

MÉLANCOLIES

16 mai 2025 – 5 avril 2026

1. RONNY MACKENZIE

Atelier : Project Ability

Ronny MacKenzie attended the Project Ability art workshop (Glasgow) when he created the work displayed at the Trinkhall Museum. We currently have no additional information about this artist



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Taking care

Works produced in studios face at least two threats. The first threat is a lack of financial or structural resources, preventing studios from storing the works produced there in good conditions, regardless of the artistic quality of the works. These works are therefore at risk of disappearing due to the harmful effects of poor conservation, because they will be thrown away due to lack of space or sold for financial reasons. This is the second threat to works created in studios: predation by gallery owners or art lovers. These greedy predators, aware of the state of the art market – with Art Brut and similar movements experiencing significant growth – take advantage of the conditions of (sur)vival in workshops to buy, often at low prices, magnificent works that are thus removed from the common heritage.

Its public service mission and, even more so, its commitment to fragile worlds, oblige the Trinkhall to take action with regard to these endangered forms of creation. To ensure the preservation, study and promotion of an important part of our cultural heritage, the Trinkhall museum project therefore responds to a form of necessity and urgency.

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2. VALERIO CICCONE

Atelier : Arts Project Australia

Valerio Ciccone has been attending the Arts Project Australia workshops since 1984. There, he developed primarily figurative artwork: still life, celebrity portraits, and reproductions of newspaper pages. The *Mélancolies* exhibition features a still life and a personal map created by Ciccone – the inscriptions refer to localities in the Melbourne neighbourhood where the artist lives.



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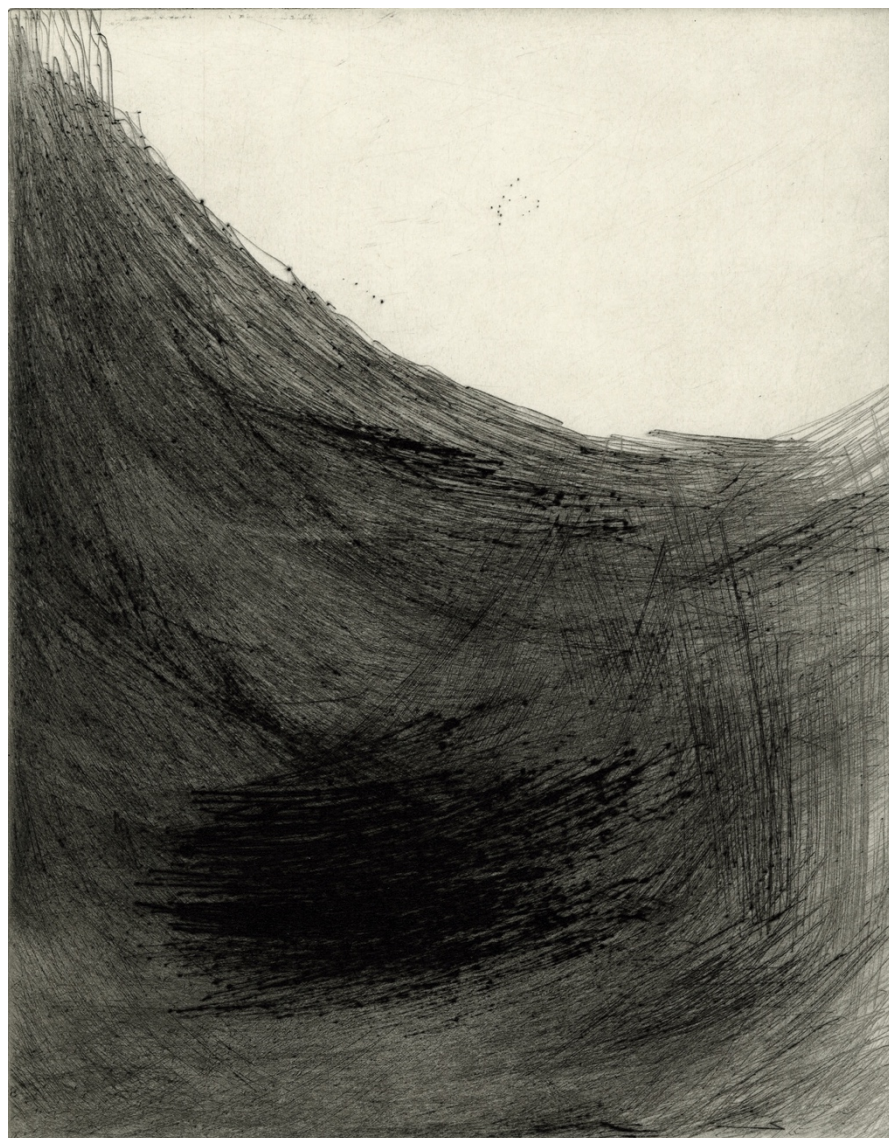
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3. VÉRONIQUE DECLERCQ

Aux lisières des ateliers

Véronique Declercq (1965–2021) was an artist on the fringes of workshops. She attended the Antonin Artaud Club in Brussels, where she discovered printmaking with Chris Delville. Thus began a partnership of over twenty years with the two engravers working side by side once a week.



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4. MARIA PACE

Artiste partenaire

Maria Pace, who trained at the Academy of Fine Arts in Liège, where she taught from 2007, to 2024, is internationally recognized.

"I have made the technique known as mezzotint my own, and above all, the use of its tool: the rocker. The tool has become an extension of my hand. I rock it for hours on a copper plate. What I present is the result of these moments of intimate connection between the copper plate, the tool, and myself.» (Maria Pace)

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5. JOHAN GEENENS

Atelier : Kunstwerkplaats De Zandberg

Born in 1970, Johan Geenens has regularly visited the De Zandberg workshops since 2002. A member of the Wild Classical Music Ensemble, Johan Geenens is also, maybe above all, the creator of major plastic works and now enjoys wide recognition.

His work – etchings, drawings and paintings – seems to indicate great restraint, of course through its contents, but also through the choice of extremely simple, even frugal materials. Deceptively minimalist, Johan Geenens' pieces are lengthy creations, engaging the artist for several weeks. The result is stunning, particularly the artist's acrylics preserved at the Trinkhall Museum, which reveal the necessity of artistic creation.



©Muriel Thies/De Zandberg

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6. DANIEL STERCKX

Atelier : Créahmbxl

Born in 1965, Daniel Sterckx has been attending the visual arts workshops of the Créahm in Brussels since 1986. His work, initially made up of fantastical and personal parables, later evolved into a gallery of expressive, mysterious, lively, and tumultuous portraits. The artist uses various techniques and materials—sometimes within a single piece: he handles dry and oil pastels, acrylic paint, and India ink with equal ease.

Daniel Sterckx tirelessly explores the human form. To do so, he draws precise, repeated, and vigorous circular lines, which he layers or allows to curl in on themselves. The line becomes a fundamental element, allowing him not only to swiftly capture the essence of his subject but also to emphasize certain key motifs. The faces, always shown from the front, are sometimes attached to the outline of a body. The eyes are enormous—astonished, frightened, or frightening—and the mouths, wide open, seem ready to bite or scream. At times violent, angry, anxious, or afraid, Sterckx's figures are always captivating.

(Adapted from "STERCKX Daniel", in the Madmusée Collection 1998–2008, Liège, 2008, pp. 233–234.)*



©Muriel Thies/Collection privée

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7. CHRISTIANE DEWAELE

Atelier : Villa DACart

Christiane Dewaele attends the Villa DACart visual arts workshop (Zonnehoeve/Living +), in East Flanders. Two of Christiane Dewaele's pieces are exhibited in Mélancolies: using blue ink, the artist has transferred the faces of great creative figures who are important to her onto carbon paper – Marlène Dietrich, Vincent Van Gogh, etc.



©Muriel Thies/Trinkhall museum

"Christiane Dewaele (1957) was born in Ghent, which can be heard in her subtle and, sonorous dialect. She smokes like a chimney and looks at anyone who addresses her, with extraordinary intensity. Her hands are constantly moving. Her long fingers, ravaged by pain and joy, sketch out enigmatic choreographies and support her words, looks, and shared silences. Christiane Dewaele bursts out laughing as she holds both ends of the rope of existence, with distress and jubilation woven into each of her images."

(Carl Havelange, after meeting the artist on July 14, 2021.)

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8. ANDREA WELLENS

Atelier : Centre Het Zonnellied

An artist working in the Het Zonnellied centre's workshops in Lennik, Andréa Wellens creates visual art primarily using pastels, and occasionally paint.

While she excels in portraits, the artist is also the creator of the stunning still life featured in Mélancolies.



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9. CHRISTINE CATTEBEKE

Atelier : Kunstwerkplaats De Zandberg

A regular at the De Zandberg workshops, Christine Cattebeke creates fine art with very bright colours, mixing oils and pastels.

Her pieces are quite repetitive and follow the same structure; the subjects – flowers, people, houses, and mushrooms – appear in accordance with regular motifs. The piece in the Places to Exist exhibition is a perfect example of this.

On one occasion, Catherine Cattebeke moved away from her creative pattern: a non-figurative textile creation made up of coloured squares and rectangles.



©Muriel Thies/Trinkhall museum

La vie en mieux

From 2017 to 2020, Christine Cattebeke contributed to the pages of Morgen Boeken. Compiled into two collections deposited at the Trinkhall Museum, these reworked journals can be (partially) consulted online on the museum's website.



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10. PEDRO RIBEIRO

Atelier : Centre Sésame

Born in 1990, from 2014, Pedro Ribeiro regularly attended the Sésame painting workshop in Brussels. His pictorial work is composed of often very stylized portraits that are impossible to identify. The painter's work is constantly evolving. In his most recent productions, the figures have become almost imperceptible, lost beneath the paintbrush strokes and wand that the artist inflicts on the drying painting. Pedro Ribeiro's work is becoming denser – the artist applies multiple layers of pastel and acrylic – to such a point that the productions can no longer be seen as two-dimensional interpretations but understood as three-dimensional objects. Now a sculptor, Pedro Ribeiro's paintings submerge us into an abyss – paradoxically, on occasion very bright – and lead us to the deepest part of the characters who are dissolving into their places.



©Muriel Thies/Centre Sésame

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11. MATTIAS JOHANSSON

Atelier : Inuti

Mattias Johansson, born in 1979, has been attending Inuti workshops (Stockholm) for over twenty years. Although the artist is now more willingly engaged in abstract art, he also creates magnificent portraits of celebrities and political figures.



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12. ASHLEY ANJUYN

Atelier : Kunstwerkplaats De Zandberg

Ashley Anjuyn has been attending the De Zandberg workshops since 2014. Gifted in the art of chiaroscuro, Ashley Anjuyn creates oil portraits inspired by the great figures of art history. He also uses his fellow workshop members as models. This is the case for the two works exhibited here: on the right, a self-portrait and, on the left, a portrait of an artist from the De Zandberg workshop.



©Muriel Thies/De Zandberg

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13. SYLVAIN COSIJNS

Atelier : Centre De Bolster

Sylvain Cosijns (1932–2020) entered the artistic workshop of the De Bolster centre (Mariaheem, at the time) at the age of fifty-four. With the support of the leader, Jan Geldhof, Sylvain Cosijn's artistic talent blossomed little by little.

The artist maintained his own style: his characters became more and more stylized as he refined his lines. The large, sometimes coloured silhouettes have very faint outlines. Sylvain Cosijns artwork is of infinite sobriety and indescribable strength.



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14. ALAIN MEERT

Atelier : Créahm, Région wallonne

As an active participant of the Créahm Liège workshops since 1996, Alain Meert is a formidable painter of animals and an incredible copyist. Reproductions of animals or still life are transformed by his hand. The artist is also a talented model maker – he makes reduced-sized models of airplanes or hospitals.



©Muriel Thies/Trinkhall museum

Le musée idéal

Le musée idéal is a piece created throughout 2019 by Alain Meert, in preparation for the opening of the Trinkhall. The artist answered our question – What is a museum? – with a galleon in full sail, which casually displays drawings, paintings, and sculptures. It is a scene of paper, cardboard, objects, multiple unusual and familiar presences, lodged precisely between states of consciousness. The whole world that fits into a boat: Alain Meert's ark. And it is a museum, just as we want it to be, dreamily navigating among ideas, shapes and emotions. Ship Lieutenant Alain Meert is a pirate. So, let's all climb aboard with a heave ho!

Vidéo : Pièce majeure de la collection du Trinkhall museum, le *Musée idéal* s'accompagne d'un making off rendant visibles les dix-huit mois de réalisation de l'œuvre.



15. PASCALE VINCKE

Atelier : Créahmbxl

A workshop artist at the Créahm in Brussels, from 1986 to 1998, Pascale Vincke's plastic art activity is mature, intense, and brief. Her work largely consists of portraits inspired by magazine pages and adverts. Pascale Vincke uses her painting to twist and transform this glitzy and sparkly world; it breaks free of itself.

"See how the image communicates with the actual edges of the figure within – she messes around with it and literally plays with the frame. Free of affectation, delicately, the interplay of the image and the frame points to the conditions of visible possibility: The image is constantly under the threat of extinction or, in better terms, it seems to be permanently inhabited by a hesitation of existence, an escapist project, simultaneously maintaining its own visibility, the slice of silence and darkness of which it consists and paradoxically makes possible, the silence from which it is born. This is why, without any doubt, it escapes from its origins and guidance through the rituals of demonstration, commerce, inner elation: it stretches towards its edge and also predicates its own appearance. It has never turned to the inside; it opens up to the troublesome and vast bareness of the outside."

(Excerpt from Carl Havelange, *"Les portraits de Pascale Vincke : une anthropologie silencieuse,"* Pascale Vincke, Liège, MADmusée–Créahm Région Wallonne, 2006, p. 34.)



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16. PASCAL TASSINI

Atelier : Créahm, Région wallonne

Pascal Tassini (Ans, 1955) spent time at the Créahm workshops for more than twenty years, from 1966 to 2018. He developed an extraordinarily rich polymorphous style – drawings, paintings, terra cotta sculptures and bunches of knotted material for which he is now famous, relentlessly cobbling together shapes, substances, existence.



©Muriel Thies/Trinkhall museum

La Cabane is a monumental installation created within the workshops and the result of a long-term artistic endeavour: conceived in the early 2000s, *La Cabane* was continuously revisited, modified, and transformed by the artist until 2018, when he ceased his activities. *La Cabane* is, in a way, a metatheatre; not only of the artist's work—through the materials and techniques used—but also through the movement of the workshops: *La Cabane* is a workshop within a workshop. In 2019, the Créahm workshops were preparing to move into a new building. *La Cabane* was then under threat: its weight (500 kg) and dimensions made it difficult to move. Moreover, the Créahm workshops lacked both the financial means and the space required to house the monumental piece in their new premises. As a result, *La Cabane* was at risk of being destroyed. Once alerted to the situation, the Trinkhall Museum management team decided to salvage the artwork. A committee was convened, and a schedule of operations was established: in July 2019, an initial feasibility study was carried out by the Beguin–Massart architectural firm, followed by a more in-depth study in December 2019; in February 2020, the process of dismantling and reconstructing the work began; and in March 2020, the fully-restored piece was installed at the Trinkhall Museum, in a dedicated room that ensures maximum visibility.

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17. JOHN BRESLIN

Atelier : Project Ability

John Breslin is a Scottish artist who attended the Project Ability Center in Glasgow. He came to Liège in 1992. We still know nothing more about him today; only that he was a «shy and charming man.» Any trace of him has been lost in Scotland, too. There is no inventory of any of his work. Only a few large drawings remain, which the Glasgow studio kindly handed over to the Créahm and Luc Boulangé. Each time, we find the same characteristics: large open and free compositions, a nonchalant aptitude for drawing lines, totally reliable use of colour, and these secret narrations that seem to resonate with our worries, our mythologies, our hopes. The great unknown pastels of John Breslin are fireflies blinking in the planetary night that we are passing through: Bring on the charming and shy men and women...



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18. PIERRE DE PEET

Atelier : Créahmbxl

Pierre De Peet (1929–2019) was one of the leading artists from the Créahm Brussels workshops, where he worked for almost thirty years from August 1990 until he passed away in November 2019. From quite a modest background, his poor health ensured that schools were inaccessible to him early on.

As he explained in his autobiography, he helped out in the fields “breaking up the beets with a spade before a farmer collected them with a horse and plough.” Then he joined his brother in the family bakery, where he was a labourer for several years. In 1988, he was taken in by the ‘Les Châtaignes’ shelter in Woluwe–Saint–Pierre. He lived there until the end of his days. In August 1990, at the age of 60, he joined the Créahm workshops. There, he gradually developed an overwhelmingly intense fine art body of work: drawings, paintings, and etchings. Perfectly clear strokes, an intelligent use of colour, a sense of narration and an incomparable and outstanding use of poetry were the main elements of a pictorial form of language or expressionism, sometimes with his most tragic dimensions, which he continuously conversed with a kind of softness and tenderness never seen before.



©Muriel Thies/Trinkhall museum

This completed piece is a magnificent picture book of thousands of hours of visual emotions patiently, modestly, and persistently put together by the artist at his work desk. Consumed by grace, it is the epitome of joy and colour and casts an uncompromising but extremely kind eye on the world.

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19. ANNE DE GELAS

Artiste partenaire

Originally from Brussels, Anne De Gelas is a photographer. She has had more than thirty solo exhibitions and been part of many group exhibitions, both in Belgium and abroad. She is also the author of several publications, including *Zone de Confort* (2021), *Mère et Fils* (2018), *Une journée (presque) parfaite* (2012), *Le secret ou la question du journal intime* (2008). Primarily photographic, her work combines images with text and drawings. By questioning the body, absence, solitude, the scars of time and illness, Anne De Gelas always reveals, the power of desire and connections in the depths of her work.

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20. ALEXIS LIPPSTREU

Atelier : La Pommeraie

With a minimalist approach – pencil, paper – Alexis Lippstreu (La Pommeraie, Belgium) has become a brilliant reproducer of masterpieces. He has reinterpreted and reinvented Gauguin, Manet, and Velasquez countless times. Each drawing is a variation of the same inexhaustible theme, each time revisited and reworked. Whether rewriting or adding a new page to the History of Art, Alexis Lippstreu's work cuts to the bone revealing, with great sobriety and starkness, the essence of the most famous paintings.

The magnificent engraving displayed here follows the same creative process.



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21. DOROTHY BERRY

Atelier : Arts Project Australia

An Australian artist from Arts Projects Australia, Dorothy Berry likes to vary the media and techniques that she uses, sometimes within the same creation. She is the architect of fantasy mythical creatures including many birds.

Her work has been included in a number of private and public collections, notably in the National Gallery of Australia and the National Gallery of Victoria.

One of the artist's magnificent parrots is on display here. Or is it a crow, the ultimate melancholy bird?



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22. DOREEN MC PHERSON

Atelier : Intoart

Doreen McPherson's work is created in black and white using graphite pencil and charcoal. Her works are reinterpretations of old photographs or afro hairstyles taken from magazines. Doreen McPherson isolates the faces and makes them pop with her very masterful use of light and shade.



©Muriel Thies/Trinkhall museum

Listen to the podcast produced by ISELP about this work.

Zoom. La parole à l'œuvre, épisode 10 :



23. FRANCESCO ROMITI

Aux lisières des ateliers

Francesco Romiti was an Italian artist (1933–2013). He began drawing at an early age, but it was only later in life, and for a brief period (1999–2002), that he attended the La Tinaia workshop in Florence. There, he experimented with new media and tested a variety of materials. He also formed trusting relationships, particularly with members of the Chille de la Balanza theatre troupe, entrusting them with some of his pieces for small exhibitions. Until then, protective of his work and wary of the exploitation of art, he had refused any public display or sale of his creations.

As the custodian of Romiti's work, the Chille de la Balanza company aimed to award him the recognition he deserved. It was from this intention that irregolART was born in 2019. It was a festival centring around the Umani exhibition. Francesco Romiti. The artist's creations were then met with enthusiastic commentary from critics, particularly Tomaso Montanari and Eva di Stefano.



© Muriel Thies/Chille de la balanza

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24. IRÈNE GÉRARD

Atelier : La S Grand Atelier

Born in 1958 in Eupen, Irène Gérard has been attending La S Grand Atelier since 2007. The faces and forms of Irène Gérard are made of shards and fragments, which she connects with lines. A master of kintsugi, the artist patches things up without hiding any suffering endured: in the same gesture, she reveals and fixes the cracks which she highlights with gold powder. With infinite patience and extreme delicacy, Irène Gérard celebrates imperfections, praises the vulnerability of entities, and thus reminds us of our shared fragility.



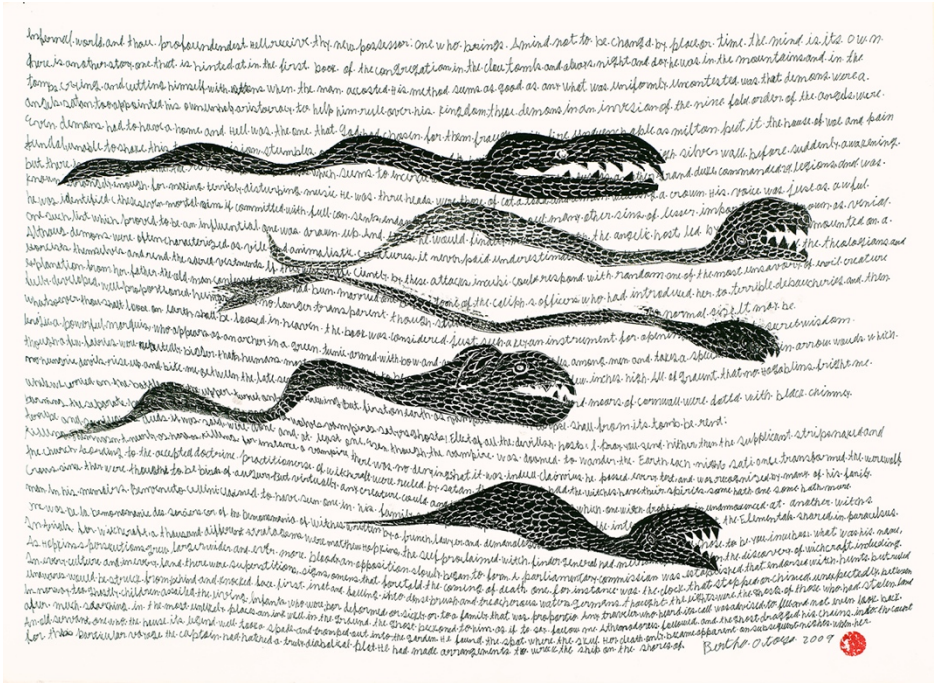
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25. BERTHA OTOYA

Atelier : Creativity Explored

Bertha Otoyá is a Peruvian artist who emigrated to the United States. For about twenty years, she attended one of the major American studios, Creativity Explored, established in San Francisco. Since 2009, after a long time working with textiles, tapestries, and embroideries initially inspired by South American techniques and iconography, she dedicated herself to painting and engraving.

Otoyá's pieces are large compositions, often monochrome, where fabulous animals – snakes, hydras, sea monsters – seem to progress through meandering words and phrases overlay the whole mount that is partially covered by the pattern. All the letters are detached, and each word is separated by a dot, thus organizing the text into a vast graphic, rhythmic, musical composition, so to speak. The drone of words and the melody of images. The text is a sky, a horizon, the atmosphere, the milieu of Otoyá's prints where the monsters are born and take shape, and movement. An ecosystem, as we might say today, where images and words mutually generate, drawing from their secret and mysterious Roots, the resources of their efficiency.



©Muriel Thies/Trinkhall museum

The monsters and wonders of Bertha Otoyá

To learn more about the artwork displayed along the lift shaft, consult (and take away!) the booklet detailing the investigation into this enigmatic creation.

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26. JEAN-MARIE HEYLIGEN

Atelier : Home André Livémont

Jean-Marie Heyligen (Ath, Belgium, 1961) is a polymorphic artist: painter, etcher, sculptor. For over forty years, with endless patience he has played the role of saying everything that really matters in a way that is beyond words – stunned faces, abandoned and naked bodies, Indians from another world, knights from another time, all drawn into the irresolute enigma of shapes, strokes, materials, colours, images and things. The long-lasting theme of Jean-Marie Heyligen's work is organised knick-knacks, constantly metamorphosing due to everything we secretly go through from childhood to adulthood.



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27. RÉMI DELANGE

Atelier : Créahm, Région wallonne

Rémi Delange (1954–1983) attended Créahm shortly after it was founded. Although he participated in the visual arts workshop, Rémi Delange was, above all, a magnificent actor.



© Muriel Thies/Trinkhall museum

The video – Is Rémi not here?:

Life and work intertwine, and the lines are blurred. Luc Boulangé, founder of the Créahm, and his wife Michèle, a partner from the very beginning, found in Rémi Delange someone who could have become their fourth child. The adoption processes did not have time to be finalized: Rémi was struck by a car while crossing the main road of his village. The documentary made in 1984 by Daniel Remi retraces the artist's journey. Behind this story lies the primarily human and artistic adventure of the Créahm.