



**GN  
RI  
JUL  
2016**

NICK ERVINCK



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**WIEBLOY**, 2009  
polyester and polyurethane  
80 x 110 x 105 cm  
31.5 x 43.3 x 41.3 in.



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On this level Nick Ervinck and 2PM have found each other.

Nick Ervinck has also watched and learned from art history and interpreted it in an innovative way.

With his oeuvre, he brings art to a next level, away from the existing paths and with a fresh and ambitious vision of the future, *Investing in Art*.

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**Managing Partners and colleagues  
of 2PM Personalized Portfolio Management**

i study for **WINEYER**, 2015-2016  
polished steel





ii **LAPISUB**, 2015-2016  
print  
155 x 120 cm  
61 x 47 in.



## Nick Ervinck

### Archaeologist of the imagination

***Nick Ervinck (°1981, Roeselare) gives body to his own universe while simultaneously referencing both classical sculpture and contemporary pop culture. His is a transboundary world that deploys forgotten disciplines and innovative tools. This cross-pollination process effectively pulls up by its roots the various media and fields so that they pool together and become indistinguishable. Architecture becomes painting, virtuality becomes sculpture and stasis becomes movement.***

***The art of Ervinck is the result of an active search for the means to depict his personal world. While the reality we know is not ignored, there is still the dream of another one.***

***Ervinck's body of work represents a futuristic, innovative vision that is at once seductive and capricious. Past, present and future collide in a complexity of materiality that drives a battle between the virtual and the physical.***

I

There is the potential these days to simply drown in the flood of media images. We have become transfixed by image manipulation. Ervinck converts this incessant flow of visuals into a mythological language of his own. He digs into the past to then use distinguishing characteristics of certain periods in his work. By composing a parallel universe, Ervinck redefines archaeological forms and historical paintings as pictorial elements.

There are stark disparities in terms of form and scale in his work. Alongside monumental, shiny blob sculptures are small, more complex biomorphic shapes. Yet there

is a clear correlation: the artist's determination to depict an unknowable notion of the future. We encounter strange, armoured forms, unfamiliar weirdness, a cyborg style reminiscent of science fiction films. Monsters from our nightmares threaten to break into our waking lives.

For his cross-boundary and futuristic vision, Ervinck plunders numerous sources for both the substantive and physical aspects. He transforms these finds into a kingdom of his own, inhabited by yellow knights and blue princesses.<sup>1</sup>

1 Freddy Decreus, 'Van Kafka's *Gedaantevenwising* (1915) tot Nick Ervinck's *EROMPRI* (2015)' in: *GNI-RI nov 2015*, Cassochrome, 2015, p. 6-9.

## II

As a child of his time, Ervinck approaches the digital age without trepidation. He is fascinated by the latest developments. But this is not a source of inspiration for him, merely a tool to help him to manifest his world.

Ervinck deliberately chooses not to programme his designs using code. He draws his sculptures in the classic manner by hand, although this is done straight on to the computer. The major advantage in this method is that he is able to design instantly in three dimensions.

Ervinck manages time and again to transcend the digital roots of his creations, whether they are small figures or monumental sculptures. The final forms – organic, geometric, liquid, solid – demonstrate continual flux, visual hybrids.

The 3D design process creates a different perspective on the evolution of a sculpture than is provided by the classic process of sculpting. Ervinck repeatedly pushes the boundaries of both sculpture and digital media. Where Michelangelo created space for his sculptures by cutting, chiselling and carving away the excess material, the digital sculptor does the opposite. Since his designs are drawn directly in 3D, Ervinck builds his sculptures in virtual building blocks. The form is not “liberated” from the material but created in a digital drawing process.

Ervinck seeks to push this to the extreme. He is obsessive in his desire to advance his designs, sketching and re-sketching them until he arrives at forms that he no longer feels capable of perfecting. This visionary distillation process can mean over a thousand hours of drawing for one sculpture. But it is precisely this search for the essence and simplicity of an object that drives Ervinck to new heights.

By means of this artistic practice, the artist wishes to be part of the debate about what is possible, plausible or likely.

## III

To Ervinck, art history represents the constant dynamic between action and reaction from within to without and vice versa. His work is a response to a diverse and illustrious sculpture legacy. There are clear references to Henry Moore and hints of Barbara Hepworth, Hans Arp and Georges Vantongerloo. Ervinck also draws inspiration from the famous sculpting techniques of Michelangelo. Furthermore, his work shows unequivocal influences from science fiction, architecture, oriental Zen gardens and pop culture. The artist moves seamlessly between “high” and “low” art. He demonstrates that the different art forms no longer need be compartmentalised. His entire oeuvre is the result of a synergy between disparate materials and media.

Ervinck is not a slave to art history. He manipulates and isolates elements in order to create his own visual language; filters information from the work of predecessors to then develop his own principles. His work reflects futurism through its search for constant movement. At the same time, he includes aspects of gothic, baroque, romantic and surrealist art.

Henry Moore's discovery of the hole in sculpture is for Ervinck one of the most significant turning points in the history of sculpture. By deliberately forming a cavity, the backdrop, the surrounding landscape, suddenly plays an active role. This created a new code of conduct that entailed a new visual idiom. Ervinck employs this idiom in his blob sculptures. They play tricks on the eye. The viewer feels the need to approach the sculptures, disappear into the cavities and to touch them in order to "see" them.

Making art signifies integrating oneself into the world of concrete action, of doing what others cannot. For Ervinck, it is not enough to sketch and develop concepts. As an artist, he feels the need to lift sculpture to a new level by employing the processes he invented himself.

#### IV

Ervinck's abstract, alien-like creations are the result of an amalgamation of the substantive roots

with new technologies and the continual investigation and purification of line and form. The artist draws in elements from a huge visual arsenal and blends them together to concoct new forms.

The sculptures possess aesthetic values within their own dynamic and freedom. They offer an amusing look at who we are.

It is not necessary to attribute a unique meaning to Ervinck's work. The artist constantly breaks down the barriers of reality with his structures and with the colours he uses. He challenges the viewer to question and to reinterpret his or her own perceptions. His poetic designs transport us to another dimension, where the imagination is given free rein. The actuality and the implausibility of Ervinck's fantasy world – with its links to computer games and futuristic tropes – merge together. Viewers become sunk in thought; feel alienated from themselves and their surroundings. The experience is an emotional one, dominated by a sense of wonder.

#### V

With regard to interdisciplinarity, Ervinck unites art and science in his work. The importance he places on this crossover results in innovative practices and spectacular designs. For example, Ervinck worked in partnership with scientists to develop his two series *human muta-*

tions and *plant mutations*, in order to add an extra dimension to both content and form.

Although the role of the artist may seem to be diametrically opposed to that of the scientist, the two disciplines can challenge each other. When such a confrontation occurs, reality is hit by the dazzling power of possibility. For the realisation of *AGRIEBORZ*, for example, Ervinck immersed himself in drawings from medical textbooks and in discussions with Dr Delaere, NTE doctor and face and neck surgeon. A “screaming” larynx emerges from a chaotic tangle of veins, nerves and muscles. Ervinck depicts the minutest details of both the interior and exterior of this piece. Since this organic tissue can never be part of a functioning body, it does not seem to fully exist and remains hovering in the domain of the virtual.

## VI

Ervinck stands at the helm of his universe but is not interested in the outward theatre of it. He is constantly moving forward, expanding his oeuvre and reframing his concepts.

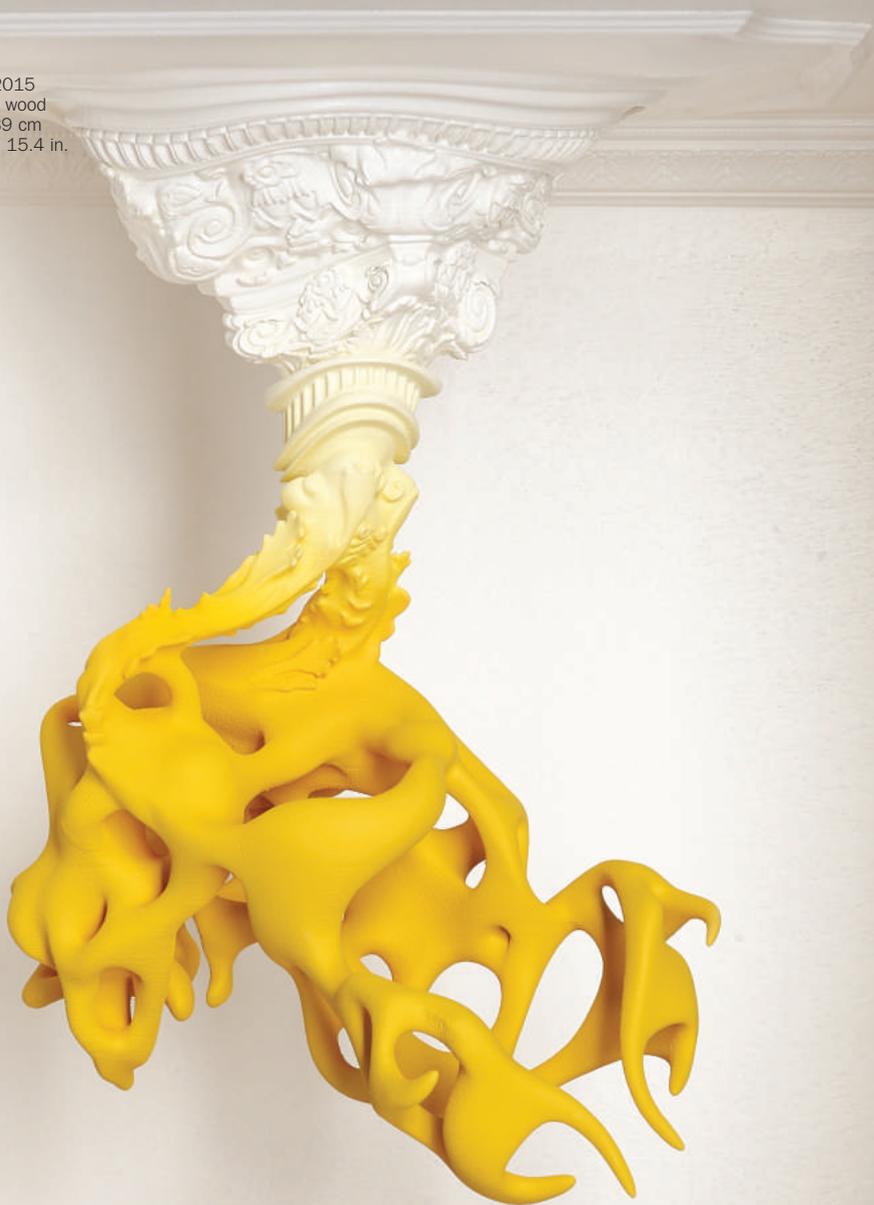
He is an open-minded artist for whom technology cannot evolve fast enough. The continuous search for the unknown and the inaccessible is simultaneously intriguing and terrifying. These elements constitute the challenge

within his artistic creative process, which consists of tirelessly developing new techniques to explore and depict the future.

The clash between the apocalyptic and the mundane is what makes Ervinck’s fantastic hybrid creatures so powerful and dynamic. He balances the energies of “the beauty and the beast” in each of his works so that the two are inseparable and all the more compelling for it.

Heleen Sabbe, Studio Nick Ervinck, 2016

i **KOMANIL**, 2015  
3D print and wood  
39 × 38 × 39 cm  
15.4 × 15 × 15.4 in.



**NABEKIESAV**, 2013–2014  
SLS 3D print  
58 × 29 × 52 cm  
22.8 × 11.4 × 20.5 in.



**EMOBCOR**, 2013–2014  
SLS 3D print  
58 × 35 × 31 cm  
22.8 × 13.8 × 12.2 in.



#### **NOITATUM**

The three “strawberry sculptures” AELBWARTS, NABEKIESAV and NABEKIARTS are the result of an exchange between Nick Ervinck and Dr A.P.M. Ton den Nijs, a scientist at the Plant Breeding Department of Wageningen University. This department holds a patent for the cultivation of a genetically manipulated variety of strawberry.

With NABEKIESAV, this hybridisation process is carried to the extreme. The leaves of the strawberry plant gradually change colour. A utopian, almost surreal strawberry seems to grow from the vase and be held together by a skeleton. The vase seems about to spring into life.

NABEKIESAV has both a poetic and a critical social dimension. On the one hand, the sculptural contradictions, such as inside/outside and rough/smooth, make this work purely poetic. This work questions how far we can or should go in manipulating food. Will we be able to create our own food in the future?

The influence of ikebana, the Japanese art of flower arranging, is very evident in NABEKIARTS.

In this traditional art form, the vase, stems and leaves are as much a part of the composition as the flowers. The focus is more on the shape and the lines than on the colours or the flowers themselves. Each arrangement must also include stems that symbolise heaven, earth and humanity.

The third source of inspiration for these works was a visit to the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. There, Ervinck saw a display of 18th century Meissen vases that were illustrated with an allegorical depiction of the four seasons. These flamboyant vases are lavishly decorated with plants, animals and creatures that can seem more beautiful than their originals in the natural world. While this porcelain is a testament to great craftsmanship, it also has an absurd side: a combination that Ervinck strongly admires.

With AELBWARTS, NABEKIESAV and NABEKIARTS, Ervinck investigates how he can use today’s techniques to transcend or continue the craftsmanship of the past. His 3D prints are also the result of meticulous craftsmanship.

**i** **AGRIEBORZ**, 2009–2010  
SLS 3D print  
53 × 34 × 33 cm  
20.9 × 13.4 × 13 in.



**i** **AGRIEBORZ**

This perfectly symmetrical cyborg figure was largely inspired by conversations between Nick Ervinck and Dr Pierre Delaere, a professor whose affiliation with Leuven University as a head and neck surgeon primarily concerns conducting research into larynx reconstruction. This dialogue resulted in a hybrid visual language situated somewhere between the organic and the mechanistic.

Ervinck used drawings from medical text books as the basis for the actual execution of AGRIEBORZ. From a chaos of veins, nerves and muscles emerges a bizarre larynx that seems as though it may be in the midst of a scream. Since this organic tissue can never be a functioning body it doesn't seem to fully exist and remains floating in the virtual world. Arrested in its process of becoming, AGRIEBORZ consists of two identities that turn on each other, that embrace and repel but never coalesce. The work reads as a balancing act between yin and yang, between good and evil.

The artist once heard someone say that nature is evil. This thought stayed with him.

**i** **SNIBURTAD**, 2011–2012  
SLS 3D print  
41 × 35 × 33 cm  
16.1 × 13.8 × 13 in.

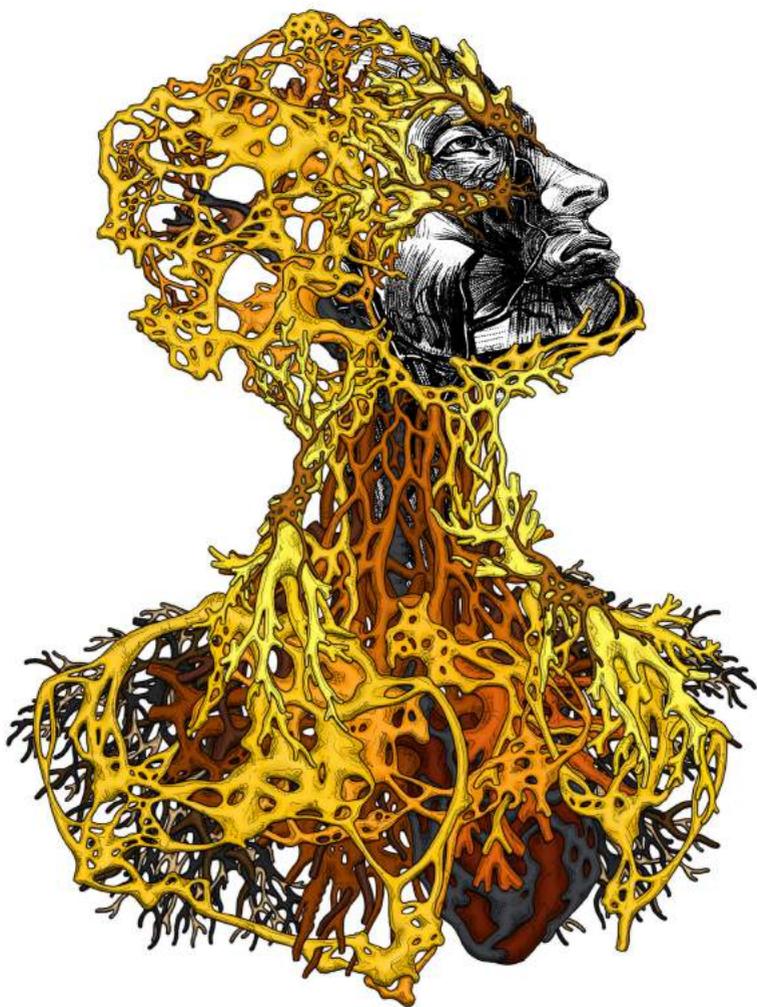


Blood will flow, life is a force that will always find a way and we are all survivors by instinct. This is also symbolised in AGRIEBORZ.

With this work, Ervinck not only refers to the increasing integration of medical technology into the human body but also to the intriguing potential of using living tissue as a technological material. For example, 3D models created from CAT scans have been used as the basis for actual replicas of human bones. The bio-printing technique, which enables scientists to print organs, will only become an increasingly bigger business in the future.

AGRIEBORZ exists as a 3D sculpture, a print, a lightbox and a large temporary wall print. The 3D sculpture is the result of a passionate quest and over a thousand hours of manual computer-aided drawing. This makes it the most complex work in Ervinck's oeuvre. Since this sculpture can only be spatially realised through 3D modelling and printing, it forms a direct challenge to classical sculpture.

i **AGRIENANUH, 2009-2016**  
print  
51 x 36 cm  
20.1 x 14.2 in.



ii **SEVALIS**, 2013-2014  
SLS 3D print  
60 x 36 x 28 cm  
23.6 x 14.2 x 11 in.



i **ESAVOBOR**, 2011–2012  
FDM 3D print  
45 × 61 × 53 cm  
17.7 × 24 × 20.9 in.



i **LAPIRSUB**, 2015–2016  
SLS 3D print  
68 × 35 × 43 cm  
26.8 × 13.8 × 16.9 in.



#### ESAVOBOR

In order to reconstruct the past, an archaeologist interprets historical remains. As an artist wondering how this discipline can be relevant for his sculpting practice, Nick Ervinck starts from fragmentary pieces to build up a new personal and digital space.

ESAVOBOR, recollecting a roman vase, is a hybrid entity which is build up with interconnecting parts. Ervinck never aims at closing this sculpture, he is rather interested in the aesthetics of unsounded reconstruction. ESAVOBOR looks like a transformer robot and heralds the possibility of a flexible metamorphosis: robots, as seen in popular sci-fi series and comics, are able to transform themselves easily. The artist proposes contemporary sculpture as an intermediate form which finds itself in a dynamic transitional phase. ESAVOBOR thus is a sculpture in flux.

Though this use of 3D computer graphics may suggest a confrontation between the ancient civilizations and a possible digital future, Nick Ervinck wards off this possible clash and initiates a constructive dialogue between present, future and past, between craft and technology, and between the virtual and the physical.

Ervinck's works recollect the inevitability of historical concepts and classifications, but at the same time he challenges this urge for artificial classification. ESAVOBOR thus reflects on our changing ways of thinking and feeling: the artist no longer makes art in order to represent the world, but rather to reinvent it.

**RACHT**, 2012  
SLS 3D print  
42 × 29 × 20 cm  
16.5 × 11.4 × 7.9 in.



**OKNALEH**, 2012  
FDM 3D print  
22 × 10.5 × 6.5 cm  
8.7 × 4.1 × 2.5 in.



#### RACHT / OIRNAT / OKNALEH

This series of small busts was inspired by the idols on display in the Gallo-Roman museum in Tongeren. As was the case for the LUIZADO statue, the design of these works was informed by archaeological finds such as helmets, armour and busts. A pedestal is still clearly visible in OIRNAT and functions as a base or backbone. For OKNALEH, Nick Ervinck used elements from the Viking culture, such as horns and helmets. The head of the RACHT sculpture is inspired by a knight's helmet as well as a Viking warrior's ponytale.

The artist appropriates history and bends it to his will. RACHT, OIRNAT and OKNALEH demonstrate how the past is experienced, interpreted and manipulated differently by every generation. These busts are almost literal embodiments of this distortion of the past. RACHT, OIRNAT and OKNALEH resemble guards protecting mysterious sanctuaries.

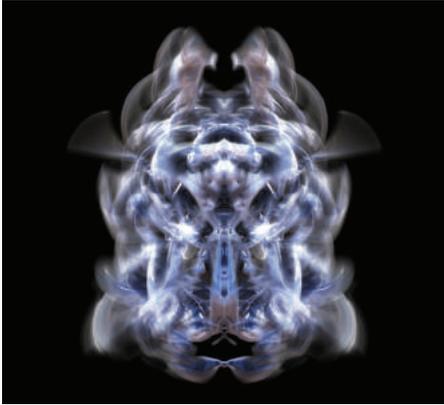
Unflinching, these compelling and fearsome beings prevent the viewer from going any further: they hide the realm beyond the tangible, control access to what can only be found in dreams. It is at this threshold between past and present that Ervinck likes to linger and orchestrate unexpected encounters.

While they seem monumental, these eclectic statues are constructed from empty spaces. Like Henry Moore, Ervinck uses these negative spaces as a positive force. Emptiness is an integral part of a sculpture and as such can even be perceived as volume.

NOITALS, 2015-2016  
SLS 3D print  
44 × 51 × 43 cm  
17.3 × 51 × 43 in.



i detail **NOITEAB**, 2012–2013  
lightbox  
104 x 89 x 14 cm  
40.9 x 35 x 5.5 in.



i detail **NOITULS**, 2012–2013  
lightbox  
154 x 154 x 14 cm  
60.6 x 60.6 x 5.5 in.



## NOITEM

Like a Rorschach inkblot, the NOITEM series can be interpreted from many different angles. The images, as delicate as spider webs and yet as hard as bone, leave the viewer feeling uncomfortable. They convey a sense of spirituality, religion and alienness all at once.

Nick Ervinck used the colour yellow as a starting point for this work and created a mysterious and poetic work that does not readily fall into any one category.

These creatures float in an infinite and indeterminate space like shadows from the past. This gives them the status of Nachbilder or afterimages, optical illusions that are burnt on the retina when the eyes suffer exposure to bright lights.

The presentation in lightboxes further reinforces the ephemeral and intangible nature of the “shadows”.

With NOITEM, Ervinck manages to capture the ephemeral using a concrete medium. He chose six images for further elaboration from thousands of designs.

These images were intertwined using different renders, each focused on reflection, colour and movement. This created an image that appears to have emerged straight from the virtual world but which cannot, in fact, simply be retrieved from the software.

The series is an homage to Eadweard James Muybridge (1830–1904), one of the pioneers of photography, who created the zoopraxiscope, a device that mimicked moving images. This groundbreaking invention inspired many 20th-century artists to endeavour to incorporate movement, emotion and time into their own artistic medium.

NOITEM is also the outcome of a similar quest for the free and dynamic form. Ervinck does not wish to merely revive this artistic tradition but to renew it and thus frames this experiment in the context of the 21st century. At his digital studio, he uses 3D software to explore the potential for innovation within this tradition.

**NARZTALPOKS**, 2009–2011  
light bulbs, polyester and polyurethane  
450 × 330 × 330 cm  
177.2 × 129.9 × 129.9 in.



**EMISOLB**, 2009–2013  
iron, polyester and polyurethane  
94 × 505 × 499 cm  
37 × 198.8 × 196.5 in.



#### **NARZTALPOKS**

The title NARZTALPOKS is vaguely derived from the words lantern and blob. This street lamp in two parts has an almost root-like, rhizomatic structure reminiscent of a mangrove tree. The work is a surreal presence in a public space.

The mangrove tree form derives from Nick Ervinck's fascination for bonsai trees that he found in Chinese souvenir shops and for the rocks hollowed out by water that he saw in the country's temple gardens. Like these tree structures, the trunk of NARZTALPOKS is grafted to the ground. It refers to what is invisible and yet undeniably there under the surface.

At the same time, the roots push upwards and forcefully draw the eye upwards to the "crown" of the lamp. There, four long stems or necks support four heads – dragon heads or arum lilies, depending on the eye of the beholder. When these heads light up at night, there is the illusion of either dripping water or melting lights.

Ervinck is not only interested in creating a fantasy world: his work is heavily influenced by art history.

NARZTALPOKS was designed in the spirit of the Parisian art nouveau. More specifically, the street lamp echoes the world famous designs for the Paris metro by Hector Guimard. Not only does Ervinck borrow the visual style of art nouveau and the arts and crafts movement, but also the alliance between the functional, practical and aesthetic.

**OLNETOP**, 2010–2012  
iron, polyester and polyurethane  
820 × 705 × 615 cm  
322.8 × 277.6 × 244.1 in.



#### OLNETOP

OLNETOP guards the coast on the cusp of the high and low tides. The sculpture gives shape to the interface of nature and technology. The hybrid form was inspired by macro photographic images of splashing water.

Like a beacon in the coastal landscape, OLNETOP represents the relentless force with which the sea crashes against the breakwaters. The sculpture is a biomorphic image of the sublime violence that lurks beneath the serene surface. The addition of three legs lends OLNETOP the air of being a living creature, a bizarre beachcomber.

For Nick Ervinck, the formation of irregular, complex structures through natural erosion is a constant source of inspiration. But while the sculpture demonstrates its roots in this process, it also owes its existence to the virtual dynamic. Experiments with advanced 3D animation software created a sculpture with futuristic elements.

At the same time, the artist remains faithful to the cultural heritage of his great influences Henry Moore and Hans Arp.

**MYRSTAW**, 2014  
3D print Veroclear  
42 × 40 × 20 cm  
16.5 × 15.7 × 20 in.



#### MYRSTAW

MYRSTAW has something monstrous, a hybrid shape in which one can recognize various elements. In its symmetry it almost has the likeness of an alien creature or even an idol ready to be worshipped. The work isn't clearly defined but points in different directions. Just like OLNETOP the imagery used is clearly inspired by macro photographic images of splashing water, and thus sculpturally interprets the encounter between nature and technology. This refers to some previous works such as NIEBLOY and IKRAUSIM.

Ervinck tries to catch this sublime violence lurking behind a serene surface. How natural erosion processes generate irregular, complex structures (e.g. the erosion of rocks by seawater) has always fascinated the artist.

Though inspired by natural dynamics, this sculpture is generated by the power of the virtual. Not liberated from the material by a process of depletion and carving, the virtual form itself rather becomes a generative principle. Although MYRSTAW is designed fully digitally, it is nevertheless tangible because of its manual execution.

**ERAETOBS**, 2015  
polyester and polyurethane  
67 x 56 x 43 cm  
26.4 x 22 x 16.9 in.



■ **NIEBLOY, 2009**  
iron, polyester and polyurethane  
325 × 350 × 230 cm  
128 × 137.8 × 90.6 in.



➤ **Parallelepipeda, M - Leuven, BE ,2010**  
Collection UZ Leuven - Leuven, BE

**LUIZAERC**, 2014-2015  
iron, concrete, polyester and polyurethane  
420 x 280 x 190 cm  
165.4 x 110.2 x 75 inches



**LUBZAERC**, 2012-2014  
SLS 3D print  
42 x 42 x 24 cm  
16.5 x 16.5 x 9.4 in.



#### LUIZADO / LUIZAERC / LUBZAERC

Although the Roman Saint Martin Chapel in Tongeren was demolished in 1803 to allow access between the Graanmarkt and the Vrijthof, this archaeological site still concealed a number of historical treasures. In 2010, two bases of a Roman Jupiter column were excavated. These remnants form the basis for Nick Ervinck's work LUIZADO.

LUIZADO is a striking bust presented on a monumental column. The piece is an eclectic mix of various elements, including Roman masks, vases and the outline of Hercules' bear mask. The new column appears to be a Dionysian riff on the stern Roman deities, a simultaneously insane and liberating dystopian construction, a god of explosive, fluctuating energy.

However, this column is anything but a reconstruction of a Roman artefact. LUIZADO is more of a personal pastiche of different elements that raises questions about the relationship between the statue and its context. Since Ervinck eschews historical fact, the

original mytho-religious connotations of the column disappear entirely leaving behind only an aesthetic value.

This stripping of the original meaning of something is also commonplace in the computer games and Hollywood movies that so intrigue Ervinck. One often sees a revival of the Greco-Roman past used together with futuristic elements.

LUIZADO is therefore essentially a hymn to the digital design process that enables designers to combine and transform diverse elements. The hybrid art form that results from it stands in opposition to the idea that the past is freely accessible and can be reconstructed in some non-ephemeral way.

LUIZAERC emerged from an image of the top of LUIZADO. While this sculpture is part of the same family, it is more abstract. This makes it a more mysterious and more powerful piece. LUIZAERC also recalls the extraordinary creature from the film *Alien* (1979), created by the artist H. R. Giger.

**IKRAUSIM**, 2009  
SLS 3D print  
60 × 46 × 35 cm  
23.6 × 18.1 × 13.8 in.



**KOLEKNAT**, 2010  
SLS 3D print  
44 × 44 × 34 cm  
17.3 × 17.3 × 13.4 in.



#### **IKRAUSIM**

During a stroll in the Yuyuan garden in Shanghai, Nick Ervinck became absorbed by the jagged, pierced rocks along the banks of the river Huangpu. The shapes reminded him of the sculptures of Henry Moore. Two worlds, the East and the West, that of the organic structures and that of digital blob architecture, inspired Ervinck to create a contemporary, futuristic rock sculpture. IKRAUSIM is a yellow, organic structure that seems to have been hollowed out from the inside.

Using digital design, Ervinck can go further than his predecessor, Henry Moore, could ever have imagined. However, when physically cutting a hole in a sculpture, the artist is subject to the limitations of his or her tools. With 3D printing, the envelope can be pushed much further.

This creates all sorts of potential. Instead of being restricted to one particular dimension or discipline, the artist is now free to move in various dimensions and return with images from the very edges of our imaginations.

IKRAUSIM makes reference to and questions examples from traditions in sculpture, painting and drawing. The latest 3D printing technology allows these complex structures to actually be materialised. In an accompanying animation, a camera takes the viewer inside the rocky chambers of the sculpture: a virtual walk through fascinating spaces within spaces.

IKRAUSIM comes in the form of a lightbox, 2D prints, a 3D print and a digital animation. Each medium explores another aspect of the material and other perspectives on this infinite form. Ervinck is engrossed in examining how a dialogue arises between a work and its various forms of expression. The sculpture and the animation are more than just the sum of each work. The animation gives viewers the desire to be assimilated into the sculpture; they seem to start seeing the sculpture move. The sculpture then gives viewers the sense that the gigantic caverns in the animation are real and that they themselves are wandering around inside them.

**EVORIARD**, 2015  
polyester and polyurethane  
37 × 52 × 58 cm  
14.6 × 20.5 × 22.8 in.



**i REWAUTAL**, 2015  
iron, polyester and  
polyurethane  
600 × 280 × 280 cm  
236.2 × 110.2 × 110.2 in.



**NIARGTZAG, 2012**  
wall print  
c. 2000 m<sup>2</sup>  
c. 21528 ft<sup>2</sup>



**BOLBEMIT, 2013–2014**  
wall painting  
c. 200 m<sup>2</sup>  
c. 2153 ft<sup>2</sup>



#### NIARGTZAG

For the exhibition Kanal (Roeselare, 2012), Nick Ervinck wrapped the facades of the Maselis grain plant in Roeselare in a giant wall print. In contrast to the artist Christo, who conceals the physical characteristics of a building, Ervinck projects a fantasy image of the building's internal functions, materials and production processes as well as its actual physical features on to the exterior. NIARGTZAG functions, therefore, as a surreal X-ray: it exposes what lies beneath the surface.

NIARGTZAG is an abstract representation of the production process. In this monumental print, black stains appear under brittle yellow shapes that seem to be deposited on top of them. However, the black substance doesn't simply let itself be subjugated. On the one hand, Ervinck depicts the duel between coal – the cargo that the first ships on this canal transported from factory to harbour – and grain, the reason for the existence of the plant and of the community that depended on it for jobs, while on the other hand the artist symbolises the age-old battle between good and evil. The black substance stands for evil, which is forced upwards, and the yellow substance

for good, which seems to come down from heaven. The two meet in the middle for an encounter that falls somewhere between an embrace and a fight.

The second layer of the wall print is a cross-section of the factory. The starting point for this work was not a blank canvas but an old factory full of interfering features, such as windows, drainage pipes, grates and so on. Using a classic grid structure and abstract planes of colour, Ervinck seeks to rationalise these obstructions into a visually provocative theme.

The grid structure and abstract areas of colour make reference to Mondrian and Donald Judd. Furthermore, the grid allows a greater potential for working with depth: the shapes appear on top of the grid in some places and under it in others. This allowed the obstructions to be depicted on the print, which actually accentuates them. The physical building becomes an integral part of the wall print since the drawing passes through, over and between the physical features.

**IMAGROD**, 2010 - 2012  
polyester and polyurethane  
600 x 400 x 300 cm  
236.2 x 157.5 x 118.1 in.



**WARSUBEC**, 2009  
wood, iron, polyester and polyurethane  
314 x 1222 x 647 cm  
123.6 x 481.1 x 254.7 in.



#### IMAGROD

IMAGROD is an ornamental yellow sculpture, installed at the front of the chapel of the military hospital in Ostend.

Referring to the giant 'gates of paradise' made by the Renaissance sculptor Lorenzo Ghiberti, Nick Ervinck interprets this gate as a trespass between the manual and the digital.

Though exploring the boundaries between sculpture, architecture and design, Nick Ervinck pays great respect to this cultural heritage. His design is inspired on the authentic doors of this chapel, but realised with contemporary materials (polyester).

The structure of IMAGROD seems to be the result of a spontaneous, natural erosion process (think for instance on how seawater hollows out rocks). Yet, the shining yellow finishing gives the sculpture the look of an artefact.

Moreover, Nick Ervinck refers to the fauna and flora, and specific to the sea with its hidden networks and corals. By doing so, he is indebted to Hans Arp and Henry Moore, two sculptors who introduced the organic and the void in their constructions. The work of Nick Ervinck runs parallel with the current architectural discourse concerning blobs and boxes.

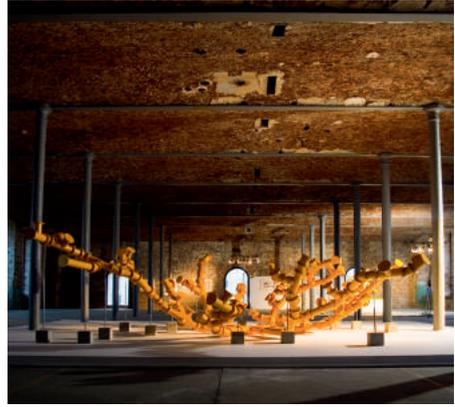
Resulting out of geometric and hard shapes, erratic, biomorphic and soft shapes come into being by using the computer. This evolution from the geometric to the organic is only possible by a control over the software.

In IMAGROD, the doors and window sills can be interpreted as blobs, while the chapel represents the box. The result of this game is a tension between old and new, between history and future.

**YARONULK**, 2009–2010  
SLS 3D print, SLA 3D print and plexi  
70 × 138 × 90 cm  
27.6 × 54.3 × 35.4 in.



**YAROTUBE**, 2007  
concrete, iron and PVC  
170 × 700 × 800 cm  
66.9 × 275.6 × 315 in.



#### **YARONULK**

One day, Nick Ervinck would like to create a 14 metre scale model of the Koekelberg Basilica – or perhaps even one measuring its actual 140 metre length. This would be a modular sculpture made from metal pipes connected with screws and would involve the design and manufacture of hundreds of different connectors. A complicated, many-sided tent would hang within the “Meccano” skeleton and serve as a video room.

The artist could show animated films here, including a virtual tour through the enormous tent – as though it was stretched out in the actual basilica. The tour would be so life-like, a scintillating hyperrealistic trompe-l’oeil, that visitors would have the impression that rather than viewing imaginary, digitally constructed images, they were seeing a filmed representation of the actual construction.

In anticipation of the 14 metre long version, Ervinck created a smaller scale model. Rather than a modular construction, this model consists of 3D prints that were printed in different materials in forty separate pieces and then assembled. The cage was treated to look rusty.

The tent was placed inside this skeleton after meticulous sanding and varnishing in yellow.

With this scale model, Ervinck looks beyond the static facade and shows us the supporting structure inside. As with the original in Brussels, the skeleton is composed of geometric volumes. The smooth surface of the many-sided tent contrasts with the rusty cage that imprisons it. The framework and the tent are respectively symbolic of static and nomadic architecture. This tension is contained in the title: YARO is an anagram that refers to organically growing coral and NULK is almost Cluny read backwards, a French city that houses a monastery whose church has a long architectural history.

Besides the scale model, Ervinck produced a digital drawing of this piece. The framework is a deliberately approximate copy of the original: the digital construction was placed in an idyllic setting that has little reference to reality. The artist thus plays with viewers’ expectations, transforming his memories of the original building into an imaginary architecture.

**i SIUTOBS, 2006–2008**  
wood, bricks, concrete, iron, polyester  
and polyurethane  
and wood  
55 × 192 × 135 cm  
21.7 × 75.6 × 53.1 in.



**i SIUTOBS**

The hybrid-like SIUTOBS has four manifestations: an animation, a working drawing, a scale model and a sculpture. An oversized yellow egg sits in the middle of the courtyard of a traditional house whose facade is perforated.

The house has no interior. Indeed, since the inside and outside of the facade is identical the basic premises of architecture are called into question. Inside and outside are reversed, the house has no volume, no protective roof or functional space. It is no longer a building but instead a sculpture.

The egg shape refers to the sublime in sculpture. It references Brancusi's sculpture *The Beginning of the World*: in the sculptor's own words, an object of perfect, albeit asymmetrical, beauty. Ervinck perceives the yellow egg as a kind of utopian scale model for a huge apartment building, fully clad in glass that is bright yellow from the outside but which simply functions as windows from the inside. Thus sculpture becomes architecture.

**i VIUNAP, 2013–2014**  
FDM 3D print, wood and polyester  
68 × 94 × 108 cm  
26.8 × 37 × 42.5 in.



The reflection of the walls of the house on the shiny, yellow surface allows the viewer to see the house from an unexpected perspective. With the absurd distortion and scaling-up, Ervinck plays with the viewer's expectations.

In this complex virtual world, opposing mechanistic and organic elements fuse together. Classic architecture is unfolded and injected with new life. The rustic "bric-à-brac" version of the sculpture is in stark contrast with the smooth, shiny surface of the egg or blob. The bricks represent the physical world of the past while the egg heralds the digital high-tech era of the 21st century. With this paradoxical symbiosis between egg and brick, Ervinck promotes a new architecture poised between rigidity and softness.

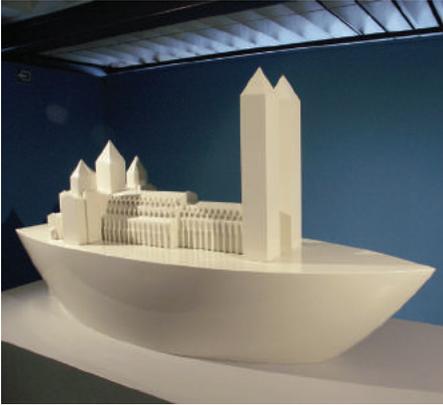
Since the traditional logic of functionality is transcended, one might even see SIUTOBS as a parallel world that is less subject to limitations. From there we can explore the uncertainty of what we call our "real" world.

i **EGATONK, 2009**  
print  
100 x 200 cm  
39.4 x 78.7 in.





**IEBANULK**, 2004 - 2006  
wood and polyester  
125 x 250 x 75 cm  
49.2 x 98.4 x 29.5 in.



**IENULKAR**, 2004 - 2006  
oak wood  
330 x 1105 x 475 cm  
129.9 x 435 x 187 in.



#### **IEBANULK**

The 20th century was characterized by a growing mobility, and consequently by a growing cultural exchange.

This exchanges sometimes resulted in a culture clash. Nick Ervinck tries to visualize the problems of our hypermobile culture by mounting the abbey of Cluny – a Benedictine monastery in France in Romanesque style, dating from the 10th to the early 12th century – on an enormous oil tanker.

IEBANULK can be interpreted as a hypermobile ark of Noah and has reminiscences to a Western Culture, which once was very powerful. By combining these two elements, the public is forced to observe in a different manner. While the dimensions of the tanker and the cathedral are perfectly balanced, the towers are raised beyond proportion.

Here, Ervinck points at a current 'tower of Babel-complex' in our society; a striving to build beyond the sky, in order to show off and to reach God, or at least to find the unknown.

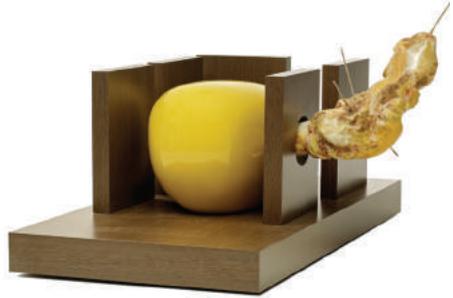
Yet, IEBANULK will never sail away, and therefore it is rather an empty meditative space. IEBANULK is designed fully digital and the lower part was moulded by a machine.

Resulting out of this working process is a symmetric form, with smooth curves, which are polished afterwards.

**XOBBEKOPS**, 2004–2007  
formica, wood and polyester  
120 × 156 × 100 cm  
47.2 × 61.4 × 39.4 in.



**ARCHISCUPT V**, 2004–2006  
wood, plastic, iron, styrofoam, plaster,  
chalk and gauze  
104 × 185 × 142 cm  
40.9 × 72.8 × 55.9 in.



#### XOBBEKOPS

In XOBBEKOPS, the sphere and the cube are manifested in the recurring motifs of the yellow blob and the wooden box. This experiment in form began life as an intuitive question: ‘How can an organic form emerge from this cube?’ The tension between blob and box is a critical factor in Nick Ervinck’s work. The architect Greg Lynn was the first to use the term “blob architecture”, in 1995. He thus described the organic computer-generated visual language that was so eagerly applied by the new generation of architects. The new architects put aside rigid, angular architecture to create round, organic forms instead. XOB-BEKOPS is one of Ervinck’s first blob shapes.

As with SIUTOBS, in XOBBEKOPS raw materials represent the physical world and the shiny shape represents the digital. Ervinck deliberately opposes conflicting visual languages: sphere/cube, outside/inside, sculpture/pedestal, vertical/horizontal. The same contradictions also return in the type of aesthetic and materials: rough/smooth, thin/thick, shiny/matte, natural/industrial. At the same time, the tension between the opposing elements requires the artist to seek a possible synthesis.

The organic shape seems to be trapped but also dominates the cage it is in. The result is a cross-pollination between art and architecture.

The sculpture Xobbekops originated from the desire for a fully controlled space. When Nick Ervinck first began to exhibit his work, he was often disturbed by the colour of the walls or the ceilings, the lighting or the type of flooring, a wall that was badly placed and so forth. In short, he did not have complete control of the space. So he decided to construct a space in which every element would be subject to his own will.

As with all Ervinck’s work, Xobbekops can be considered from various perspectives. For the artist, it is simultaneously a space, a scale model, a sculpture and a preliminary study for a monument or building.



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