

Dear Hunter et la cartographie des villes (Herstal et Vottem)



[Dear Hunter](#) a été fondé par Marlies Vermeulen et Remy Kroese, tous deux architectes/chercheurs. Ensemble, ils proposent à des villes et communes d'investir des espaces afin de comprendre comment ceux-ci sont utilisés par les usagers. Ce service a vu le jour suite à un constat récurrent : le temps investi dans la compréhension d'un lieu n'est souvent pas suffisant pour développer un projet d'architecture prenant en compte les besoins des citoyens.

“Comme un chasseur dans sa cabane, conscient de ce qu’il voit et de ce qu’il expérimente”, Marlies Vermeulen

En total immersion, ils vivent, dorment, mangent dans un container installé dans un espace stratégique de la ville. Ils peuvent ainsi observer, suivant des méthodes anthropologiques, les activités des usagers de jour comme de nuit. Cela leur permet de cartographier le lieu et la manière dont il est exploité.

Après Heerlen, Genk, Eupen, Visé, Heers, Vaals, Maastricht, Hasselt... en avril 2018 et pendant deux mois, Dear Hunter s'est installé sur [la place Jean Jaurès de Herstal](#) et, ensuite, pendant 1 mois, sur la place Gilles Gerard de Vottem. Nous leur avons confié un appareil photo jetable. En image, ils nous racontent leur expérience immersive.



Place Jean Jaurès, Herstal. Maybe not the first place you will think about when choosing a place to live for two months, but there definitely happens something over here. First class location from a researchers' point of view!



A meeting with the Comité d'accompagnement in Herstal. It was a pleasure to work with these people that all care for their city. Take in account that these meetings started very early, like 7:30 in the morning. Nevertheless, everybody was always present and actively involved, which might be due to good coffee!



As we like to hike, we go places that not everybody knows. This is one of the 'terrils' in Herstal (well, actually it's Liège), among the most impressive that we've seen so far. The view, all the way from Blegny to Liège and the Ourthe valley, is just incredible.



We tend to visit offices of aldermen quite often, but have never been surprised as much as in this one: It's hard to believe there is a sort of structure in all stacks and piles, but in the meantime, it was very clear someone passionate about his work created it. One of the beautiful aspects of our work to be able to be in these kind of places.



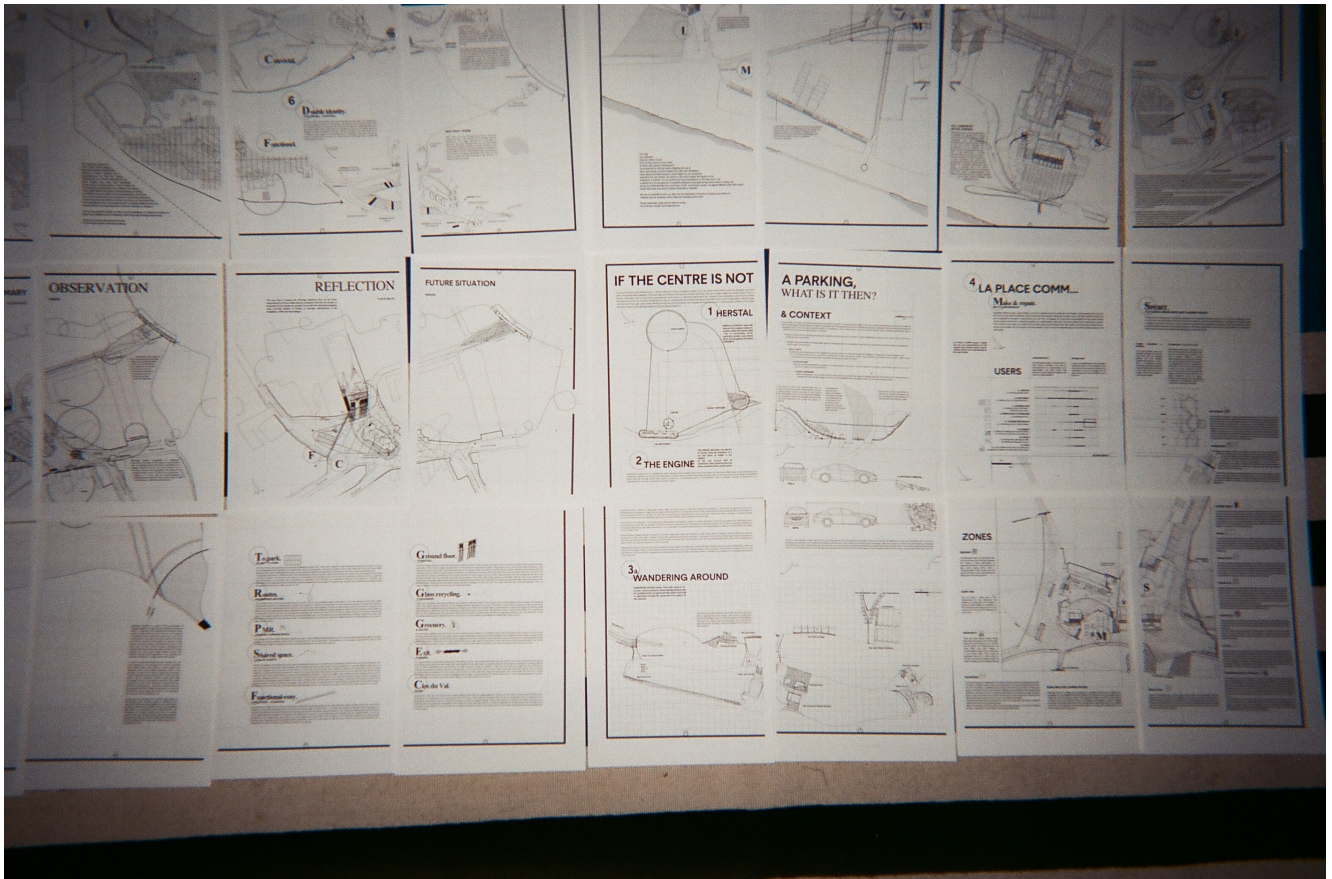
Of course we were also present at the the 'Village Italienne' festival on Place Jean Jaurès. This square tends to be perceived as being too grey, maybe it's because of this that they now created a 'square on a square': fake grass and a – well, how would you call this fountain... Actually it works out pretty well...



And this is what moving looks like to us. Right here we arrive at Place Gilles Gérard in Vottem for the continuation of our mapping project in Herstal.



This is the view from our desk in our 'hunting cabin', Place Gilles Gérard in Vottem. Today there were two marriages taking place in front of us, as you can see. During these moments the square finally wasn't used as parking only.



Well, this is (part of) the result of three months of mapping in Herstal. A lot of work reduced to A4's... But all is there, we're proud of it, and we already know the city is, too!



It's hard to recognize the typical Dutch skies on a picture like this, but hey, we're researchers and no photographers!

After taking this picture, Marlies had a meeting with the Scheepvaartmuseum in Amsterdam to discuss a collaborative project. Actually we're super excited about this. It's such a great institute, strongly connected to the 'golden age' and the numerous discoveries of travellers and cartographers.



Today we took a look at the place where we will go after Herstal: along the Vennbahn, next to the former train station of Sourbrodt (Hautes Fagnes). It will be a mapping project on the perception of the landscape, of which there is plenty to find in this 'far east' corner of Belgium!

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