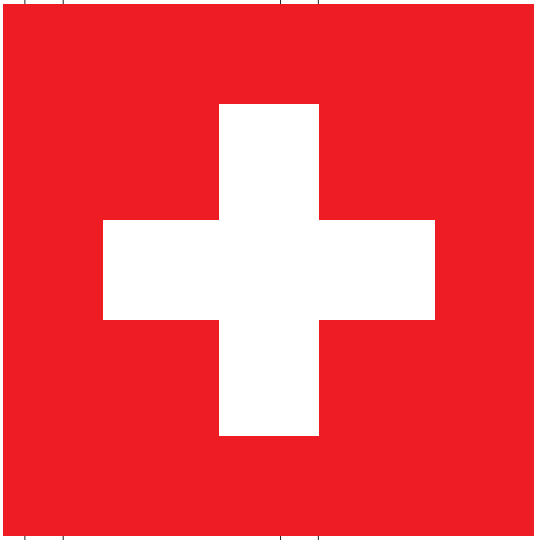


TABLEAU SUISSE



ប្រភាព
ពីប្រទេស
ស្វីស

Images
from
Switzer-
land

27 Oct—
27 Nov
2022

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Switzerland, a small country nestled in the heart of Europe, internationally renowned for its chocolate, enchanting landscapes, financial institutions, innovation, and neutrality, is often seen as a dream destination, a country where life is good. It is particularly present in Asian movies and series, such as Sauvik Kundu’s Indian mainstream film *Switzerland* (2020), the Korean series *Crash Landing on You* (2019) and Irene Villamor’s Filipino romantic comedy *Meet me in Sankt Gallen* (2018), to name but a few recent productions. Representations of Switzerland and its inhabitants contribute to the construction of myths: in case you missed it, the mother of the legendary 007, whose many adventures are set in the Swiss Alps, is said to come from Bottens, a small town in the canton of Vaud. Switzerland’s image abroad is shaped by photographs in the press and social media: from the Matterhorn illuminated during the COVID-19 pandemic to bucolic landscapes perfect for taking selfies. Switzerland is a resolutely “instagrammable” country.

Less known to the general public for its cultural heritage and contemporary art scene than for its landscapes, Switzerland is nevertheless a country that attaches great importance to artistic creation. Many artists have found the country to be a political, cultural, and social haven for the development of their ideas. A literary and artistic refuge in war-torn Europe, the Cabaret Voltaire, founded in 1916 in Zurich by the poets Tristan Tzara, Hugo Ball, Richard Huelsenbeck and the artists Jean Arp, Sophie Taeuber-Arp, and Marcel Janco, was the headquarters of the Dada movement. Meret Oppenheim, who like Sophie Taeuber-Arp also practised photography, soon joined the group. It was at this time that the *Werkbund Schweiz*, an association of designers that promoted cooperation between art, craft and industry was founded. Together with the Zurich School of Applied Arts, it worked to modernise Swiss design. The *Swiss style*, inspired by Bauhaus and Constructivism, characterised by a sober aesthetic, a targeted use of colours, symbols, and photography, emerged in the 1950s. Joseph Müller-Brockman, a key figure in this movement, developed an aesthetic based on a grid system throughout his career, while Max Miedinger created the Helvetica typeface in 1957. A standard of *Swiss style*, it is still one of the most popular fonts in use today. The Swiss poster also made history in the field of graphic design and marketing: a unique, so-called *world format* (90.5 x 128 cm), designed by Erik Nitsche from Lausanne in 1955 for the American company General Dynamics. The grid system, the Helvetica font and the world format poster are used in the design and communication of this exhibition.

Tableau Suisse, a project by the artists Marie Le Mounier and Beat Streuli in collaboration with the Zurich graphic designer and curator Marcus Kraft, brings together fifty works by ten contemporary Swiss artists working with photography. Its title refers to the exhibitions that Marcus Kraft holds in Zurich near the Stadelhofen train station, under the name *Tableau Zurich*. The word “tableau”, deriving from the French word for “table”, is polysemous and refers, depending on the context, to a pictorial work, a scene or landscape that is open to view, the blackboard in a classroom or a panel designed to receive information. It is also a nod to the French language, one of Switzerland’s four national languages alongside German, Italian and Romansh. *Tableau Zurich*, which uses poster spaces in downtown Zurich, is designed to be replicable worldwide and aims to promote art in public spaces. *Tableau Suisse* is a variation of this project, taking it for the first time abroad to Cambodia.

The artists selected for this exhibition offer a varied panorama of contemporary Swiss photography-based art, both in terms of generation and practice, and pay tribute to its diversity. Some of the works show “typically” Helvetic aspects, which is the case of the series *Hoselupf* by Sabina Bösch, whose lens is fixed on one of the national sports: Swiss wrestling. Practised by alpine shepherds since the 15th century, it is a traditionally male sport played on a circular area covered with sawdust. Sabina Bösch followed a female team for a season. Joëlle Lehman’s portraits of teenagers, commissioned for a magazine, reveal a Switzerland between tradition and modernity.

These two approaches, which could be called documentary, contrast with a more experimental approach to the photographic medium as in the case of Bernard Voïta, Beni Bischof and Magdalena Baranya. Drawing their inspiration from ordinary places and objects, their work is closer to montage and installation. Jules Spinatsch presents a panoramic work based on the operating principle of surveillance cameras, while Jean-Vincent Simponet strays even further from traditional photography by reworking images taken during a trip to Vietnam as paintings. Photographer and sculptor Marianne Müller carries out plastic research based on image archives accumulated over the years. Tehran-born Shirana Shahbazi creates spectacular installations combining individual photographs and more abstract images printed as wallpaper. Finally, Walter Pfeiffer, an important figure in the Swiss photographic scene, presents images of the male body that are both sensual and evocative of a quest for identity.

A screening of video works by Pipilotti Rist, the artist duo Fischli/Weiss, and Marie José Burki completes this brief overview of contemporary Swiss creation in the field of photography and, more broadly, of installations and moving images. Pipilotti Rist’s vibrant and hypnotic videos have gained her international recognition. The colourful multimedia installations she has been producing for more than thirty years are evocative of the often saturated light of the Swiss countryside. Zurich-born Peter Fischli and David Weiss, whose art has been exhibited extensively around the world, create humorous works that border on the irreverent. Using media such as clay, sculpted and painted polyurethane, photography, and video, they playfully point out the boundaries between art and popular culture. Sensitive to the passage of time, to space and its perception, Marie José Burki, trained in art, literature, and history in Geneva, makes us slide tirelessly from words to images and back again.



1

Magdalena Baranya

Shoppingtrail, 2022

The artistic practice of Magdalena Baranya (1981) is not limited to photography but characterised by the convergence of different media such as video, sculpture, and digital prints on various supports. From an ever-expanding archive of images, she produces collages in the form of posters, wallpaper, scarves, moving image montages and even hand-knotted carpets. As a sculptor, she incorporates recycled materials into ceramics, concrete, and textiles.

Magdalena Baranya is interested in the private, the banal, the domestic. The protagonists of her works are ordinary objects that she recycles. Collected, forgotten, they are charged with a personal, sentimental value. *Shoppingtrail* is a series of large collages featuring potted plants. The density of the compositions and the boldness of the colours are reminiscent of advertising posters and underline our ambiguous relationship to plants, which we consider more as mere commodities than as living beings. Baranya questions our understanding of nature and its place in our daily lives. She lives and works in Zurich.

magdalena-baranya.ch



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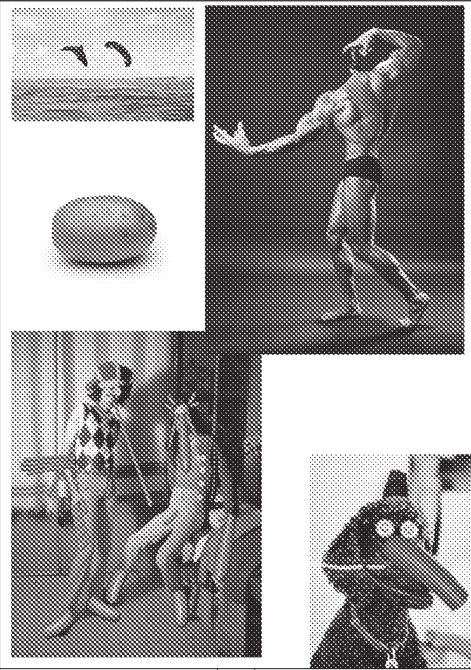
Shirana Shahbazi

Billboards, 2018

Shirana Shahbazi (1974) studied photography in Germany before continuing her education at University of the Arts (ZHdK) in Zurich where she now lives. She draws on traditional art genres such as portraiture, landscape and still life to develop an experimental photographic practice. By playing with scale, bright colours, and transposing images onto other media such as posters, monumental murals, and carpets, she challenges the viewer's expectations to address more complex issues. Her widely exhibited works are included in the collections of prestigious museums around the world.

The five posters presented here are taken from a series made at night on the roads bordering Tehran, her native city. They show blank billboard surfaces illuminated by spotlights, whose power accentuates both their form and non-existent message. On the borderline between road trip and social commentary, these images reflect the political and economic climate of a country subject to international sanctions, the effects of which have a powerful impact on the population.

shiranashahbazi.com



2

Beni Bischof

Disturb Reality, 2016–2022

Born in 1976, Beni Bischof lives and works in St. Gallen, or, as he likes to say, “elsewhere on Earth”. From 2005 to 2013, he published a series of laser-printed art magazines that allowed him to distribute his drawings, collages, and texts independently. Sculpture, painting, and installation now enrich his artistic palette. He draws inspiration from music, literature, gossip magazines, worthless objects from consumer society, art brut and of course the famous sausage from his region, a recurring motif in his work. Beni Bischof reappropriates analogue images or those downloaded from the internet and transforms them into absurd or unusable objects: here cars without wheels, there a sausage plunging into the ocean. The different digital and analogue techniques he uses are invitations to create burlesque situations and disturbing environments. Between dada and neo-punk, his eclectic style is above all charged with humour.

benibischof.ch



8

Jean-Vincent Simonet

Whirling Coils, 2018

Born in 1991 and graduated from the École Cantonale d'Art de Lausanne (ECAL) in 2014, Jean-Vincent Simonet, of French origin, now lives in Paris and Zurich. Although rooted in the photographic tradition from a material point of view, his approach is experimental. The hybrid images he produces are more akin to painting.

The photographs from the *Whirling Coils* series were made during a location scouting trip on the outskirts of Ho Chi Min City in Vietnam in 2018. In this timeless suburbia, destined to change with the expansion of the city, families gather to picnic, young people fly kites. At the end of the trip, Jean-Vincent Simonet looked for a process that would allow him to recapture the sensations and feelings he had experienced. The printing technique he developed took advantage of the malleability of the photographic surface when the print was still wet. Between abstraction and reality, the real experience is thus freed from any documentary intention. The title *Whirling Coils* refers to the movement of kites, as well as to the mechanism of the printer used to make these images.

jeanvincentsimonet.com



3

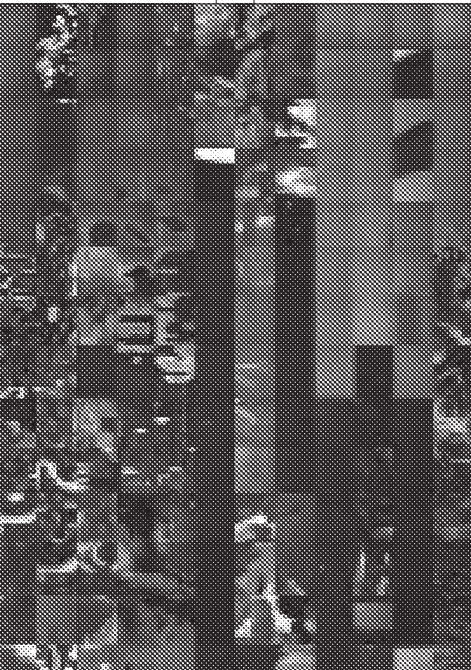
Sabina Bösch

Hoselupf, 2019

Sabina Bösch (1990) is fascinated by the human body. A graduate of the Ecole Cantonale d'Art de Lausanne (ECAL), she now works in Zurich. From portraiture to still life to fashion, her photographic practice is multifaceted and includes long-term documentary projects related to queer feminist topics.

Hoselupf, which means “to lift by the trousers”, is a vernacular expression synonymous with Swiss wrestling. Together with throwing the 83.5 kg Unspunnen Stone, Swiss wrestling, which dates back to the 17th century, is considered a “national sport”. Traditionally a male discipline, it requires the wearing of jute trousers: the wrestlers hold each other by the trouser belt and try to throw their opponent to the ground. For a long time, women were denied access to the equipment necessary to compete, so much so that the motto of the first women's tournament was “Frau ä id Hosel!” which can be translated as “women, put on your trousers!”. While this was the first obstacle they had to overcome, women in Swiss wrestling are still occasionally stigmatised. During the 2019 summer season, Sabina Bösch photographed young female wrestlers and sensitively documented their passion for the sport.

sabinabosch.com



9

Jules Spinatsch

Tanzboden 1, 2015

Jules Spinatsch (1964) is a native of Davos in the mountainous Graubünden region. He now lives and works in Zurich. In 1993 he joined the documentary photography program at the renowned International Center of Photography (ICP) in New York. Today he devotes himself to personal projects in the form of books, exhibitions, and photographic installations. In particular, he is known for the panoramic images he has been making for the past 15 years with automated cameras similar to those used for the surveillance of public spaces. The particular quality of these hybrid panoramic images is a speculative combination of control and luck.

Tanzboden 1, which translates as “dance floor 1”, is a panoramic work composed of images taken during a techno event, the *Time Warp Festival*, held each year in Mannheim, Germany. It is composed of 714 images recorded with a computer controlled SLR camera during the entire event, from 5 April, 7.30 pm to 6 April, 11 am. Due to the constantly changing light, the recording was technically unpredictable resulting in a large number of blurred and abstract images.

jules-spinatsch.ch



4

Joëlle Lehmann

Untitled, 2020

Joëlle Lehmann, born in 1982 in Biel, studied photography in the Art and Media Department of Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK). She now lives and works in the Swiss capital Bern. She documents her travels, her encounters, her family, simple everyday moments and unusual situations that present themselves to her camera. She takes most of her photos with her mobile phone or with mainstream digital or analogue equipment, challenging the idea of technical sophistication often associated with artistic photography. This simple equipment also allows her to get closer to her subjects.

The images shown in *Tableau Suisse* are the result of a magazine commission on the theme of the body and youth. In the context of this work, Joëlle Lehmann encountered a dozen or so young people, not quite adults but not quite teenagers anymore, across the country. From Billie Eilish to football, from tattoos and family to horse riding, they tell us what drives them, what makes them tick.

joellelehmann.ch



10

Bernard Voïta

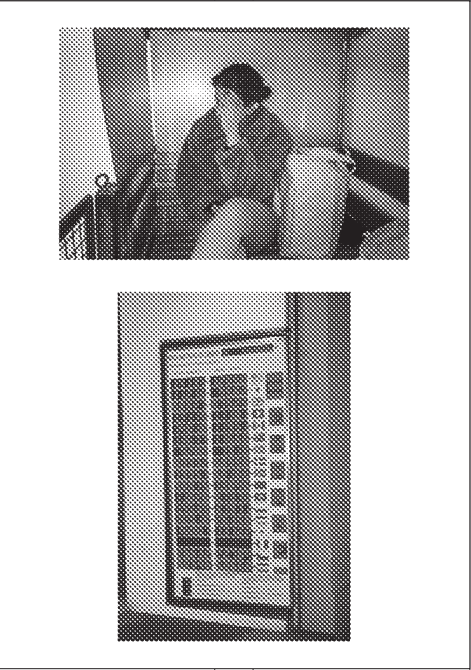
Melancolia, 2014–2017

Bernard Voïta was born in 1960 in Cully on the shores of Lake Geneva between Lausanne and Vevey. He graduated from the École Supérieure des Arts Visuels de Genève in 1986 and his artistic practice encompasses photography, three-dimensional works, and installations. Fascinated by light from an early age, he explores, through perspective and mirror effects, the interstices between reality and imagination, between truth and illusion.

The *Melancolia* series refers to a favourite motif in art since the Renaissance: the artist's studio. A symbol of the creator's mental space, an inexhaustible source of objects and materials, the studio is also a place of metamorphosis and enchantment. In these images, the meticulous organisation of space, the play of scale and light intensified by the choice of black and white, transform the artist's workspace into astonishing geometric patterns. With both seriousness and humour, Bernard Voïta, a talented illusionist, transports us, for a moment and no doubt for a different purpose, into Plato's cave.

He lives and works in Brussels, Belgium and in the Swiss Jura.

#bernardvoita



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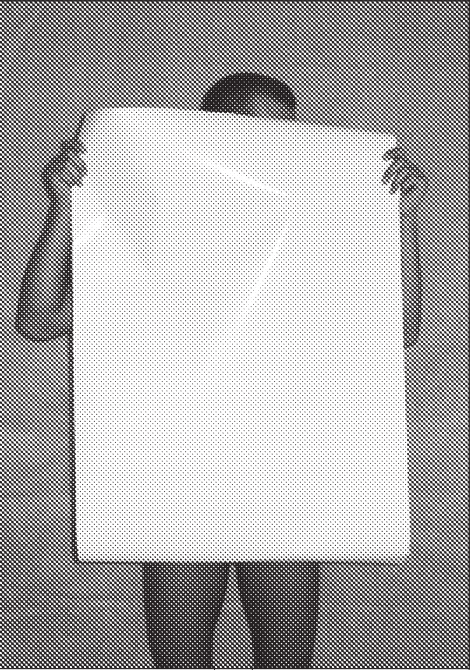
Marianne Mueller

UNTITLED (RED), 2021

Marianne Mueller (1966) is based in Zurich and works primarily with photography, video, installation, and books. The everyday environments she records are often later adapted to the specificity of the place where the images are exhibited. Since 2007 she has been a professor at Zurich University of the Arts (ZHdK). Her work has been widely exhibited and she has participated in numerous international residencies. *The Proper Ornaments, Stairs Etc.* and *Leg* are three major works in her long list of publications.

Over the years, Marianne Mueller has accumulated a large archive of photographs made in Switzerland or during her extended stays abroad. Viewed in a non-hierarchical way, these images capture everything that has caught her eye. Their juxtaposition reveals a way of looking at the world that emerges once the artist's chronology and memories of the original scene have faded. *UNTITLED (RED)* refers to the series of photographs *RED* taken by the Ukrainian photographer Boris Mikhailov between 1968 and 1975, in which he captured red elements present in everyday Russian life under the communist regime.

marianнемueller.com



6

Walter Pfeiffer

Untitled 1976–2017

Walter Pfeiffer, born in 1946 in the rural village of Beggingen, moved to Zurich in 1966 to attend the then new experimental art school Form & Farbe. He worked with painting, drawing, video, collage and soon began to integrate photography into his artistic practice. His gaze falls on friends, lovers, and visitors. He started using the flash to compensate for the blur caused by the trembling of his hand, a stratagem that soon became his hallmark. Famous for his bold depictions of gay sex juxtaposed with scenes of domestic solitude or snapshot-like images, he was invited in 1974 to participate in the groundbreaking exhibition *Transformer* at Lucerne Museum of Art. Curated by Jean-Christophe Ammann, this exhibition was inspired by gender fluidity and reflected on sexuality, weaving together the aesthetics of art and glam rock. From portraiture to landscape to still life, Walter Pfeiffer's style oscillates between pop aesthetics and self-awareness. Today, he is recognised as a major figure in contemporary photography.

@walterpfeiffer_official

Screening

Peter Fischli and David Weiss,
The Way Things Go, 1987, 30'

Marie José Burki,
De Nos Jours (Dedans), 2004, 10'40"

Pipilotti Rist,
(Absolutions) Pipilotti's Mistakes, 1988, 11'10"

Date:
Friday 28 October, 6.30–7.30 pm

Location:
Institut français du Cambodge
218, Street 184, Keo Chea
Phnom Penh

TABLEAU SUISSE

An exhibition curated by Marie Le Mounier and Beat Streuli in collaboration with Marcus Kraft

Photo Phnom Penh Festival
F3 – Friends Futures Factory
215, Street 13, Sangkat Chey Chumneas Khan
Daun Penh
Phnom Penh

27 October–27 November 2022
Monday–Saturday 11.30–7 pm

Design: Studio Marcus Kraft
Texts: Marie Le Mounier
English translation: Liz Morrison

All images © the artists

Photo Phnom Penh Festival and the curators would like to thank Pro Helvetia, Institut français du Cambodge, F3 – Friends Futures Factory, and most of all the artists for their contribution to this project.

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