## Intro

So nice to see you here!

This is the platform where I speak about my work and it is taking the shape of an easy **conversation** between you and me.

There is a lot I want to share but I wouldn’t know where to begin. So here is the deal: you are the one to navigate and decide what you get to read about. And I’ll just go with your flow.

As we chat, you will see some keywords appear in **bold** or *italic*. By sending these words in, I will respond by displaying the matching information.

You can call them at any time in the flow of your navigation.

I can start with my **existing** **works** or my ongoing *themes* of reflection. I can tell you about my *latest* *news,* or I can speak a little bit *about myself*?

You’re my guest! How shall we start?

## Bold

Correct.

“Bold” is indeed a keyword. You’re so meta!

It redirects to the actual works I make, either **existing** ones or in the **forecast**.

You can either read about my latest production **Silicon** **Mountain**, or the research around it **.ext**. You also have **Travail!** that is in development.

FYI, in *italic,* you have the *transversal* *themes.* Wanna check?

## exisiting works

A good part of my existing works were produced in the frame of a long research called .**ext** wich I lead between 2019 and 2022.

The most prominent object I produced in this frame is the performance **Silicon Mountain**. But you also have **BULK, intuit®,** or the **Stone Beauty Contest.**

Before .**ext** I co-created a dance duet called **duet** with my colleague and friend Dan Mussett.

And next to that I developed the *design* of two versions of my website as artistic *internet* objects: a **2016** edition and this current **conversation.**

## Ext

\_.ext\_ is the name of a 3 year long research that started in October 2019 by an opening residency at Maison des Métallos in Paris. It started as an exploration of my practice of mountaineering, (a cornerstone in my personal life) coupled to a study of the figure of the mountaineer. The first observation was that this practice is situated in a specific socio-cultural context (white, educated, masculine, privileged) and is contingent to our western history. A legacy of unspoken rules pre-scripts the whole practice, imposing re-enactment as default behavior. It structures our desires, our perceptions, our subjective experience and our ethos when we are in *nature*.

My working hypothesis was: what we call nature is a dedicated space where we perform an idea of Nature.   
From there, journaling, reading and speculating were my tools to inspect the limits of that hypothesis. Speculating was one of the *action* *verbs* that drove my practice, next to what arised as a *research* *methodology*.

For example **Silicon Mountain** speculates on the contemplation of nature under the pressure of *technology*, **BULK** on the commodification of hiking, **intuit®** on our faith in Gore-tex, and **Stone Beauty contest** on the origins of beauty in *nature*.

Even if the research is officially completed, it pervades the upcoming ideas I have for my **work** **forecast**. Some themes are invariably present such as *nature*, *technology*, *internet*.

## Silicon Mountain

Silicon Mountain© is the main outcome of the .**ext** research. It is a performance that speculates on what contemplation of nature means today. It opens with a look back into history. We listen to contemplative descriptions of sublime landscapes, taken from the literature of the Golden Age of Alpinism (1860-1890). Then the performance makes us dive into the mind of a genius Silicon Valley *entrepreneur*. He announces the launch of an App for smartphones that emulates the sensation of being immersed in nature. Like this, our longing for beauty in nature is solved once and for good. The performance further proceeds by letting the audience navigate through his Contemplation-of-Nature App.

Choreography, text, lights, image, web-design… Silicon Mountain© displays various media in unprecedented ways. The historical text is a collage of several authors from that period. The light and scenography create eerie seductive artificial tableaus. The photos and web-design revisit traditional representations of landscape, adding the time dimension to them. The images become one infinite landscape you can scroll, swipe or tap. It’s really beautiful. WiFi, HTML, DMX, JPG, MP4: After countless hours of preparatory work, technique rules in Silicon Mountain©. The presence of the performer and public is entirely determined by the surrounding choreography of the *technique*.

Silicon Mountain© compiles several layers of questioning. What happens when we are looking at nature? Do we see the real thing, or do we see with the things we are prescribed to see? Silicon Mountain© focuses on the fact that, just in the way we look, we re-enact attitudes that we inherited from our context. How do we deal with technology today? We say “Yes!” to it. Think about marketing, TED talks or start-ups. Strong semiotic strategies around us make us applaud *technology*. It now mediatizes large parts of our interaction with the world: social life, entertainment, memory. Will it go as far as to cover our interaction with nature? Will it propose a better more immediate connection to nature, to relieve us from the longing? And WTF is an ‘im-mediate connection’ with *nature* anyways?

Voilà. OK. I stop. I got carried away and spoke too much. It was the biggest chunk in the **conversation**, I promise.

From there I can zoom back out to the research .**ext**? or even to the **existing works**? Or dive in one of the *themes* traversing the project: *nature, technology, internet, technique, design, entrepreneur*? Or some aspects of *methodology* maybe? And see how it informs my **work forecast**?

## BULK

BULK is a fictional entrepreneurial project that brings the first indoor hiking gym to the world. It takes the form of a commercial facility branded BULK. Unlike climbing gyms, skating-rinks, indoor skiing, indoor skydiving, indoor swimming… we don’t have a place to practice indoor hiking! Speculating on this idea, BULK was co-designed with architect Jules Flocke.

When you push the door to BULK, the first indoor hiking gym in the world (and it’s coming to Brussels in 2026!), three hiking valleys open before you. Circular, they offer irregular terrain with various elevation gains, where you practice your stamina and balance. You set the level of difficulty, and our artificial intelligence engine INFINITRACK does the rest! It video-projects on the floor the route you have to follow in real-time. You can also compete in the Olympic valley and hone skills before it’s an Olympic discipline in 2028. Share your stats with your friends and give each other kudos!

#*entrepreneur*

Graphic-designer Timon Bloemen crafted the commercial brochure.

#*design*

Amongst my **work** **forecast**, there is this fantasy about going further with this. Check **BULK2**. In any case, it’s a very very good illustration of my *action verbs*.

## Intuit

Intuit® is pronounced “into-it” but derives its spelling from “intuition”. It is a textile work co-designed with (and entirely realized by) Ruby Russell. It is inspired by how Amazonian indigenous tribes devised special garments to invoke protection when roaming the forest. Think about the bright red and blue macaw feather headdresses, or jaguar teeth necklaces... Adapted to our Western practice of the great outdoors, intuit® is made of technical water-proof Gore-Tex® fabric. The protection is woven within the technological fibers of the fabric, protecting you from the elements. It is not visible but it works just like magic. Intuit® is meant to be worn on the left arm and/or to be on sale in a shop window and/or exposed in an ethnographic museum.

Only so much for Intuit®… Would you like to hear what I have to say about *nature*, *technology*, or the *action verbs* structuring my .**ext** research?

## Stone beauty contest

Oh I loved this one.

The Stone Beauty Contest was a one-time online event organized with the Wandering Arts Biennale (Brussels) in December 2020. Participants were asked to submit the most beautiful stone they had ever picked. They had to write about why their stone should win. Participants could ask questions and challenge each other’s assumptions on true authentic stone beauty.

The overarching reflection is about why we would even pick up stones while on the hike, and upon what criteria. Come to think of it, it’s quite cute and absurd... Do we find beauty in stones? Or are stones beautiful in themselves? A vote designated the winning stone, earning a throne in the WAB office in Brussels.

The Stone Beauty Contest is a franchise that could be reproduced, but still hasn’t.

## Duet

The dance piece duet is actually entitled dddddddduettttttttttt. It was co-created with Dan Mussett, a friend and colleague from the Conservatoire of Antwerp. We started to investigate the question of how to become each other.   
The motif of modifying who you are was strongly influenced by our trajectories at school and by what started to boom in those same years: a whole new body culture on Youtube. Yoga, fitness, calisthenics… you-friggin-name-it!

Caught in that injunction to learn and transform, we assessed how it could be adapted to the goal of becoming each other. The piece manifests the dynamic between learning and teaching, and repeating repeating repeating…

Such a good piece.

But never performed more than twice.

Too much tension between us.

Dan if you’re reading this : <3

So yeah, the theme of *internet* was already present back then. The *action verbs* too, somehow. And the first seeds of a *research methodology*.

Oh and do check Dan’s project: The dating project (easy to find on Instagram).

## 2016

In 2016 I designed my first artist’s website as an active medium to present my work ambitions.

Its title was “About the movie” since it is adopting the looks of rolling credits at the end of films, as if we were in the 60’s. Following a series of screenshots, it offers a linear dramaturgy through a fake cult film.

It’s really cool actually. You can look it up at laurentdelom.com/2016   
(although the contents are really outdated by now)

That website was my first artistic object on *internet* after graduating*.* It has been replaced by this platformentitled“Hi! I’m Laurent”: the **conversation** you are navigating right now. In my work forecast I am thinking of trying something new with **vanilla**.

## conversation

This conversational format was first experimented with in June 2022, at the closure of my **.ext** research in wp Zimmer (Antwerpen).

I designed 2 Easy Conversations taking place on WhatsApp in which I used the same principle: people would send keywords in and I would display the matching information, by hand.

It came from the constatation that I had too much information to share in order to give an exhaustive report of the research. So, I delegated the task of selection to the audience, and I just organized a protocol for them to navigate through all of it. If they wanted to.

The underlying structure is like a neural network (vs. vertical choice-tree; vs. horizontal rhizome) where interest is triggered from one node to another like a nerve impulse.

Besides that, I am also fascinated by how familiar we have become with written/oral conversations on the *internet* and how it re-shaped the landscape of our online communications. I mean: it’s he-ge-mo-nic!

So, now I turned it into a stable version for my artist website, replacing the old *2016* version.

+ I like that it is playful & representative of my practice. It echoes with *design* as well as with *entrepreneur*. In my work **forecast** I am thinking of trying something new with this **vanilla** thing.

## work forecast

Work forecast?

What does that even mean?

Error 404

Just kidding.

Robot humor, sorry.

In what I call my work forecast, I adress all the things that I would potentially make in the future. Some fresh ideas, some vague visions, some further elaborations. Bear in mind that the future is unknown. So, don’t take my word.

But here is what could happen : **Travail!**, a research project that now arrived to the stage of maturity. Going in production, as we speak. **Deep beliefs** is the working title of my next “big research” after .**ext**. Expect water, darkness and prayers that it all goes well.

More on the fantasy side, I would love to develop **Vanilla** as a kind of social network for long distance sexual arousal. And I would dream about going further with **BULK2**.

## Travail !

Travail! is good.

Yes! It is a project co-created with Yannis Attard and Mina Perrichon, with the support of the programme Chimères, in France. The research & development stage is now completed and the project is now going in production. It will become a performance flirting with the game world, for 9 participants. In an ergonomic chill-working space, the participants join in a game of exponential accumulation of work performed by their smartphones. Activated by their efforts on sport machines, they increase the speed, their growth and their gains. Whoever works the hardest goes the highest! But beware of not losing it all if the battery of your phone runs out!

That’s the rough pitch, basically.

With this playful simulation, what we really try to promote is a collective reflection within the group of participants about fruitfulness in the vast domain of what we call “work”. It is so easy to lose sight of it when running behind figures and especially when it’s-so-much-fun… The performance proposes a miniature version of “taking a step back to contemplate how-the-heck we ended up here”. Hopefully will this rehearsal of a “mini act of distancing” bear fruits outside of the theater.

Or are we completely naïve?

Very good so. Travail! is part of my **work** **forecast**. It’s linked to *technology* obviously, to the *action verbs*, to *technique* and to *design* a lot.

## Deep beliefs

Amen.

Deep beliefs is the title of my next artistic research starting in 2024, prolonging the previous one **.ext**. Where I am entering deep beliefs in is via another natural landscape (symbolically a neighbor to the mountains of **.ext**) and another human practice attached to that environment. Namely the underwater and the practice of free diving (in apnea).

The exact same socio-historical + aesthetical bla-bla as what was developed in .ext applies here too, so I’ll skip it and jump to the more juicy part. What I find exciting is that the practice of free-diving mobilizes the psyche in a way I am not familiar with: to believe.

Whether it is about achieving outstanding performances in depth or in duration, or about managing the paranoia inherent to going under the surface of the water: you are with what you believe.

Bam!

How I got the first spark for that investigation was by noticing (and disapproving of) my utter fear of dark waters. (Not limnophobia yet, but in that direction). So, it got me curious.

For now, I’ll let you read further on my *research methodology* and/or my *action verbs*.

## Vanilla

Vanilla. A title that shouts : Problems ahead!

Vanilla is a very young seed for a potential future project. It was planted in the wake of **Silicon** **Mountain** and the sheer joy I have with *design*. Again an App for smartphones, it will elaborate on its representational modality (namely: infinite scroll); but applied to the image of the human body. Imagine an infinite panorama of flesh, skin and hairs, shot in intimacy. It takes you to different body parts as you scroll down, parts you don’t always recognize: is it a neck or the soft flesh of a knee? It brushes more erogenous parts, and as you go down and down and down, the App triggers sexual arousal in you.

That’s the rough idea, basically. I suppose you got the picture, you, beings of flesh and bone…

It is yet unclear where this is going to go. An instrumentalizing of the sexual body by *technology*? One more step towards digital sensuality? Think long distance relationships. A different perspective on our consumption of online sexualized content on *internet*? Think nudes, think Grindr, think Only Fans… Think big money, think *entrepreneur*.

Many questions. But way too soon to know. A proper first step will be to make the first Vanilla bodyscape, and check if it is soft and sweet like ice-cream.

Or plain gross disgusting porn.

## BULK2

Before I start on BULK2, you know it comes from **BULK**, right? In my **existing works**?

For me BULK could go further. At the moment BULK only exists on paper, in the form of a commercial brochure. But in it, there is a call-to-action: if you’re interested and would like to know more, report yourself to [investors@bulkgym.be](mailto:investors@bulkgym.be). Any business-angel amongst you?

It is a door that the project could take to navigate outside of the theater. Could BULK enter the realm of the real biz world? How does fiction operate in pitching, marketing or selling an idea? What system of beliefs does an *entrepreneur* surf on? The “innovative idea”, the “commodity”, the “solution”, the *technology*…

I have to think about Elizabeth Holmes’ crazy story in Silicon Valley.

Which, in turn, would be an amazing theater piece. Let me get famous and ask her if she wants to play her own role in it…

When she comes out of jail. Muhahaha.

## italic

Hehe, yep!

“italic” is a keyword... thank you.

It redirects to the transversal *themes* I work around, sometimes in relation to existing works or simply as ongoing reflections.

You can either read about *nature*, or *technology*. You also check my *research methodology*. Nice chunk.

FYI, in **bold***,* you have both **existing** **works** and the **working** **forecast***.*

## Themes

A few themes appear to run steadily though my projects, informing them transversally. Either those in the **existing works** or in the **work forecast**; inside and outside the larger investigation .**ext** from these last years.

So, in this whole *italic* category you can read my thoughts about *nature*, *technology*, *internet*, *entrepreneur*, and *design*. And about *choreographing technique*, my *research methodology*, and my *action verbs*.

## Nature

## Technology

## Internet

+ duet

## Entrepreneur

+ I am totally obsessed slash slightly aroused by all the potential other lives I could have had, for real.

## Choreographing Technique

## Performing Nature

## Research methodology

I am very very careful when I speak about methodology. Firstly because I don’t have a specific methodology. And secondly because I feel a little bored about setting a methodology and abiding by it.

Trust me I’m an engineer.

What I do observe in my practice is that the mere thought of having a methodology has an efficacy already. I am not saying that any methodology will do (I actually disagree). What I am saying is that keeping the question present in my mind performs better than producing an answer to that question.

In a nutshell: This is my methodology: what is my methodology?

So far in my processes I observed that “instant methodologies” tended to arise, suited to the moment, the situation, the material and my skills. I also noticed that my thinking processes needed a support to expand. That’s all.

These divagations originated in **duet,** in .**ext,** in **Travail**! and in this **conversation**.

## Action verbs

I have 3 action verbs.

Of-course-I-do!

I am an *entrepreneur,* remember?

Now, the number 3 is a bit arbitrary, but I do like to think in verbs for what I do and what my work does. Namely, in french: confondre, spéculer, explorer.

“Confondre” can mean a lot of things: to mistake something for something else, to blend two things, to disconcert someone, to provoke confusion in someone, to unmask a liar. It is active here in this **conversation**, as well as in **Travail**! And a lot in **duet**.

“Spéculer” was so far my main creative tool for all the **existing works** I produced within **.ext**. It is about taking what is already there and elaborate further on it, going the extra mile. “If we are already doing this, we might as well start doing that…”. And “explorer” is about daring to go out of place, dealing with the unknown, adapting. Which is where I am at with **deep beliefs.**

Oh and may I add a fourth one?

Ah no, enough already…

## Design

I believe that the design of a web object (an app, a website like in **2016** or this **conversation**…) can happen just like the making of a performance. Both can arguably be qualified as “organized protocols to display information and promote an experience, including time and attention management”.

LOL.

But it does get interesting when you start comparing design tools with dramaturgy tools, and start playing, swapping, mixing. So an app can have a dramaturgy, see **Silicon** **Mountain**, or a performance can work like a human-machine interface, check what’s cooking with **Travail!**

My thinking on this has not fully blossomed yet. It’ll get updated soon. In the meanwhile you can have a look at my *research* *methodology,* or my deep deep thoughts on the *internet.*

## News

Ok. Laurent, what’s on the menu?

At the end of March 2023 I am two weeks in residency in Nantes, at Le Lieu Unique to work on **Travail!**

The first week of April 2023 I will be performing **Silicon Mountain** during the Festival Bâtard in Brussels.

I am su-per-du-per-ex-ci-ted.

Check it out on batard.be

After that I will be working as performer for a project in the Netherlands with via Berlin company.

+ I have two weeks of field research in Brittany (Bretagne) in France to start gathering material for **deep beliefs.** *#research methodology*

Voilà.

## About myself

Sure.

Hi ! I am Laurent Delom de Mézerac. I am French.

I first graduated as an engineer in telecommunications in France and later in contemporary dance from the Conservatoire of Antwerp in 2016. And I stayed here since then. Working and living in Antwerp, Belgium.

Not Brussels.

At the moment my interests go towards performance *design* and exploratory practices. Basic rule of thumb: where I smell danger, I go.

Will the Real Gemini please stand up?

Besides what’s on the *news* at the moment, I dedicate a lot of time preparing **Travail!**, speculating on *deep beliefs*, and meta-thinking about this *conversation.*

Hi! I’m Laurent!

## Yourself

Yeah yeah. I did think about that one too.

But no.

If you want me to speak *about* *myself*, you need to ask *about* *myself*.

Not about *yourself*.

So selfish…