

Overlooking the Rotterdam port, a breeze can be felt, intensifying into a strong wind. Generated by air curtains, *Commuter* (2024) by Katie Watchorn refers to constant movement and intercity living, typical of the Randstad experience. Often working in transitory spaces, the artist activates the “threshold” between inside and outside. An air curtain is a system typically used at the entrances of supermarkets to keep insects and dust out while regulating the air—warm in winter, cool in summer—in short, separating through what is formless.

The white noise produced by the machines has a meditative effect, permeating the rooms and studios of the building. Like mindfulness (the ever-productive person’s meditation), where the flow of noise (read: consciousness) pauses, the impact of the work becomes apparent in its absence. Click, click, click then off—until the motion sensor detects your body again, and the cycle repeats. Vertical columns of air fill Shimmer’s stairwells and the curves of the modernist building—oh, to undo, how lovely life could be.

Throughout the building, hidden behind Shimmer’s door, are thermoses—one a cast, three others ‘real,’ as real as an object can be when it keeps your drink warm for hours on end. These vessels mark the presence of people constantly on the move, those without time to pause for a coffee, who stretch a moment into an entire day. In this stretch, life becomes a series of in-between moments before being swept away by the wind. City living.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Katie Watchorn (b. 1992, Ireland; she/her) creates sculptural arrangements that explore a form of communication through the language of materials and objects, investigating the associations formed with these new encounters of domestic and commercial relics outside their usual contexts.

Exhausted in their original ‘real-world’ settings, the artist recontextualizes these objects in landscapes where a transference can occur between the materials and the viewer. Often, indirect representations of the body suggest its presence in the room through circulatory-like devices or advertising displays. Watchorn predominantly works with pre-existing

Commuter (2024)
by Katie Watchorn

Sunday 29 September 2024
until February 2025

materials, slowly growing an attachment and bond with the objects, meticulously forging connections over time and allowing them to operate on the same level as larger industrial systems in a non-hierarchical arrangement.

Recent presentations include *Underbelly* at De Ateliers, Amsterdam, 2024; *Move-Set-Move* group show at The Complex, Dublin, 2023; *From Here to There*, a three-person show at The Douglas Hyde Gallery, Dublin, 2021-2022; *Zero Grazing*, a solo show at Studio Pavilion, Glasgow International, 2021. Her solo show *Dry Brimming* will open at mother’s tankstation | Dublin in September 2024.

ABOUT THE BUILDING

The old RET building was designed in 1941 by the architects A. van der Steur, W.A.C. Herman de Groot and K.I. Ruige on behalf of the N.V. Handelscompagnie. Adrianus van der Steur (1893-1953) was city architect of the municipality of Rotterdam between 1931 and 1939. He designed, among other things, the Boijmans Van Beuningen Museum (1928-1935), the Maastunnel Complex (1935-1940) and the Eye Hospital (1941-1949). The building was completed in 1946 and expanded on the west side in 1953. The building was designed and built directly after the bombing of Rotterdam.

ARTWORK LIST

Commuter (2024) by Katie Watchorn

Two air curtains, arduino devices, approximately 7 minute program, pigmented jesmonite, thermal flasks, dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist.

ABOUT SHIMMER X AMARTE

Earlier this year, Shimmer x Amarte made a call for existing works that could be adapted for the stairwell leading up to our space. We encouraged artists to propose old ideas or existing works that could be modified for this project. By opening up Shimmer in this way, we continue to serve as a site of reflection for artists. Shimmer is proud to collaborate with x Amarte on this project.

X Amarte is a platform dedicated to supporting cultural organizations and institutions that focus on showcasing talented creators through various projects, open calls, and events.



Waalhaven Oostzijde 1
3087 BM Rotterdam
second level
Open Sundays 13:00 - 18:00

✉ shimmerrotterdam@gmail.com
🌐 www.shimmershimmer.org
📧 @shimmerrotterdam
📷 @shimmer_rotterdam