

Stories Unfold



PRESS FILE



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IN SHORT



Stories Unfold is a top event, organised by EventFlanders at the initiative of VISITFLANDERS, which tries to offer an answer to the revaluation issue of Flemish estates in an innovative, creative, artistic and participative manner.

Stories Unfold is going to be organised every two years. The first edition takes place in and around the Rubens Castle, in Zemst, from 1 August to 29 October 2023. Below you can find more information about the background to Stories Unfold, its objectives, the vision around the programming and the participatory aspect thereof.



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It is no secret that Flanders has an extraordinary collection of castles which captures everyone's imagination. Moreover, we know from research that our Flemish heritage splendour is one of the most important reasons for visiting Flanders. Thus immediately an additional reason for VISITFLANDERS to highlight our almost magical castles and estates in the future.

Within the new 'Castles and Gardens' storyline of VISITFLANDERS, a tourist network of Flemish estates is going to be developed over a number of years. This applies both to domains that already have a tourist activity and to domains that are going to be developed and reoriented (for tourism) in the coming years. Moreover, from 2023 onwards, this storyline will be highlighting the uniqueness and authenticity of the Flemish estates.

The kick off for this? Stories Unfold. With this brand new, event-related concept, VISITFLANDERS, in collaboration with EventFlanders, is highlighting the start of a broad and ambitious programme for Flemish castles and gardens in an innovative way. This plan will be unfolding the stories of the various castles and gardens in Flanders through new revaluations and openings over a number of years.

Stories Unfold not only puts our Flemish estates in the spotlight, but also helps to build the international reputation of our Flemish heritage.

At the same time, Stories Unfold stimulates the building and sharing of knowledge and connection within and from out of the Flemish network of estate owners and operators via a customised programme.

Last but not least, through community engagement and local involvement, Stories Unfold is also going to focus on the role and place of the estate in question within its community and landscape.

"Stories Unfold is a unique international project that will undoubtedly reinforce the ambitions that VISITFLANDERS has for the Flemish estates," says Peter De Wilde, CEO of VISITFLANDERS. "It must become a creative breeding ground that does not shy away from experimentation in order to marvel and imagine, to inspire about the future of our estates. Our intention is to be able to have a new edition of Stories Unfold every two years each time for a different Flemish estate."

Flemish Minister for Tourism, Zuhair Demir, is delighted with the project: "The versatility and strong focus on local interweaving, involvement and engagement in Stories Unfold attracts me very much. And I also welcome the way in which sustainability, nature and the environment are handled both in the organisation and in the programming."

The first edition in Rubens Castle

'Het Steen' in Elewijt (Zemst), better known as 'Rubens Castle' (home of Pieter Paul Rubens between 1635 and 1640), kicks off proceedings as the first location. From 1 August to 29 October 2023, this domain will host a whole range of experiences. Stories Unfold is open to visitors five days per week and on at least four of these days it regales them with a programme that is not to be missed. From cultural activities such as concerts, films, art exhibitions, theatre and dance, to food experiences, overnight stays, readings, workshops and numerous local initiatives. In short, Stories Unfold will be the (summer) hotspot of the year for heritage lovers and fanatics, families, friends and people who are searching for innovative and inspiring experiences.

"This initiative is a great opportunity for our associations, local entrepreneurs and other organisations," explains Mayor of Zemst Veerle Geerinckx. "They get the unique opportunity to make use of this wonderful location for their initiatives. As a municipality, we really want to do our bit here. At the same time, our residents and other visitors will have the opportunity to fully enjoy the beauty of Rubens Castle and its wonderful surroundings. Definitely a trump card for Zemst!"

This event also marks the culmination of the participatory revaluation process of Rubens Castle. In recent years, there have already been a number of surveys, workshops and brainstorming sessions with the residents, entrepreneurs and other stakeholders. Stories Unfold builds on this by deepening certain aspects of the revaluation, but also by building on local sustainable ownership, pride and engagement.

"Our Flemish estates have a great deal to offer," says Flemish Minister for Heritage Matthias Diependaele. "This unique project is an excellent incentive in thinking further about their (re)valuation. The fact that Stories Unfold will also be a place for building and sharing knowledge and connection for the Flemish network of estate owners and operators is a fantastic plus point."





Flanders has an extensive range of castles and historic country houses, some of which have been owned by the same family for centuries, while others are managed by the government or private owners. Until now, VISITFLANDERS has never played on this heritage internationally. By 2030, within the 'Castles and Gardens' storyline, VISITFLANDERS wants to develop a tourism network of strong Flemish castle domains and gardens that have an international appeal. These are not only sites that contribute to tourist development through various high-quality activities for visitors. They are also sites that offer support to place keepers, local residents and entrepreneurs. The new 'Castles and Gardens' storyline of VISITFLANDERS puts this into action and, in the future, the affiliated castles must be a match for the castles of the French Loire region or the English Castle Estates.

Within the 'Castles and Gardens' strategy, we interpret the word 'castle' in the widest sense. By castles and gardens, we mean the broader whole of the estate that includes not only the buildings but also the surrounding terrain with parkland, lands, woods, farms, etc. In this way, VISITFLANDERS sees the potential of castle sites as multifunctional sites in the surrounding community.

"Estates are multifunctional landscape ensembles that owe their unique identity to the ambiguous relationship that we as humans have with our environment. On the one hand, they are born out of our urge for control which then translates into technical knowledge and capacity in order to unlock and transform the landscape until it fulfils our needs. On the other hand, these places always represent our inability to separate man from his environment and from nature. It is from this duality that estates today are very valuable places to help shape the social transformations that we are championing", Bert De Roo, co-curator of 'Castles & Gardens' and researcher at Ghent University College.

In 2019, the Flanders Heritage Agency conducted a survey on how Flemish people value immovable heritage. For 14 types of heritage, people were asked how important they think it is to preserve them. For half of these types of heritage, more than 70% of the Flemish people think that it is (very) important to preserve them, and for four of them it is even more than 80%: fortresses, castles and country houses (88%); landscapes (85%); parks and gardens (80%); urban and village views (80%). According to a reputation research conducted by VISITFLANDERS in 2021 Spain, Italy, France and the United States are the international source markets with the most potential. In these markets, heritage, and more specifically castles, have high tourist potential.

The unique and biennial event concept, Stories Unfold, contributes to the further development of the 'Castles and Gardens' storyline. Stories Unfold not only provides the leverage for the activation of the network of relevant stakeholders, but it also inspires castle owners and operators to look at revaluation and the operation of castles and gardens from different viewpoints. This fuels interest and awareness for the Flemish heritage splendour among art lovers and international visitors alike who have a love and passion for heritage.

However, the 'Castles and Gardens' storyline goes beyond simply attracting visitors from home and abroad. The social added value of these castle domains also plays a major role. The development of these sites is diverse and impactful, which means that the further evolution of this storyline offers many opportunities for the 'Travel to Tomorrow' strategy of VISITFLANDERS. 'Travel to Tomorrow' starts out from sustainable tourism, whereby tourism encompasses more than just the commercial and economic part.

The experience of travel changes travellers and the places that they visit, as well as the people and local communities who inhabit these places. Within 'Travel to Tomorrow', an investigation is being conducted into how all the stakeholders within the tourism system can derive maximum benefit from this.

More information via:

- <https://toerismevlaanderen.be/nl/thema/erfgoed>
- <https://toerismevlaanderen.be/nl/thema/erfgoed#kastelenentuinen>
- <https://www.reizennaarmorgen.be/>



3/ THE RUBENS CASTLE



Rubens castle has not always carried that name and it had a long history before master painter Peter Paul Rubens took up residence there. Its origins date back to the 11th or 12th century. At that time, the castle occupied a strategic place as part of Brabant's defence girdle. Originally there was a wooden watchtower on the estate, which was replaced sometime in the 13th century by a stone donjon (a medieval fortified residential tower) with the Lords of Elewite and Wilre as possible builders. This stone donjon gave the castle the name 'Het Steen' (The Stone) which we sometimes still use today.

As from 1333, the estate was owned by the noble families Taeye van Bouchout, Oudart, van Borchgrave and van Egmont. After the death of Maria Kristina van Egmont (daughter of Count Lamoraal van Egmont), the castle came into the hands of Jan de Cools in 1622. However, he was deep in debt and was forced to sell the castle. In 1631, it was none other than master painter Peter Paul Rubens who bought the castle as a country residence. He had it thoroughly refurbished into a luxury Renaissance-style residence and lived there with his wife, H el ene Fourment, until his death in 1640. The fact that he was a proud lord of the castle is proven by his tombstone in Antwerp's St. James' Church, which bears the title 'Steinni Toparcha' (Lord of The Stone).



Over the years, Rubens castle suffered a great deal, being looted during the French Revolution and becoming a base for various troops during the Second World War. But it also had many different owners, resulting in the castle being renovated a number of times. The stone donjon eventually disappeared from the site.

Today, the castle consists of a breath-taking building complex with drawbridge and moat, surrounded by the serenity of nature thanks to its gardens, meadows, ponds and trees. Quite a few of Rubens' famous paintings are landscapes of Elewijt, with the most famous being "A View of Het Steen in the Early Morning" (1636). "Landscape with an avenue of trees" (1635-1640) was also painted here, probably from the donjon. Those who now thunder daily along the E19 between Mechelen and Brussels drive straight through the landscape Rubens depicted in this painting. Since 1948, Rubens Castle has been a protected monument. Since July 2019, Rubens Castle has been in the possession of VISITFLANDERS.

Thanks to the first edition of Stories Unfold, Rubens castle will become accessible to the general public. Above all, this initiative creates a unique experience for visitors, as well as cultural and tourist added value for the castle itself. The Rubens' touch means that the castle fits perfectly within the tourism policy of putting the Flemish Masters in the spotlight and playing this out internationally as a trump card. Flanders Special Venues within VISITFLANDERS is tasked with revaluing Rubens Castle and using it as a pilot project for the new Flemish tourism policy for a Flemish castles and gardens network.



4/ REVALUATION FOR A NEW FUTURE AND PARTICIPATION



Within the 'Travel to Tomorrow' strategy of VISITFLANDERS, it is very important that the local community, villages and towns are involved. After all, they need to be enthusiastic about welcoming visitors from home and abroad to their flourishing region. This is no different from the first edition of Stories Unfold, and various initiatives have already been set up to get the residents of Zemst involved in the revaluation of Rubens castle.

VISITFLANDERS, together with the municipality of Zemst, its residents and local organisations and entrepreneurs, is aiming for the perfect revaluation of Rubens Castle. A revaluation about which all stakeholders feel good and are involved. To this end, in recent years, many surveys, workshops and brainstorming sessions have been conducted with the residents. As part of this, the castle estate was temporarily opened up to the local community so that they could experience the place and so be able to provide better input. Stories Unfold is the culmination of this beautiful process. Thanks to the event, we have been able to experiment with specific interpretations, deepen certain sub-aspects of the future of the domain and strengthen the castle's relationship with its surroundings, its most important stakeholders. The earlier surveys of residents also led to try-outs; a kind of ultimate test.

Local initiatives get support thanks to Stories Unfold. Approximately 40% of the programme is filled locally. During this project which lasts for 3 months, a local theatre company, music group, sports or hobby club, restaurant, etc. can descend on the castle estate in Elewijt, Zemst.

"For the new future of this special heritage site with its rich story, we want to start off from the strength and the soul of the place," says Kristof Lataire, project leader Rubens Castle at VISITFLANDERS. "Anyone entering the site later as a visitor and resident of Zemst must be able to taste and discover Rubens, his creativity, work and life. But the castle and estate must also offer added value for entrepreneurs."



The absolute showpiece during the first edition of Stories Unfold? An architectural pavilion with space for catering and a stage; a place that connects people and also with nature. Designed by the collective ConstructLab + 019, the temporary pavilion will serve, together with the rest of the domain, as a home/house for a diverse and inspiring programme. From catering to music, art, installation, performance, dance, theatre, debate, workshop, reading, local initiatives, parties, etc. For the engineering and stability works, they are all supported by Guy Mouton and agency H110.

The architectural installation will provide a rainproof area for 150 to 200 people and thanks to the outdoor facilities there is capacity for 100 more. This temporary pavilion will be the heart of Stories Unfold from where all kinds of activities can be put on: catering (summer bar/small restaurant), discourses, readings, concerts, performances and other gatherings.

The Stories Unfold pavilion created by ConstructLab + 019, like the work of Peter Paul Rubens' "A View of Het Steen in the Early Morning", aims to place the view of the landscape centre stage.

The watchtower

In the painting, the painter introduces you to the estate and the surrounding landscape from the watchtower: the now-vanished donjon of the castle. The pavilion acts as a contemporary and architectural reference to that watchtower. But it goes beyond that and challenges the visitor to see more than that single picture. The pavilion offers the visitor new perspectives regarding the castle, the estate and the current surrounding landscape with protected forests, ribbon development, impressive views and pylons.

"Through positioning and playing with walls, cut-outs and different levels, we offer a multitude of perspectives on the landscape," explains Tomas Lootens of 019. "The pavilion has, for example, different 'viewing' heights and viewing directions from which the landscape opens up." In this way, the pavilion creates lines of depth in the landscape.

The painting "A View of Het Steen in the Early Morning" was painted in several phases and is composed of different panels that Rubens - in the first phase - recuperated from his studio. This is extended to the circularity of the pavilion. After Stories Unfold, ninety percent of the pavilion's building elements can be taken back into the economic value chain almost without loss of value.

The materials of the pavilion

With the building of the pavilion, the highest standards in terms of (climate) sustainability have been respected. The fact that all materials are rented and will be put back into circulation after Stories Unfold is already special in itself, but the composition and use of different types of materials also has its place in this.

DOKA, the structure's main partner, provides a steel formwork system (normally concrete formwork systems are often used on gigantic construction sites into which concrete is poured to create walls and roofs). Here, the formwork systems are used as carriers of the pavilion itself to temporarily support the stairs, terrace and roof. DOKA is a pioneer in this type of steel formwork system and with it, among other things, it is indicating its ambition to become climate neutral by 2040.

The pavilion itself rests on screw piles that are screwed into the ground like screws. This minimises the impact on the environment since no foundation needs to be poured. After Stories Unfold, the screws are unscrewed and no trace is left behind.

Finally, the pavilion's walls consist of traditional formwork panels used in the pouring of concrete. These smooth panels are used here to frame the surroundings and draw them into the pavilion.

King of my castle

The pavilion also hooks into the architecture of castles. The rhythm of the blue bucks is an evocation of the battlements. Through the pavilion, visitors learn to look at the castle and its domain in a different way. Bert Watteeuw, director of the Rubens House, describes the pavilion in this way: "With this design, the narrative does not shift an inch away from Rubens castle. The castle here is the 'grande dame' and the pavilion her temporary lover who comes to entertain her. Her summer love. An interesting detail is that Rubens' wife, H el ene Fourment, continued to live in the castle for a long time after his death and also had a young lover at the time. With this, all the pieces of the puzzle fall into place."

Last Resort – a Summer school concept

From 24 July until 4 August 2023, the international interdisciplinary ConstructLab team descend upon the castle estate for 'Last Resort': a temporary interruption and collective re-exploration of daily routines in the extraordinary and historically charged domain of Rubens Castle. The focus is on the embodying of different ways to re-energise the domain and support the transition to the new public character.

An open call will be established for this, via which profiles from abroad as well as from in the vicinity can sign up. During this Summer school, there is a collective design and construction of different structures that build on the idea of Last Resort.

"The name has a double meaning," explains Bert Villa (ConstructLab). "On the one hand, a resort is a paradise in which to relax but, on the other hand, it can be a last option for finding refuge. We will be investigating this contradiction further in our Summer school, using Rubens Castle and the pavilion as an excellent temporary base. We are asking ourselves the question of how we can determine our human impact on the world in a new way."



Stories Unfold is open to visitors five days per week and treats them to a varied programme on at least four of these days. From cultural activities such as concerts, films, art exhibitions, theatre and dance, to food experiences, overnight stays, readings, workshops and numerous local initiatives.

Following a call to participate made earlier this year, a large number of local residents, organisations and associations are now contributing to the programme and getting their place on the site. Every fortnight, on Sundays, there is a Neighbours brunch to which everyone is invited to add to the lavish brunch buffet themselves or to order a basket of delicious local products from the bar.

Curious about what you can experience during the first edition of Stories Unfold? Check out this round-up (yes, this is just a quick glimpse!) of unmissable activities!

FOOD

Besides the ever-present drinks and bites, a large number of food-related concepts are planned during Stories Unfold. These can largely be found in and around the pavilion, as well as in other parts of the castle grounds. During Stories Unfold, there will be seven food experience events: dishes with local produce from promising young chefs, Belgian high tea with waffles, pralines and delicious biscuits offered in collaboration with Joost Arijs, open fire cooking with local gastronomic talent Maarten Van Essche from Meteor, international kitchens and also workshops. Tickets and more info about reservations can be found on storiesunfold.be.



CULTURE

Sculpture garden NEIGHBOURS from curator Manor Grunewald with scenography by Bram Vanderbeke

The sculpture garden NEIGHBOURS provides an insight into the fascinating work of twenty contemporary visual artists from home and abroad. The artists go into dialogue with the garden, Rubens and the rich cultural history of the castle. A sculpture garden where you can discover, learn and be amazed by a play of shape and colour. Expect artworks by, among others, Charlotte Posenenske, Tom Volkaert and Bram Vanderbeke.

The curator is Manor Grunewald (°1985), a Belgian visual artist who currently lives and works in Ghent. Grunewald considers himself primarily to be a painter, although he is also active in the world of sculpture, installation and graphics. His own work is characterised by the continual analysis of the development of the pictorial in our everyday environment.

Scenography is in the hands of Bram Vanderbeke (°1991), an artist/designer from Ghent. Bram creates 'Architectural Objects': monumental designs with a pronounced materiality and aesthetic. He explores and transforms potential interactions between an object, its architectural environment and its user, moreover, challenged by the raw materiality of the object, form and function.

NEIGHBOURS is free to visit five days per week from 17 August to 12 October 2023.

The twenty participating artists are Filip Vervaeke, Katleen Vinck, Joep van Liefland, Charlotte Posenenske, Loup Sarion, Tom Volkaert, Luca Monterastelli, Przemek Pyszczyk, Xavier Mary, Leyla Aydoslu, Samuel Francois, Maxime Brigou, Theo De Meyer, Aaron Bobrow, Eva Robarts, Alice Vanderschoot, Mathieu Verhaeghe, Johanna Von Monkiewitsch, Bram Vanderbeke and Willem Boel.

Concerts

During Stories Unfold, various artists will be giving of their best. Spread over four evenings, you can experience intimate concerts in the magical atmosphere of the castle grounds. With established names in Belgium such as Raymond van het Groenewoud and Isbells, to the musical charms of Wannes Cappelle & Nicolas Callot and Meskerem Mees, there is something for everyone. In addition to these well-known artists, there is also local and supra-local talent. This includes a performance by the local Elewijts Bach Choir, a four-part mixed amateur choir consisting of thirty singers. On a "Talent in Zemst" evening, three rock or pop bands from Zemst will be giving of their best, after which the audience can choose one of them as the winner. Tickets available from € 15.00. Discover the line-up via storiesunfold.be.



TRAVEL

Spend the night in the Rubens suite

If the Flemish master Peter Paul Rubens were still alive today, what would his bedroom look like? During Stories Unfold, you get the unique opportunity to spend the night in a real “Rubens suite”. Designed by Studio Stories, the suite will be available to the general public for three months. Ever wanted to live as a castle owner? Here is your chance! Book an overnight stay for two in the Rubens suite via storiesunfold.be.



A stay for everyone: Camping May

Everyone deserves to spend a night on the castle grounds of Stories Unfold. Right next to Rubens Castle, a camp-site with space for 20 tents, as well as basic infrastructure such as toilets and showers, will be available for a period of three months. Just bring your own tent with you. And payment? That is one of the experiments of Stories Unfold! You decide yourself how you want to pay: a free contribution, by performing volunteer duties during the festival, or paying nothing at all. It's all possible! The organisation is curious about the outcome of such an approach. Book your tent spot via storiesunfold.be.



MAKERS MARKET, LOCAL SHOP AND CRAFTS HOUSE

The Makers market at Stories Unfold, set up by Marktistiek vzw, is a must visit for those who love local arts or crafts. There you can find exhibitions and displays of talent from the vicinity and from a little further afield.

Regional products that feel completely at home in the Rubens castle: you can taste and buy them in the pop-up regional shop developed in collaboration with Hof van Beieren. This partner understands the delicacies that we love like no other, because the team has been running an experience farm in Zemst for some time. You will be served by various associations from the vicinity.

In the Crafts house you can see talented artisans at work. During the three months, the talents on show include a professional knife sharpener, basket weaver, wool spinner and potter.

Furthermore, you can also admire the craftsmanship of goldsmith Iris Van Steenwinckel and see her unique jewellery come to life. Discover the process of leather artist Wendy Rombouts, who shows you how she makes her beautiful plant-based, tanned leather accessories.

ROLL UP YOUR SLEEVES

Feel like having a go yourself after seeing these craftsmen and women at work? Then join a leather working, jewellery making, basket weaving or pottery workshop.

If you want to make a change to your interior at home, why not follow a “make a light ball” workshop where you make a light ball in which you can place an atmospheric candle. The “ecoprinting on tote bags” workshop will inspire you to give your garments a second life at home.

Discover the actor in you during a theatre workshop or get a feel for percussion at a djembe workshop. Specifically for the men, there is also a sustainable shaving workshop.

For those with somewhat greener fingers, there is a house plant cuttings workshop in which you discover how you can best re-pot and multiply certain plants. In the kokedama workshop, you dive into a Japanese flower arrangement technique where dried moss forms the basis for the growing of house plants.

You can relax and recharge your batteries during an introductory class in qigong or yin yoga.

INTO NATURE WITH ALL THE FAMILY

Stories Unfold will be the hotspot of choice for the whole family. Children from 3 to 18 years can enjoy a host of fun summer activities. During the entire month of August, week-long camps are being organised during which children get to know Stories Unfold and with that Rubens castle.

“What would I do if Rubens castle was mine for a day?” or “How does it feel to live like a real princess or knight?” There is the “Knights and Princesses” summer camp where children, with and without a disability, see their fantasies come to life. Sword fighting, dragon tickling, dancing and other adventurous sports, games and crafts all make the time fly by.

The “Art in Motion” summer camp, combines art experience and sport in connection with the environment to arrive at a unique, total experience.

Let the artist in your child run free? Book one of the children’s theatre productions or reserve a spot in the “Baroque children’s arts studio”; a drawing and handicraft workshop for children inspired by the work of the grandmaster himself. In the “Connecting Signs” sessions, parent and child head out into nature to draw. Immerse yourself in an experimental drawing - forest pool - during the “Nature Illustration” workshop. Do your kids like to make jewellery? Then they can join the “Making jewellery with silver clay” workshop.

Teenagers in the house? Let them join a theatre workshop, specifically aimed at young people between the ages of 14 and 18.

Kids can also get to work with food, at a cooking with chicory workshop run in collaboration with the Witlofmuseum, a workshop cook with forgotten vegetables or a castle-worthy workshop “High tea for kids”.

We go further into the nature! We offer workshops on itchy bugs, water research, nature games in which plants and animals are discovered, and also workshops on making shampoo from nettles, making fire with nothing, baking bread on coal and making a bee hotel.

During the falconry shows, marvel at birds of prey and owls in free flight or come along and admire the giant planets Jupiter and Saturn during 2 unique stargazing sessions organised by the Mira Observatory in October.

Or would you prefer an evening of open air cinema in the summer? Thanks to the municipality of Zemst, you can enjoy a film at Stories Unfold outdoors in the open air and on a large screen during a night of starry-sky cinema.

You can even organise your birthday party at Stories Unfold this summer! There are also plenty of other fun things to do, such as a mini library with books, fun games available to play with, such as frisbees, kubb, a small outdoor kitchen, etc.

THE LINK WITH THE GRANDMASTER

No surprise, of course, that Rubens is in the spotlight at Stories Unfold. Besides the aforementioned Rubens suite, you can immerse yourself in the world of the grandmaster in many other ways.

The Rubens House in Antwerp will have a residency in Rubens Castle during Stories Unfold. For three months they will be working in the castle, conducting research and giving readings on a number of dates. Some still to be determined pieces from the Rubens House will also be on display during Stories Unfold.

Furthermore, author and historian Leen Huët, who wrote the book “Letters of Rubens”, among other works, will be taking up temporary residence during Stories Unfold.

Artist couple Tamara Esseling and Lars Senders, will also take up their residency in the castle during the three months and they will be conducting an artistic investigation into the revaluation of Rubens castle under the name tOeKomstVouwen. During their residence, they will be engaging in dialogue with neighbours of the heritage site. They will be going in search of stories from the present, past and especially of dreams of the future. Graphic design, creative development and sound art are their means of building bridges. With this, they create an installation in which the future will unfold on the foundations of Peter Paul Rubens.

Local writer Dirk Huyge wrote a fictional story with historical references that takes place at Rubens Castle and, together Bib Zemst, he will be giving a presentation about it at Stories Unfold.

Rubens becomes even more accessible thanks to Rubens walks, guided tours of the local history society and a chat café with non-native newcomers about how they experience Rubens' art.

On Open Monument day you can walk through Rubens Castle accompanied by enthusiastic guides. You can immerse yourself in the place where Rubens spent his last years and explore the most beautiful spots in the domain.

Want to learn more about what there is to experience during the first edition of Stories Unfold? The full programme will be available online on www.storiesunfold.be no later than 14 June.

NOTE FOR EDITORS

About VISITFLANDERS

VISITFLANDERS reinforces the positive power of tourism with the aim of letting Flanders flourish as an innovative, inspiring and high-quality travel destination. We support the tourism sector in the further development of Flanders as a travel destination and we promote it abroad. Our efforts benefit the place as well as the residents, entrepreneurs and visitors. More info via www.toerismevlaanderen.be.

About EventFlanders

Stories Unfold is a top event organised by 'EventFlanders'. EventFlanders was founded in 2016. It is a specialised cell that takes Flemish events to a higher level and it is chasing international events. 'EventFlanders' operates under the auspices of VISITFLANDERS and is supported by Sport Vlaanderen, the Department of Foreign Affairs and the Department of Culture, Youth and Media.

About ConstructLab

ConstructLab is a collaborative construction practice that takes on both short-term and permanent projects. Unlike the conventional architectural process in which the architect designs and the builder builds, ConstructLab brings together the design and construction of the project. With a focus on low-tech and simplicity, they create construction techniques that can be used by anyone. Environmental awareness is also integrated, from design to implementation. For example, recycled materials are used so that even for temporary projects, the raw materials can be reused. More info via www.constructlab.net

About 019

019 is a transdisciplinary platform that develops intermediate spaces for intuitive experimentation, collaboration and encounters between architecture, graphic design and visual art. 019 constantly reveals new possibilities and breaks through the common ways of exhibiting in artistic and non-artistic spaces. As a hospitable occupier, 019 invites artists to explore and make visible the potential of these spaces. From a project space in Ghent, in public spaces and with institutions at home and abroad, 019 is creating new interfaces between art and society. More info via 019-ghent.org

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