presented: Eduard Bal, Bram Bogart, Lourdes Castro, Jean Degottex, Lucio Fontana, Jef Geys, René Guette, Paul Van Hoeydonck, Georges Mathieu, Georges Vantongerloo, Constructivism art in Belgium etc. Later the program shifted to activities related to the new avant-garde movements such as Visual poetry, Sound poetry, Sound art, Conceptual art, Fluxus, Mail art and artists' books.<sup>[2]</sup>

### 1.2 *Guy Schraenen éditeur*

In 1973 Schraenen founded the publishing house *Guy Schraenen éditeur* (Antwerp / Paris). He worked with artists such as Ulises Carrión, Lourdes Castro, Henri Chopin, Mirtha Dermisache, Peter Downsbrough, François Dufrière, Brion Gysin, Bernard Villers etc. Until 1978 he published artists' books, magazines, catalogues, ephemera, postcards, multiples, posters, records and films.<sup>[3]</sup> About Guy Schraenen's multimedia revue *AXE*<sup>[4]</sup> the French sound poet Bernard Heidsieck said: "Yes, he had always great sense of implementing things with a great taste and a professionalism, although this is done with very simple facilities. There were only three issues but everyone is fine, one with a cover from Degottex, the other with Brion Gysin, and each time he approached objects or publications, he did it with a great ingenuity and great sophistication."<sup>[5]</sup>

### 1.3 *Archive for Small Press & Communication*

In 1974, Guy Schraenen founded the *Archive for Small Press & Communication* (A.S.P.C.) (Antwerp, Belgium) together with Anne Marsily.<sup>[6]</sup> The aim was "...to collect and preserve all types of art documentation, emanating principally from artists' initiatives and covering all fields the contemporary artist is active in."<sup>[7]</sup> The collection includes artists' publications mainly from the 1960s to the 1980s. These are visual works, sound works, text works and artists' writings. All together it is a fund of thousands of documents representing the works of several hundreds of artists from more than 25 countries. The A.S.P.C. is as well an artistic as a political statement. Although most of the artists are recognized now by a larger public, in this time they were neglected by the traditional art world. Therefore their preservation remains an important contribution to the knowledge of the international contemporary art scene of the 1960s and 1970s.<sup>[8]</sup>

Connected with the A.S.P.C. was an uninterrupted activity in its own *Archive Space* in which Schraenen organised exhibitions, lectures, concerts etc.<sup>[9]</sup> Also in his publications and his radio program *I am an artist*, he gave public access to the gathered works. All this happened on individual base and in collaboration with artists' run spaces, museums and cultural centres in Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain, Hungary, the Soviet Union, etc. In this frame he developed a close relationship with the Latin American and the Eastern Europe art scene. The Polish artist Józef Robakowski commented Schraenen's engagement in Poland in the 1970s: "Our contacts were broken mechanically. Letters were controlled and all parcels destroyed. But soon Guy Schraenen from Antwerp, an independent publisher, helped us and started to cooperate with us very actively. This contact was extremely [*sic*] helpful as far as the exchange of information beyond official, institutionalized channels was concerned."<sup>[10]</sup>

In 1999, the A.S.P.C. - a fund of ca. 50,000 documents - was acquired by the Museum Weserburg with support by the city of Bremen (Germany). It forms the cadre of the Research Centre for Artists' Publications, a collaboration between the University of Bremen and the Museum Weserburg Bremen, "the largest and most outstanding collection of published artworks in Europe."<sup>[11]</sup>

## 1.4 *A Museum within a Museum*

In 1989, Guy Schraenen became the founding curator of the artists' publication collection *A Museum within a Museum* in the Museum Weserburg Bremen,<sup>[12]</sup> the first autonomous department of its kind: "Never before artists' books were regarded as art works and presented equally alongside paintings, sculptures, graphics, environments and installations in a museum"<sup>[13]</sup>

For many years Schraenen has been responsible for the collections and exhibitions of artists' publications in the the Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía in Madrid, the Fundação de Serralves in Porto, the Museu d'Art Contemporani de Barcelona (MACBA), the International Centre of Graphic Arts, Ljubljana (MGLC) and other institutions.

## 2 Texts (Selection)

- *Archive for Small Press & Communication*. Manifest. Antwerpen 1974/1981. In: Out of Print, Bremen 2001
- *The book of an artist is a 'work of art'*. In: Metrónom. Llibres d'artista/ Artists' Books. Barcelona 1981
- *A Survey of Alternative Spaces. Sound – printed – visual*. In 4 parts. In: Artefactum, No. 8/9/10/11. Antwerpen 1985
- *Espaces alternatifs, sonores, imprimés...& Indépendance ou dépendance*. In: Inter. Québec 1988
- *For an other approach of Art History*. In: Kunstenaars-publicaties. Gent: Rijksuniversiteit 1988
- *Multiples and 'other multiples'*. In: Free Access. Multipels / Multiples. Leuven: Katholieke Universiteit 1994
- *Addressee unknown*. In: Mail Art. Osteuropa im internationalen Netzwerk. Schwerin : Staatlichen Museum 1996
- *Catalogues: Passation de pouvoir*. In: Les Cahies du musée national d'art moderne. Du catalogue, No. 56/ 57. Paris: Centre Pompidou 1996
- *Installing the sound*. In: Hotsaren espazioa. San Sebastián 1999
- *From the letter to the image*. In: Hommage à Stéphane Mallarmés dice throw. Bremen: Neues Museum Weserburg 1997

## 3 Exhibitions / Catalogues (Selection)<sup>[14]</sup>

### 3.1 Solo exhibitions

- *Ulises Carrión. We have won, haven't we?* (1992: Amsterdam)
- *Dieter Roth. Gesammelte Werke u.a.* (1992: Bremen)
- *Henri Chopin. Revue OU, Collection OU* (1993: Bremen)
- *Peter Downsbrough. Books* (1993: Bremen)
- *Richard Long. Step by step, page by pag* (1993: Bremen, Porto)
- *Sol LeWitt. Systems in book form* (1994: Bremen)
- *James Lee Byars. Perfect is my death world* (1995: Bremen, Krems)
- *Brion Gysin. Dream machine* (1995: Bremen)
- *Christian Boltanski. Inventar of all books published between 1969 and 1995, drawn up by G.S.* (1996: Bremen, Köln, Budapest)
- *Marcel Broothaers. poetry and/or art* (1997: Bremen)
- *Ben (Vautier). Books-magazines-invitations-posters* (1998: Bremen)
- *Daniel Buren. Coloured and multiple impressions* (1999: Bremen)
- *Hans Peter Feldmann. Bücher* (1999: Bremen)
- *Ernst Caramelle. All the printed matter 1974-2004* (2005: Porto, Karlsruhe, Innsbruck)
- *François Dufrêne* (2007: Porto)
- *Nemo propheta in patria. Cavellini und andere Projekte* (2014: Bremen)
- *Dear Reader. Don't Read. Retrospective Ulises Carrión* (2016: Madrid, 2017: Mexico City)

### 3.2 Thematical exhibitions

- *Text-Sound-Image*. Small Press Festival (1976: Antwerp, Brussels, Ghent)
- *Editions & Communications Marginales d'Amerique Latine* (1976: Le Havre)
- *International Mail Art Festival* (1980: Antwerp)
- *Poolse Avant-Garde* (1985: Antwerp)

- *Kunst-enaars-publicaties* (1988, Ghent)
- *Multiples and other multiples* (1991: Leuven, Turnhout)
- *Metamorphoses of writing* (1994: Bremen)
- *Erratum Musical* (1994: Karlsruhe, Edinburg, Munich, Bremen)
- *Two houses - Le Corbusier/Melnikow* (1995: Moscow)
- *D'une oeuvre l'autre* (1996: Mariemont)
- *Out of Print. An archive as artistic concept* (since 2001: Bremen, Zürich, Porto, Barcelona, Paris, Ljubljana, Erlangen)
- *Vinyl. Records and covers by artists* (since 2005: Barcelona, Bremen, Porto, Paris, Moscow, etc.)
- *On the margins of art. Creation and political engagement* (2009: MACBA Barcelona, Porto)
- *Una tirada de libros* (2010: Madrid, Palma de Mallorca)
- *From Page to Space* (2011: Porto, Bremen, Düren, Murska-Sobota)
- *Journey to the end of colour: Books and prints* (2013, Museum Serralves Porto)
- *It is not new, it is a book* (2014/15: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid)
- *I call them simply books* (2015: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid)
- *More than a catalogue. The catalogue-boxes of the Museum Abteiberg-Mönchengladbach* (2016: Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid)

## 4 Further reading

- Miessner, Marie-Cécile, *Les éditions de Guy Schraenen*. In: *Nouvelles de l'estampes*. n° 33, 1977, p. 52–53
- Schraenen, Guy *Guy Schraenen Collectionneurs (fragment)*. *Collection A.S.P.C.* Saint-Yrieix-la-Perche: Pays-paysage, 1995
- Jahre, Lutz *Künstlerbücher, mehr als fünf Sinne*. In: *Unlimited Edition*. Köln: Salon Verlag, 2001
- Schwarz, Isabelle *Archive für Künstlerpublikationen des 1960er bis 1980er Jahre*. Köln: Schriftenreihe für Künstlerpublikationen, 2008, p. 43-89

- *Collected Writings Guy Schraenen. Essays, Statements, Interviews 1974-2013*. Printversion und digital edition. Edited by Bettina Brach in collaboration with Maïke Aden. Bremen: Centre for Artists' Publications, 2013
- *Guy Schraenen éditeur*, exhibition catalogue, Paris: Librairie Didier Lecoindre et Dominique Drouet, 2014. Download PDF-version

## 5 Further watching

- Lecture by Guy Schraenen (2006), held at the CIMAM Conference, London: [http://www.cimam.org/arxius/reuniones/videos/dsp\\_video.php?id\\_video=13\\_01](http://www.cimam.org/arxius/reuniones/videos/dsp_video.php?id_video=13_01)
- Guy Schraenen about the exhibition of his *Sound Collection: Vinyl : records and covers by artists* (2010) at La Maison Rouge, Paris (in French): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PGKs6N1t4co>
- *O Livros de artista* (2012). Fundação de Serralves, Porto: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xxBdN8K86oU>
- *Livre ouvert*. A film for *Artists' books and photography* at Paris Photo (2014), showing a.o. *Encoconage*, Guy Schraenen éditeur, 1974: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCw3CWy3e\\_c](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RCw3CWy3e_c)
- Guy Schraenen about the Ulises Carrión retrospective *Dear Reader. Don't Read* at Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía, Madrid (2016): <https://vimeo.com/159767487>

## 6 External links

- "Centre for Artist's Publications, Bremen".
- "Un coup de livres". Artists' books and other publications from the A.S.P.C., Fundación Juan March
- "On the Margins of Art", *MACBA Study Centre*, Barcelona
- "Vinyl. Records and covers by artists", *Garage*, Moscow
- "It is not new it is a book", *Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía*, Madrid
- "I call them simply books", *Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía*, Madrid
- "Archivo Mirtha Dermisache"
- "Dear Reader. Don't Read". Retrospective Ulises Carrión, *Museo Nacional Centro de Arte Reina Sofía*, Madrid

## 7 References

- [1] cf. Schraenen, Guy (2001). *An archive as artistic concept. Exhibition catalogue*. Bremen: Neues Museum Weserburg. p. 14. ISBN 3-928761-51-X. Out of print.
- [2] cf. Foulon, Pierre-Jean (2008). "Photographie et livres d'artistes". In Julie Bawin. *Art actuel & photographie*. Presses universitaires de Namur. p. 25. ISBN 978-2-87037-554-9.
- [3] cf. Miessner, Marie-Cécile (1977). "Les éditions de Guy Schraenen". *Nouvelles de l'estampes*. n° 33: 52–53.
- [4] cf. Boivent, Marie (2008). *Revues d'artistes. Une sélection*. Rennes: Association ARCADE, Fougères en coédition avec LENDROIT Galerie, Rennes et les Editions Provisoires, Paris. pp. 96–101.
- [5] Heidsieck, Bernard (1993). "Entretien avec Jacques Donguy". *Poesure et Peintrie. "D'un art, l'autre"*. Marseille: Musées de Marseille, Réunion des Musées Nationaux. p. 412. ISBN 2-7118-2767-4.
- [6] cf. Delleaux, Océane (2010). *Le multiple d'artiste: Histoire d'une mutation artistique: Europe-Amérique du Nord de 1985 à nos jours*. Paris: L'Harmattan. pp. 20 et al. ISBN 978-2-296-12253-6.
- [7] Schraenen, Guy (1974). *Manifest. Archive for Small Press & Communication*. Antwerp: Guy Schraenen éditeur.
- [8] cf. Schwarz, Isabelle (2008). "Archive for Small Press & Communication (ASPC)". *Archive für Künstlerpublikationen des 1960er bis 1980er Jahre*. Schriftenreihe für Künstlerpublikationen. Köln: Salon Verlag. pp. 43–81.
- [9] cf. Club Moral, Antwerp, 1985. "Club Moral in in Guy Schraenen's Archive Space".
- [10] Robakowski, Józef (1998). "The Conservator of Ideas. An Interview with Józef Robakowski by Maria Morzuch". *Kolekcja Multimedalna. Galerii Wymiany Józefa Robakowskiego [A multimedia collection. Exchange Gallery. Joseph Robakowski]*. Łódź: Muzeum Sztuki. p. 10. ISBN 83-906130-8-5.
- [11] cf. Research Centre for Artists' Publications. "About the Archive for Small Press & Communication (A.S.P.C.) in the Research Centre".
- [12] cf. Brach, Bettina (2011). *A Museum within a Museum*. Bremen: Museum Weserburg. pp. 3–4. ISBN 978-3-928761-89-5.
- [13] Deecke, Thomas (2001). *Ein glückliches Treffen. Newspaper on the occasion of the exhibition*. Bremen: Neues Museum Weserburg. p. 3. Out of print.
- [14] Complete list of the exhibitions in: Guy Schraenen (2001) Out of Print, exhibition catalogue, Bremen; and: Guy Schraenen (2012) A Museum within a Museum, Bremen

- 
- 
- 
-

## 8 Text and image sources, contributors, and licenses

### 8.1 Text

- **Guy Schraenen** *Source:* [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guy\\_Schraenen?oldid=721662912](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guy_Schraenen?oldid=721662912) *Contributors:* Topbanana, Tabletop, RadioFan, Welsh, PKT, Waacstats, GrahamHardy, HughJLF, SchreiberBike, XLinkBot, Tassedethe, Yobot, Gongshow, Citation bot, Sionk, Orakologen, ArticlesForCreationBot, Mekiedan, Jamescmahon0, TuxLibNit, Jerodlycett and Anonymous: 4

### 8.2 Images

### 8.3 Content license

- Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 3.0