

LLS Paleis; Paleisstraat 140, 2018 Antwerp; www.llspaleis.be; info@llspaleis.be; tel: 0032 (0)3 337 03 87

Opening Sunday 7 February 2021
Exhibition until 28 February 2021

Sunday 14 February, at 15:00 Interview by Valentijn Goethals with the founders of The Serving Library (English, streaming)

Saturday 20 February at 15:00 Lectures on graphics and typography by Thomas Desmet, Bodo Peeters and Boris Van den Eynden (Dutch)

Open: Thursday – Sunday, 14:00 – 18:00 and by appointment

The Serving Library Collection

The current exhibition at LLS Paleis is the result of a collaboration with 019*. Since 2020, *The Serving Library Collection* has been on long-term loan there with the goal of touring the collection around Europe. For this purpose, 019 designed a custom-made structure with built-in lighting (completely dismountable and reinstallable) that encapsulates the entire collection of objects within a 2 x 2 x 4 meter container.

In the tunnel of 100 objects, autonomous (art) works, applied graphic works, and other objects criss-cross each other. The only common denominator of the objects in this collection—varying from record sleeves, aquarelles, woodcarvings, Polaroids, drawings, screen prints, airbrush painting, as well as a pot of green paint, a German license plate, a slide...—is that they appeared (served) as illustrations in a volume of The Serving Library Annual or one its direct predecessors Bulletins of The Serving Library or Dot Dot Dot, within the past twenty years.

The Serving Library can be interpreted as a visual representation of the following subjects:

- The status of the artwork
- The distrust of the photographic image
- The creator of an artwork
- The copyright of found material
- The attribution upon appropriation
- The boundaries of sampling ('stealing from another one's work')
- The veracity of documentary
- The boundaries of originality and uniqueness
- Associations in language, text and typography...

The exhibition does not distinguish between signed or unsigned, unnumbered and numbered graphics, unique items, printed matter, or editions. An accompanying publication that is available to view describes why many of the objects are part of *The Serving Library Collection*.

In addition to displaying the collection, *The Serving Library Collection* operates as a mobile seminar space in which lectures and workshops are given to visual arts, graphic design and art criticism students.

The Serving Library v.z.w. was founded in 2011 by Stuart Bailey, Angie Keefer en David Reinfurt. Initially active in Liverpool until 2018, today the organization is based in London. The current members are Francesca Bertolotti-Bailey, Stuart Bertolotti-Bailey, Vincenzo Latronico and David Reinfurt.

* 019 is an artist collective located in a former welding factory in Dok-Noord (Ghent). It was created in 2013 as the "19th project" of the v.z.w. Smoke & Dust. 019 is Tim Bryon, Bieke Criel, Bert De Backer, Arnout De Cleene, Michiel De Cleene, Olivier Goethals, Valentijn Goethals and Tomas Lootens.

In addition to a publication platform and a seminar room, The Serving Library also owns a collection of approximately 100 objects, which are exhibited under the title *The Serving Library Collection*.

The collection started in 2005. A first batch of about fifteen items were transported in a suitcase from Amsterdam to Tallinn for their first presentation in a dilapidated space without electricity. The collection grew steadily with the support of countless colleagues and institutes. It has been shown at numerous guest locations in Europe (early exhibitions of the material took place at Kaleri Tartu in Estonia (2005), at the Lyon Biennale (2007), Kunstverein Munich (2008), ...) and North America before a home was found in Liverpool, in the summer of 2016.

The collection was formally named 'The Serving Library' in 2011, and was immediately used as a pedagogical tool during 'From the Toolbox of a Serving Library', a six-week summer course at the Banff Center in Canada that same year.

In 2014, the group went ashore in the UK (now filling four transport crates) to hang for a season in an eccentric structure designed by French architect Claude Parent in Tate Liverpool (2014). A few years later, The Serving Library moved to its own space in the historic 'India Buildings' in the same city. It was placed in Nottingham Trent University's Bonington Gallery in late 2018, visually in dialogue with an intervention by the English artist David Osbaldeston, who also has a work in *The Serving Library Collection* (No. 58).

In October 2020, a long-term loan and presentation project started with 019 in Ghent, of which this exhibition in LLS Paleis is a part.

'The serving library collection': the words themselves are known, their order noticeably less. What immediately catches the eye is the adjective 'serving': who serves whom?

Some artworks provide a humorous answer to this, or show with subtle irony how they are anything but 'illustrative' or suitable for explaining texts. Now they form a dynamic element in an exhibition that aims to stimulate a dialogue about graphics, typography, visual art and image(s) as reproduction. That is why a discursive program has been linked to this project, consisting of lectures, interviews and conversations (see the program on the website llspaleis.be).

S.L., februari '21

Thanks to Bieke Criel, Eugènia Lopez Duran, Lyra Oey, Hannelore Mattheus, Kathy Moyson, Olivier Goethals, Valentijn Goethals, Tomas Lootens, Thomas Desmet, Bodo Peeters and Boris Van den Eynden.

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