

**Crossover :****David Posth-Kohler × Bruce Nauman**

macLYON

David Posth-Kohler is an artist whose practice is rooted in his experiences of life. He travels widely and draws inspiration from the landscapes, objects, and people he encounters. He translates into art – mainly sculpture – those which leave a deep impression on him. The monumental work *Sténos*, which entered the macLYON collection in 2019 at the end of the 15th Lyon Biennale, consists of three chimerical giants – an echo of his encounters. One of them stands tall at the entrance to this third *Crossover*, an exhibition format that creates a dialogue between the works of an artist from the macLYON collection and those of an emerging artist. The intertwined forms, face and hands of this colossus are all elements that play on the ambiguity between the marvellous and the monstrous, and testify to the artist's interest in the human.

Although David Posth-Kohler has always been interested in the question of the body, his recent work is more particularly oriented towards *mise-en-scène*. He ponders the relationship to space and the synergies induced by the body, and this has set up a resonance for him with the works of Bruce Nauman, who, in the 1960s, used himself as a focus of performances filmed in his studio. With simple actions, the repetition of which accentuates an obsessional quality, Bruce Nauman experiments with the involvement of the body in space. The body then becomes his raw material. *Thighing*, the title of which is a conflation of the words “thigh” and “sighing”, is an expression of this fascination for the parts of the body. David Posth-Kohler designs and makes models of figures – gesticulating, disjointed automatons – and explores the theatricality of the body. He makes assemblages of hybrid objects, transforming them into anonymous misshapen figures and dressing them up so that they take on the appearance of clowns. These sculptures, with their exaggerated forms, are caricatures of individuals in a society with predefined logic and codes that the artist holds up to ridicule. This theatrical mix of tragedy and comedy, is reminiscent of Samuel Beckett, whom Bruce Nauman references in *Slow Angle Walk (Beckett Walk)*. In that film, Nauman spends an hour repeating a series of movements inspired by the peculiar gait of the Beckett character, Molloy.

Both artists have an approach in which the body seems to be a powerful medium for experiencing human reality. David Posth-Kohler manipulates the extremes, he contorts, changes the scale and likes to “de-normalise”. He has transformed this *Crossover* into a theatre of the human condition, where the narrative, although absurd, examines our relationship with the world.

Curator: Marilou Laneuville



David Posth-Kohler, *Sténos*, 2019  
View of the exhibition associated with the Biennale de Lyon 2019, at the CIC - Lyonnaise de Banque  
Collection macLYON  
Photo: Blandine Soulage

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## David Posth-Kohler

David Posth-Kohler was born in 1987 in Annecy. He lives and works in Paris. He graduated from the École Nationale Supérieure des Beaux-Arts de Lyon in 2013.

The sculptures produced by David Posth-Kohler display his interest for a form of DIY. It should be understood here as the desire to discover and hijack functioning, disassembling to better reassemble, objects and their meaning. Out of this comes a poetic narrative often linked to specific contexts that tend to integrate the objects that he uses into fables or situations for which they were not designed for. He proposes different possibilities for existence to them by making them change register, in this way attributing new meaning to them.



David Posth-Kohler  
Photo: Pablo Réol

## Bruce Nauman

American artist Bruce Nauman is one of the outstanding figures in contemporary art. For over forty years he has been a major influence on new generations of artists. His films from the 1960s and 1970s are among his most avant-garde works.

Born in 1941 in Fort Wayne (Indiana, USA), he lives and works in New Mexico (USA). In 1989, macLYON\* acquired one of Nauman's emblematic pieces, *Good Boy Bad Boy* (1985), and in 1992 it received *Butt to Butt (Large)* (1989) on permanent loan from the Fonds National d'Art Contemporain (FNAC). These important works remained isolated, however, until the museum acquired others: four videos in 1997, and a set of nine pieces, films and videos, in 2008. When ownership of the works from the FNAC was transferred in 2008, macLYON became the owner of *Butt to Butt (Large)* and of *Setting a Good Corner*, a work from 1999.

\*Consequently, the museum now holds 16 works by Bruce Nauman: a remarkable ensemble.



Bruce Nauman, *Slow Angle Walk (Beckett Walk)*, 1968  
Courtesy Electronic Arts Intermix (EAI)  
Collection macLYON  
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