



PRESS RELEASE

# VANISHED STUDIOS

10/03/2022 – 22/01/2023



Autrique House  
Chaussée de Haecht, 266 - 1030 Brussels  
[www.autrique.be](http://www.autrique.be)

# VANISHED STUDIOS. ARTISANS IN THEIR HOME...

10/03/2022 – 22/01/2023

Artists and craftspeople... Studios are the best places where arts and crafts create synergies: tapestry, stained glass, sculpture, painting and sgraffito.

The Autrique House presents these artists' studios in Schaerbeek and their remarkable cultural legacy, and invites the visitors to wander through the surrounding streets, whose windows and glass roofs will reveal all their secrets.

With the support of:  
Raymonde Van Vaerenbergh  
Yole Devaux  
Accarain-Bouillot Architectes Associés  
Laurence Brogniez  
Tatiana Debroux  
Loterie Nationale  
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Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles  
Commune de Schaerbeek  
Invicta Art  
SPF/FOD Economie  
Université Libre de Bruxelles

Illustration: Etienne Schröder, based on a drawing by Privat Livemont

M A I S O N



AUTRIQUE

Wednesday to Sunday  
From 12pm to 6pm  
Chaussée de Haecht, 266 - 1030 Brussels  
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*La goutte de lait [The milk drop]*, 1917, Privat Antoine Théodore Livemont

## ARTISTS' STUDIOS

In former times, artists' studios had been concentrated in the city centre; in the 19th century, however, there was a general relocation of these spaces to the north-east of the capital. As plots of land could be purchased there quite cheaply, municipalities such as Schaerbeek attracted a number of skilled craftspeople, whose standing rose from that of artisan to the more prestigious status of creative artist. In this way, they were able to have vast homes-cum-studios built for themselves.

The first artists who chose to live near the Porte de Schaerbeek attracted pupils keen to learn in private studios. Art schools were established, thereby providing teachers with a regular income. Exhibitions of works by local artists were held; these became highly renowned, due to the number of participants involved.

The aim of our exhibition is to illustrate the link between artists and artisans. A number of 19th-century Belgian artists came from humble backgrounds. Their early training, therefore, took place in the artisanal context. This traditional apprenticeship was supplemented with a part-time education, provided by the newly established municipal schools of applied arts. Privat Livemont was a renowned teacher at the Schaerbeek school. The purpose of these institutions was to develop first-class artisans from among the young people who arrived equipped with the School Certificate that became compulsory in 1914.

One of the characteristics of this period was that artists, artisans and the middle classes were all brought together within the city. Studios became laboratories, introducing a new type of architectural and decorative arrangement into rapidly growing districts and municipalities. New examples of architectural vocabulary emerged: glass roofs, attic spaces, displays of assorted accumulated objects, etc. "Studio visits" became fashionable in their own right, promoting a particular idea of the artists and boosting the sale of art objects.

## TAPESTRIES

Georges Chaudoir (1890-1969), who was actively assisted by his wife Suzanne Perot, is seen as the key figure in the revitalisation of the art of tapestry making, which had been so highly developed in Brussels in former times. Sadly, however, he was also the last representative of this activity, for which the city had been renowned over several centuries.

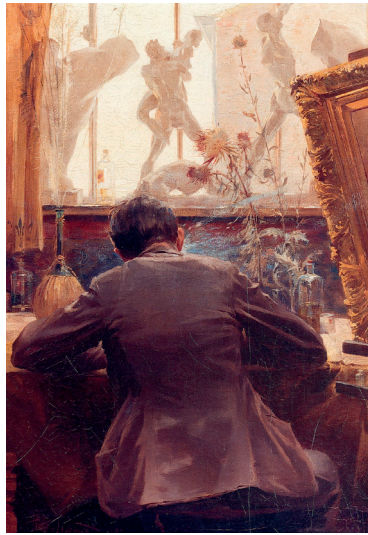
Following his death in 1969, his family continued in the business until Suzanne Perot died in 1984. This marked the end of the last Brussels-based manufacturing enterprise which had the exclusive right to display the initials BB (Bruxella in Brabantia).

Besides Georges Chaudoir himself, a number of painters, including José Crunelle, devoted their talents to creating tapestry designs for this studio. José Crunelle (1924-2012) was a versatile artist (an artistic decorator, painter, engraver and illustrator) from Belgium. He is known to have created dozens of decorative and monumental tapestries. From 1950 to the late 1990s, he produced designs for the master tapestry maker Georges Chaudoir and for the Gaspard De Wit manufacturing company at Malines (Mechelen).

The exhibition features two of his tapestries: *Allégorie de Bruxelles* [*Allegory of Brussels*] (1957) and *L'Emplumé* [*Plumed*] (1975). The latter is in dialogue with the work of the young artist Brigitte Coric. Her costume *L'Emmuré* [*Walled in*] is inspired by the wallpapers and textiles of the Autrique House, the patterns and the colour chart which adorn its walls. A strip of Morris & Co. wallpaper, *Chrysanthemum*, was reproduced by hand and then silkscreened at the workshop of the École de Recherche Graphique (ESA Saint-Luc Brussels) on the yokes of the garment.



*Allégorie de Bruxelles* [*Allegory of Brussels*], 1957, José Crunelle, SPF/FOD Economie



*À l'atelier (portrait du peintre Ruytinx) [At the studio (portrait of the painter Ruytinx)],*  
1899, Privat Antoine Théodore Livemont  
© Municipal collection of Schaerbeek

## PAINTINGS

The painter Alfred Ruytinx was Privat Livemont's nephew. Ruytinx, viewed from the back, is depicted in Privat Livemont's painting *A l'atelier [At the Studio]* (1899). His house-cum-studio, located at 17 Rue Vogler, was built in 1906. Privat Livemont adorned the façade with a sgraffito decoration, endowing the house with a highly original character. We should mention here that Livemont – an all-round artist – also lived in Schaerbeek. Although he is less famous internationally than Mucha, he numbers among the great artists of the Art Nouveau period.

Yvonne Vonnot Viollet, as she is known, was a Post-Impressionist and Luminist artist. She was the unrecognised daughter of the painter Victor Viollet-le-Duc, and, therefore, the granddaughter of the famous architect. As the student and partner of Oswald Poreau, she moved into the Vogler studio after Ruytinx. Her canvases depicting Walloon Brabant (*Matin de Mai [May Morning]*) and Brittany (*Le Crépuscule [Twilight]*) have a remarkably fresh quality.

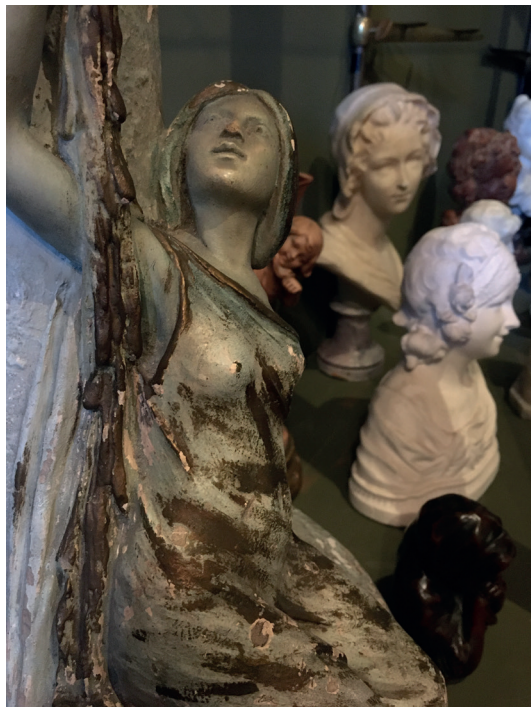


*Matin de mai [May morning],* 1931, Yvonne Vonnot-Viollet  
© Municipal collection of Schaerbeek

## SCULPTURES

There are few documents attesting to the statuary making activities carried out by the A. Carli Frères establishments. The firm moved to the premises at 48 Rue l'Olivier in Schaerbeek in 1907. Their stand at the 1910 Brussels Exhibition included a publicity notice that gave a fairly good idea of their varied output: "Producers of artistic works in bronze, marble and terracotta, as well as compositions: we export to every country. The company is highly renowned for its finely finished results and the affordable prices of its works of art". And indeed, busts by Carli are more or less everywhere to be found, not only in Belgium, but also in Europe and even in the United States.

One of their sculptors made a particular impression, namely Gustave Van Vaerenbergh (1873-1927), a little-known inhabitant of Schaerbeek whose sensitive works stood midway between Romanticism and Symbolism. Born in Ghent in 1873, he arrived in Schaerbeek in 1902. He worked for the Carli brothers' enterprise until 1925. He mainly created busts, using different materials: marble, bronze, regulus metal, terracotta and plaster. For middle class clients he chiefly produced busts of women and children. Some of the more elaborate examples of such works bear his signature, these being female busts in gilded bronze and white marble or alabaster, which echo the refined and luxurious quality of chryselephantine pieces. Van Vaerenbergh was highly prolific, not only in terms of the number of models he produced (over 200), but also in terms of the different versions of the same model that he created, using a variety of materials.



Sculptures, Gustave Van Vaerenbergh (A. Carli Frères Establishments), collection of Raymonde Van Vaerenbergh



*Le feu – projet de vitrail [Fire – stained-glass window project], 1920, Henri Quittelier*

## STAINED-GLASS WINDOWS

The studios formerly belonging to the stained glass artist Florent-Prosper Colpaert were built in the Art Deco style from the designs made by the architect Adolphe Deboodt in 1929. The focus of interest for this exhibition is Henri Quittelier's collaboration with F.-P. Colpaert. Quittelier was an artist who produced paintings, etchings and engravings. A former combattant in the First World War, in 1920 he had the good fortune to be commissioned to create 24 designs for stained glass windows to decorate the Council Chamber in Schaerbeek's Municipal Hall (not to be confused with the windows in the Wedding Room!) These were then produced by Colpaert.

## PRACTICAL INFORMATION

### INTERVIEWS

Etienne Schröder (manager of the Autrique House)  
Alexandra Rolland (director of the Autrique House)

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