
► *A Family Story,* *Collection(s) Robelin*

macLYON

Gianfranco Baruchello

Livorno, 1924

After studying law, Baruchello left Italian heavy industry in 1959 to devote himself to his work as a self-taught artist. A painter, but also a poet and filmmaker, he was very close to Marcel Duchamp, Gilles Deleuze and Jean-François Lyotard. With them, he experimented with the cross-cutting nature of artistic languages. He creates improbable bridges between fields such as the regime of a fictitious society and economics (founding of Artiflex, 1967, and the delivery of samples), and even art and agriculture (Cornelia Agricola SpA, 1973–83), all responding to the principle of a *relational aesthetic*. His painting addresses the uncertain and uses white as a field of the possible. He fragments and miniaturizes in order to develop a visual vocabulary of his own: acrylic paint, aluminium, a multitude of objects, forms and characters from various fields are arranged without hierarchy, thereby creating a kind of microcosm and rendering a mental map of the decidedly unclassifiable artist.

[Exhibition room Galerie Bama | Fluxus]

George Brecht

New York, 1926 – Cologne, 2008

After initially working as a chemist, George MacDiarmid, alias George Brecht, became interested in serendipity in science and art. In 1958–59, he attended John Cage's experimental composition seminar at the New School for Social Research in New York and soon became an important member of the Fluxus movement. He moved to Europe in 1965 and, with Robert Filliou, he co-founded the 'non-École' (non-School) in Villefranche-sur-Mer and La Cédille qui Sourit, a 'non-boutique', a place of creation where his research on randomness and play continued. This was the beginning of the creation of boxes filled with ordinary objects that were to inspire him for decades. In addition to his *Chance Paintings*, in his events he theorises about the decisive moment that may consist in the discovery of a ready-made work of art or an event score prescribing actions for the spectator. In 1970, Brecht settled in Germany and his works were shown several times at documenta in Kassel.

[Exhibition room Galerie Bama | Fluxus]

Jean-Marc Bustamante

Toulouse, 1952

Lives and works in Paris.

After studying economics, Jean-Marc Bustamante learnt photography, notably with William Klein, whose assistant he became in the mid-1970s. From 1978, he produced large colour photographs of houses and other buildings on the outskirts of the city, which he paradoxically entitled *Tableaux*. During the 1980s, he collaborated with sculptor Bernard Bazile under the name of BazileBustamante, creating installations made up of objects and photographs. He developed several techniques and processes, including one that consists of taking a picture of photographs found in architectural magazines and then screen-printing the images onto Plexiglas. From the outset, his work has established a dialogue between photography, painting and sculpture, questioning the image and aiming to go beyond it while keeping in touch with reality, to use his words. Since 1996 he has been teaching at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, of which he was director from 2015 to 2019; he also taught at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Munich between 2010 and 2016.

[Exhibition room Abstraction; Exhibition room Light | Black and white ; Exhibition room Landscapes]

Michael Buthe

Sonthofen, 1944 – Bad Godesberg, 1994

During his short but intense career, German artist Michael Buthe produced a wide variety of works, including paintings, photographs and assemblage sculptures, as well as stories and poems.

After studying at the Werkkunstschule in Kassel, he settled in Cologne in 1968. His work then sought to reconcile the two opposing currents of Minimalism and anti-form. In 1972, he participated in the legendary documenta 5. In Morocco, where he stayed frequently between 1971 and 1991, Buthe was deeply marked by the country's traditional materials and vivid colours, as well as its spirituality. He then turned to dreamlike works playing with textures and superimposed materials.

From 1983 until his death, he taught in the Düsseldorf Kunstakademie.

[Exhibition room Galerie Bama | Fluxus]

Vlassis Caniaris

Athens, 1928–1991

After studying medicine for five years, Vlassis Caniaris continued his studies at the Athens School of Fine Art, graduating in 1955. In 1958, his first exhibition of abstract art in Athens caused a scandal. He then left for Rome, before settling in 1960 in Paris, where he frequented the Nouveaux Réalistes. He attempted to return to Athens after the military coup of 1967, but in 1969 he returned to Paris, where he explored the theme of emigration, which took him to Berlin for two years. He settled permanently in Greece in 1976 and taught at the National Technical University in Athens until 1996.

Turning away from easel painting very early on, this Greek artist drew inspiration from social and political conditions to forge a very personal style combining various raw materials and creating installations that included dolls and objects. His work was presented at the Venice Biennale in 1964 and 1988, and also at documenta 6 in 1977. He had solo exhibitions at the Musée d'Art Moderne in Paris (1970), at the Moderna Museet in Stockholm (1972) and at the Institute of Contemporary Arts in London (1976).

[Exhibition room Galerie Bama | Fluxus]

Franck Chalendar

Chadrac, 1966

Lives and works in Saint-Étienne.

The artist Franck Chalendar trained at the École des Beaux-Arts in Saint-Étienne. He is a painter whose work explores the emotional power of colour through the use of the brush. 'All the questions that run through this painting (the function of the painted image, the gestures, the references, etc.) are only addressed insofar as they fit within the limits of the flat space of the painting. Chalendar's many statements reflect his concern for the painted picture: "Trying to paint and to make a painting, that's what matters to me"' (Karim Ghaddab et al., *Franck Chalendar*, Saint-Étienne, Ceysson art publications, 2016).

[Exhibition room Abstraction]

Erik Dietman

Jönköping, 1937 – Paris, 2002

This Swedish artist was a libertarian spirit who preferred the practices of the Dada movement to the teaching of the School of Fine Arts in Malmö, and he mixed drawing, painting, assemblage, sculpture, glass blowing and poetry. A conscientious objector, Dietman left Sweden for France in 1959. He had the same sense of happening, spontaneity and provocation as the members of Nouveau Réalisme and Fluxus, although he did not join any movement. A keen reader and lover of concrete poetry, he often punctuated his works with pataphysical humour, thereby distancing himself from the linguistics of Conceptual Art.

After the destruction of the works and manuscripts that he had left in his room at the Hôtel Carcassonne, Paris, in the summer of 1962, Dietman became interested in decomposition and its prevention: this gave rise to his images and *pansés/pensés* (bandaged/bandied), objects of adhesive plasters and bandages. In the 1980s, he diversified with sculpture – which he taught at the ENSBA school of fine art at the end of his life – which played a major part in his work, impregnated with poetry tinged with a hint of impertinence.

[Exhibition room Galerie Bama | Fluxus]

Helmut Dörner

Gengenbach, 1952

Lives and works in Karlsruhe.

Helmut Dörner studied at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf under Gerhard Richter from 1976 to 1982 and has been teaching at the Staatliche Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Karlsruhe since 1989. Working initially with sculpture, then with painting, the German artist has drawn inspiration from various fields (including biology, contemporary music and geology). The thick and bright material of his beginnings gradually became finer and smoother, producing an almost lacquered effect.

In the early 1990s, Plexiglas became his favourite medium. The total or partial transparency of the material allows the artist to create a dialogue between the motif painted on its surface and its coloured shadow cast on the wall. Lacquer, oil, pencil, oil pastels and acetone give rise to multiple experiments which modify or alter this medium. Over the past ten years or so, Dörner has gradually returned to colour fields on wood.

[Exhibition room Landscapes]

Elger Esser

Stuttgart, 1967

Lives and works in Düsseldorf.

The French-German artist Elger Esser spent his teenage years in Rome, where his writer father and his photographer mother lived. He studied under Bernd and Hilla Becher, notably at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf, and is one of the heirs of this school. However, he departs from the conceptual and minimalist grid of the Bechers' objective series and compositions in favour of a picturesque elegiac poetry. His pictures resonate with the Roman *vedute* of classical painters and Romantic painting, but also Impressionism and Symbolism. With his use of old shooting and printing techniques, Esser belongs to the tradition of the pioneers of photography and the Pictorialists. Memory, present and past times and painting are at the core of his landscapes. Esser presented his work at the Rencontres Photographiques in Arles in 2009.

[Exhibition room Landscapes]

Robert Filliou

Sauve, 1926 – Les Eyzies-de-Tayac, 1987

After spending his childhood in the Gard – an area of southern France marked by the French Resistance – followed by studies in political economics in Los Angeles, Robert Filliou travelled as a UN official. In 1954, he resigned to focus on art and poetry, which he produced both individually and collectively, making it an integral part of life. Between 1961 and 1965, he lived in Paris. In 1962, he created his 'Galerie Légitime', a miniature gallery in his hat, which he renamed 'couvre-chef(s)-d'œuvre(s)' (masterpiece(s)-hat) before founding the workshop-boutique La Cédille qui Sourit with George Brecht in Villefranche-sur-Mer (1965–68). This self-taught artistic virtuoso was referred to as a 'talentless genius' in 'Interview with Robert Filliou', in the catalogue of the exhibition *Robert Filliou, Commemor*, at the Neue Galerie, Aachen, 1970. His 'artistic proposals' embrace writing, performance, street theatre, acting, assemblage and video, and are rooted in Buddhism, Dada, 1960s counterculture, concrete poetry, Conceptual Art and Fluxus. From 1967 to 1974, he lived in Düsseldorf and, together with Joseph Beuys, George Brecht, John Cage and Allan Kaprow, he published *Teaching and Learning as Performing Arts* in 1970 (a French translation was published posthumously in 1998 under the title *Enseigner et apprendre, Arts vivants*).

[Exhibition room Galerie Bama | Fluxus]

Günther Förg

Füssen, 1952 – Friburg-im-Breisgau, 2013

German artist Günther Förg studied at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste in Munich from 1973 to 1979 and achieved international success very early on. His extremely radical work (in sculpture, painting and photography) continually questions the nature of art. The artist maintained a strong relationship with architecture, by photographing it – particularly the Bauhaus buildings – but also by using certain motifs such as the window, which became a grid in his paintings, and even in the way he took into account the spaces where his works were hung.

His critical reception changed as his output evolved: initially considered a postmodernist, he was subsequently seen as an heir to Expressionism, but there is now no doubt that his work escapes all classification.

[Exhibition room Architecture]

Hreinn Friðfinnsson

Bær Dölum, 1943
Lives and works in Amsterdam.

Hreinn Friðfinnsson trained at the Icelandic College of Arts and Crafts in Reykjavik before founding the group Sum in 1965 with Sigurður Guðmunðsson and Dieter Roth. A member of the Icelandic artistic avant-garde, he is based in Amsterdam and has pursued an international career since the 1970s. Reminiscent of Duchamp's intransigence, his works are characterised by their economy of form, conceptual acuity, poetic evocation and a concern for the tiny, the variation, the double and transparency. Using natural materials as well as found objects and images, the artist subtly addresses nature, its laws and balances, and humankind's relationship with it, which veers between otherness and belonging.

[Exhibition room Galerie Bama | Fluxus ;
Exhibition room Light | Black and white]

Pia Fries

Beromünster, 1955

Lives and works in Düsseldorf and Munich.

After studying sculpture in Lucerne, Pia Fries was admitted to the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf in 1980, where she studied with Gerhard Richter. Since the mid-1980s, the Swiss-born artist has been painting abstract works. Colour occupies a central place in the composition of her works. Each application of thick colour reveals the trace of the tool used and creates various volumes – reserves, crevices, gaps and traces of shearing – all reminiscent of sculptural work. The expressiveness of her abstract works starts with figurative elements from which she extracts fragments that she silk-screens on the support of her paintings, which is often a wood panel. She is interested in several artists from the 16th to the 18th centuries, including the naturalist Maria Sybilla Merian (1679–1717), in particular a contemporary reprint of the plates of the album *Erucarum Ortus* (Dover Publications Inc., 1991).

[Exhibition room Abstraction ; Exhibition room Light | Black and white]

Bernard Frize

Saint-Mandé, 1954

Lives and works between Paris and Berlin.

Bernard Frize has been a major figure in abstract painting for the past forty years. In 1977, the French artist began producing work in large series which, as he put it, established constraints (a formal protocol) in order to avoid having to choose and to be able to continue. Chance and randomness play an important role in his work: for example, works *Untitled B5* and *Untitled B6* were produced by pouring paint of several colours into a large container that the artist left to dry for a month and a half before transposing the ‘skin’ onto the stretched canvas. These unforeseen events also allow the artist to escape from the series currently in progress and to imagine the next series. Frize uses countless techniques and processes in his operations, producing works that sometimes require great precision and craftsmanship. At other times, his works are produced ‘without much effort’ at all, depending on the formal protocol at play. Frize takes the observer into account in his work. He seeks to produce paintings that are ‘true to the viewer’, works that neither dominate nor crush the onlooker.

[Exhibition room Bernard Frize ; Exhibition room Light | Black and white] Noir et blanc]

Jochen Gerz

Berlin, 1940

After being active in Paris for a long time, he has been living in Ireland since 2008.

Initially a philologist and linguist, it was through writing and concrete poetry that the self-taught Jochen Gerz approached artistic creation, mixing performance, installations, photography and video. After taking part in the 37th Venice Biennale in 1976 and in documenta 6 and documenta 8 in Kassel, Gerz became increasingly involved in participatory events in public spaces. In 1986, he produced the first of his *anti-monuments* – against fascism in Hamburg in 1986 and against racism in Saarbrücken in 1993. These non-monumental, imperceptible even, works resituate responsibility for memory in man and explore authorship and the work of art. For Gerz, art is above all a social activity, involving the artist as well as the community in a reflexive process.

Rodney Graham

Abbotsford, 1949

Lives and works in Vancouver.

After studying literature at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, Rodney Graham studied conceptual photography alongside Ian Wallace. Since the mid-1970s, using a wide variety of means, the artist has questioned the relationship between reality and its representation. His complex works, which use text and image in very diverse forms, multiply literary and philosophical references. In several works, he questions our own perceptive mechanisms. In 1991, to emphasize the relationship between the photographic process of the *camera obscura* and the way in which the image is first perceived upside down by the retina, and is then turned around by the brain, Rodney Graham produced a series of photographs in which each shot is of an upside-down tree, disrupting our perceptual habits.

[Exhibition room Galerie Bama | Fluxus ;
Exhibition room Light | Black and white]

[Exhibition room Landscapes]

Olaf Holzapfel

Dresden, 1967

Lives and works between Berlin and Argentina.

Born in Germany, Olaf Holzapfel studied at the Kunstakademie in Dresden. From the start, his work has focused on how people organise their living space, both in urban and rural situations, and on the impact of humans on their environment. The artist's language is very rich, ranging from the use of traditional craft techniques (such as straw, in an adaptation of Polish customs, and weaving, which is based on ancestral skills from several regions of the world) to digitally generated designs. This leads him to produce paintings, sculptures, installations and photographs that explore the interstices between nature and culture, between two geographical spaces (borders), between art and craftsmanship, and finally between the two-dimensional image and the three-dimensional form in space.

[Exhibition room Light | Black and white ; Exhibition room Olaf Holzapfel]

Callum Innes

Edinburgh, 1962

Lives and works in Edinburgh and Oslo.

Callum Innes studied drawing and painting at Gray's School of Art and graduated from Edinburgh College of Art in 1985. Since then, he has established himself as one of the most important abstract painters of his generation, following on from the Canadian-American painter Agnes Martin (1912–2004). With great formal rigour, he leaves reserves (unpainted areas), adding and removing paint, using turpentine to adjust an area of solid colour. Each painting results from a balance of doing and undoing, seeming to originate from the interruption of the creative process. However, each one is added to the series of paintings that preceded it, which it extends and modulates. This process of constant progression is an examination of time, destiny, the creative act, presence and absence.

[Exhibition room Callum Innes]

Harald Klingelhöller

Mettmann, 1954

Lives and works between Karlsruhe and Düsseldorf.

The German artist Harald Klingelhöller studied at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf in the 1970s. Since the mid-1980s, he has made language the raw material of his work. Letters and words, taken from press clippings and legal texts as well as poems and even medical vocabulary, are transposed to volumes in space using a wide variety of materials: cardboard, plaster, concrete, steel, wood and glass. The titles of his works play an important role: they sometimes seem to define the works unequivocally, but they also highlight the evocative power of words and their ability to conjure up images. The artist defines himself as 'an idle stroller through language' and has produced a body of work whose meaning is continually developing and being extended.

[Exhibition room Drawings | Words]

Annette Messenger

Berck-sur-Mer, 1943

Lives and works in Malakoff.

Annette Messenger entered the École Nationale Supérieure des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, in 1962. The raw material of her work is her own story, around which she invents characters whose gestures and attitudes she transcribes. In the process, she highlights the social status of women. In the 1980s, the artist produced several works that were spatial representations of the body, while, in the 1990s and 2000s, she produced a growing number of sculptures and huge installations in which she incorporated movement. Recurring figures have appeared, such as Pinocchio and the witch, and objects linked to childhood, such as soft toys, are used. The childish universe has a much more nightmarish counterpart, with her works occupying a disconcerting space between the two. Messenger is linked to the 'individual mythologies' movement; for her, her entire oeuvre speaks of fragments and parts of bodies.

[Exhibition room Annette Messenger]

Wilhelm Mundt

Grevenbroich, 1959

**Lives and works in Rommerskirchen,
Cologne and Dresden.**

This German sculptor studied at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf with Tony Cragg and Klaus Rinke. He now teaches at the Hochschule für Bildende Künste in Dresden. In the 1980s he created foam sculptures, accumulating a lot of scraps and rejects. He became famous for his series of *Trashstones*, which he started making in 1989 and continues to develop today. Evoking natural forms, these 'waste stones' are full of paradoxes and meaning: the artist makes them by covering waste from his studio in a technically advanced coating. A genealogy is thus established from one to the other, and their visible numbering gives these biomorphic works of seemingly random shapes a systematic, conceptual seriality. The creation, transmission and conservation of artworks are confronted with the question of our ecological future.

[Exhibition room Abstraction]

Tom Phillips

London, 1937

Lives and works in London.

Born in 1937 in London, Phillips studied Anglo-Saxon literature and Renaissance iconography at St Catherine's College, Oxford, and drawing at Ruskin School of Drawing and Fine Art. This versatile artist made a name for himself in classical and experimental music, as well as in the visual arts through his paintings, drawings and collages. Literature holds a special place in his work, since he both writes concrete poetry and illustrates and ornaments texts. Since 1966, he has been working on his long-term project *A Humument*, in which he ornaments and transforms the Victorian novel *A Human Document* (1892) by W. H. Mallock. As a collector, he happily channels his creativity into the transmission of the collected heritage by putting forward proposals for exhibitions and publications. In 1984, Phillips was elected to the Royal Academy of Arts.

[Exhibition room Galerie Bama | Fluxus]

Pascal Pinaud

Toulouse, 1964

Lives and works in Nice.

Pascal Pinaud teaches painting in Nice, where he has lived since he studied with Noël Dolla at the Villa Arson. He is a prolific painter who continually expands the possibilities of painting. His oeuvre reflects his constant concern for execution and his marked predilection for the aesthetic and synaesthetic qualities of materials. He borrows unexpected media from everyday life, crafts and industry, such as crocheted wool, car lacquer, bandages and bobbins of thread in all sorts of colours. He also intervenes in exhibition spaces so that his works can be seen in new ways. In addition to painting, he also produces sculptures, installations, drawings and photographs. Pinaud is now widely represented in French public collections.

[Exhibition room Abstraction ; Exhibition room Drawings | Words]

Eric Poitevin

Longuyon, 1961

Lives and works in Mangiennes.

After discovering photography at an early age, Éric Poitevin studied at the École des Beaux-Arts in Metz. When he was only twenty-four years old, he received a grant from the French Secretary of State for War Veterans Affairs and travelled all over France in order to take portraits of one hundred veterans of the Great War. His language was already taking shape: the very simple portraits were taken with a large-format view camera, a technique he continues to use today. In 1989, he had a year-long residency at the Villa Medici in Rome. Throughout his career, he has redefined several artistic genres – portraiture, landscape and still life – offering to the viewer ‘subjects’ that are stripped of all frills and artifice. Poitevin has been a studio head at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris since 2008.

[Exhibition room Portraits ; Exhibition room Landscapes]

Denis Pondruel

Paris, 1949

Lives and works in Amiens.

After studying engineering, Denis Pondruel decided to become an artist. Self-taught, he shunned traditional techniques, drawing on his technical knowledge and scientific methods to apply technologies from the world of industry. He designs logic systems and builds machines, using metals, composite materials, motors and electronics. He is also strongly drawn to literature, poetry and theatre, frequently referring to works from these disciplines, as in his homage to Paul Celan. His scientific training gives him considerable freedom in the creation of his works, which are conceived not as metaphors, but as models – that is, as representations based on functional analogies rather than similarities of form.

[Exhibition room Architecture]

Dieter Roth

Hanover, 1930 – Basel, 1998

Karl Dieter Roth, alias Diter Rot / Diterot / Dietrich Roth, was a multi-faceted artist, as suggested by his various signatures, the different places where he lived – Denmark, Iceland, USA, Germany and Switzerland – and the numerous media that he used and accumulated. Roth was close to the Fluxus movement. He casually likened and questioned art and life, deriving the material of his textual and visual art works from everyday life. From the 1950s, his object-books were nurtured by his graphic design studies in Bern and his taste for constructivism and optical art. In 1970, he created his first spice cupboard. By using organic materials, he then created works destined to become perishable objects which, through their transformations, question the possibility of artistic representation. In the 1970s, Roth created his own museum in Hamburg; in 1982, he represented Switzerland at the Venice Biennale.

[Exhibition Galerie Bama | Fluxus]

Thomas Ruff

Zell am Harmersbach, 1958

Lives and works in Düsseldorf.

Between 1977 and 1985, this German artist was a disciple of the Bechers at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf, whose professorial chair he took over between 2000 and 2006. Ruff borrows his masters' conceptual seriality of their work, but, whereas they employed conditions of constant shots to formulate an objective photography, he questions the ability of photography to reflect reality. The radical starkness of his photographs induces a disturbing strangeness that accentuates his choices of printing techniques or digital alterations, ranging from night shots, disproportionate formats for portraits evoking passport photos, appropriation and transformation, to the abstraction of existing photographs. Everything invites us to take a distanced look at reality, but also at photography.

[Exhibition room Abstraction ; Exhibition room Light | Black and white ; Exhibition room Portraits ; Exhibition room Architecture ; Exhibition room Landscapes]

Anne-Marie Schneider

Chauny, 1962

Lives and works in Paris.

After studying at the École des Beaux-Arts in Paris, Anne-Marie Schneider quickly achieved considerable success, notably at documenta X in 1977, after being invited to participate by Catherine David. 'My drawing is my daily writing. It saves me from writing with words,' she explains. Pencil, India ink, charcoal, watercolour and acrylic are the tools she uses to produce this daily writing. Her drawings mix hybrid figures, object-bodies from her imagination, which veer between dreamlike images and cruel visions with biting humour. The artist also transcribes everyday life as she perceives and receives it through the media, delivering images of a painful and sometimes violent world.

[Exhibition room Drawings | Words]

Thomas Schütte

Oldenburg, 1954

Lives and works in Düsseldorf.

After visiting documenta 5 twice, Thomas Schütte decided to study at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf, where his teacher was Gerhard Richter. Starting in 1973, he has been designing miniature models with various materials, out of which he sometimes later produces sculptures, installations, models and even lithographs. He is thus constantly shifting around, conceiving his works on different scales, sometimes returning to certain recurring subjects or ideas years later. His three-dimensional works employ a wide variety of media (ceramics, bronze, steel, aluminium, glass), demonstrating his technical virtuosity. Ever since his student days, drawing has occupied a central place in his work. His recurring motifs range from the representation of architecture to public sculpture, including all kinds of subjects – flowers, faces and constructions – that he describes as remnants of tradition.

[Exhibition room Thomas Schütte ;
Exhibition room Portraits ; Exhibition
room Architecture]

David Shrigley

Macclesfield, 1968

Lives and works in Glasgow.

David Shrigley studied environmental art at the Glasgow School of Art. On completing his studies in the 1990s, he began publishing books of deliberately childish line drawings, bearing random words like fragments from overheard in conversations. With dark cynical humour, they highlight the absurdity of our fears. His drawings are never reworked or corrected, and often include doodles. The artist does not limit the distribution of his works to the traditional channels of the art market, embarking on numerous collaborations in order to make his drawings popular objects. Although drawing is central to his work, he also produces paintings, installations, sculptures and interventions in public places that he photographs and subsequently exhibits. Through this type of work, he examines the relationship of works of art with their environment and the way in which they are perceived.

[Exhibition room Portraits ; Exhibition
room Drawings | Words]

Thomas Struth

Geldern, 1954

Lives and works in Berlin.

This German photographer studied at the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf from 1973 to 1980 – firstly painting with Gerhard Richter and Peter Kleeman, then photography with Bernd and Hilla Becher. Using a large view camera, Thomas Struth creates richly-detailed shots, which are most often printed in large formats to facilitate their contemplation. He thus reveals the theatre of the world and its invisible links – links between a given society and its urban or natural environment, between individuals, between a work and its audience – as demonstrated by his urban views known as ‘places of the unconscious’, his family portraits and, since the late 1980s, his museum photographs. *The mise en abyme* of the latter invites us to think of photography itself as an object that affects the ‘viewer’ and his or her environment.

[Exhibition room Landscapes]

Hiroshi Sugimoto

Tokyo, 1948

Lives and works in Tokyo and New York.

Hiroshi Sugimoto went to Los Angeles in the early 1970s to study photography, then moved to New York. Initially known for his photographs, he is also an architect and creates sculptures and installations. His iconic photographic series question the transcription of time and light. He uses large-format view cameras and extremely long exposure times, as in his *Theaters* series, which includes the Tylon Theater in Queens, New York City. For this series, started in 1978, he photographs cinemas, opening the shutter at the beginning of the film and closing it at the end, resulting in an intense contrast between the whiteness of the screen and the darkness of the auditorium. In *Lightning Fields* (2009–10), the exploration of the effects of electric discharges on dry photographic plates is a tribute to two pioneers, one an inventor, Benjamin Franklin, and the other a photographer, William Fox Talbot.

[Exhibition room Light | Black and white]

Mitja Tušek

Maribor, 1961

Lives and works in Brussels.

The artist Mitja Tušek was born in 1961 in Maribor, Slovenia, and studied at the École Supérieure d'Art Visuel in Geneva. He experiments with a range of techniques in his painting, including mixing wax with paint, superimposing layers and working with pictorial monotypes and prints. He handles colours, materials and shapes in a purely pictorial approach, transcending figurative and abstract categories. Even when Tušek takes a photograph as a starting point, the inclusion of reflective materials and the interplay of transparency and opacity in the superimposed pictorial layers remove the perceived image from reality and give it the evanescence and vividness of a vision. In 1992, Tušek took part in documenta 9 in Kassel.

[Exhibition room Abstraction]

Françoise Vergier

Grignan, 1952

Lives and works in Grignan.

The artist Françoise Vergier, based in her native Drôme region, is a painter, designer, sculptor and ceramicist. Her works, executed with great finesse, have the singularity and strangeness of Surrealist objects. However, the chance encounter is replaced by the evocation of numerous artistic, philosophical, mythological, religious and popular references through which she expresses her existential feelings. Femininity and motherhood play a central role, as does the physical and spiritual relationship of human beings to the world. The artist's attention to materials and nature, as well as the holistic way in which she conceives of existence and creation, have opened up many gateways to African and Far Eastern forms of spirituality, from which she draws part of her inspiration.

[Exhibition room Drawings | Words]

James Welling

Hartford, 1951

Lives and works in New York.

James Welling studied visual arts at Carnegie Mellon University and modern dance at the University of Pittsburgh, then at the California Institute of the Arts. He quickly chose photography as his sole medium and became associated with the Pictures Generation. He produced several series linked to documentary or landscape photography that question space. In 1988, he began working on a series documenting North American railway landscapes. He has continually experimented with different techniques, including film photography, large-format glass-plate photography and Polaroids, exploring their properties and their physical components. This approach is typified by his photographs of crumpled aluminium foil which result in abstract images. In other series, such as *Les Dégradés* in 2005, colour plays a predominant role.

[Exhibition room Abstraction ; Exhibition room Light | Black and white ; Exhibition room Architecture]