

MUSÉE CANTONAL DES BEAUX-ARTS LAUSANNE Exhibition programme 2024

Installation view of the Collection. Photo: MCBA, Etienne Malapert



Press Kit

Musée cantonal
des Beaux-Arts
Plateforme 10

Place de la Gare 16
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Switzerland

mcba.ch



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Our Museum

The year 2024 marks five years since the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts of Lausanne opened its doors to the public in its new home on the Plateforme 10 site. Since then MCBA has heard much positive feedback and encouragement from numerous visitors from around the world. The 2024 programme carries on this ambition and dynamic, based on the identity the museum and its collection have historically forged. With the thematically oriented show *Surréalisme. Le Grand Jeu*, MCBA tackles art and intellectual history, spinning its own institutional narrative into the here and now – a narrative begun in one of the museum's major exhibitions back in the 1980s. And direct references to exhibitions simultaneously on view at Plateforme 10's two other institutions, Photo Élysée and mudac, will enrich visitors' overall experience of Lausanne's young art district.

With three consecutive solo exhibitions by Babi Badalov, Gina Proenza (the Manor Vaud Culture Prize), and Uriel Orlov, MCBA is pleased to invite significant contemporary artists to work with us, while dealing with social issues that lie at the heart of current events.

With the work of the Lausanne sculptor André Tommasini and an installation by Esther Shalev-Gerz, the museum is likewise offering new views and a rediscovery of its expanded collection. And finally, in its autumn-winter season, with *Thalassa, Thalassa!*, MCBA delves into the dream depths of the sea as a space for life and culture.

We invite you to join us on this wide-ranging journey into art. Come in and enjoy the freely accessible permanent collection, and take advantage of the wide range of events and outreach programmes the museum has to offer. Only the active participation of all – our partners, the general public, interested groups – makes for the open, inviting, vital place for inspiring exchanges that is MCBA, *our* museum.

Welcome!
Juri Steiner, Director

Surrealism. Le Grand Jeu

12.4.2024 –
25.8.2024



Marion Adnams
Emperor Moths / Thunder On the Left, 1963
Oil on Board, 56 x 45 cm
© Raw collection

This transhistorical show, the first thematic exhibition devoted to Surrealism at MCBA since 1987, examines the unprecedented relevance today of this major movement in the history of art. Surrealism, a young centenarian, hasn't aged one bit.

The year 2024 will mark one hundred years since the publication of the first Surrealist manifesto. In this context, the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts of Lausanne is mounting a show devoted to the role of play in this art movement. Initially present as an informal activity cementing Surrealist sociability, play crystallised the birth of a collective mindset that was defined by a reversal of traditional values, putting the old rules in the dock while devising new ways to make art.

The show borrows its title from a review that was published between 1928 and 1930 by a splinter group of French Surrealist artists who vehemently refused to rally to André Breton's movement. This conflict is symptomatic of the movement, which fractured and reconfigured itself according to the passions, frictions and friendships of the moment, making everyone alternately an adherent or a rebel.

Le Grand Jeu (The Great Game) features is twofold. The historical section is organised in three sequences focused on three games, chess, Tarot, and dice. Within each of these, the exhibition additionally develops concepts like esotericism and chance that imposed a structure on the movement. We are a far cry from any fixed categorisation. Above all, the show aims to point up the creative exaltation these artists harnessed in their work.

Although Surrealism proclaimed itself revolutionary, the movement did gradually spread throughout society, so much so that it became one of the rare artistic references shared by one and all. The dizzying images wrought by this liberation of the imagination continues to influence our way of seeing the body, language and objects in their infinite capacity to change. The show will also be the occasion for contemporary artists to carry on the vital impulse of this anarchic spirit, like a vast exquisite corpse.

Exhibition curators:

Juri Steiner, Director, MCBA, Pierre-Henri Foulon, Curator of Contemporary Art, MCBA, assisted by Paolo Baggi, external scientific collaborator and Eleonora Del Duca, scientific collaborator, MCBA.

Publication:

The show will also have an accompanying publication, a special review inspired by *Le Grand Jeu*.

Thalassa, Thalassa! The Imagery of the Sea

4.10.2024 –
12.1.2025



Alphonse Osbert
Soir antique, 1908
Oil on canvas, 150,5 × 135,5 cm
Petit Palais, musée des Beaux-Arts
de la Ville de Paris
CCO Paris Musées / Petit Palais, musée
des Beaux-Arts de la Ville de Paris

This show challenges us with a singular landscape, the sea, in works of art from the 19th century to the present. What role have artists played in fashioning its imagery? How do they express our desire to preserve its mysteries and beauties?

At the point where art history and the history of science and culture meet, the exhibition makes plain how artists have depicted or anticipated the series of upheavals that have redefined our perception of the sea, that immense territory that extends from the shore to the ocean depths. At a time when we are increasingly aware of the role we humans are playing in undermining ecosystems, and maritime borders are causing a number of conflicts, the past sheds light on the present.

Shores have long been places for distant observation, symbolised by the horizon line. They inspired Classicism's great mythological depictions of the undersea world. During the 19th century, beaches were gradually tamed, first by the romantic stroll and later by seaside tourism. Through a range of efforts to explore the oceans, and thanks to new ways of observing the underwater world like the aquarium, Realist artists came to understand the depths by developing a lateral vision, a view from the side as it were, fashioning a kind of cutaway in the density of water. Hostile to positivist rationality, the Symbolists reconsidered the repertory of abysses through the lens of a subjectivity that raised fantastic creatures from the depths of the soul or the cosmos. In the early years of the 20th century, the Surrealists followed in their wake, mixing different scales and rhythms, as well as plant, animal, and human kingdoms.

Today, stirring up this cultural memory, new narratives about the sea convey nostalgia, fear, and empathy at one and the same time. Confronting issues like immigration and the pollution of the world's "watery part," contemporary artists are deconstructing the concepts of "landscape" and "nature" to comprehend the disturbances – in many ways unknown until now.

The layout of the show is meant to suggest a narrative. Visitors will discover that their emotional and aesthetic relationship to the natural world is anchored in a history and story made of images, and in a series of formal inventions. On the first and second floors of our museum, three themes are examined in turn, first in the past and then in the present, i.e., shores, depths, and finally creatures.

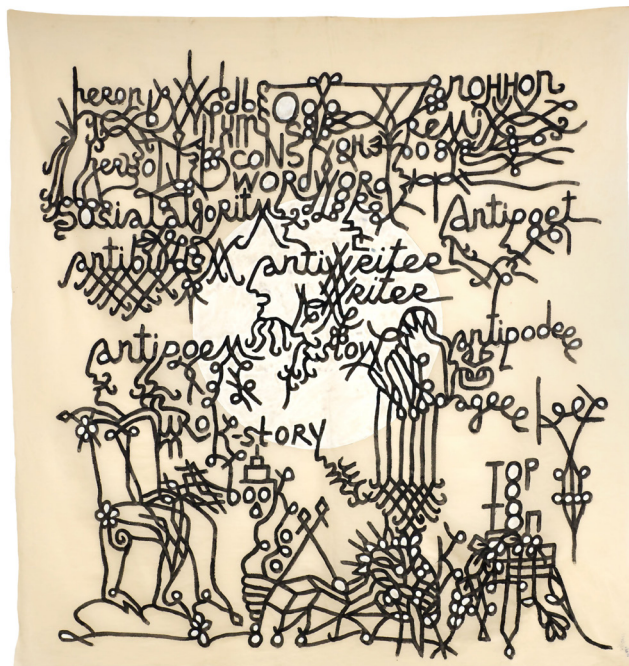
Exhibition curators:

Danielle Chaperon, professor of French literature, University of Lausanne; and Catherine Lepdor, curator-in-chief, MCBA

Publication:

For the show, a richly illustrated catalogue will be published by Éditions Octopus, edited by Danielle Chaperon and Catherine Lepdor, 2024, Fr.

2.2.2024–
28.4.2024



Babi Badalov
Antipoem, 02/2021
 Painting on fabric, 197 x 195 cm
 Courtesy Galerie Poggi, Paris
 © Babi Badalov

MCBA is pleased to announce the first solo exhibition in Switzerland devoted to the work of Babi Badalov. Both writing and drawing, the artist's visual poetry explores the political and poetic possibilities of language.

Words form the foundation of Babi Badalov's work, which stretches out like an immense collage interweaving the languages and alphabets that underpin his complex identity. Born in 1959 in Azerbaijan, the artist grew up at the crossroads of Azeri, Persian, and Soviet cultures. Now settled in Paris after a series of exiles that led him to explore underground Leningrad (present-day Saint Petersburg) in the 1980s, the art and culture scene in San Francisco and New York in the early 1990s, and the United Kingdom in the early years of the new millennium, Badalov still harbours a feeling that he will forever be the foreigner.

Dissecting language in its most concrete aspect – letters and syllables – Badalov reinvents a tongue that is both refuge and battleground. As the very title of the show announces, he usually works by phonetic free association in an approach that recalls certain Dadaist strategies. Mikhail Bakunin's anarchism and Friedrich Nietzsche's nihilism, once essential to Dada's conceptual articulation, remain important references for Badalov. Grounded in the experience of oppression, rejection, and marginality, his body of work nevertheless tries to reconstruct a horizontal utopia in which each person is invited to free themselves from systems of domination.

There is a circularity at work in the supports he uses, whether they are recycled cloth which he paints on, or things he gleans from daily reality and makes a part of monumental collages. That porosity with our immediate surroundings indicates a deeply curious eye, both sensitive to and critical of his own day and age.

Exhibition curator:

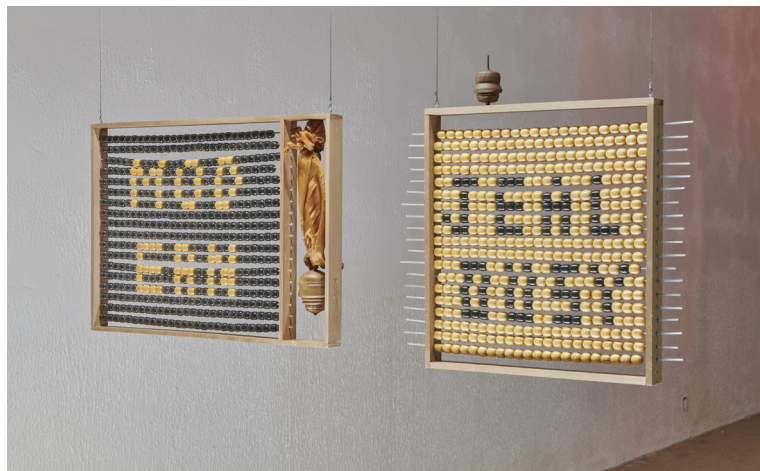
Pierre-Henri Foulon, curator of contemporary art, MCBA

Publication:

Pierre-Henri Foulon (éd.), *Babi Badalov. Xenopoetri*, with texts by Pierre-Henri Foulon and Julie Abbou (FR/EN), Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts de Lausanne, 2024. (coll. Espace Projet, n° 5).

Gina Proenza. Manor Art Prize 2024 Vaud

24.5.2024 –
1.9.2024



Gina Proenza

Modern Jealousy, 2022

Wood, wood beads, metal, silk

Courtesy the artist

Photo: Art au Centre, Genève / Thomas Maisonnasse

The Manor Art Prize 2024 Vaud has been awarded to Gina Proenza (*1994, Bogotá, Colombia; lives and works in Lausanne and Geneva). For the occasion, the artist has been invited to take over the museum's Espace Projet gallery for a new exhibition. Proenza convinced the jury with the originality and subtlety of her formal idiom and its references, and the impressive extent and depth of her practice.

In her work, Gina Proenza combines different literatures, sciences, legends, and anthropological research, summoning both Indigenous American references and popular European tales while conjuring up the history of modernist sculpture through theatrical elements. The artist weds the depth of her research to the intelligence of the materials, and the precision achieved in fashioning objects to the poetry of their arrangement in space, producing works that harbour multiple meanings and are in constant motion.

Over the course of her shows, the artist has developed narratives in which each work of art functions like a clue, simultaneously an independent creation and an active part of a whole that remains to be deciphered. As she puts it, 'Thanks to these occasionally incongruous or mischievous connections, I build exhibitions that reference both the history of Minimalist sculpture and Indigenous American legends, humorously playing with word use to question the relationships of power and its modes of knowledge.' Gargoyles that stick out motorised tongues, neon signs transformed into song scores, or rocking benches that have the bodies of visitors engaging in a dialogue with each other – language, whether oral, written, allegorical, or anatomical, lies at the heart of her practice.

A graduate in Visual Arts from Lausanne's École cantonale d'art (ECAL), Gina Proenza has exhibited her work in a number of solo shows, including at the Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen (2022), CAN, the Centre d'art Neuchâtel (2020), and the Centre Culturel Suisse of Paris (2018).

Exhibition curator:

Nicole Schweizer, curator of contemporary art

Publication:

Nicole Schweizer (ed.), Gina Proenza, with contributions by Sabrina Tarasoff and Nicolas Brulhart. Co-edition MCBA, Lausanne / JRP Editions, Geneva, 2024, Fr/Eng.

Uriel Orlow. Forest Futurism

27.9.2024 –
5.1.2025



Courtesy of the artist

For his show in the MCBA Espace Projet venue, Uriel Orlow (b. 1973 in Zurich; lives and works between Lisbon, London and Zurich) is presenting a series of new works from a research project begun in Bolzano (Italy) which takes fossilised trees as its main subjects, in order to explore the extended time of climate change.

Uriel Orlow is a multidisciplinary artist whose practice is based on research and centred on processes. That is, his films, lectures, and multimedia installations emphasise places and specific micro-histories by combining different types of images and narrative modes. The artist's work addresses the remains of colonialism, the spatial manifestations of memory, always anchoring his concerns in the material history of the objects themselves, whether it's plants, language, or written records. As Ana Teixeira Pinto puts it in connection with one of Orlow's latest works, shown at the 2022 Berlin Biennial, 'Orlow focuses his attention on the entanglements of human and nonhuman actors in order to read the archive against the grain and to consider what a restitution of the natural world means.' His long-term practice resonates more than ever with contemporary issues, be they the blind spots of our colonial heritage or our relationship to the natural world.

Uriel Orlow studied in London at the Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design, the Slade School of Art, and University College London, completing a PhD in Fine Arts in 2002. He was awarded the Swiss Grand Prix Art /Prix Meret Oppenheim in 2023. He was the recipient of the Sharjah Biennial Prize in 2017. He has also earned the 2015 Price from the City of Zurich, and three Swiss Art Awards (2008, 2009, 2012).

Exhibition curator:

Nicole Schweizer, curator of contemporary art, MCBA

Publication:

Bruno Leitão and Nicole Schweizer (eds.), *Uriel Orlow*, Co-edition MCBA, Lausanne / Galerias Municipais de Lisboa, Lisbon, 2024.

Esther Shalev-Gerz. *White Out – Between Telling and Listening*

15.3.2024 –
4.8.2024



Esther Shalev-Gerz
White Out – Entre l'écoute et la parole, 2002
2 synchronised video projections, colour, sound,
40' each, 7 Diasec mounted colour photographs,
6 texts laminated on aluminium, ed. 1/3
Acquisition, 2012
© 2023, ProLitteris, Zurich
Photo: MCBA, Lausanne

MCBA is pleased to present *White Out – Between Telling and Listening*, an installation by Esther Shalev-Gerz (*1948, Vilnius, Lithuania; lives and works in Paris), who offers us a portrait of a woman between two cultures, places, and timeframes.

Acquired by MCBA for its collection following the 2012 retrospective devoted to Esther Shalev-Gerz, *White Out* is a piece the artist created at the invitation of Stockholm's Historiska Museet. Learning that in Sami, the language spoken by the Sami people, the word "war" does not exist, and that Sweden has not been in a war for 200 years, Esther Shalev-Gerz began research in the archives of the two cultures to explore the existence of a possible link between these two facts and, more broadly, to question what separate cultural heritages, languages, peoples and landscapes may have in common.

The video installation features two static shots of Åsa Simma, a woman of Sami origin living in Stockholm. The two shots are projected on facing screens, one filmed in the capital, and the other in Simma's native landscape in the north of Sweden. In the former, Simma is seen reacting to various quotations that touch on Swedish and Sami cultures, while in the latter she is listening to her own words. The contrast between the two 'egos' is striking – on one screen, the animated city dweller, her hands and arms in motion and expressive as she shares her story; on the other, the calm reserved face of a woman listening. The piece divides the ego between the subject of the speech act and the subject taking in speech.

The “in-between state” conjured up by the title is the space that is continuously crossed, from one of the contemporary identities to the other, the permanent oscillation from one outer position to the other. The photographs that round off the *White Out* installation picture objects from the collection of the Historiska Museet of Stockholm, an echo of the official history of the country, from which Sami culture has been largely excluded.

Exhibition curator:

Nicole Schweizer, curator of contemporary art, MCBA

Publication:

Nicole Schweizer (ed.), *Esther Shalev-Gerz. Entre l'écoute et la parole / Between Telling and Listening*, with contributions by Nora M. Alter, Georges Didi-Huberman, James E. Young, and Annika Wik, exh. cat., Lausanne, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts & JRP éditions, 2012.

André Tommasini. A Life to sculpture

6.9.2024 –
5.1.2025



André Tommasini
Expansion II, 1984
Marble
Acquisition of the cantonal commission
for cultural activities, 1987
© André Tommasini
Photo : MCBA, Lausanne

Drawing on unpublished documents, the exhibition spotlights the life and work of the Lausanne sculptor André Tommasini (1931–2011).

Son of a stonemason of Italian descent who lived and worked at the Montoie Cemetery, Tommasini studied stone carving before taking a degree in the early 1950s at the Lausanne School of Fine Arts in the studio of Casimir Reymond. Active mainly in what is called direct carving, a technique going back to classic statuary that allowed him to work closely with his chosen material, Tommasini also produced numerous reliefs that are a part of their surrounding architecture as well as public artworks. He greatly admired Henry Moore's sculpture as well, and his own work displays his examination of the tension between contradictory forms, organic and geometrical, full and empty, constricted and expansive.

The show also recreates the social and political dimension of Tommasini's art practice through the ties of friendship that connected him with other important actors on the Lausanne art scene in the 1970s and '80s.

Exhibition curator:

Pierre-Henri Foulon, curator of contemporary art, MCBA

Publication:

Pierre-Henri Foulon (ed.), *André Tommasini. Une vie à sculpter*, with texts by Pierre-Henri Foulon and Lorena Ehrbar (FR), Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts de Lausanne, 2024. (coll. Espace Focus, n° 12).

The collection on the go



Installation view of the Collection
Photo: MCBA, Jonas Hänggi

The display of MCBA's permanent collection encompasses the large galleries devoted to the collection as well as the special Espace Focus gallery. You are invited to discover, free of charge and throughout 1500 m² of exhibition space, some 300 works of art that span centuries, from the Renaissance to today. Since 1816 the collection has never stopped growing, thanks to acquisitions, donations, bequests, and long-term loans. While offering a wealth of comparisons with international movements and styles, the artistic heritage brought together in the museum makes plain the depth and breadth of the work of artists from the Canton of Vaud and more generally French-speaking Switzerland, whether they pursued careers in their home country or abroad. This unique group of artworks is especially well represented in a number of areas, Neo-classicism, Academism, Realism, Symbolism, and Post-Impressionism; abstract painting in Europe and the United States; Swiss and international video art; the New Figuration; Geometric Abstraction and, across all categories, politically or socially committed art practices. There are also significant collections of works by individual artists that stand out, including Charles Gleyre, Félix Vallotton, Louis Soutter, and Silvie Defraoui, along with Jean Dubuffet and Giuseppe Penone.

Organised around a flexible chronology, the selection of artworks on display changes regularly. Pieces on loan from private collections are placed in dialogue with works from the canton's own collection. There are exceptional loans, too, sculptures by Alberto Giacometti, and paintings by Kimber Smith or Miriam Cahn. Moreover, on the museum's contemporary art floor, recent acquisitions are exhibited for the first time, including major installations by Renée Green and Banu Cennetoglû, while works that have been rarely, if ever, shown are exhibited once again, from Beauford Delaney to Tom Burr by way of the artist duo Pauline Boudry / Renate Lorenz.

Watching the Glacier Go



Katie Paterson,
Langjökull, Snæfellsjökull, Solheimajökull, 2007
Film still
© Katie Paterson, 2007

During the summer of 2024, the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts of Lausanne will be a part of the multivenue *Regarder le glacier s'en aller*, a decentralised art event taking place throughout Switzerland.

Curated by Lorette Coen, Bernard Fibicher, and Carmen Perrin, the decentralised exhibition *Regarder le glacier s'en aller* (Watching the Glacier Go) adopts the artist's point of view on the disappearance of glaciers. The multivenue show features numerous partners, inviting them to question processes now playing out by engaging artists and drawing on their way of seeing. Down through the ages and in a range of ways, creative individuals have expressed humans' complex ties to their milieu. The inevitable end of glaciers could also announce a new beginning, i.e., learning once again how to listen to and sense the world, and as humans, trying to reach a more sensitive, humbler, more just and peaceful place there.

MCBA is taking part in this project by exhibiting the works on permanent display an installation by the artist Katie Paterson (*1981) titled *Langjökull, Snæfellsjökull, Solheimajökull* (2007), an installation in dialogue with the Romantic landscape *Le glacier du Rosenloui* (1841) by the Genevan painter François Diday (1802-1877). Paterson's installation comprises three videos and a soundtrack. The Scottish artist used recordings of the meltwater coming from three glaciers in Iceland. These sound recordings from the three glaciers were pressed into three records, then cast and frozen using the meltwater from each corresponding glacier. These ice discs were then played simultaneously on three turntables until they completely melted away.

Information and contact

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All our press releases and press kits are available under:
→ mcba.ch/presse

Hours:
Tuesday – Sunday: 10am–6pm
Thursday: 10am–8pm
Monday: closed



MCBA is open:
Easter Monday (1.4.24)
Ascension Day (9.5.24)
Whit Monday (20.5.24)
National day (1.8.24)
Federal Fast Monday (16.9.24)

Special hours:
→ mcba.ch/infos-pratiques

Admission and Online Tickets:
→ mcba.ch/billetterie
Up to 25 years old: free
First Saturday of the month: free

Access:
SBB Lausanne train station, 3 minutes on foot
Bus: 1, 3, 20, 21, 60, Gare stop
Bus: 6, Cecil stop
Metro: m2, Gare stop
Car: Montbenon parking, Reduced fee

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Partners and sponsors

The MCBA building was inaugurated on 5 April 2019. The museum's new premises were built by the canton of Vaud with the generous support of the City of Lausanne and the following private partnerships:

Fondation
Les Mûrons



Fondation
Art et Vie

Fondation
Anita et Werner Damm-Etienne



Abakanowicz Arts and
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