



GRACE ELLEN BARKEY

Installations, performances,
photos and work on paper

GRACE ELLEN BARKEY

The artist, choreographer and performer Grace Ellen Barkey was born in Surabaya (Indonesia). She lives and works in Brussels and is a co-founder of Needcompany (1986), a house of artists.

Since 1992 she has been successfully building an international career with her own stage creations, whose nature lies where theatre, dance, live art and visual art meet. The musical dramaturgy is central to her work, and includes works by Gustav Mahler as well as Sonic Youth. In 2013 the iconic avant-garde American performance art collective The Residents has written music for her creation MUSH-ROOM. In FOREVER (2016), Grace Ellen Barkey raises the same questions as Mahler: "No one can sustain constant praise of life. Death or, rather, the finiteness of human life deserves a song or a dance too."

Grace Ellen Barkey is steadily building up a visual oeuvre of her own. Since 2016 she has been creating new site-specific installations. These installations form a study of the transposition from a space to a narrowness in which the viewer is invited to become part of a sensory work. Grace Ellen Barkey has been

collecting, photographing and filming flowers, leaves and other flora in her own town garden in Brussels and her immediate surroundings.

In the framework of *An exhibition with an audio script by Sarah Demeuse and Wendy Tronrud, as well as a soundtrack by Mario García Torres in collaboration with Sol Oosel* at Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art in Rotterdam in February 2019, Grace Ellen Barkey was invited to further explore and interpret the core themes of this exhibition – dropping out, retreat, refusal. In *Day and Night*, Barkey occupied the third floor with several installations and performative interventions. [Watch a video impression of this intervention at Witte de With](#)

Grace Ellen Barkey was part of the artistic duo Lemm&Barkey, together with Lot Lemm. Their work has been exhibited at several museums including BOZAR (Brussels), Benaki Museum (Athens), Musée des Arts décoratifs (Paris), CC Strombeek, Dr. Guislain museum (Gent), Triënnale Hasselt / Superbodies i.a.



photo: Asad Hoogendoorn

Magnolia
Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art
Rotterdam



photo: Aad Hoogendoorn

Magnolia
Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art
Rotterdam



photo: Aad Hoogendoorn

Performance
Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art
Rotterdam



photo: Asad Hoogendoorn

Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art
Rotterdam



photo: Phile Deprez

Studio MILL
Brussels







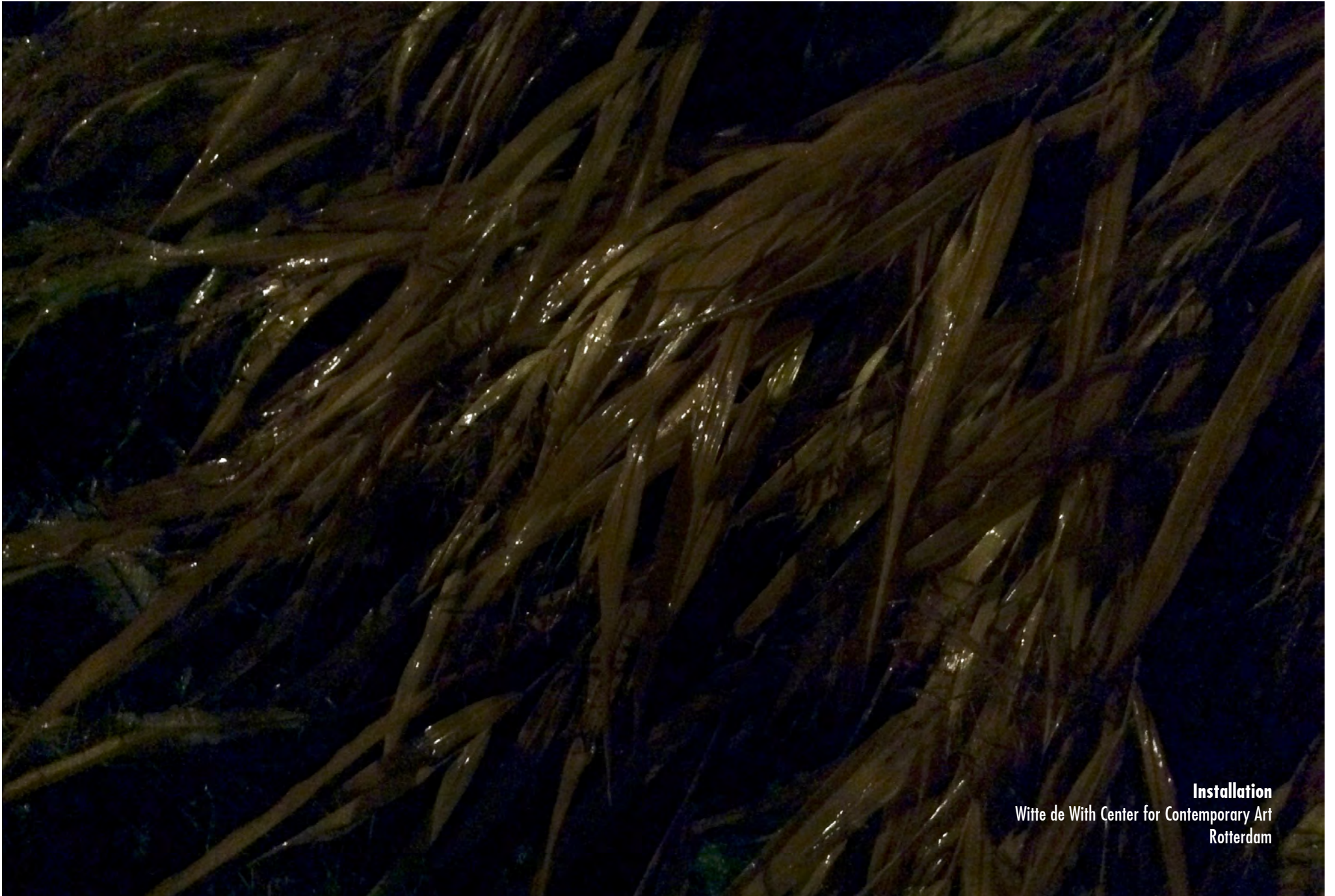
photo: Aad Hoogendoorn

Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art
Rotterdam



photo: Jeroen Geffings

Performance
Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art
Rotterdam



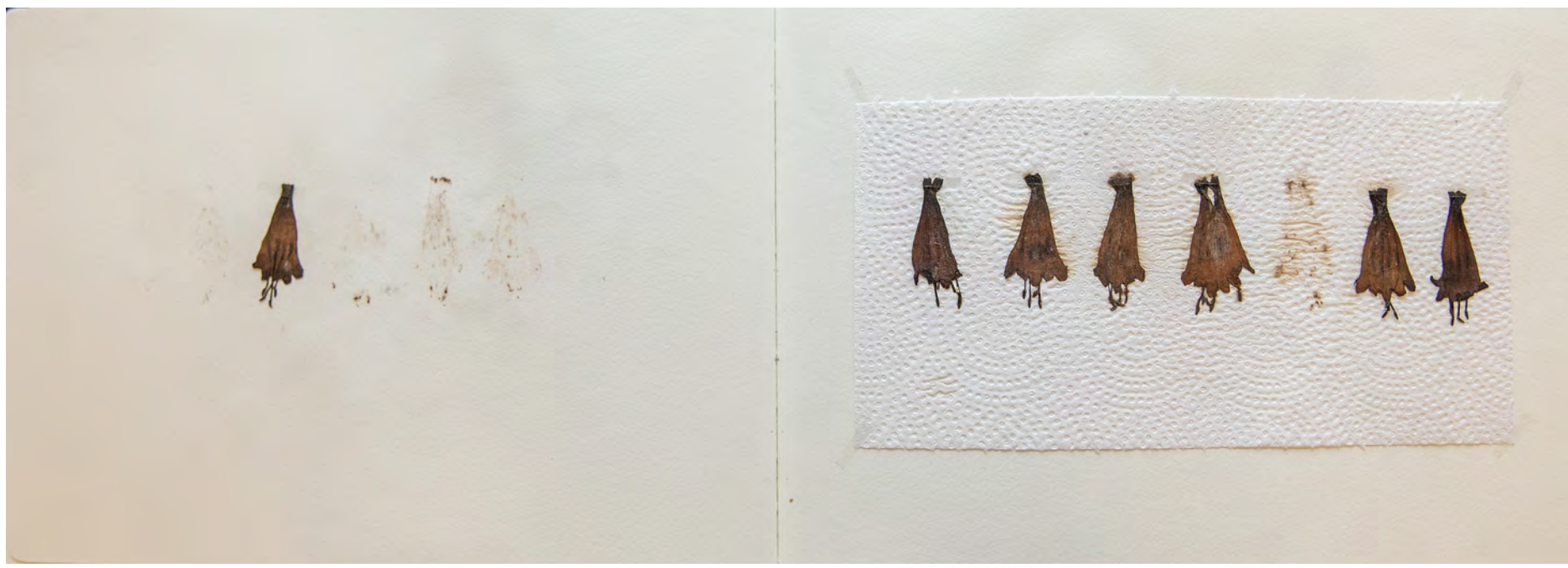
Installation
Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art
Rotterdam



photo: Aad Hoogendoorn

Performance
Witte de With Center for Contemporary Art
Rotterdam

Works on paper





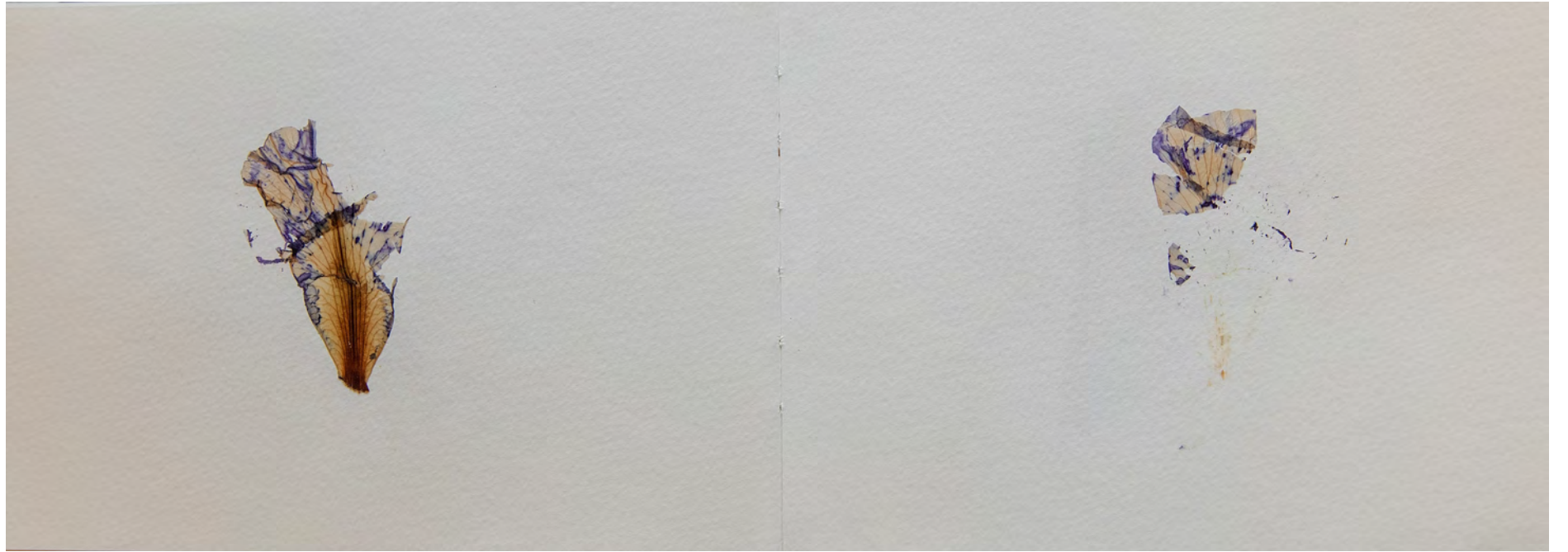




photo: Sophie Nuytten

Installation
CC Strombeek

“ Grace films a flower for hours on end. Slowly and obsessively. As if she wants to know what all the dead have missed when they took too quick a look, or didn't dare to look alone in case it was too much. She says: 'Art is all about the solitude of looking.' And as if that were not enough, she projects her images and puts the spectator on a swing. The spectator literally feels the ground vanishing from under his feet. Looking becomes a physical sensation. A feeling that refers to childhood. In that instance it is no longer about the solitude of looking, but about the solitude of the viewer himself. She herself planted all the flowers that she films in her small garden somewhere in Brussels. The magnolia, the first to stubbornly make a fool of winter. A sign of hope, but filmed by Grace as if the magnolia flower were already in the distant past. It's quite something, artists and nature. Cézanne spent his whole life trying to capture the beauty of a mountain, but failed miserably. Monet designed his own garden so as to paint it. Derek Jarman's stone garden. Now there's Grace, who is trying to fathom the whole of life in her own garden.

- Jan Lauwers



photo: Filip Van Zandvycke

Installation
MILL
Brussels

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My installations are an examination of the transposition of a space to a confinedness. I have filmed the flowers, leaves and grass in my garden for a number of years. So much under the impression of the details of nature that it is no longer nature; they become abstractions, and the birds appropriate the image and their singing distorts into a hysterical sound.

- **Grace Ellen Barkey**

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