

Press release

**EXHIBITION**

23 February to 17 May 2020

**GALA OPENING**

Saturday 22 February at 5 p.m.

**PRESS CONFERENCE  
WITH VISIT OF THE EXHIBITIONS**

Thursday 20 February 2020 at 11:15 a.m.

This spring, the La Chaux-de-Fonds Museum of Fine Art is proud to announce two forthcoming exhibitions:

**KIKI KOGELNIK. LES CYBORGS NE SONT PAS RESPECTUEUSES**  
and **MATHIAS PFUND. LAUGHING STOCK.**

The museum pays homage to the Austrian artist Kiki Kogelnik, a colourful personality who made her mark on New York's Pop Art scene. Featuring over a hundred works from the 1960s to the 1980s, this is the first solo exhibition of her art in Switzerland.

The young Swiss artist Mathias Pfund offers a new approach to the Chaux-de-Fonds artists of the École du gris school with an exhibition that sets out to explore how art history comes to be written.

*The gala opening will be held on Saturday 22 February at 5 p.m., with guests of honour Mathias Pfund and representatives from the Kiki Kogelnik Foundation and speeches by Théo Bregnard, president of the La Chaux-de-Fonds council, and museum director David Lemaire.*



## KIKI KOGELNIK. LES CYBORGS NE SONT PAS RESPECTUEUSES [CYBORGS ARE IRREVERENT]

Kiki Kogelnik left her native Austria for New York in 1961. In changing continents, she also changed style. Her work became ever more colourful, moving on from abstraction to explore the body from various social, medical, and technological points of view. She brought a critical gaze to bear on the bodies shaped—or distorted—by the consumer society, to the point of losing their form and becoming empty, interchangeable vessels. Fashion images flatten out differences, neatly tidying bodies away in the city like a vast closet. What happens on the inside is just as worrisome: organs can be plucked out and replaced like spare parts, creating hybrid cyborg beings that are neither quite human nor machine. Bodies can be healed or dismantled, sent into space or smashed to smithereens by bombs: this is the ambivalence of progress.

Kiki Kogelnik's status in the Pop Art scene was equally ambivalent: while she was widely acclaimed as a new avant-garde muse, her work never achieved significant sales. Only recently have art historians begun to re-evaluate the place of women in Pop Art, long seen as an almost exclusively male preserve. Kiki Kogelnik's discreet yet steadfast feminism made her a marginal figure in the movement. The time has now come to acknowledge the importance of her pioneering work, which, while resolutely upbeat, nonetheless raises important questions.

Kiki Kogelnik was born in Bleiburg in 1935 and died in Vienna in 1997. The exhibition is curated in partnership with the Kiki Kogelnik Foundation, New York.

## MATHIAS PFUND. LAUGHING STOCK

The exhibition *Laughing Stock* gives *carte blanche* to the artist Mathias Pfund, who has chosen to work with the museum's extant collections by re-hanging one of the upper floor spaces. His vision explores the "École du gris", or school of grey painting, argued by some to have flourished in La Chaux-de-Fonds between the two world wars. While the school is mentioned in a variety of sources, its actual historical existence is far from clear: it is often the object of ambiguous intentions that say more about the aesthetic assumptions of the critics than about the intrinsic qualities of the art itself. Art history has seen other so-called "écoles du gris" identified with similar arguments.

Pfund's project is rooted in dual meaning, offering an arm's-length study of how art history manufactures meaning by placing greater emphasis on the interpretation, tastes, and values brought to bear on the painting than on the painting itself. The aim is to ask questions of the image of art and to explore the ideological tensions it gives rise to.

Pfund's intervention is camouflaged by the institution's display practices and draws on its authority to write a narrative that probes images and the values associated with art. A booklet outlining the artist's historiographical research on the question is available from the museum bookshop.

Mathias Pfund was born in 1992. He lives and works in Geneva.

## CURATORS

David Lemaire

Marie Gaitzsch



### Mediation around the exhibitions

#### GUIDED VISITS

Sunday 8 March 2020 at 11.15 a.m.

Guide: David Lemaire. Members of the Société des amis du Musée des beaux-arts (SaMba) only. In French.

Sunday 29 March 2020 at 11.15 a.m.

Guide: Gabriel Grossert. In French.

Sunday 26 April 2020 at 11.15 a.m.

Guide: Zoé Spadaro. In French.

Play the immersive game CYBER RUN 2222  
in partnership with LUDESCO

Saturday 21 March 2020 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Sunday 22 March 2020 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

Information and booking: [www.ludesco.ch](http://www.ludesco.ch)

#### LES «GROS MOTS» DE L'ART CONTEMPORAIN Lecture series (in French)

26 March 2020, 30 April 2020, 28 May 2020,

25 June 2020 6.45 p.m.-8 p.m.

With David Lemaire

#### NUIT ET JOURNÉE DES MUSÉES

Saturday 16 May 2020 5 p.m.-midnight and

Sunday 17 May 2020 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

For the full programme, see [www.mbac.ch](http://www.mbac.ch)

#### TEA-TIME

Meet the artist Mathias Pfund

Sunday 17 May 2020 2.30 p.m.

#### CHILDREN'S WORKSHOPS (in French)

Saturday 14 March 2020 10:15 a.m.-midday

Portraits pop! (ages 4 to 7)

Saturday 11 April 2020 10:15 a.m.-midday

Silhouettes en papier (ages 6 to 12)

Saturday 9 May 2020 10:15 a.m.-midday

Kiki dans l'espace (ages 8 to 12)

No charge. Booking required.

#### VIENS MANGER CHEZ MOI, LES CHAUX-DE-FONNIERS DANS LEUR MUSÉE

Tuesday 31 March 2020 12.15

Cécile Guinand

Tuesday 28 April 2020 12.15

Jean-François Lehmann



**PARTNERS**

Fondation Nestlé  
pour l'Art  
partenariat

**KIKI KOGELNIK  
FOUNDATION**

**PRESS CONTACT**

David Lemaire, head curator  
+41 32 967 60 76  
mba.vch@ne.ch

Marie Gaitzsch, deputy curator  
+41 32 967 65 64  
marie.gaitzsch@ne.ch

**PRESS CONFERENCE AND VISIT**  
Thursday 20 February 2020 at 11.15 a.m.

Media tours can be booked at +41 32 967 60 77 or  
mba.vch@ne.ch.

The press kit and copyright-free illustrations are available on  
the "Pour les médias" page at the museum website  
www.mbac.ch and on request after 20 February 2020.

**GALA OPENING**

Saturday 22 February 2020 at 5 p.m.

**EXHIBITIONS**

23 February to 17 May 2020

Opening times

Tuesday-Sunday 10 a.m. - 5 p.m.

**TICKETS**

Full price: CHF 10.-

Concessions: CHF 7.-

Free for children under 16

Free every Sunday, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.

**CONTACT**

Musée des beaux-arts  
Rue des Musées 33  
2300 La Chaux-de-Fonds  
+41 (0)32 967 60 77  
mba.vch@ne.ch  
www.mbac.ch