

Guided tour

– Thurs 14.5.2026, 18:30 (fr)

Guided tour in French of the exhibition by Nelson Schaub, with the artist and Paul Bernard, Director KBCB

Art at noon

Lunch with the Kunsthaus team: bilingual short tour followed by a lunch snack by Épicerie Batavia

– Fri 27.3.2026, 12:15 (de/fr)

CHF 20.- (members CHF 18.-)

Registration until the day before:

kbcb.ch / info@kbcb.ch

# NELSON SCHAUB

## REBUTS DE REFRAIN

Special Prize Kiefer Hablitzel | Göhner Art Prize 2025

20.2.–17.5.2026

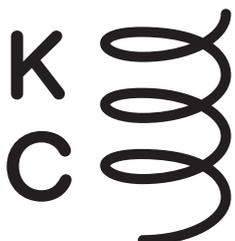
Winner of the 2025 Kiefer Hablitzel | Göhner Art Prize, Nelson Schaub (\*1995) works with performance, installation, poetry, drawing, and music. Deeply shaped by a Do-It-Yourself aesthetic rooted in queer and countercultural legacies, their work summons a spectrum of emotions that are at once dramatic and incongruous – often ambiguous or contradictory. It explores the tensions between intimate narratives and public discourse, between gender nihilism and normative ideals. The exhibition «Rebuts de Refrain» presents a group of works produced over the past two months in the artist's Biel studio and rearranged to suit the particular context of the enfilade of the Parkett rooms.

One might begin by approaching the exhibition from a material perspective, listing the objects diverted from their intended uses into architectural, decorative, or functional roles: tattoo ink covering windows, shaving foam used to draw on walls, toilet paper turned into a projection screen, disposable razors used as display stands, dental floss employed as fastening. To this litany of disposable hygienic tools—intended for bodily care—must be added industrial packaging materials: cardboard boxes, stretch film, plastic bottles... These elements come together in a series of more or less resolved assemblages, placed on plinths salvaged from the Kunsthaus's storage. Thus abruptly highlighted, this profusion of «trinkets» (as the artist calls them) forms poetics of waste, fragility, and disqualification.

A corollary of the chosen materials, the space is saturated with the overpoweringly mentholated smells of toothpaste, shaving foam, and dental floss. The five rooms are immersed in the effluvia of an aseptic bathroom, in those characteristic scents of intimate grooming. They evoke that moment when, alone before the mirror and sheltered from view, one can speak to oneself, observe oneself, contemplate aging and bodily transformations, but also outwit identity assignments. One must also mention the fragments of music and songs emanating from low-quality headphones. The artist's voice can be heard, distorted and interwoven with passages of electronic music. Snippets of slogans, refrains, and apologies emerge.

Visual, olfactory, and sonic: «Rebuts de Refrain» is thus a total, multi-sensory exhibition—a kind of «lo-fi Gesamtkunstwerk» from which a few scenes emerge: a reincarnation, an intergenerational dialogue, a procession of chrysalis-like bodies. Nelson Schaub readily plays with these more or less grotesque archetypes of metamorphosis and trans-identity. In *I've been a very bad girl, a very, very bad, bad girl* (2025), a particularly striking performance with which the artist won the Kiefer Hablitzel | Göhner Art Prize, they spat out a strange abecedary that shattered the language of heteronormativity.

In the Parkett rooms, visitors are invited to embark on a kind of fragmentary initiation journey, from the work *Not dead* (2026) in the first room to the installation *Im alive* (2026) in the final room. In these «refrain remnants», one discerns the formation of a distinctive aesthetic language—fragile, impermanent, slightly murky. «Our social context demands



Kunsthaus Centre d'art  
Biel Bienne

Opening hours

Wed 12:00–18:00

Thurs 12:00–20:00

Fri 12:00–18:00

Sa&Sun 11:00–18:00

order, solidity, homogeneity», the artist explains. «Within this framework, what is perceived as ‘failure’ is simply not conforming to those norms. The apparent fragility of my works stems from a desire to play with this notion of failure—a process that, over time, has turned into a celebration of chance and vulnerability (...) Without an ideal model, all that remains is the disorder of attempts.»<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Interview by Deborah Holman with Nelson Schaub, to be published in the exhibition catalogue, scheduled for release in May 2026.

Jury Kiefer Hablitzel | Göhner Art Prize 2025

Claire Hoffmann, jury president, curator at the Centre culturel suisse, Paris

Denise Bertschi, artist, Zurich

J. Emil Sennewald, art critic, Paris

Barbara von Flüe, curator at Kolumba, Cologne

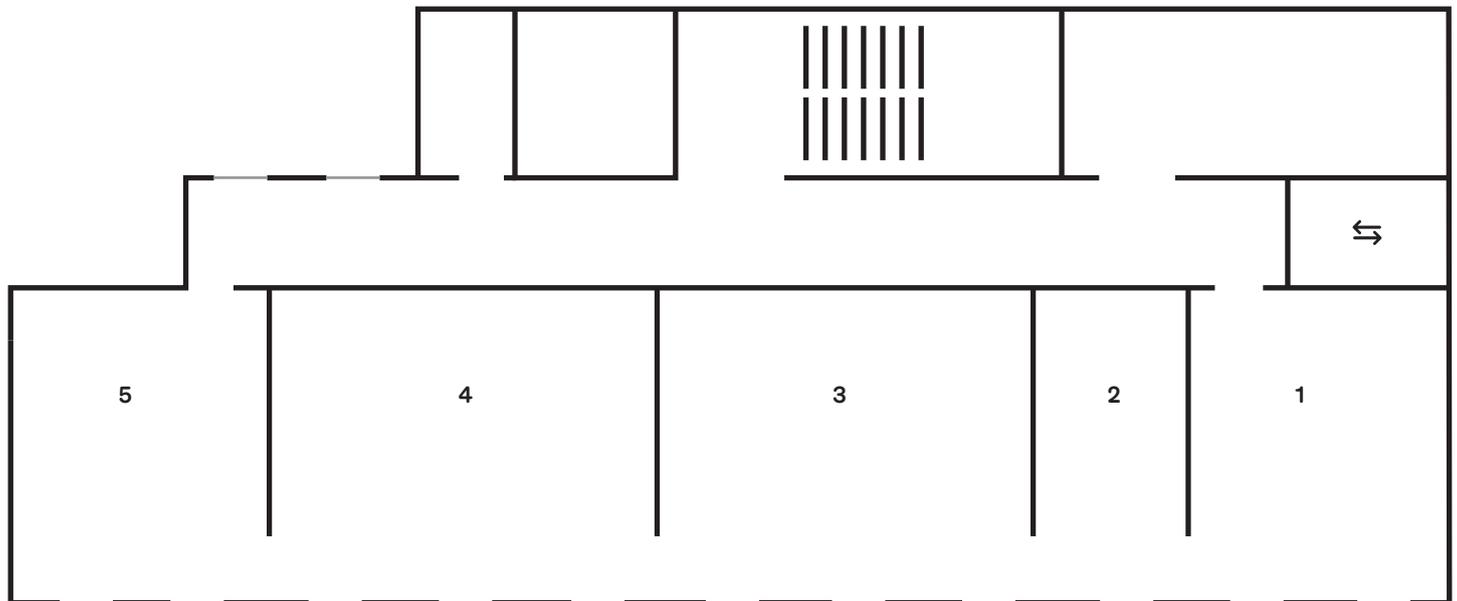
Deborah Joyce Holman, artist

Paul Bernard, Director of Kunsthaus Biel

KIEFER HABLITZEL STIFTUNG

ERNST GÖHNER  
STIFTUNG

PARKETT



1 *Not dead*, 2026  
Cardboard, toilet paper, kitchen paper, dental floss, toothpaste, hectograph ink, disposable razors, loudspeakers

2 *Sorry*, 2026  
Cardboard, hectograph ink, brick, headphones, clay

3 *Babioles*, 2025/26  
Cardboard, toothpaste, toilet paper, hectograph ink, disposable razors, eye shadow, postcards, adhesive tape, mirrors, PET bottle caps, headphones, cling film, toothbrushes, glass, packaging, shaving foam, underpants, make-up remover wipes, nail polish, plastic gloves, KBCB plinths

4 *Going out*, 2026  
Stretch film, PET bottles, toilet paper, high heels, lipstick, toothpaste, mirrors

5 *Im alive*, 2026  
Stretch film, PET bottles, toilet paper, dental floss, projection

All works: Courtesy the artist