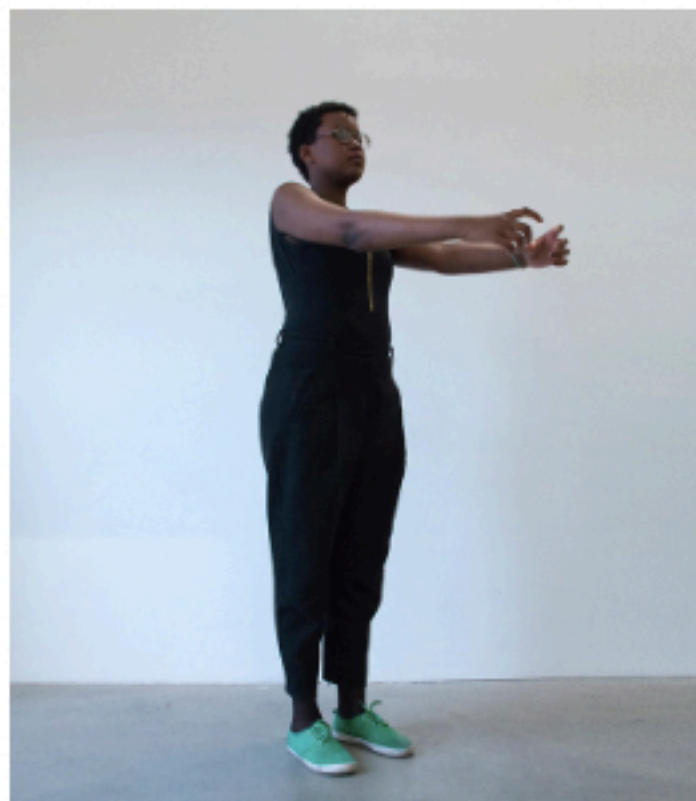


EXPO REVIEW EN

Sonia Niwemahoro: absurd lives, simple actions

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The young Rwandan artist Sonia Niwemahoro, who has lived in Belgium for the last fifteen years, was a laureate of Art'Contest in 2013 and recently had a residency at Wiels. You can see her work in a new exhibition at the Elsene/Ixelles Museum, after passing through the museum's permanent collection. While her small-scale exposition mainly consists of videos, they are on display not so much as the work of a video artist, but rather as documentation, as traces preserved by a performing artist. The principle is the same in each case: a simple action (or non-action) takes place in a single location, recorded in a static shot by a camera on a stand, with a soundtrack made up of what was recorded live: cars approaching and then moving away, the rustling of an aluminium foil wrapping being torn, the wind shaking the branches of the trees... No Viennese-style self-mutilation or trickling blood here: the gestures are calm and the most spectacular acts ("pseudo-dangerous", as Niwemahoro says) consist in dissolving four effervescent Dafalgan tablets in a closed mouth or setting up a hair-dressing salon alongside a road. As if she was not

intervening at all, with a composure worthy of Buster Keaton, Niwemahoro inserts little disconnections into reality, causing inside and outside, private and public, art and the everyday to coexist. Some useful lessons in calmly coming to terms with the absurd side of our lives.

SONIA NIWEMAHORO: WINNER ART'CONTEST 2013

> 3/5, Museum van Elsene/Musée d'Ixelles, www.museumvanelsene.be, www.museedixelles.be