

DENIS SAVARY

Ventimiglia

26 may / 12 June 2021

Galerie Maria Bernheim London
5 Mount St, Mayfair, W1K 3NE

GALERIE MARIA BERNHEIM



Born 1981, Granges-Marnand, Switzerland / Lives and works in Geneva, Switzerland and London UK.

Denis Savary works across forms and media in his creation of dreamlike objects, images and installations. Often reinterpreting motifs and relics from throughout history, he twists them formally and psychologically through shifts in scale and material, craft and content, towards a contorted total and piecemeal reimagination of culture.



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Galerie Maria Bernheim LONDON is pleased to present *Ventimiglia*, an exhibition of new works by Denis Savary.

Exuding the artist's eclectic and versatile multifaceted practice, this new series of sculptures embraces his ability to push the material to its limits. In this exhibition, his new works represent a continuum in his overall sculptural projects, referencing art historical and literary heritage while actively responding to the environment of the gallery, with its striking floor and classical architecture.

Multicolored blown glass works will hang like polymorphous chandeliers in the gallery space. Denis Savary employs the formal language of sculpture with an emphasis on geometry and colors through the traditional medium of glass, paying homage to artists such as Duchamp and Sophie Taeuber Arp but also to a painterly conception of color field, where the sculpture exists outside of itself through the play on light and shadows.

As often in his oeuvre, this series is simultaneously imbued with themes and images of old-world tales, where temptation and salvation represent two pieces of the same puzzle. The play on light and transparency mixes kitsch with a romantic Raphaelite idea of landscape, whilst creating an immersive environment for the viewer, transporting them to a small village on the Italian coast. The clear references to the Memphis Group and Ettore Sottsass are less of an homage than a disassembly, pulling apart all the elements and recreating an extraordinary form.

Whether they take different shapes as hanging installations or as intimate design sculptures, Savary's sculpture imply secret narratives and always evolving histories.

This exhibition runs concurrently to Savary's solo exhibition at the Kunsthalle St Gallen in Switzerland. Denis Savary has been the subject of numerous solo exhibitions in international institutions and recently at the Musée de la Chaux de Fonds, Switzerland, Museo Pietro Canonica, Rome and MAMCO in Geneva.



Charm 1, 2021

Blown glass, copper

53 x 54 cm

20 7/8 x 21 1/4 in

(SAVAR00130)

GBP 8,000.00 (ex tax)







Charm 2, 2021

Blown glass, copper
53 x 54 cm
20 7/8 x 21 1/4 in
(SAVAR00131)

GBP 8,000.00 (ex tax)



TECHNIQUE INTRODUCTION & MINOR INFLUENCES

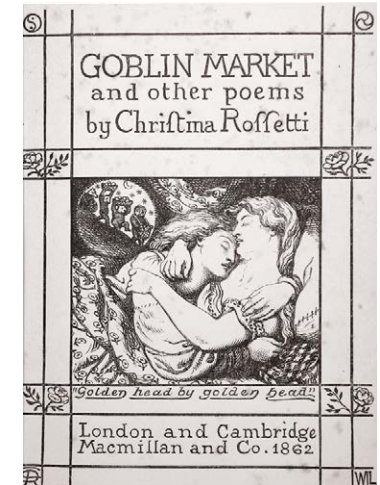
As always in Savary's oeuvre, the artist explores ancestral techniques and brings them to new limits. This traditional technique called "bousillé" was used by glass workers, which consisted in recycling the left over materials to create little objects to bring home to their families. With this series, this savoir faire is elevated to create sculptures that resemble jewels. The shapes of these elements to which the artist refers to as Charms, also allude to a more industrial production of glass, such as glass insulators for electrical networks but also imagery referring to robots and cyborgs, similar to the R2-D2 in Star-Wars.

Created as an in situ installation, taking into consideration the historical elements of the Mount Street space, brings an atmosphere that is reminiscent of a set of jewels in a giant box, but also of a beach in Ventimiglia. Italian landscapes is at the core of his vision, as the viewer is immediately transported to Murano and its glassblowers upon entering the exhibition space.

Savary explores folklore legends, such as the one reported by the Roman author Plinio, which recounts that glass was discovered by Phoenician merchants who had just landed on the shores of the river Belus. As they were heating their food on the fire, they took pieces of rocks found on the beach to create a pot. Under the effect of heat, the rock mixed with sand was transformed into an unknown

and translucent material: glass. Inspired by Christina Rossetti, sister of the Pre-Raphaelite painter Dante Gabriel Rossetti and her poem "Goblin Market", Savary reinterprets her goblins as Charms, coloured spirits, sublime creature shining in the sun, yet monstrous.

His research into this display of bodies springs from the avant-garde abstraction of Oscar Schlemmer's Triadic Ballet, exploring a deconstructed idea of body elements, arranging a choreography on the emblematic gallery floor.



Down: view of Ventimiglia, Italy





Still from "The Triadic Ballet", 1922, directed by Oskar Schlemmer



Charm 3, 2021

Blown glass, copper
53 x 54 cm
20 7/8 x 21 1/4 in
(SAVAR00132)

GBP 8,000.00 (ex tax)







Charm 4, 2021

Blown glass, copper
53 x 54 cm
20 7/8 x 21 1/4 in
(SAVAR00133)

GBP 8,000.00 (ex tax)



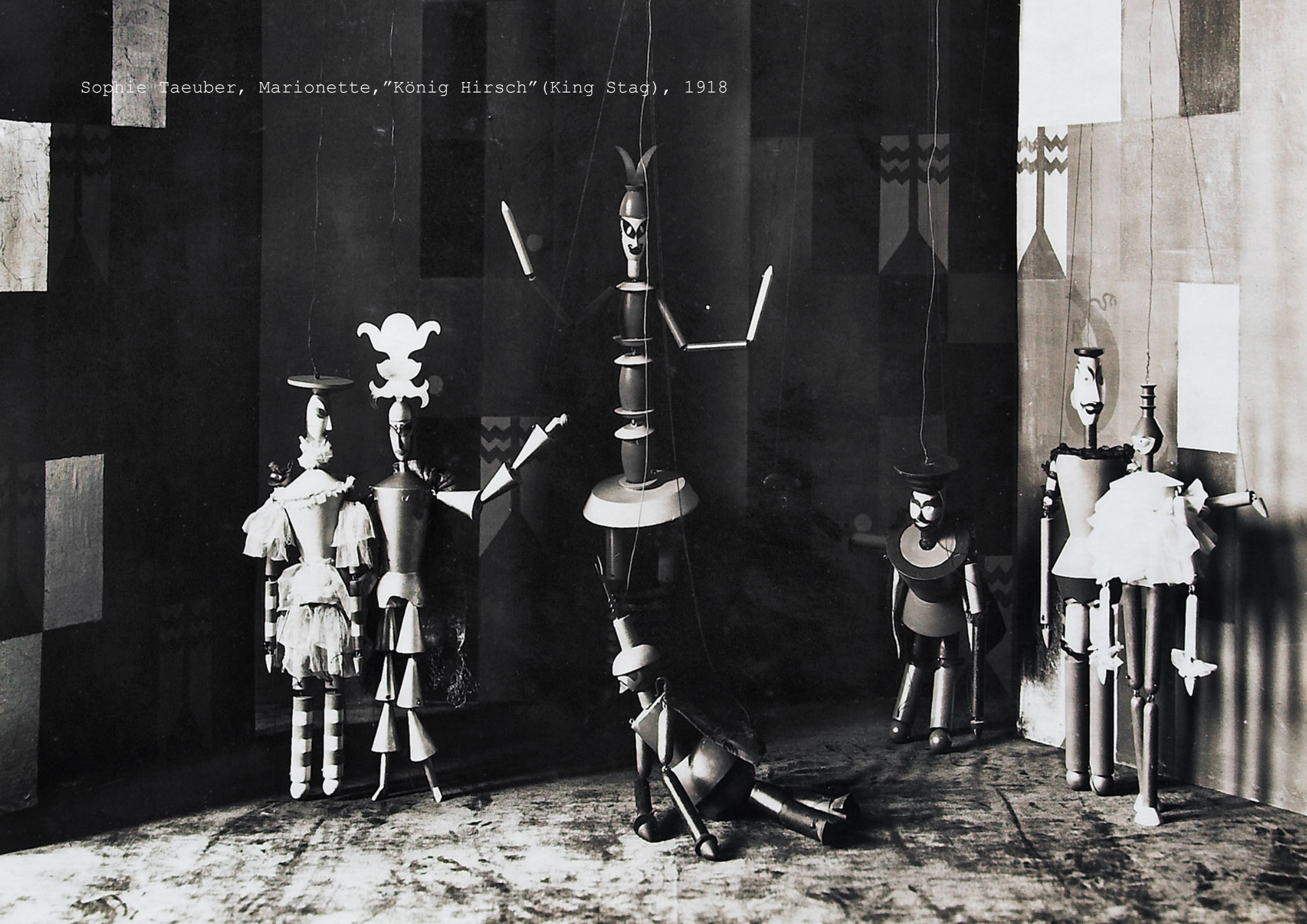


SOPHIE TAEUBER-ARP

For the series of puppets dating from 1918, Taeuber-Arp proposed an adaptation of *The Deer King* by Carlo Gozzi (1720-1806), and made a radical break with the puppet tradition and created seventeen puppets, none of which were miniature replicas of human beings, rather they were based on constructive aesthetics.

This new series furthers his interest in the world of DADA. In 2016, Denis Savary was invited to imagine a dance project for the DADA Jubilee for the Cabaret Voltaire in Zürich as well as at the EMST museum in Athens, in which he displayed a puppet by Taeuber - the Guard or Robot King - transformed into a sculpture by professional puppeteer. A set of dancers crawled on the floor and manipulated transparent city sections on wheels, inspired by the façades of the Venice Canal.

Sophie Taeuber, Marionette, "König Hirsch" (King Stag), 1918



Charm 5, 2021

Blown glass, copper
53 x 54 cm
20 7/8 x 21 1/4 in
(SAVAR00134)

GBP 8,000.00 (ex tax)







Charm 6, 2021

Blown glass, copper
53 x 54 cm
20 7/8 x 21 1/4 in
(SAVAR00135)

GBP 8,000.00 (ex tax)



ETTORE SOTTASS

An important part of Ettore Sottsass' works are his glass sculptures. He began creating them in the early 1980's, challenging the traditions of Murano glassmaking, combining materials such as glass, plastic and polycarbonates and bringing them to life.

Within the Memphis Group, founded by the architect in 1981, of particular interest for the artist is Martine Bedin's 1981 Super Lamp. Playfully shaped like a stylized car, this piece featured two wheels at the bottom of its half-circular blue silhouette, while the edges were adorned with six bulb holders in pink, green, blue, yellow and red.

These new Charms take from both the complexity and depth of Sottsass' work and the liveliness Bedin's Lamp, elevating the pieces to beings made of many elements that create a lively yet imaginary world.



On the left: Ettore Sottsass, "Sirio Glass Vase", 1982, hand-blown multicolored glass, 14 x 6 x 5 1/2 in
Right: Martin Bedin, "Super Lamp", 1981, painted steel mounted with lighting components, 33 x 60 x 18 cm



Charm 7, 2021

Blown glass, copper

53 x 54 cm

20 7/8 x 21 1/4 in

(SAVAR00136)

GBP 8,000.00 (ex tax)











Charm 8, 2021

Blown glass, copper

53 x 60 cm

20 7/8 x 23 5/8 in

(SAVAR00137)

GBP 8,000.00 (ex tax)



HOPI KATCHNA DOLLS and JACQUES CALLOT GROTESQUE ENGRAVINGS

Kachina dolls, also known as katsina dolls, are symbolic and ceremonial Native American gifts. Traditionally given to Hopi girls during infancy and as they grow up, the dolls are a significant aspect of Native American culture. The word "kachina" comes from the Hopi word "kachi," which means "spirit." Kachina dolls symbolize spirits of nature.



The rare series of dwarf caricatures by Jacques Callot, first published in 1616, also serves as inspiration. The Callotto Resuscitato, which appeared in several slightly

different editions, can be found not only in printed graphics, but also in garden sculptures, porcelain paintings and figures, wall paintings, wallpapers, wood and ivory carvings. The characters appear in the elaborate dresses and hairstyles of early Baroque Europe, showing the trades and scenes of daily life of that period.

On the left: Jacques Callot, *L'Estropié au Capuchon*, Etching and engraving, 1616

Right: Kachina Doll, 1960-1970, cottonwood root, acrylic pigment, hide, feathers, shell, fur, turquoise, metal, 45.1 x 15.2 x 22.9 cm, Brooklyn Museum, USA





Charm 9, 2021

Blown glass, copper

53 x 54 cm

20 7/8 x 21 1/4 in

(SAVAR00138)

GBP 8,000.00 (ex tax)





Still from "The Triadic Ballet", 1922, directed by Oskar Schlemmer



Denis Savary

Born 1981, Granges-Marnand, Switzerland
Lives and works in Geneva, Switzerland

SELECTED SOLO TWO PERSONS EXHIBITIONS

2022

CAC synagogue de Delme, Delme, France
(forthcoming)

2021

Fonderia Artistica Battaglia, Milan, Italy
(forthcoming)
LEMME, Sion, Switzerland (forthcoming)
Ithaca, Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zurich,
Switzerland
Ambarabà Cicci Coccò, Kunst Halle Sankt Gallen,
Sankt Gallen, Switzerland
Ventimiglia, Galerie Maria Bernheim, London, UK

2019

VFO edition, Zurich, Switzerland
Fondation Baur, Geneva, Switzerland
Musée des Beaux-Arts, La Chaux-de-Fond,
Switzerland

2018

Swamp, Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zurich, Switzerland

2017

Flytraps, Museo Pietro Canonica in villa Borghese,
Rome, Italy

Eustache, Xippas Gallery, Geneva, Switzerland

2016

Jour Blanc, Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris,
France
Lokis, Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zurich,
Switzerland
Gipsoteca, Villa Medici, Rome, Italy
Lagune et autres poissons, Le Confort Moderne,
Poitiers, France

2015

Neiges de Printemps, Mamco, Geneva,
Switzerland
Denis Savary, l'Adresse, Le Printemps de
septembre, Toulouse, France
Neiges de Printemps, La Placette, Lausanne,
Switzerland

2013

Etrusques, art3, Valence, France
Denis Savary, Galerie Xippas, Geneva,
Switzerland.
Etourneaux, Cyclop de Jean Tinguely, Milly-la-
Forêt, France
Les Mannequins de Corot, Musée d'art et
d'histoire, Geneva, Switzerland

2012

Baltiques, Kunsthalle Bern, Bern, Switzerland

2011

Brûlis, Galerie Xippas, Paris, France
Period Room, Galerie Evergreene, Geneva, Switzerland

2010

Carrousel, La Ferme du buisson, Noisiel, France
Le Narrenschiff, Centre Pasquart, Bienne,
Switzerland
La Villa, Villa Bernasconi, Geneva, Switzerland

2008

Billard, Galerie Evergreene, Geneva, Switzerland
Denis Savary, Galerie Xippas, Athens, Greece
Meilleurs vœux / d'après, Jeu de Paume, Paris,
France

2007

Musée Jénisch, Vevey, Switzerland
Galerie Xippas, Paris, France
Galerie Sima, Nuremberg, Germany

2005

Elles portent des plaisirs qui leur sont propres
mais qui n'ont rien à voir avec le plaisir de se
grater, La Russille, Switzerland
Perpetual Motion Food, Sima Gallery, Nuremberg,
Allemagne

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS**2021**

Platform 10, Musée cantonal des beaux-arts de
Lausanne, Lausanne, Switzerland (Forthcoming)
Ballard in Albisola, Albisola 21, Jorn House,
Albisola, Italy (Forthcoming)
Art en plein air, Môtiers 2020, Môtiers,
Switzerland (Forthcoming)

MAMCO - Permanent Collection, Geneva,
Switzerland

2020

Avant demain, Château de Penthes, Pregny-
Chambésy, Switzerland
Nestlé Young Art Prize 2019, Vevey,
Switzerland
Misplacements, Museum Villa Stiassni, Brno,
Czech Republic

2019

WEFRAC, FRAC des Pays de la Loire, La
Fleuriaye, France
RomaRomaRoma, Istituto Svizzero, Rome, Italy
Oskar Kokoschka. A Retrospective, Leopold
Museum, Vienna, Austria
Récréation Exposition, Villa Bernasconi. Art
Center, Geneva, Switzerland

2018

Oskar Kokoschka. A Retrospective, Kunsthaus,
Zurich, Switzerland
Sang Bleu Carte Blanche, Selfridges, London,
UK
RomaRomaRoma, Parc de la Grange, curated by
Lionel Bovier, Geneva, Switzerland
Art en Chapelles, Villedieu lès Mouthe -
Église St-Joseph, Labergement-Sainte-Marie,
France
Nuit des Musées, Musée Jénisch, Vevey,
Switzerland
Institut Français, Athens, Greece

Inversion / Aversion, Centre d'Art Contemporain -
La Synagogue de Delme, Delme, France

2017

BIENALSUR-International Biennial of Contemporary
Art of South America, Buenos Aires, Argentina
Geneva Lux Festival, Geneva, Switzerland
In the Museum Trilogy, Kunsthau Glarus,
Switzerland
Villa du Parc, Centre d'Art Contemporain,
Annemasse, France
The Show Must Go On, Kunstmuseum Bern, Switzerland

2016

La Grande Place, CACY, Yverdon, Switzerland

2015

Tunguska, Galerie Maria Bernheim, Zurich,
Switzerland
Dimensione Disegno. Posizioni contemporanee, Villa
dei Cedri, Bellinzona, Switzerland
Work Hard: Selections by Valentin Carron, Swiss
Institute, New York, USA
Printmaking, ECAL, Lausanne, Switzerland

2014

Sphère 2014, Galerie Xippas, Galleria Continua /
Le Moulin, Boissy-le-Châtel, France
Drawing Night, Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris,
France
Le regard du bègue, Cycle des histoires sans fins,
MAMCO, Geneva, Switzerland

2013

Post Mortem, FORDE, Geneva, Switzerland

L'origine des choses, collection du Centre
national des arts plastiques (CNAP Paris),
Centrale for contemporary art de Bruxelles,
Brussels, Belgium
Vertigo, Xippas Art Contemporain, Geneva,
Switzerland
LOST IN LA, Los Angeles municipal art gallery,
Los Angeles, USA

2012

La jeunesse est un art/ Manor Art Award
Anniversary exhibition, Kunsthau Aargau,
Switzerland
Misia, reine de Paris, Musée d'Orsay, Paris,
France
This and there, Fondation Ricard, Paris, France

2011

Café des Rêves, Helmhaus Zürich, Zurich,
Switzerland
LOOK, Xippas Art Contemporain, Geneva,
Switzerland
Hospitalités, Institut français de Slovaquie,
Bratislava, Slovakia

2010

Modèles modèles 2, Mamco, Geneva, Switzerland
Voici un dessin Switzerland (1990-2010), Musée
Rath, Geneva, then Kunsthau, Aarau, Switzerland

2009

INSIDERS, L'entrepôt CAPC, Bordeaux, France
Invasion of Sound, Zacheta, National Gallery of
Art, Varsow, Poland

Espéride, Musée des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne,
Switzerland
Jean-Marc Chapoulie: Festival Spirits, Palais de
Tokyo, Paris, France

2008

Palimpseste un bon pre-texte, La Réserve, Pacy-
sur-Eure, France.
Performa(c)tivity, Amore Theater, Athens, Greece

2007

Flexibility, flexibility, flexibility, Evergreene
gallery, Geneva, Switzerland
Module, Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France

2003 - 2006

Incipit, Espace Paul Ricard, Paris, France
Conjonctions, cycle Mille et trois plateaux,
sixième épisode, MAMCO, Geneva, Switzerland.
Scènes de vie, Centre Culturel Suisse, Paris,
France
Disappearance, Fri-art Kunsthalle, Fribourg,
Switzerland
Mine de rien, MAMCO, Geneva, Switzerland
Negotiation: for Love or Money, Galerie Donzé Van
Saanen, Lausanne, Switzerland
Wrong Time, Wrong Place, Les Halles - Espace d'art
contemporain, Porrentruy

EDUCATION, GRANTS AND PRIZES

2018

Landis & Gyr Stiftung Residency, London, United

Kingdom

2011

Prix Culturel Arts Visuels, Fondation Vaudoise
pour la Culture, Suisse

2007

Swiss Art Awards, Switzerland
Cité Internationale des Arts, Paris, France

2006 - 2007

Pavillon du Palais de Tokyo, Paris, France
Atelier des Arques, Les Arques, France

2004

Diplôme d'arts visuels, ECAL, Lausanne
Prix Ernest Manganel, Fondation Ernest Manganel,
Lausanne, Switzerland
Bourse de la Fondation Leenaards, Lausanne,
Switzerland
Bourse de la Fondation Liechti pour les arts,
Nyon, Switzerland
Swiss Art Award, Switzerland

2003

Viper Swiss Award, Basel, Switzerland

PUBLIC COMMISSIONS

2020

BIRD in Geneva (Forthcoming)
ECA in Lausanne outdoor sculptures (Forthcoming)

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