

Gwendoline Robin: earth, wind and fire

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The Brussels-based visual and performance artist Gwendoline Robin has developed an international reputation with work that explores the relationship between humanity and nature. Her new creation A.G.U.A. confronts the elements head-on.

> **Kunstenfestivaldesarts**

Gwendoline Robin: "In the visual arts, you rarely see the artists themselves in the process of creating their works. I thought it would be interesting to show this aspect as well. That is how I came to combine performance in my work. The audience becomes an active witness."

Robin works at the intersection of the sculptural and the poetic and the scientific. She does not shy away from

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have always loved working with materials that you cannot completely control. The performances are often related to natural elements like water, fire, or earth. Volcanoes, geysers, the desert: these are all sources of inspiration. The humble position of human beings in the face of these strong elements is the leitmotif of these performances.”



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— GWENDOLIN ROBIN

A number of journeys also played a role in the creation of *A.G.U.A.* “Crossing the Atacama Desert in Chile, one of the driest places in the world, it inspired me to use the image of a huge plain where water is very scarce and valuable. There is also an interesting film about the Atacama Desert, *Nostalgia de la luz*, by Patricio Guzmán. It links the desert to stardust and the comets in the cosmos that leave their traces on earth. While at a festival in Punta Arenas in Patagonia, I also became fascinated by the stories of the disappeared indigenous people, whose rituals and songs still attest to a relationship with nature that was about harmonious coexistence.”

Voices add an extra layer to the performance, which also features the dancer Louise Vanneste. “We are not singers, so our sounds are more like a vague memory of the songs of the old tribes. Louise’s presence helps to make you feel the loneliness of the great plains.” Finally, there is also a subtle link to science

because the Festival de Liège put Robin in touch with professors of oceanology and astronomy who provided her with instruments and techniques. (MB)

> **Gwendoline Robin A.G.U.A. 18** > 20/5, Les Halles

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