

MITTELMODA\_ALCANTARA Xs INT'L ROVING EXHIBITION\_Third Step

@ LA CAMBRE\_ Hotel Van De Velde

27-29 Avenue Roosevelt  
1050 Brussels  
Belgium

**Vernissage** 21st April 2005 at 6.00 pm

**Opening Days** \_ 22, 25, 26, 27, 28 and 29 April from 1.00 pm to 6.00 pm

It was **Veronique Mersch** and **Loubna El Amouri** who won the **Alcantara Xs Competition** last November 2004, and it was their exhibition displayed at La Cambre that we\_Federica\_Stefano\_Veronica did not want to miss for any reason!

And here we go ... in Treviso we took off in the very early morning of 20<sup>th</sup> May 2005 on a Ryanair flight directed to Brussels Charleroi Airport, where a rented car waited for us and drove us back and forth from Brussels to Antwerp during the 2 days of our stay ... Since the Vernissage was scheduled for 21<sup>st</sup> May 2005 at 6.00 pm, before that time we had some hours to spend with some friends of ours, with whom we enjoyed Belgian food, Belgian air, with whom we had interesting chats, many ideas' exchanges, nice laughs, Belgian *half & half* (an aperitif, for those who have never heard of it ... by the way, Tony, thanks a lot!).

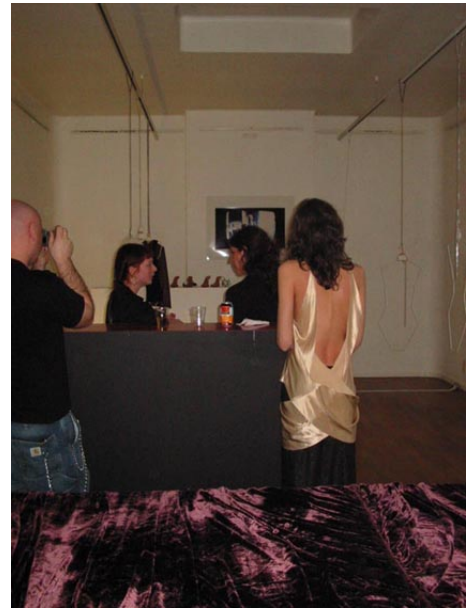
Well, first we reached our favourite B&B run by Carlotta, a nice Portuguese *madam* with an artistic inclination which stands out clearly enough by the very first glance at the different-coloured rooms she painted herself.



The second thing we did was to go to **La Cambre** and visit **Tony Delcampe** \_ *Head of Fashion Dept* @, who was waiting for us at some indefinite time in the middle of the afternoon. And after an interesting tour inside the big building of **La Cambre – ECOLE NATIONALE SUPERIEURE DES ARTES VISUALES**, set in a former ancient Abbey and surrounded by a magical atmosphere with a natural landscape, he drove us (no, not literally, just being our co-pilot!) to Wallis, a hype Belgian bar where to breathe a nice atmosphere and have a nice time.

It was really great to meet **Solange Thiry**\_ *Tony's assistant and friend*, and **Olivier Zeegers**\_ *New Designers' Passionate and Expert*, who joined us for dinner and with whom we had a great time, especially when we had to order food! Well, the restaurant, *Au Stekerlapatte*, was exactly what we looked for – a perfectly Belgian manner and style one – and, even though they were thinking we would be in trouble for the type of food being served, shifting between *pieds de porc*, cow's brains, and some blood mixed with sausage meat - well, we managed it with no problems as Stefano ate up his *pied de cochon*, while we escaped with a very good chicken course!

The following day we drove to Antwerp and met our friend **Emmanuel Verheyden**, *Pulp magazine's Editor & Art Director* for lunch. The place he chose was a bar, so that the choice on food was much easier! We had a great time with him, listening to his projects, and exchanging ideas ... interesting, indeed. Thanks Emmanuel and speak to you soon!



Once arrived at the Vernissage @ Hotel Van de Velde - where we got late considering the high level of traffic jam we were stuck into while coming back from Antwerp - the first thing that caught our attention was a kind of

wooden house reminding a beehive, set in the centre of the first and central room, while the music was playing on, and people were spread around, holding glasses, discretely chatting, looking at Veronique's video projection, at the installations around - Veronique's clothes hung up in a bright and enlightened space, while displayed in a dark room lit by a red light stood the collection of Loubna El Amouri and Jennifer Defays selected for ITS#FOUR!, happily puffing



(in Belgium it is still allowed to smoke almost everywhere!), some models were walking around wearing some of Veronique's last collection's clothes, on incredibly high heels – actually, Veronique's summer shoes are really nice and appreciated by everyone! - some others were bent down watching their friends creeping-crawling from under a long table ...

But we sensed that something was strange ... as it is, we came here, to Brussels, for the presentation of the 10 mini-collections which are touring all over the world, so, where are the small dummies then?



Here they are! The mini-collections had been set up under the table, which was totally covered in a velvet mantel except for one short side, which was left open to let people in. People, friends, children, in fact, were laying on the floor and followed a special path to be able to get near to the dummies and look at them properly. But at an attentive look, it was clear that one collection, the Belgian one, made by Veronique and Loubna, was missing. Missing under the table. Well, how could it have been different? Of course the winning one had deserved a different place to be set up, still more difficult to be properly seen and appreciated. It had been stock inside the wooden beehive, and you could see it looking through the peep-holes that it contained.

Veronique and Loubna, who were entertaining their guests, offering them drinks and checking that everything was fine, were tired but very excited by the experience, and happy for the way in which everything went.



On 22<sup>nd</sup> May, we had the chance to visit the new office/ exhibition space/ meeting point for creative people of **Ad!dict Creative Lab** and so we had the pleasure to have lunch with our friend [Jan Van Mol](#), *Ad!dict Creative Lab's Chief Creative Officer*. New projects, clever ideas, interesting tests, curious initiatives, different angles of perceptions ... all this and a lot more could be felt in the air. A huge old brewery – or better a place where the biers were bottled – is the building where today not only his Lab but also many interesting creative activities are being held and hosted, from theatre rehearsals, to meeting places, media offices, and so on. The lunch was *superb!* Belgian restaurant, as we pleased, and the menu was really great! Meat with potatoes, Belgian salads ...

Whether renting the car had been a bright idea or not had been difficult to say since the beginning of our trip. But on 22<sup>nd</sup> May, our last day in Belgium, it became clear that we could have done better without! Why? Because ... what about getting a fine for a wrong parking place, and what parking right under a big nest of spring birds, who enjoyed so much resting above your rented car that left an indefinite enormous sign of evidence we had to pay for not having the time to wash the whole car? And then, do you think that spending half of the time stuck

inside the car among the traffic while your flight is about to leave is a nice feeling? Of course not! But we managed, in the end!

As far as our Belgian stay is concerned, it was also very exciting to be able to share, though for a brief moment, our friends' projects, which are huge, interesting, searching and testing something new, fresh, creative, involving different people from different cultures and nations and backgrounds ... real projects still to be tasted, to be felt, to be made. It was great to realise once again that there are so many people with the same urge of trying to gather int'l talents and giving them a concrete chance of visibility ... each one in one's small or big office, according to one's own tools and personal contacts, and strength and visions. But sharing the same aim.



See you soon, Belgian friends!