



Visual Arts Artistic Crafts Belgium Cultural Synergies

Emma the small giant takes over the city of Kortrijk

Emma is Kortrijk's new urban giant, bringing back one of the city's old traditions.

Emma is Kortrijk's new urban giant. Bolwerk Cultural Organisation was the driving force behind the creation of this endearing giant puppet. Not only in terms of design and production but also as initiator of an innovative and participatory process involving inhabitants of the city and various partners from the public and private sector.

As in other cities and countries in Europe, Kortrijk has a tradition of historical giants representing the spirit of the city and its inhabitants. For Kortrijk, the couple Manten and Kalle represented many things over time: eternal love, mercantilism, innovation.

By the 1990s, the giants at the time were damaged and neglected. Eventually, they disappeared. At the beginning of the legislature in 2012, the new city council expressed a desire to reinvent the pair of giants.

When this desire of the city crossed the Bolwerk project "The Giants" (2015), everything gained momentum.

In 2015, Bolwerk submitted a project to the Flemish Government to work in an innovative way on the intangible heritage of giant culture. Central to the dossier: a contemporary and participatory approach with an emphasis on an interactive process of co-design.

The new giants symbolize a modern city: dynamic and innovative - both by process and result. They appeal to all citizens, including newcomers and people from different cultural backgrounds. The making of the new giants also provided opportunities for the creative sector. To secure the new giants for the future, cooperative management is a must. The principles call for a pathway that allows citizens to help conceive, design and create the new giants.

Find more about the project [here](#)

