

Since 1736, every 7 years the village of Beesel has 'reenacted' the story of Saint George and the Dragon.

It started with the local marksman-guild being the only ones with the privilege to play out the legend, soon after the whole village was under the spell of the dragon.

During the reenactment, the entire village is transformed into an open-air spectacle: 'Draak-steken'.

- Literally means Dragon stabbing –

What caught my attention in this subject is the way they are holding history within them; the nostalgia of a time never passed?

This little village is normally only mentioned on the radio, if traffic is jammed on the nearby highway.

Has intertwined the legend to such a degree, to its reality and daily life.

When you are born in Beesel, the soil determines that you'll have 'Dragonblood'.

In Dutch tradition when a baby is born, we put a stork in our gardens. In Beesel you'll have either blue or pink dragons, because a new dragon has been born.

When their dragon-stone (a large boulder in town) was "stolen" in the fifties by boys from another village, the police investigates it with great seriousness.

A certain magic is sensible, within the layered mythologies of time and place. Connecting a whole village with only 2500 inhabitants.

Every seven years a new Saint George is selected for the event. To be eligible you have to be born in the village or have a strong connection to it, but most importantly Saint George has to be able to ride a horse.

The legend is about a fight between good and evil.

These are struggles we encounter ourselves every day. Especially in this time of polarisation and separation, we want to belong somewhere and connect.

Is it important that we look and explore apologue stories like these?

Since nobody will doubt that the story of Saint George & the Dragon is fantasy..

St. George rides into town on his horse, agrees to kill the dragon as long as everybody converts to Christianity. They do, and he does, thereby providing a template for endless medieval illustrations. I am not aiming to research the biblical aspect neither the Crusader Knights who spread the legend between eastern Mediterranean to Western Europe.

With the grant - I hope to collect- I would like to go on a *quest & investigation* the upcoming months; wondering why, in this age, what could be the possible reasons that mythology & folklore persist? I want to discover the -social- structure that provides and protects the village of Beesel. Providing my audience with several chapters within this story.

I am interested in the intertwined worlds of reality and fantasy, but also questioning it. Does these worlds provide an alternative? Provide an escape? Provide a threat ? Provide a dream? and power; provide refuge, and pain? Do they give our world meaning?

Perhaps the pressing question is; Where do dragons come from in the Netherlands?