

## Disconnected / Reconnected (#2)

Edition Maastricht (NL): 15 September to 10 December, 2022

©Jonathan Wanders, September 15, 2022

With the project *Disconnected / Reconnected*, artist Jonathan Wanders wants to excite and challenge people. To give rise to thoughts and conversations. It is a call for an open dialogue, in which the themes of freedom and connectedness are central, explored and questioned. *Disconnected / Reconnected* does this by seeking confrontation with our collective recent history and shows how it is connected to our situation today, as a starting point for conducting a dialogue. In a special way, iconic events are experienced in a local setting and a different perspective is offered to a wide audience.

### Freedom

The realization that peace and freedom cannot be taken for granted is passed on with this project to current and future generations in an innovative, provocative and challenging way. Our freedom to come and go wherever we want, was severely limited during the corona crisis. Subsequently, the war in Ukraine started in February 2022 due to a large-scale Russian invasion. The images of the art installation remind us of these and other shocking events that influenced and still affect our freedoms. They stimulate the awareness that the world does not stop at the boundaries of their own living and residential area. The process of disconnecting to (re) connecting, from *disconnected* to *reconnected*.

The images themselves are not shocking, rather peaceful. Nevertheless, it is an ominous peace. Maastricht has lived in freedom since its liberation on September 14, 1944, but what does freedom or peace mean in a globalized world if attacks, conflicts, wars and human rights violations continue to take place and the number of refugees continues to increase? What is our responsibility as liberated people?

### Second edition: September 15 to December 10, 2022

After the landscape context of Reijmerstok during the first edition, the second edition will take place in the urban environment of Maastricht. The installation can be seen from 15 September to 10 December 2022 at the passage on the Petrus Regoutsquare, between the iconic Eiffel building (Sphinx building) and the Sphinx car park on the Frontensingel. The Sphinxquarter is the new cultural and creative heart of the city. September 15 is the International Day of Democracy and a day after the liberation of Maastricht in 1944. December 10 is Human Rights Day.

The installation at the Sphinxquarter consists of six images of iconic events placed in the local setting of Maastricht and its region. The images are composed of photos, taken with a smartphone in the municipalities of Maastricht, Gulpen-Wittem and Eijsden-Margraten, in combination with censoring color areas, creating a highly abstracted translation of the events.

### From left to right the following images can be seen:

- Theo van Gogh, 2004. Charlie Hebdo, 2015 / Grote Staat, Maastricht
- MH17, 2014 / Field, Wittem
- Alan Kurdi, 2015 / Day beach, Oost-Maarland
- Brussels, 2016 / Train station, Eijsden
- George Floyd, 2020 / Boschstraat, Maastricht
- Capitol Attack, 2021 / City Hall, Maastricht

The images refer to tragic events, yet Jonathan is optimistic and sees the future positively. “The past makes who we are, but the future determines what we do and become. It is up to us to decide what we take into the future. As a society we gradually have all the means at our disposal, now it is important to use them correctly. That also means that we have to confront and seek for connections, as a starting point for conducting a dialogue.”

### **Image culture and the role of the smartphone**

People today probably see more images on one day than someone 100 years ago in their entire life. What does this do to us? It seems as if we are becoming indifferent and even immune to all the miserable news and the accompanying images we keep confronted with.

The photos of the installation were taken with a smartphone in the form of snapshots as posted everywhere on social media today. This form ensures more involvement of the spectators than the use of professional photos. After all, anyone could have taken the photo themselves. Since the introduction of the smartphone, everyone could be a potential photographer and reporter.

Today our lives are inextricably connected to the smartphone. We follow the world with it and record our lives with it. Sometimes this seems like an addiction, something negative, also in relation to privacy. For countless refugees, however, the smartphone is extremely valuable and indispensable as a means of communication with their family or for determining a safe route. Many owe their lives to their smartphones.

The installation stimulates visitors to visit the locations themselves and to look up the iconic events with their smartphone. The smartphone as a tool in the process from disconnecting to (re)connecting.

### **Process**

Disconnected / Reconnected is, like many of Jonathan's projects, part of a continuous process. Just as life is a process: a fluid movement with loose and fixed connections. Disconnected / Reconnected is a follow-up to Jonathan's projects such as: Refugees (#1), Remembrance Road (#3), Memorial Wall (#2) and I can't breathe.

### **Exclusive photography art prints for sale in limited edition**

Exclusive photography art prints of each of the eight images (from both editions) of Disconnected / Reconnected are offered on large format, in a limited edition of 25.

An exclusive photography art print costs € 100 (ex. shipping costs) and is:

- + Printed in a limited edition of 25.
- + In large format of 40 x 30 cm.
- + Printed on special photo paper with matte finish: Ilford Studio Matt 235 gsm.
- + Signed on the back (verso).

Extra included:

- + A certificate of authenticity.
- + A printout of the detailed explanation of the artwork Disconnected / Reconnected.
- + The art print comes in a sturdy envelope.

Interested? Questions? Send an email to [info@jonathanwanders.com](mailto:info@jonathanwanders.com).

**Title: *Disconnected / Reconnected (#2)***

*Location: Petrus Regoutsquare, Sphinxquarter, Maastricht (NL). The installation is located at the passage on the Petrus Regoutsquare, between the Sphinx building (Eiffel building) and the Sphinx parking lot on the Frontensingel. Address: Petrus Regoutplein, Maastricht. The installation is publicly accessible 24/7.*

*Process: November 2020 to September 2022.*

*Period installation: September 15 to December 10, 2022.*

*Material installation: 7 dibond boards with full color print and matt protective laminate. 7 metal frames with aluminum-look coating.*

*Dimensions: The installation consists of 6 image boards and 1 information board. Each board is 1.2 m wide x 0.9 m high x 4 mm thick, clamped in a metal frame. Bottom of the signs: 1.1 m above ground level, top of the signs: 2 m. Dimensions of the poles of metal frames: 50 x 50 mm. Total width of the installation: 70 m.*

*Initiative: Jonathan Wanders.*

*Financing and donors (edition 1 and 2): Province of Limburg, Foundation Brand Cultuurfonds Limburg, Prince Bernard Cultuurfonds, Municipality of Maastricht, Foundation Kanunnik Salden / Nieuwenhof, Elisabeth Strouven Fund, Municipality of Gulpen-Wittem, Foundation Art Buro Limburg, Edmond Hustinx Foundation, Cooperative Fund Rabobank Zuid-Limburg Oost, HeusschenCopier Landschapskracht, Foundation Fonds voor Sociale Instellingen, carlabloemen.nu and all donors of Voordekunst.*

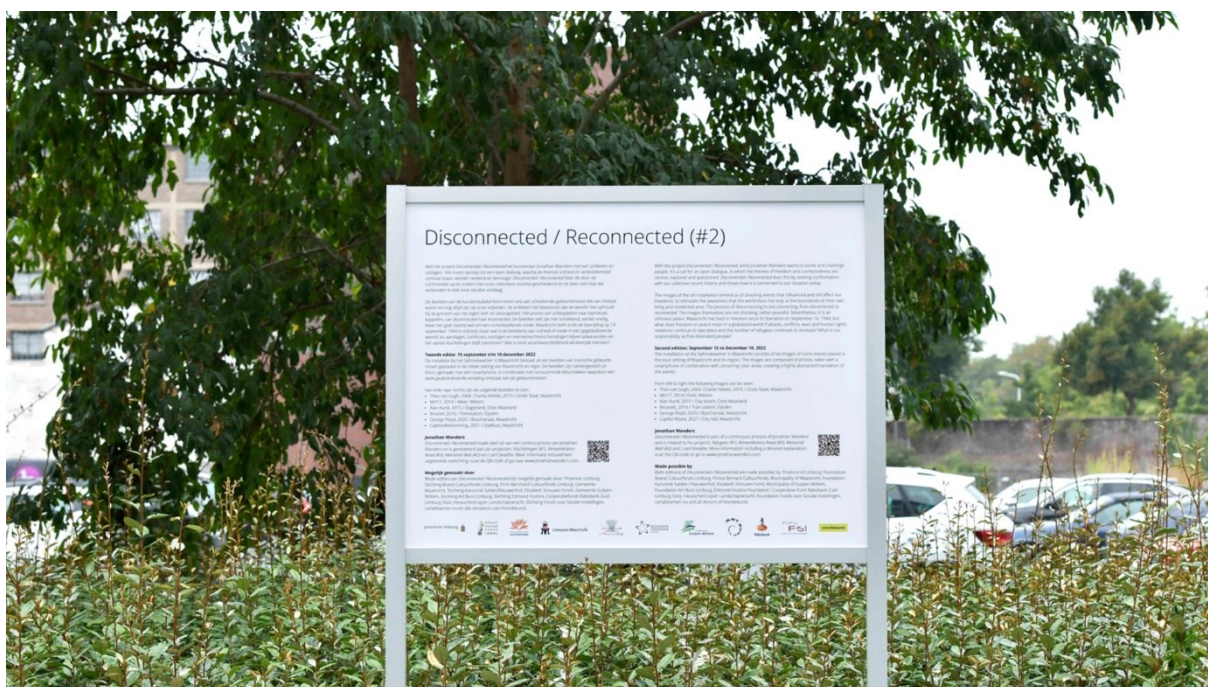
*Photos: Ralph Sluysmans.*

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Installation Maastricht: September 15 to December 10, 2022



The six image boards of the installation *Disconnected / Reconnected* (#2) as seen in Maastricht in the period from September 15 to December 10, 2022.



The information board of the installation *Disconnected / Reconnected* (#2) as seen in Maastricht in the period from September 15 to December 10, 2022.

## General explanation of images of the installation

Each image is explained on the following pages.

All images refer to tragic, iconic events from our recent history. To enhance the unpleasant experience for the viewer, without actually showing macabre details, Jonathan Wanders has given the photos a desolate, clinical and unheimlich feeling. People or human activities cannot be seen on any image. Not in a normally busy shopping street or a city square in Maastricht, not on the beach. The images show predominantly gray, not very bright shades with cloud cover. This also creates a sharp contrast with the bright color areas. These color areas are positioned in such a way that they unbalance the symmetrically photographed images. Between the censoring color areas and the viewer, the potential photographer, a tension arises between distance and proximity, attraction and repulsion. At such a distance that you can see the "victim" well enough out of a sense of curiosity. But at a safe distance, without getting involved.

Theo van Gogh, 2004. Charlie Hebdo, 2015 / Grote Staat, Maastricht



This image refers to two tragic, iconic events where freedom of expression is central: the murder of Theo van Gogh on November 2, 2004 and the attack on Charlie Hebdo on January 7, 2015. Attacks that took place (partly) in the street. The blue color area refers to the French cop who was shot in cold blood in the street. The gruesome images of this have left an indelible impression on Jonathan. Both the first photo of the murdered Theo van Gogh and the video of the murdered cop were taken with mobile phones.

The photo was taken in one of the most famous shopping streets in the Netherlands: Grote Staat, Maastricht. A busy shopping street where people come to consume, relax, unburden and maintain social contacts. Linking the tragic events to such a public place reveals a reality that we want to escape while shopping. The unheimlich feeling is reinforced by the absence of people in a normally busy place, the car in the background and the gray colors.

The Dinghuis (with turret) adds an extra layer to the image. This was a medieval courthouse. Prison cells were located in the cellars, and later elsewhere in the building.

That the photo was taken during the Covid-19 period can be deduced from the white flags (with rainbow) and the white stripe on the street. A period in which we again experience that freedom cannot be taken for granted.

MH17, 2014 / Field, Wittem







A field in Wittem with in the background the striking row of Italian poplars on the border with Eys. These trees give the landscape its special Tuscan appearance. A recurring image in many tourist expressions to promote this region. A well-known tourist region where people come to relax and enjoy a carefree holiday.

Holiday flight MH17 was on its way from Schiphol to Kuala Lumpur when the Boeing 777 was shot down by a missile over the war zone of eastern Ukraine on 17 July 2014. All 298 occupants are killed, including 196 Dutch. Photos of the consequences of this disaster show wreckage, victims and their belongings scattered over a landscape similar to that in South Limburg.

The colored areas symbolize the victims of the MH17. The red and blue color refer to the colors of Malaysia Airlines, which were seen on the wreckage, and the flag of Russia.

On November 25, 1944, close to this spot, behind Monastery Wittem, the 20-year-old American pilot James W. Jeter crashed with his plane. He was killed because his parachute did not open. Jeter accompanied bombers that would attack oil installations in Germany. On September 13, 2020, a war memorial was unveiled for him at the intersection of Wittem, opposite the gas station.

Alan Kurdi, 2015 / Day beach, Oost-Maarland



This image refers to the death of the Syrian boy Alan Kurdi. On September 2, 2015, he washed up dead on the Turkish beach. Drowned in an attempt to flee in search of safety and a better life in Europe. A dream that ended in a nightmare. The whole family had died. Only the father survived.

This event most affected Jonathan. Children stand for innocence, for the future. He himself has a young son.

The rectangle refers to the red T-shirt that Alan was wearing. The photo was taken at the day beach of Oost-Maarland. A place for recreation and relaxation. Just 1 kilometer from this place, dozens of refugees jumped from a truck on the A2 highway, near Gronsveld and Eijsden, in both April and August 2019. A number of refugees were arrested, some remained without a trace. There were also minors.

*More info and articles (in Dutch) in relation to the above theme and context (Maastricht region):*

- [https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20190411\\_00100806/calais-bij-gronsveld](https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20190411_00100806/calais-bij-gronsveld)
- [https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20190807\\_00117604/zeker-niet-de-eerste-verstekelingen-die-in-limburg-uit-eeen-truck-klimmen](https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20190807_00117604/zeker-niet-de-eerste-verstekelingen-die-in-limburg-uit-eeen-truck-klimmen)
- *Stowaways jump from truck on parking lot A2 (28 October 2020):*  
[https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20201028\\_94493480](https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20201028_94493480) +  
<https://www.burgernet.nl/burgernet/3178643>
- *Arab boy (10) shows up without family at gas station: "He came alone from Syria " (28 October 2020):* [https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20201028\\_94919058](https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20201028_94919058)  
*Reconstruction: migrant Tran Ngoc Hieu suffocated in a refrigerated truck of death after he left Cadier en Keer shelter (October 18, 2020):*  
[https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20201018\\_92739693](https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20201018_92739693)

Brussels, 2016 / Train station, Eijsden



The train station in Eijsden. From here you are within 1.5 hours by train in Brussels. On March 22, 2016, the attacks in the Brussels metro (Maalbeek) and at Zaventem airport took place. Dozens of deaths and many injuries resulted. This image refers to perhaps the most famous image of the attacks in Brussels: the two injured women sitting on a bench at Zaventem airport shortly after the explosions. A photo taken by Georgian journalist Ketevan Kardava, with her cell phone.

The colors, white and red, were chosen because of their symbolic meaning, the contrast effect and because they were already part of the color palette of the image series. The color white represents innocence and peace. Red represents blood, life and war. The colors contrast nicely with the background and with each other.

In the early morning of 10 November 1918, the station in Eijsden was world news thanks to the fleeing German Kaiser Wilhelm II. The emperor had applied for asylum in the neutral Netherlands and had to wait until the morning of November 12 at Eijsden station before he received the message that his application for asylum had been approved. In the meantime, the armistice had been signed on 11 November 1918. The end of the First World War,

George Floyd, 2020 / Boschstraat, Maastricht

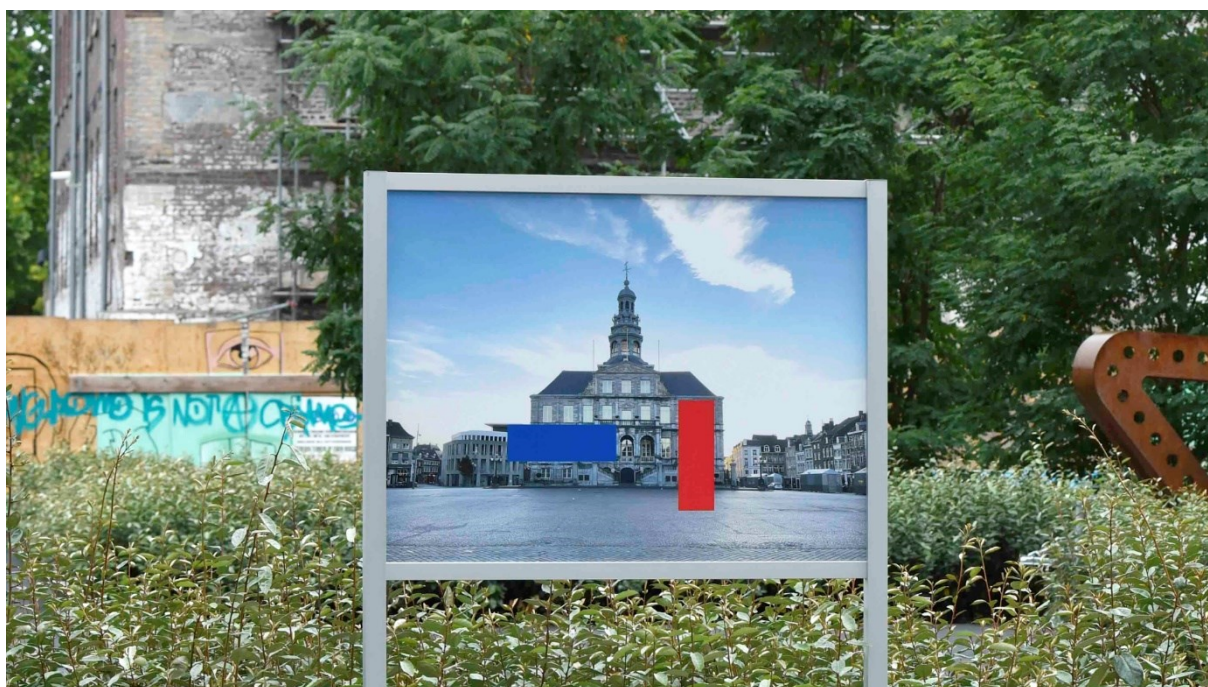
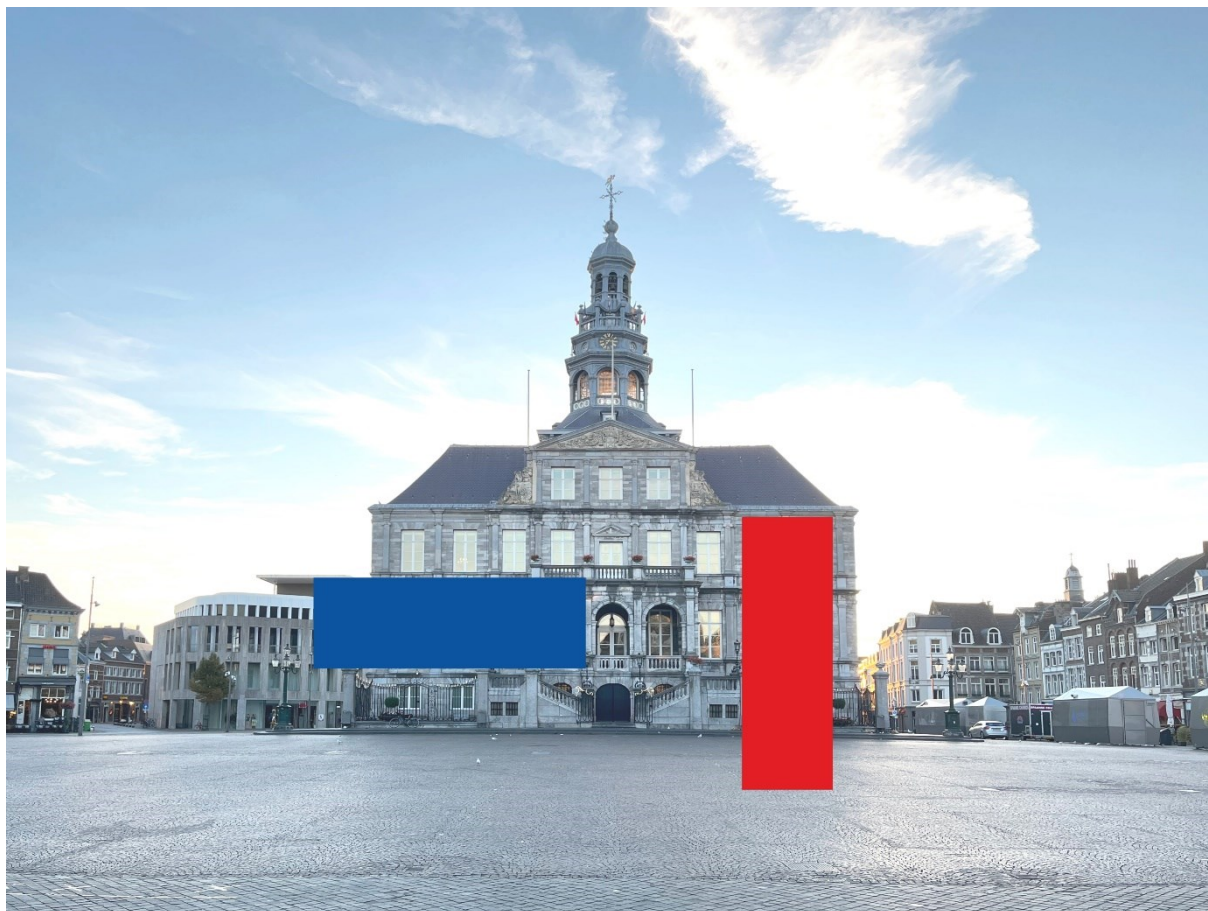


For the second edition of *Disconnected / Reconnected*, the two image boards 'Twin Towers, 2001 / -----, -----' and 'Christchurch. Sri Lanka, 2019 / Basilica of Saint Servatius, Maastricht' have been replaced by 2 new image boards with more recent and relevant themes: 'George Floyd, 2020 / Boschstraat, Maastricht' and 'Capitol Attack, 2021 / City Hall, Maastricht'.

The image 'George Floyd, 2020 / Boschstraat, Maastricht' refers to the murder of George Floyd on May 25, 2020 in Minneapolis. Floyd, 46, an African-American man, died after police officer Derek Chauvin pressed his knee on Floyd's neck for more than eight minutes while he lay handcuffed with his stomach in the street. Following this tragic event - which became world news - Black Lives Matter's following grew internationally, gained worldwide attention and many protests against racism took place. Also in the Netherlands and Maastricht.

Given the event, the context and the themes of racism, equality and diversity that are central to this image, the colors white and black have been chosen. The shop in the background, AfroShop Giselle Wato, adds an extra layer to the image. The location is close to the installation site on the Petrus Regoutsquare.

Capitol Attack, 2021 / City Hall, Maastricht





The image 'Capitol Attack, 2021 / City Hall, Maastricht' refers to the storming of the Capitol in the American capital Washington D.C. by ardent supporters of the Republican American president, Donald Trump, on January 6, 2021. Trump and his associates have convinced many Americans that the election victory of his Democratic rival, Joe Biden, has been stolen. It led to an unprecedented attack on American democracy.

This event showed once again - which was also exposed during the corona crisis - how vulnerable and polarized the world is today. A divided society where there seems to be no unity anymore. The heart of democracy has been attacked by people who are convinced of different facts and hold a different truth. This manifested itself in verbal, but also physical and even deadly violence. Something similar, but on a smaller scale, took place at the GGD in Heerlen (NL) in February 2022 when activists accused employees of a GGD vaccination site in Heerlen of genocide.

The red and blue colored areas symbolize the Republicans and Democrats and also refer to the flags of America and the Netherlands. The town hall is within walking distance of the installation site on the Petrus Regoutsquare.

*The article 'Activists accuse GGD employees in Heerlen of genocide ...' can be read here (in Dutch):*  
[https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20220210\\_95485295](https://www.limburger.nl/cnt/dmf20220210_95485295)