

Critical Girls

Chloé Delarue, Miriam Laura Leonardi et Gaia Vincensini

03.07.26 → 05.09.26

Press release



Miriam Laura Leonardi
Open Season, 2025 (detail)
golf ball, adhesive film
variable dimensions
© Giulio Boem

Xippas Geneva

Rue des Sablons 6
1205 Geneva, Switzerland

Tuesday to Friday:
10am to 1pm and 2pm to 6.30pm
Saturday: 12pm to 5pm

geneva@xippas.com
xippas.com
+41 (0)22 321 94 14

@xippasgalleries
@xippasgalleriespage
@xippas

Opening on July 2nd from 6 pm, on the occasion of Nocturne d'été des Bains.

Xippas Geneva is pleased to present three artists whose highly distinct practices share a critical perspective on contemporary society. Gaia Vincensini examines the notion of value as shaped by the capitalist system. Chloé Delarue, for her part, questions the effects of new technologies on our society, while Miriam Laura Leonardi, through a conceptual and self-referential approach, addresses, among other concerns, feminist issues.

Chloé Delarue

Since 2015, Chloé Delarue (*1986, Le Chesnay, France) has been developing a cycle of works under the acronym TAFAA, for Toward a Fully Automated Appearance. This body of work reflects on the evolution of society towards automation as a consequence of digital technologies. It forms both a conceptual and aesthetic framework through which the artist explores the transformation of appearances, affects and modes of perception as these become increasingly artificial. TAFAA begins with the idea that such systems no longer simply assist or represent reality, but actively take part in producing it. They generate images, forms and, by extension, affects according to their own internal logic, shifting our sensory frameworks and reshaping the collective imagination.

Composed of multiple elements whose complex arrangement remains deliberately impenetrable, Delarue's works and installations combine discarded technological and industrial materials, such as screens, computer racks, electronic components and neon lights, with elements evoking the vegetal world, cast in resin or latex, as well as the mineral realm, through discreet, seemingly accidental flows of metal.

Her works appear as traces of a world in decay, one that escapes our control while producing its own reality. *TAFAA* unfolds within a dystopian narrative connected to posthumanist thought. The current emergence of artificial intelligence, along with the profound and rapid upheavals it brings, both anticipated and difficult to predict, resonates with the artist's work in unsettling ways.

The exhibition presents three distinct bodies of work.

The first consists of three high reliefs, *TAFAA – OBSCENE TEARS (Alignment)* (2026), composed of vegetal elements, leaves and stems, seemingly assembled at random to form compositions with their own internal balance. Here, the artist's creative process begins with the modelling of a photographic image, which serves as a matrix for the 3D printing of vegetal elements made from plant-based resin and then dipped in a hydrochrome solution. This process, in which technology and chemistry play a central role, ultimately produces shiny, chrome and pearlescent surfaces, marked by an entirely artificial preciousness. In Delarue's engineered artefacts of nature, the logic of fabrication echoes qualities also found in living forms: reproduction, repetition, accident and singularity.

TAFAA – ONLY RELICS FEED THE DESERT (New Fraudulent Taxonomy III) (2022) takes the form of a triptych, with drawings transferred onto latex and resin. The central panel reproduces an illustration from the 1950s comparing the posture of a gymnast to that of a cephalopod, an animal often described in popular culture as a gymnast of the sea because of its flexibility and mobility. A multitude of memes, in the form of brainlets, surround the central figure of the cephalopod. The brainlet, a satirical figure from web culture that reduces a supposedly stupid person to a quick schematic line drawing, participates in online forms of classification and disqualification.

According to the artist, the subtitle *New Fraudulent Taxonomy* refers to "an unstable taxonomy", in which algorithms influence the circulation of signs and access to information, thereby contributing to the normalisation of opinions and judgements. The cephalopod's ability to camouflage itself becomes a metaphor for the individual's relationship to the web, shaped by a constant need to adapt to rapid, saturated flows of information.

TAFAA – SIGNAL (Stupid Affection) (2024) takes the form of a neon sign based on the troll face meme, reinterpreted using a generative tool. The face becomes animated, shifting from the troll's characteristic sarcastic smile to a circular mouth expressing surprise. The rapid alternation between the two figures visually suggests that the troll is pronouncing either "dio" or "idiot", without allowing the viewer to decide. Caught in a hypnotic rhythm, the viewer is drawn into the work's exploration of viral imagery: through endless repetition, meaning paradoxically dissolves, giving way to the image's power of fascination.

Gaia Vincensini

The notion of value runs throughout the work of Gaia Vincensini (*1992, Geneva, Switzerland), who examines it through the lens of its circumstantial volatility. The body of work she has developed since 2021 brings together two distinct yet interconnected worlds. The first, that of banking, evokes money, of course, but also security, secrecy and mystery. Safes, locks, banknotes and coins form part of her symbolic vocabulary. The second world refers to cosmetics and luxury accessories, including perfume, make-up, glasses, jewellery, watches and lingerie, drawn from the commercial context of liquidation sales and discount stores.

Alongside her individual practice, Vincensini is part of Inner Light, together with Kim Coussée and Elliott Villars. Based in Paris, the collective produces customised clothing and accessories using various printing techniques influenced by street culture, while embracing an artisanal mode of production that positions their work, as artists and designers, at the intersection of art and fashion.

This context of experimental exchange in turn feeds Vincensini's own work, which is rooted primarily in woodcut, printing, the production of forms using cookie cutters, and their subsequent assembly. More recently, the artist has transposed these investigations into ceramics, one of her preferred mediums.

The exhibition brings together a selection of her latest works: small and medium-format polychrome bas-reliefs made in ceramic, porcelain and draped porcelain. These works present accumulations of consumer objects that belong to Vincensini's visual vocabulary. Combining rough, irregular surfaces with a baroque sensibility, they evoke the past flamboyance of the objects they summon.

Through a subtle reflection on perception, Vincensini formulates a social critique closely linked to the capitalist conception of value and its hierarchies, a critique that also extends to the art system. She evokes its mechanisms of accumulation, obsolescence, fetishism and superstition, transposing them into a world charged with mystery and fantasy, like a marvellous and deceptive tale.

Miriam Laura Leonardi

A multidisciplinary artist, Miriam Laura Leonardi (*1985, Lörrach, Germany) develops a conceptual practice that encompasses sculpture, objects, performance, photography and video. She draws the raw material for her critical reflection from culture, whether literature, cinema or art. Aesthetically, her objects oscillate between minimalist restraint and a more pop dimension, while her repeated references to art history also situate her work within the field of appropriation.

Language and signs lie at the heart of Leonardi's work. As an attentive observer of the place they occupy in public space, the artist questions and deconstructs the codes and values they convey. With humour and irony, she develops a critical analysis of social norms, in which feminism plays an important role.

Several of her works make direct reference to artists such as Jenny Holzer, Barbara Kruger and Lawrence Weiner, revisiting their productions in order to question issues specific to contemporary society. Another work, more explicitly feminist, *i* (2017), takes up a drawing left unrealised by the artist VALIE EXPORT, which Leonardi transposed into a sign. Showing two open hands, with one letter placed at the tip of each finger, the work adopts a style oscillating between cartoon and pop, while reiterating EXPORT's message, "MY IDENTITY", which Leonardi makes her own.

The three series of works presented at Xippas Geneva offer an overview of the artist's different practices. The first is a site-specific intervention on the exterior of the gallery, *Open Season* (2026), showing bright pink golf balls thrown against the windows and left suspended in fragments of glass. The installation evokes the direct energy of activism, softened here by the evident artificiality of what also belongs to the realm of décor and play.

The second series relates to Leonardi's sculptures and objects. *Pair of Shoes* (2017) consists of a pair of brown loafers, unisex in style, produced in both women's and men's sizes. Inside, in gold lettering, where the brand name would normally appear, one discovers the name Duchamp. The work foregrounds questions of gender and its multiplicity. While Duchamp created a female alter ego with Rose Sélavy, Leonardi shifts this play with gender identity onto the terrain of androgyny, which she also explores in her own position as an artist.

Finally, the close-up photographic series *Dr Schnäller isch dr Gschwinder* (2026) was shot in infrared during the filming of the video of the same title, presented as part of the Swiss Pavilion at the 2026 Venice Biennale, and referring to Chris Marker's experimental science-fiction film *La Jetée* (1962).

The photographs are dominated by a sense of strangeness. They show the artist, dressed in white, wandering through an airport that seems emptied of all human presence: aircraft, tarmac, architecture, all bathed in spectral light. Immersed in a form of solitude, the artist appears to be searching for herself. The images produce an unsettling echo of our contemporary society.

Manuella Denogent