

Rewilding An Introduction

Some time ago, I came across the book *Rewilding* by Paul Jepson and Cain Blythe, a clear, thoroughly researched call to action in the face of today's contentious climate issues and social changes: action in the sense of re-enabling or promoting an environment friendly to nature and all living things, including encouraging a climate that prevents or at least reduces the extinction, disappearance, or suppression of various species. The word "rewilding" in this context refers to the replanting, renaturalization, and cultivation of plant species that no longer exist, or that are scarce—thereby encouraging animal species associated with them as well—not only in landscapes but also in urban structures. The very structures, in other words, that fundamentally shape our daily lives and of which we are an important part.

Might it not also be necessary at the same time to create conditions that are more hospitable to creativity, along with more spaces conducive to this kind of "creative blossoming"? Shouldn't we strive for a better integration of culture into society, thereby increasing the relevance of culture overall? After all, creativity serves as a source of the kinds of ideas, solutions, and new directions that enable a future in times of crisis. In times like these, values such as free thought, peaceful coexistence, unity, nonjudgmental interactions, and responsible stewardship of dwindling resources are—or should be—a central global concern.

"Rewilding" means two things in the context of the inaugural exhibition: For one thing, it means providing a new haven for the vibrant creative energies that the Kunsthaus has nurtured since its founding and that it intends to continue cultivating in its new setting. And yet it also means revisiting a dynamic in a place that was once closely tied to the circulation of goods and is now, as a building, part of a significant urban transformation. In the coming years and decades, the Dreispitz premises, once closed and fenced off as a bonded warehouse, will take up the developments of recent times and develop into a new area in which people can live, study, work and also relax. The art campus will intermingle with the university campus, hopefully as part of larger ecological projects that are already underway (Merian Gardens for example) or those yet to come; support will come from a younger generation that is looking for new ways to breach sealed surfaces, that demands interaction

with certain materials along with resources such as sun, wind, and water—and that will also ask new, pressing questions of cultural institutions.

In this sense, *Rewilding* speaks both to the Kunsthaus itself and to the revitalization of a formerly inert space into an active one—a space that seeks to nurture and interact with its surroundings, one that should remain receptive to the questions of others as well as to the entire, evolving local landscape.

The title also points on a content level to the artistic practices of the invited artists, the majority of whom are female, from different generations and countries around the world. While their works may be fundamentally different in many ways, they all clearly address questions of responsibility and care for all living beings, the protesting humanitarian and socio-cultural injustices and the squandering of resources. For all those invited, the encounter with art offers a space for reflection, but also activation—principally aimed at stimulating the creative potential of others. (Ines Goldbach)

Tony Cokes in collaboration with MOS
Architects NYC

Helvetica is a democratic typeface...

*Everyone knows the name of typelaces
ke Helvetica. But do they w the name of
any female typographers? One?, 2024*

It doesn` t matter what they exchange.

It`s just important that they meet., 2024

*If you want to evolve something, first
you need a space so people can get
together to exchange whatever they`re
going to exchange., 2024*

*Is Techno Culture? Club Culture doesn` t
mean anything in isolation., 2024*

Druck auf Frontlit

je 4500 x 3500 mm

Courtesy of the artist

At the very start of the project, US artist Tony Cokes was asked to create a work specifically for the new Kunsthau Baselland that references the new location as well as the curatorial program. After several preliminary discussions with Ines Goldbach, the artist developed this new four-part work. For the first time, Cokes is collaborating with MOS Architects from New York City. Building on the idea that the Kunsthau should not only be a place to view art, but also a space where people can meet, exchange ideas, discuss, read or have a coffee, the temporality of the place is vitally important to Cokes. What is this place now, what will or can it become—and what could it become over time? Since the early 1990s, Tony Cokes has been one of the most prominent artists interrogating media and pop culture and their influence on society. Cokes, who is African American himself, starts from a fundamental critique of the representation and visual exploitation of African American communities in film, television, advertising and music videos. Usually brightly colored, his text fragments can be read on monochrome supports, as projections, or in light boxes; they are both temporally related to current political and sociocultural situations and spatially adapted to the specific place where they are on display. Through the immediacy of the texts in public space, like those on the two exterior sides of the Kunsthau Baselland, Cokes transforms our conventional perception of art: it becomes an act of communal, even spontaneous experience and reflection on what is being read—in the case of his work for the Kunsthau, this is possible twenty-four hours a day, seven days a week.

Laura Mietrup

Koris, 2024

Acryl, MDF, Massivholz, Glas, Metall

6-teilig 80 x 100 x 200cm

Courtesy of the artist

Basel-based artist Laura Mietrup, who already had a major solo exhibition at the Kunsthaus Baselland in 2022, has developed an astonishing formal vocabulary since graduating in 2017. Reminiscent of architectural fragments, machines, furniture, complex systems, or even just parts of them, it encompasses sculpture, architecture, drawing, and mural painting. For the new Kunsthaus building, Mietrup was invited to transform the tables in the large foyer into objects that invite visitors to both look at and use them. This democratic idea that art can function as an invitation, encourage people to linger in a space, and has an inherent spatial dimension plays an important role in Mietrup's work. She deploys darker tones and a deliberately muted color scheme with great precision to create a high-contrast formal vocabulary that has both corporeal and object-like qualities. On the one hand, the six table objects form an ensemble, but on the other, they also function as individual artworks, inviting the viewer to look at them from both near and far; they are immediate yet abstract, and represent a counterpart to their own scale.

Monira Al Qadiri

Benzene Float (Methylstyryl), 2024

TPU, Polyester, air pump

Courtesy of the artist

In her work, Monira Al Qadiri focuses on how our modern lives are inextricably linked to and dependent on the extraction of (fossil) raw materials. For decades, oil has been the most important fossil fuel; also known as black gold, it is responsible for the incredible wealth of the entire Arabian Gulf region, including the Emirate of Kuwait where the Berlin-based artist comes from. At the same time, this industry has led to the enormous exploitation of people, nature and the climate in this region. The dependence of the Gulf states—and of us all—on oil as a raw material and the devastating consequences this has for the entire environmental and social fabric are clearly evident in Al Qadiri's works. For the Kunsthaus, the artist has developed a huge plastic balloon that replicates the shape of an oversized hydrocarbon compound. These compounds are extracted from processed crude oil. We are very familiar with the resulting products: gasoline, benzene, propane, asphalt, and many more. Alluring yet disconcerting due to its immense size, the object intentionally dominates the space. For Al Qadiri, the poetic shimmer of rainbow colors is a reference to oil in its raw state as well as a reminder of a time when pearl diving took place in the Persian Gulf, an activity that was brought to a complete halt once the oil deposits were discovered.

Pipilotti Rist

Central Hong Kong Chandelier, 2021

Chandelier made of underpants, unique

H: 332 cm, Ø 220 cm

Courtesy of the artist, Hauser & Wirth
and Luhring Augustine

Like a large invitation, Pipilotti Rist's *Central Hong Kong Chandelier* illuminates the interior and exterior of the Kunsthaus—depending on the lighting conditions and time of day. Seductive and humorous without losing any of its profundity, the large chandelier made mostly of women's underwear is presented in the new Kunsthaus—and may also bear witness to the artist's connections to Basel. In the 1980s, Rist was one of the first to attend classes in video art led by René Pulfer in Basel; video as a medium did not seem overwhelmingly dominated by male colleagues then, especially in those early days. Rist quickly adapted the new visual language of video to create clips of feminist, female images that reference nature and the body, as well as reality itself, and are often accompanied by immersive sound or text. In her generally large-scale light and sound installations, the artist also focuses on the question of where the viewer is in relation to the work and where they can position themselves. How do they become part of the work, whether by lying, standing or walking beneath it? Bringing about a physical positioning and awareness of the body through art is one of the central themes of her oeuvre.

Renate Buser

Switchback, 2024

Analoge Fotografie digitalisiert, Print auf
Bodenfolie (Nature Walk)

ca. 1000 x 1000 cm

Courtesy of the artist

Renate Buser, who has had her studio on the Dreispitz site for many years, was invited to realize a site-specific work at the very start of the construction phase of the new Kunsthaus. The artist photographed the building site at various times of day over an extended period using both a digital 35mm camera and an analog large format camera. Black-and-white photographs, which Buser often favors in her artistic practice, reinforce the spatiality of the scene, appearing more abstract yet more tangible at the same time. On the basis of these analog prints, the artist then used a digital photomontage to produce a multilayered composite image for the foyer wall, which in turn consists of two different spatial situations: the large wall doors can be opened or closed. Depending on their state, the photograph in front of and behind them also changes. By enlarging the photograph across the entire height of the building and half its width, Buser creates another important aspect: the work can be read as part of the architecture and acquires an installation-like, three-dimensional position within the spatial structure. Through different perspectives, the repetition of architectural elements, and by focusing on the way the light enters the building, Buser uses her photographic intervention to expand the flatness of the inserted concrete wall into a space that feels larger, imagined, sculptural.

Jacob Ott

Untitled, 2024

Diverse Materialien

each 40 x 90 cm

Courtesy of the artist

Originally from Germany, the artist Jacob Ott works in Basel but currently lives in New York. He is constantly on the move and will have to embark on another journey in order to attend the opening of the new Kunsthaus in Basel. His contribution on the large metal sliding door in the foyer reflects his situation. Referring to the view in or out of a subway station, in which thousands and thousands of people are in transit every day, this intervention also recalls the conditions that are often necessary today in order to see each other, to meet, to commute to work or to go home, to the studio or to the exhibition venue. Mobility becomes the foundation of Ott's production. Integrated into the existing architecture of the institution, this artistic intervention provides an insight into a level of exhibition production that is usually somewhat invisible—global networking—and offers us a glimpse of a further exhibition to come. Progress and advancement, like that in the field of mobility, for instance, can also lead to a disconnect with the natural and create increasingly abstract chains of problems as a result of their cumulative acceleration. Ott's contribution to the opening goes hand in hand with this: together with musicians and artist friends, the institution will become part of an orchestra at certain points, a resonating body of sound that is experienced and performed together. Only through constant cooperation does a venue like the Kunsthaus become a functioning space for production, exhibition, mediation, experience and exchange.

Gerda Steiner & Jörg Lenzlinger

Altar des Prekären, 2024

Diverse Materialien

Masse variabel

Courtesy of the artist

Gerda Steiner & Jörg Lenzlinger's works are typically characterized by a great sensuality, poetry and, above all, tremendous joy, but without losing sight of socially relevant topics. Or would it be more accurate to say that this is precisely how the artist duo approaches important issues? This includes our existence in the here and now as well as our relationship with and respect for nature, which constantly manages to surprise us with its beauty and uniqueness. But also how disrespectfully and irresponsibly we treat nature at times, instead of seeing ourselves as part of it; how little faith we sometimes seem to have in the power we possess as part of a greater whole. Their installation at the Kunsthaus integrates the institution into their current large-scale project to create or initiate a pilgrimage route around Schönthal, together with the active involvement of the local area, residents, and their craft skills, and to link it to the Camino de Santiago. The multifaceted and multilayered work grows upward—toward the light—and simultaneously expands exuberantly into the space. An altar for the precarious, as the two artists describe it, dedicated to the fragile, the delicate, the burgeoning, and the overlooked, turning seemingly worthless things into precious objects and inviting us to look, marvel and imagine. Who will find the medicine man, the hasty ghost, the jellyfish, or the little monster? What can be seen or imagined?

Tatiana Trouvé

Untitled, 2022

Coloured pencil and bleach

260 x 400 x 5 cm

Courtesy private council and Gagosian

This expansive drawing by artist Tatiana Trouvé, several meters high and wide, offers a deep, almost window-like view into a wild, even seemingly eerie or menacing landscape. In 2013, the Italian-born artist, who has lived in Paris for many years, began this series titled *Les Dessouvenus*, a Breton expression referring to people who have lost their memories. This relationship between recollection and material, between memory and its limits, is something that Trouvé has been exploring in depth in her drawings and sculptures for a long time. The content of her drawings and the way she works with the material used as the image support are closely linked: for this series, the artist first bleached colored sheets of paper, which fundamentally alters their color and forms stains. The bleach also attacks the material and creates its own composition on the surface of the paper, which the artist cannot control. The resulting rhythms and changes to the surface are reminiscent of clouds, grottos, forests or cave-like structures. Using colored pencils, Trouvé then sketches a drawing over this that is inspired by what is already on the paper and at the same time depicts a fantastic, seemingly utopian constructed ecosystem. In this balance between precariousness, decay, fragility and liminal situations, poetic spaces always emerge for the viewer, revealing growth from decay and new life breaking through.

Thérèse Bolliger

Inhabited Language, 2024

Screening material

Each 105 x 105 cm, 40 elements

Courtesy of the artist

For Thérèse Bolliger, who lives in Toronto, writing and *mark making* are a way of critically reviewing and repeatedly revising and rewriting what she has perceived, experienced and practiced. In *Inhabiting Language*, the work she developed for the Kunsthaus, Bolliger traces the emergence and complex meanings of words and vocabulary from the last twenty years, as well as their codification and inclusion in lexicons, in a personal and collective encyclopedia. What remains, what will disappear, what will stand the test of time? For the artist, who was born in Switzerland and has an intercultural career, language is a process that is linked to both individual and collective experiences. We test individual words and language, we develop with them, learn new things, refine them, reject them, become aware of their roots, their impact and their role in forming identity. Through the fragility of her current work, as well as its analog, immediate material presence—the artist chose to display fragments of words on the grid-like screens typically used on windows and doors in Canada to keep out insects—Bolliger reinforces the idea that language takes place in the moments between private and public space, between appearance and disappearance. For Bolliger, refining language also means taking responsibility for our human nature and our ability to perceive language, especially at a time when artificial intelligence is increasingly finding its way into all areas of life.

Joan Jonas

Draw on the wind, 2018

Paper painted kites, bamboo

Dimensions variable

Courtesy of the artist and Galleria

Raffaella Cortese, Milan

Giving nature a powerful yet poetic voice and placing ourselves on an equal footing with it is the central artistic driving force for Joan Jonas, one of the most prominent US artists of our time. Since as early as the 1970s, Jonas has consistently and explicitly explored the themes of nature and its care, climate change and sustainability. The New York-based artist mostly realizes performative or participatory works, which in her view are not based on nature, but produced in connection with it—in other words, they are directly dependent on it, such as when she draws, paints or creates performances to the rhythm of the wind and waves. Nature both inspires and guides her artistic practice. Working simultaneously with a wide variety of media including drawing, performance and video, she produces expansive installations such as *Draw on the wind*, which is on display at the Kunsthaus. Resembling a leafy forest, the work invites the viewer to cautiously enter and experience a nature-like setting, while giving Jonas the opportunity to reflect on the theme of nature, its beauty and fragility.

Rochelle Feinstein

Plein Air VII, 2021

274.32 x 335.28 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Galerie

Francesca Pia, Zurich

Rochelle Feinstein's themes are fundamental and essential: feminism, racial discrimination, the AIDS crisis, the renewed threat posed by Donald Trump, the right to freedom of expression. Over the past almost thirty years, the native New Yorker and long-time professor of painting and printmaking at Yale University has created a body of work that is both politically incisive and densely humorous. Her paintings, which the viewer generally encounters as a powerful force, consistently grapple with the cultural and political contexts of artistic production and translate everyday individual and collective feelings into the language of abstraction. For Feinstein, painting is an anti-hierarchical attempt to discover the social and cultural significance of the medium today, without being constrained by traditional forms. In her thorough interrogation of the meaning of painting in the world today, she restores a language to the medium that remains vitally relevant as well as direct, genuine and anything but elitist in its approach. Featuring in her first solo exhibition at the Kunsthaus Baselland in 2018, the series she began at this time is still ongoing and includes the work *Plein Air VII*. Maps play a central role here, and not only because the artist herself is constantly on the move. For her, maps are a "form thought" or a foundation. In the past, she would not have chosen maps as a starting point for an investigation of form for numerous reasons, but now, in the light of new and old borders being drawn, new wars over borders, and even visualizations of election results, the artist presents maps that are intended to help us navigate or to orient ourselves. At the same time, it has become increasingly impossible to do just that. For Feinstein, these paintings are therefore also maps of disorientation, obfuscation and erasure, not reassurance—after all, painting is an event, an experience of the world.

Anna Maria Maiolino

*Untitled, from Vida Afora series -
Photopoemaction, 1981–2012*

Fotografia in b/w in digital print
19.5 x 25.5 cm

*Untitled, from Vida Afora series -
Photopoemaction, 1981–2012*

Fotografia in b/w in digital print
26 x 20 cm

*Entrevidas (Between Lives), from
Photopoemaction series, 1981*

Fotografia in b/w, print analog
each 144 x 92 cm

Courtesy of the artist, Collezione Enea
Righi and Galleria Raffaella Cortese

Anna Maria Maiolino has long been regarded as one of the most important contemporary artists in Brazil and beyond. She was recently awarded the Golden Lion for Lifetime Achievement at the Venice Biennale. In the opening exhibition at the Kunsthhaus Baselland, Maiolino presents a series of photographs that, alongside videos, films, drawings, sculptures and texts, define her oeuvre; many of them were on display in the artist's major solo exhibition at the Kunsthhaus in 2021. Since the 1970s, the Italian-born artist, who lives in Brazil, has been exploring her identity as a woman, artist and immigrant, particularly with regard to her life and work under the military dictatorship in Brazil from the 1960s to the 1980s. Maiolino's understanding of the fragility and beauty of life is perfectly encapsulated by the perfection and vulnerability of a chicken egg. With purpose and great poetry, the artist's work demonstrates an essential and pronounced sensitivity towards the human condition and a heightened awareness of global social and cultural injustices.

Daniela Keiser

«*ADER*», 2024

Raumvariable Wand-Boden-Installation,
Fototapete, von Hand angefertigte
Bodenfarbe aus Kreiden, Jurakalk,
Wasser, Gummiarabicum, pulverisiertes
Schmerzmittel

538.5 x 681 cm (Wand)

Courtesy of the artist and STAMPA
Galerie, Basel

Daniela Keiser's work *Ader* (Vein) is presented as a large spatial fold that delicately extends onto the floor at the edges. Given the materials and substances chosen by the Zurich-based artist for the realization of the approximately 100-square-meter photograph and the superimposed drawing, such as powdered painkillers, the viewer's associations quickly jump from the urban to the physical. It is also the body—our body—that is encouraged to move around to view the work close-up and from a distance, and not just within the room itself. The new building structure of the Kunsthaus Baselland also allows a view through the tower shafts, which bring light into the space, and opens up a perspective on the work from above, from the second level of the space. It is here that the coarse grid and pixelation of the photograph become legible in a new way. It can be interpreted as the lightning-like structures of a celestial phenomenon, perhaps even—especially in these current times—as threatening gestures of attack or defense; however, the expansive installation could have another, alternative reading, depending on where the viewer is standing: as a blue-violet vein structure with fine branches like those running through every human body, it represents life and its vulnerability at the same time.

Marine Pagès

Étayer (Les Intermédiaires), 2024

Acrylgemälde an der Wand

643 x 1046 x 20 cm

Courtesy of the artist and galerie

Bernard Jordan, Paris

For many years, Marine Pagès has been working consistently on a body of drawings. This term is very fitting, for the human body is the central element of her oeuvre: it appears on paper and walls of varying sizes. On uniform, monochrome, sometimes white backgrounds, the Paris-based artist develops various webs of symmetrical lines that might signify a spine, ribcage, shoulder blade or hip in the overall composition of the drawing. A body that expands into the space, takes ownership of it and simultaneously inscribes a human dimension into these spaces. For the opening exhibition, Pagès has created one of her largest works to date: *Étayer (Les Intermédiaires)*. The artist uses a brush to apply the overlapping broad lines of acrylic and ink—containing different color pigments that interact with each other—to the light yellow background. The various layered lines combine to form a vibrant structure that appears balanced yet energetically charged at the same time and capable of absorbing the viewer.

Gabrielle Goliath

Series Beloved, 2023

(LaToya, Louise, Ana, Sonia, Bessie,
Ellen, Marielle, Toni, Sister Abegale,
Francoise, Silvia, Saidiya, James,
Angela, Brenda)

Oil stick on cotton rag 76.5 × 56 cm

Oil stick on cotton rag 46.5 × 34.5 cm

Oil stick on cotton rag 80 × 71 cm

Oil stick and pigment on Fabriano

Rosaspina Avorio 285gsm 101 × 70.5 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Galeria

Raffaella Cortese

Johannesburg-based artist Gabrielle Goliath situates her multidisciplinary artistic practice within the history and daily experiences of a “Black, brown, femme and queer life.” She views her work, which includes video installations, texts, photographs and—as seen here in the Kunsthaus—drawings, as a response to the precarity and violence that continue to characterize post-colonial and post-apartheid social conditions. With her new series *Beloved*, Goliath celebrates a radically Black feminist chorus of individuals whose life-giving work continues to guide and inspire her own practice. Accompanying the series is a text by Saidiya Hartman titled *Notes for the Riot, an Outline Drafted in the Midst of Open Rebellion*. The Black academic, who has written extensively on slavery, states that “beauty is not a luxury; rather it is a way of creating possibility in the space of enclosure.” This politics (rather than an ideal) of beauty underpins all of Goliath’s performances, video installations, photo series and texts. Through this, the artist opens up participatory spaces of possibility—spaces of poetry and beauty, despite the difficult and often sad themes that she consistently explores in her work.

Naama Tsabar

Melody of Certain Damage #16, 2022

broken electric guitar, strings, metal,
cable stops, screws, microphones

79.5 x 43.5 x 3.5 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Dvir Gallery,
Paris; Kasmin Gallery, New York;
Goodman Gallery, London; Nazarian
/ Curcio, Los Angeles; and Spinello
Projects, Miami

A central theme of Naama Tsabar's work, who realized her first solo exhibition in Europe at the Kunsthhaus Baselland in 2018, is the body within space, accompanied by—or even making—music and sound. When the New York-based artist's multilayered works are activated, the way they are interpreted changes. However, so does the distance between object and subject, as visitors are encouraged to carefully and respectfully activate her works. The artist's stance has a lot to do with her understanding that she is not presenting the viewer with a work that demands to be admired or that dominates the space as an elitist declaration. Referencing the implicit gender roles and codes of conduct of the music and club world, Naama Tsabar's works and performances focus on the aggressive gestures of rock 'n' roll and its associations with masculinity and power while simultaneously subverting them. Her works function like a filter for the decadence of urban nightlife with all its seductive and subversive facets. *Melody of Certain Damage*, which is on display at the Kunsthhaus Baselland, is also a highly topical image in times of war and violence, especially in terms of the horrific conflicts and wars currently taking place: shattered electric guitars, broken, destroyed and seemingly worthless, can be brought back to (acoustic) life by the approaching movements of the viewer and their gentle touch. A sign that—despite seemingly rampant violence and inhumanity—it is still possible to find common ground and (re)discover words, sound and music together.

El Anatsui

Drying Line, 2021

Aluminum, copper wire

415 x 657 cm

Courtesy of El Anatsui and Goodman
Gallery

The almost monumental work by artist El Anatsui occupies the entire wall of the third tower room in the new Kunsthaus. Since the 1990s, the Ghanaian artist has been using a wide variety of bottle caps, which are flattened and joined together with copper wire, to create imposing, undulating works that resemble textiles.

Against the backdrop of traditional African art, Anatsui has been consistently exploring the possibility of a contemporary concept of sculpture that could also be grounded in his homeland since the 1970s. For the artist, his chosen material—bottle caps—symbolizes the movement of goods as well as the interdependence between the Western world and the global South. For example, some of the bottle tops come from spirits and drinks that were brought to Africa and utilized as currency during the slave trade. In addition to repurposing found, used material, another aspect that is particularly important for El Anatsui is processing the bottle caps in a collaborative team established especially for this purpose. For the artist, creating a work that evolves over a longer period of time, as he says, offers the opportunity to explore and expand the established boundaries of art. In the context of the history of the global South and its entanglement with the Western world through oppression and dependency, he also hopes that his work will contribute to an ongoing narrative of memory and identity, which is also connected to materials, natural resources, consumer goods and their global routes.

Andrea Bowers

Feminist Fans, 2022

spraypainted fabric fans, 83 fans

site specific installation, variable
dimensions

each: 34.2 x 63.5 cm

Chandeliers of Interconnectedness

*(The world is so beautiful even as it
burns; Quote used by permission of
Terry Tempest Williams), 2022*

steel, neon lights

185 x 120 x 100 cm

“The world is so beautiful even as
it burns” copyright © 2019 by Terry
Tempest Williams, from the book
Erosion: Essays Of Undoing

Political Ribbons (Fondazione Furla /
GAM Milan), 2022

silkscreen ink on satin ribbons

site specific installation

Variable dimensions

Fight Like a Girl, 2018

LED lights, cardboard

309 x 203 x 16 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Private
Collection and kaufmann repetto Milan
/ New York

For well over thirty years, the US artist, climate and social activist Andrea Bowers has been realizing artworks in the fields of video, installation, painting, text and drawing. Her works usually represent a combination of different fields and media. As political engagement and artistic expression are inextricably linked for the artist, Bowers comments on activism and advocacy in her artistic practice. She addresses both deep-rooted social and political injustices—particularly against women and social minorities—as well as the generations of activists striving toward a fairer and more just world. Bowers has four works on display in the opening exhibition at the Kunsthaus Baselland, including the installation *the world is beautiful even if it burns*. Bowers has been working on this series of abstracted sycamore branches since 2023, inspired by an urgent concern for the global ecosystem and simultaneously fueled by the hope she feels in spite of global environmental destruction and climate change. Made from steel rods, non-toxic neon and recycled glass, these text-bearing sculptures symbolize the artist's understanding of confidence and hope. For Bowers, hope arises in the moment when we allow ourselves to experience grief and also to feel part of a cosmos that encompasses more than just our human-dominated world. Works such as *Fight like a Girl*, *Feminist Fans* and *Political Ribbons* attest to another fundamental aspect of Bowers's oeuvre: nature and liberal thinking are linked in political and feminist terms. Inspired by the radical feminist philosopher Susan Griffin, whose texts on nature and femininity have influenced the artist since the late 1970s, Bowers creates text fragments that call for participation, empathy, mutual empowerment and awakening in a world still dominated by male perspectives.

Simone Forti

News Animation: Mad Brook Farm, 1986

Video 21:14min / Sound

Courtesy of the artist, The BOX Gallery,
Los Angeles, and Galleria Raffaella
Cortese, Milan

Simone Forti, who lives in Los Angeles, has been one of the most groundbreaking international dance, performance and video artists since the 1960s. At the end of the 1930s, she and her family were forced to emigrate to the USA via Bern due to increasing antisemitism in Italy. She had a pivotal influence on postmodern dance there and has since been named as one of the great pioneers of minimal art. Forti describes herself as a movement artist rather than a performance artist. At the heart of her work is the notion of what we can experience and know about things through our bodies. In her oeuvre, which consists of films, videos and photographs, as well as installations, drawings and texts, she repeatedly returns to the question of our own movement in space, such as in the work shown here, *News Animation: Mad Brook Farm* from 1986. Within this body work piece, Forti examines how we deal with and understand media and politics, as well as the behavior we cultivate in direct contact with each other, whether through gestures, language or, most importantly, actions.

Horizontal Waltz for Left and Right Handcameras, 1989

Video : Anna Winteler

Choreography and Dance : Monica
Klingler

Music : Peter Vogel

Courtesy of the artist

Anna Winteler has been one of the most prominent Swiss video and performance artists since the early 1980s. She has had a lasting influence on the scene, which still frequently references her today, whether directly or indirectly. Rather than pursuing a formally conventional artistic path, her career followed its own logic from the very beginning: dance, body work, video and performances are all central to this. The fact that Winteler turned away from active art production from the 1990s onwards but continued to work intensively with the body seems more of a logical consequence than a rupture.

In the thirty or so larger video works that the artist created during an intensive period lasting from 1979 to 1991, the body and its movements in space are the central themes. *Horizontal Waltz for Left and Right Handcameras* from 1989, which she realized together with Monica Klingler (choreography and dance), is one of the most significant examples of this. In Winteler's work, the body becomes a system of coordinates as well as a point of orientation within a spatial setting, whether inside or outside. Winteler achieves this level of reflection by directing the video camera and superimposing images. The female body is not something erotic or fragile to be shown or recorded in a voyeuristic manner; rather, it is a body that must perform a balancing act with every single step and action while being pushed to its physical limits. A body that moves with autonomy and confidence, that falls, gets up again, falls down again, fails—and yet remains unscathed. A body that surveys the space through movement and in doing so makes it its own.

Anne-Lise Coste

Elles Elles Elles Elles, 2024

Neon Spray paint, diverse Materialien

Masse variabel

Courtesy of the artist

Anne-Lise Coste's work always embodies a strong desire—a desire for equal rights and the end of social oppression and exploitation, especially for women. This desire can also be expressed through language. In spray paint, the artist, who was born in Marignane near Marseille, has found a medium that is extremely well suited to her directness as well as to capturing and commenting on ideas in the moment of creation. Her texts and language, which are always politically motivated yet never lose their poetry, appear on used, discarded, seemingly worthless materials such as plastic bags, packaging or, as here, remnants of the former Kunsthaus Baselland in Muttenz. As the subject of her artistic intervention for the new Kunsthaus, Coste chose Monique Wittig, a key figure in French literature of the 1960s. Wittig was among the first to address the predominantly masculine nature of the French language in her numerous texts. However, her persistent debates considerably diminished her own success as an author in a male-dominated environment. Coste's work *Elles Elles Elles Elles* is therefore also a tribute to the author, who died in 2003. At the same time, it invokes the promise of lived equality, which is still worth fighting for.

Alexandra Navratil

All That Slides, Strikes, Rises and Falls,
2015

each cotton/ wool weavings, 150 × 750
cm, 6 pieces

The Fluttering Being, 2022

Video 5:30 min, colour/ sound

sound composition by Natalia

Dominguez Rangel

Courtesy of the artist

Image archives—both historical and contemporary—are a real treasure trove for Alexandra Navratil's artistic work. These include photographs from micro and macro spheres, scientific images, her own or other people's shots of empty mega shopping malls, clippings from trade journals for the plastics industry and early film industry archives. For *Tinting and Toning*, her extended work for the Kunsthaus, Navratil delved into archives in Amsterdam, where she examined old film reels from the 1910s and 1920s that captured natural disasters, such as underwater volcanoes, eruptions and the resulting cloud formations. In order to transform the footage into something spectacular, she colored the films with the same method used at the time they were created—toning dark areas and tinting light ones. Drawing on this rich source, the artist has established a large collection of images from films, videos and photographs in order to explore how our perception works, how it changes, and which technologies either guide or influence our perception. Her works address presence, absence, and the interference of an enormous pool of visual imagery that we encounter on a daily basis—whether via the internet, advertising, in public or private spaces. Through these reduced yet powerful pictures, the artist confronts us with the way our vision processes and understands what we see, thereby refining our internal image filter.

Leonor Serrano Rivas

Carcasa, 2024

Sculpture, Blown glass, wood

46 x 44 x 30 cm; 54 x 25 x 20 cm;

32 x 43 x 30 cm

Patrones de ritmo tapestry tapiz, 2024

175 x 295 x 5 cm

Zusammensetzung des Schusses:

100% Viskose. Durchschnittliche

Schussdichte: 88.4 Lagen/cm.

Zusammensetzung der Kette: 100%

Rayon-Viskose. Kettendichte 75,2

Fäden/cm

Te dejo la profundidad, 2024

sculpture clay, clay pieces

47.5 x 122 x 49 cm

46.5 x 123 x 61 cm

Te dejo la profundidad, 2024

metal sculpture

Stainless steel, brass, and copper mesh

400 x 200 x 200 cm

Courtesy of the artist

What can we know and what is the source of this knowledge? What forms of acquiring knowledge are possible, including those far removed from texts, and what present can be found in a historical knowledge that goes back several centuries and is informed by or oriented toward nature and its elements? Leonor Serrano Rivas's multifaceted work is always based on in-depth research and often takes medieval history as its starting point, or more precisely, the transmission of knowledge via the spoken, communicated word, via songs, interwoven motifs or rituals—sometimes forbidden yet passed on nevertheless, mostly by women. In her extensive new ensemble of works realized especially for the Kunsthaus, the Spanish artist combines objects, textiles and performance/video in a multilayered narrative to create a poetic source of knowledge. For example, the hand-thrown vessels, which are decorated with fragments of materials such as lapis lazuli, represent the planets and astronomy, while recurring natural elements (birds, stones, landscapes, water, and so on) symbolize knowledge about nature. The potential for transforming elements also becomes tangible, as demonstrated by the Murano glass, steel and copper used by the artist. For her, the act of weaving and interweaving, which is visible in both the metal structure and the large textile work, reflects the idea of giving the magic of nature a new significance in our contemporary life. It is about believing in the historical knowledge passed down from one person to another in various ways and exploring the artistic experience within this kind of presentation.