

cultural capital of europe

BRUGGE 2002

V. OFF THE BEATEN TRACK

Why deny it? We have a predilection for the unexpected. BRUGGE 2002 does not merely want to be a signboard for what it has already proved and for what will certainly go down in the history books, but it also wants to provide a forum for new stimuli, for contrary thinkers, for projects that do not walk the chalk-line of Great Art, but dare to erase it in a single sweeping movement and redraw it in higgledy-piggledy fashion. Because tradition – a word that is inextricably linked with this city – can only exist by the grace of the new, and vice versa. Because culture is the constantly evolving result of forces that dare to clash. “One follows a great example most faithfully if one does not follow it, for it was through turning away from its predecessor that the example became great”, said John Ashbery (USA), a leading poet of our age.

The title ‘off the beaten track’ conceals numerous diverse projects, which will come to the surface in 2002, gasping for air and stamping with impatience. Projects which for various reasons create that feeling of escaping, which take a stand against rules of thumb, laws and practical objections.

Free spirits and sanctuaries

Free spirits and sanctuaries, dangerous words to use. All too quickly and all too easily the title becomes a trendy collective name for something that only seemingly defies the proprieties. But we are definitely planning to sully the unblemished blazon of the city. For instance, we would like to make the highly evocative warehouses next to the Gistfabriek (yeast factory) available to young people for video art and other activities. We would also like to pilot the restored fishing factory ship the **Stubnitz** from Rostock in Germany to Bruges. The ship is a temple of culture, a hip party venue, multimedia centre, printing works with all the associated paraphernalia, and work space for artists all rolled into one. A place where the alternative music scene, video art, small-scale theatre and performance can meet and challenge each other. The Stubnitz should become a sanctuary in Bruges and also a prefiguration of what a truly vibrant place for young people could be like in and after 2002.

A STORY IN THE MAKING