The Bulletin
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Get out and get positive with the Brussels, I Love You gallery crawl

CULTURE SPONSORED 18:00 08/01/2021

In association with BILY. Please note: this event has been postponed to an as-yet unknown date later in 2021

While expats get a kick out of complaining about Belgium's capital city, they are quick to defend it should anyone from outside do so. That's because, while it might be human nature to air our grievances, we also know what a cool and beautiful place Brussels can be.

The city punches above its weight when it comes to culture in general, and its plethora of art galleries is no different. The event Brussels, I Love You – affectionately known as BILY – wants you to pop into them one by one, discovering the capital as you go.

"The goal of BILY is to get people to explore the city of Brussels, to discover new cultural places, to be adventurous, to fall in love with the city," says Eleonora Antico, an Italian expat who works for BILY. "We are trying to make cultural spots as accessible as possible."

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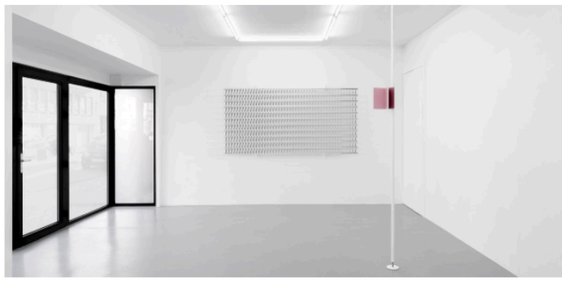

Installations by Portuguese artist Fernanda Fragateiro is on view at the Irene Laub gallery

So BILY offers a walking map to the galleries, which are spread all across the capital. Whether you choose your own neighbourhood and enter spaces you never have before or choose a completely unfamiliar neighbourhood, you'll see something new.

"BILY also includes museums," says Antico. "This year the Art et Marges museum in Marolles is taking part. And new this year are artists' studios, with artists opening up their workspaces to the public."

One of those artists is Christopher Coppers, whose work can be as political as it is crowd-pleasing. In one of his most recent international exhibitions he created sculptures of animals out of spend rifle bullets. He is best known, however, for his intricate works made from old magazines and books, transforming them into striking designs that do not resemble the raw material at all.

Anais Gaudemer of the celebrated Cokoa patisserie in Ixelles is one of the chefs contributing to BILY's culinary experience

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One theme that runs through BILY this year is the place of women in the arts – as subject, artist, gallery owner and curator. Many galleries have shows dedicated to women artists, including Almine Rech, which is featuring portraiture work by New York painter Chloe Wise, and the Irene Laub Gallery, which turns over part of its vast exhibition space to architecture-inspired installations by Portuguese artist Fernanda Fragateiro.

All this exploring would make anyone a little hungry, but you don't have to pack your own sandwich: BILY has a foodie side to it as well. The chef's walk, explains Antico, "is a culinary experience. This is the sixth edition of BILY, so we have six local chefs who offer little dishes in six of the galleries."

In keeping with coronavirus regulations, the morsels are boxed up for visitors to take-away. Some of the dishes have been created in collaboration with the gallery and reflect it or its exhibitions in one way or another. Others are simply original creations by the chef.

You won't find the list of galleries hosting chefs on the website, so let us clue you in: Chefs are handing out delicacies at La Patinoire Royale and La Forest Divonne in Saint-Gilles, Amine Rech and Spazio Nobile in Ixelles and Mier Gallery and Art22 in Brussels-City.

BILY and the associated bites are free to visitors. "We really invite everyone to this new edition of BILY," says Antico, "and we are also very glad that we can support the cultural and the catering sectors in this difficult time."

Brussels, I Love You has been postponed

Written by **The Bulletin with BILY**

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