

Preface

## **Why him, why us, why now**

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Biography

## **The trajectory of an outsider architect**

*Young Marcel Raymaekers starts and stops architecture school, chooses art school instead; disgruntled with mainstream architecture and also with his own house designs, he discovers salvage; uses the license and expertise of Jos Witters, architect, to kick off his practice; they assemble dozens of villas - eclectic, maximalist, decadent, virtuoso - across Belgium; he builds his own chateau of salvage, Queen of the South, a cultural and antiques hub, before tragedies and bankruptcy (of his own making) hollow out his empire*

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Raymaekers' architecture

## **A selection of projects**

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Chapter 1

## **The spoils of modernization, or: Raymaekers' building blocks**

*The historic, geological, and economic forces facilitating Raymaekers' work; the materials and objects he worked with, and where he got them from; how their availability was the result of postwar modernization and its peculiar manifestations in the Flemish landscape; his paradoxical relationship with modernization*

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Chapter 2

## **A museum where everything is for sale, or: Queen of the South**

*Building Europe's finest salvage emporium - and a rural entertainment hub - where Belgium's middle class and nouveaux riches could dream of nobility; how Queen of the South performed - feeding, flattering, and ravishing its visitors - and how it functioned as a household; how Raymaekers became a bankrupt tenant of his own empire*

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Chapter 3

## **Ad hoc chateaux, or: Raymaekers' design strategies**

*The rebellious roots of his eclecticism; how he used old materials to subvert modernism's smoothness and reintroduce surprise, extravagance, and evidence of time and labor; how he embraced glitches and pushed materials to their limits; and the meaning of his fortress-palace-brothel design code*

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Chapter 4

## **The improvising bouwmeester,\* or: how Raymaekers' buildings got built**

*\*Master builder, from the middle ages, responsible for materials, design, construction, workforce, and client liaison. Raymaekers rejected the modern diminution of the architect's role, embracing instead on-site conversation, empowering his contractors, evading planning regulations, and mobilizing his clients as salvagers and laborers, all the while seizing unforeseen design opportunities, whatever the consequences*

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Epilogue

## **Learning from Raymaekers in the 21st Century**

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## **List of known works**

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## **Bibliography, colophon, list of images**

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