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PRESS RELEASE

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23.10.21
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CH - 2400 LE LOCLE
T. +41 (0)32 933 89 50
MBAL@NE.CH
WWW.MBAL.CH

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BEAUX-ARTS
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Marie-Anne-Calame 6
CH-2400 Le Locle
+41 (0)32 933 89 50
mbal@ne.ch • www.mbal.ch

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PRESS CONTACT

Morgane Paillard
T +41 (0)32 933 89 50
morgane.paillard@ne.ch

**MUSÉE DES
BEAUX-ARTS
LE LOCLE**

Marie-Anne-Calame 6
CH-2400 Le Locle
+41 (0)32 933 89 50
mbal@ne.ch • www.mbal.ch

23.10.2021 - 09.01.2022

LAIA ABRIL
LOUISE BOURGEOIS
PARKETT
BATIA SUTER
SOPHIE WIETLISBACH
BILLIE ZANGEWA

Elles, from A to Z

Louise Bourgeois lived through the 20th century and died in 2010, at almost 100 years of age. Although her art can be found in the world's greatest museums – think, for example, of her monumental spiders – it should be recalled that her work was only recognised at a very late stage. She was indeed 70 years old when the Museum of Modern Art in New York gave her her first major exhibition, which was also the first retrospective devoted by the institution to a woman artist. International exhibitions followed, especially in the 2000s, even though the artist's career had begun in the 1940s. Although the works of women creators can be found in all artistic fields, art history distinguishes above all male figures, eclipsing the contributions of many women who are relegated to the periphery of the recognition networks.

This 'invisibilisation' due to male domination is now at the heart of public debate. Recent studies have shown that printmaking, considered a minor art form because of its reproducibility, has long been associated with the feminine, as part of women's artistic education in the same way as drawing. Today, books and exhibitions about women artists are proliferating, while showing the plurality of mediums in which their art has developed. The MBAL, which during its long history has exhibited only men – the default norm, as it were – is also seeking to redress this imbalance.

For the tenth edition of the **Triennial Of Contemporary Prints**, the choice was made to show works by women artists exclusively, not with the idea of locking them into a reductive category, but rather to put into perspective the themes they take up in their art, which is often marked by relationships of domination. With a real creative freedom, some of them assert themselves without fear of tackling so-called feminine subjects. They experiment with different practices to highlight their perception of the world. From **Laia Abril** (Spain, 1986) to **Billie Zangewa** (Malawi, 1973), including **Batia Suter** (Switzerland, 1967) and **Sophie Wietlisbach** (Switzerland, 1993), these contemporary artists radiate out from **Louise Bourgeois** (France, 1911-2010), whose engraved work is exhibited. The Triennial, which has shown over the years that the multiple is not a minor art form, is also the occasion to offer a space to the Zurich-based publishing house **Parkett**, which brings together more than 90 works produced over the last 30 years by international women artists.

Without being fully aware of it, our gaze has been conditioned according to the values set up by a patriarchal system. With this feminine-centered programme, the MBAL shows works that offer a counterpoint to a masculine art form and encourage renewal of our collective imagination.

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LAIA ABRIL

A HISTORY OF MISOGYNY, CHAPTER TWO - ON RAPE



© Laia Abril, *Shrinky Recipe*, On Rape, 2020. Courtesy Les Filles du Calvaire, Paris

Born in 1986, the Spanish artist lives and works in Barcelona. She is represented by the gallery Les Filles du Calvaire in Paris.

Laia Abril is a multidisciplinary artist who works with photography, text, video and sound in large-scale research projects. After a first five-year project on the subject of eating disorders, the artist embarked on a history of misogyny, a project that has received several awards, including the 2018 Visionary Award, the 2019 Magnum Foundation and the 2020 Paul-Huf FOAM Award. The first chapter devoted to abortion was exhibited at the Rencontres d'Arles in 2016 and earned her the first winner of the Prix de la Photo Madame Figaro in 2016. The exhibition has been presented in more than ten countries, including the Photographers Gallery (London), the Museum of Contemporary Art (Zagreb), the Centro de la Imagen (Mexico), the Museum of Sex (New York), and has received the Hood Medal from the Royal Photographic Society. The book *On Abortion and the repercussions of lack of access*, published by Dewi Lewis in 2018, won the 2018 Aperture-Paris Photo Book of the Year award and was a finalist at the prestigious Deutsche Börse in 2019.

The second chapter *A History of Misogyny, Chapter Two – On Rape* was presented at the gallery Les Filles du Calvaire in 2020 before being exhibited at the Biennale de l'Image Possible (Liège), at FOAM (Amsterdam), and at the Musée des Beaux-Arts Le Locle. Laia Abril is currently developing the *Genesis* chapter on mass hysteria, which will be presented in 2023 at the Musée de l'Elysée (Lausanne) and at the Bal (Paris). Laia Abril is also the author of *Thinspiration* (2012), *The Epilogue* (Dewi Lewis, 2014), *Tediousphilia* (Musée de l'Elysée, 2014), *Lobismuller* (RM, 2016) and has worked closely with the team of *COLORS* magazine for five years. Her work has been exhibited worldwide and is found in private collections and museums, such as The Pompidou Centre, the Musée de l'Elysée and the Fotomuseum Winterthur, FRAC, MNAC and FotoColectania in Barcelona.

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+41 (0)32 933 89 50
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LOUISE BOURGEOIS

THE SHAPE OF AN ANSWER



Louise Bourgeois, *The Maternal Man*, 2008, Archival dyes printed on cloth, 26.6 x 20.3 cm. Photo: Christopher Burke
© The Easton Foundation / 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich

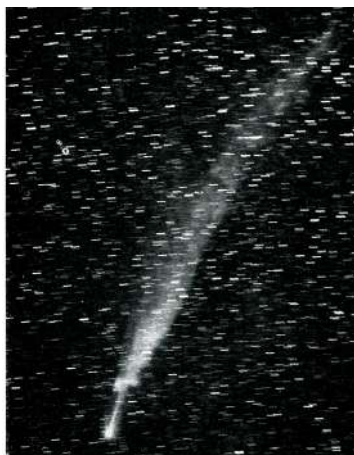
The mythical 20th-century artist Louise Bourgeois is an emblem of feminism. By focusing on her engraved work, the MBAL reveals a more intimate side of the artist, who is best known for her sculptures, particularly her monumental spiders. More than 50 engravings, dating from the 1940s to 2010, offer a unique insight into the artist's creative process. The body, motherhood, the couple and transidentity are recurring themes for Bourgeois, which are presented in this exhibition.

Louise Bourgeois has explored printmaking in all its forms since the beginning of her career. As a medium that quickly became indispensable to the artist, she devoted herself to it during two distinct periods: when she moved to New York in 1938, she printed her plates on a small press at home while raising her children. Then, from 1988, she met specialist printers and publishers and undertook major printing projects, collaborations and commissions. Often produced as series, her numerous engravings reveal an intimate and endearing aspect that presents itself like stories, and allows one to follow her creative process. She favours the burin or the dry point, gradually abandoning the aquatint. Her line, sharp and implacable, delimits her engravings on a refined background. In addition to engraving, textile and needlework, which harks back to her childhood period when she was responsible for repairing tapestries to help her parents, Bourgeois has also illustrated texts, starting with her own. Throughout her life, the artist was a prolific writer, especially during her period undergoing psychoanalysis (1950-60). Her simple, poetic and often autobiographical writing characterises her “pensées plume” and echoes her attraction to the power of language when associated with images. Bourgeois describes her relationship to art as a therapy, a struggle against trauma and anxiety that is only alleviated by her production. She exorcises her past and suffering by using her childhood memories as creative material and deals with gender issues and universal themes such as sex, anxiety, death, loneliness and pain. She openly acknowledges her vulnerability, accepts it as a goal that feeds her work and gives form to her suffering. This entangled dependence marks the singularity of Bourgeois, whose phrase has become famous: “Art is a guarantee of mental health”.

The exhibition is made possible thanks to the generous loans of public and private collections from Switzerland and France : Galerie Lelong (Paris), Fondation Beyeler (Basel), Musée Jenisch (Vevey), Musée d'Art et d'Histoire (Geneva). The exhibition is curated by Séverine Cattin, associate curator.

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BATIA SUTER**DOMESTIC NIGHT / DARK PAGES**

© Batia Suter, *Domestic Night* (detail), 2018

Domestic Night/ Dark Pages is an installation that brings together almost 100 inkjet prints and a collection of lost pages from old books and magazines. Batia Suter, who first created the installation *Domestic Night* in 2018, revisits her collection of images taken from books found at flea markets for MBAL. For over 30 years, the artist has been thinking in images. Fascinated by illustrated books, atlases, scientific prints, catalogues, art books and magazines of all kinds, she collects, accumulates and classifies the images she extracts from these often outdated publications. Once the pictures have been patiently collected and classified, Batia Suter scans them, then mounts and assembles them until new visual relationships emerge.

In her compositions, Batia Suter creates a dialogue between academic and popular culture. She is as interested in scientific images, for example from astronomy, which are produced under very complex technical conditions, as she is in advertising or motorbike manuals. The images in *Domestic Night* were selected for their dark side – literally. The artist has chosen near-black reproductions here. Once the pages have been scanned, the artist discovers new details in the dark areas of the reproductions through enlargement. The digital tool thus allows her to navigate within the images, the scans revealing all sorts of anomalies such as hairs, scratches and infinite variations of saturation that come into visual conflict with the subject. Suter's visual explorations are not only about representations (how an object is photographed) but also about ink (how an image is printed). Always decontextualised and out of use, the images, gathered by the artist for their single motive, develop new narratives.

The artist has completed her installation by assembling pages of books, also taken out of their context, in a display case. Again, she creates new visual relationships with the black as the only thread. The pages taken out of their original book appear without any information at all, as these are now missing. Batia Suter's work is the opposite of scientific archiving that seeks to master the past. Her collection of detached and decontextualised pages would be a librarian's nightmare!

Born in Switzerland and living and working in Amsterdam, Batia Suter (1967) creates work that unfolds in the form of monumental installations made from found images that merge through juxtaposition. Her books *Parallel Encyclopedia* (2007) and *Parallel Encyclopedia #2* (2016) are composed of images taken from old books she has collected over the years. *Surface Series* (2011), *Radial Grammar* (2018) and *Hexamiles* (2019) show other visual explorations. Seeking to make images communicate according to their own logic, the artist creates series that give new lives to printed images – its creative material.

PARKETT

A TIME CAPSULE, WORKS MADE BY WOMEN



© Pipilotti Rist, *The Help*, 2004, courtesy Parkett Editions Zurich-New York

Parkett is a familiar name to contemporary art lovers. The publishing house's aura extends from China to the United States and Switzerland, its place of origin. For more than thirty years, Parkett has published 101 publications and collaborated with the great artists of our time, from Andy Warhol to Hiroshi Sugimoto, Louise Bourgeois, Cao Fei, Tracey Emin, Anish Kapoor, Gerhard Richter and many others. These issues – now *collectors'* items – were published from 1984 to 2017, the year in which publication ceased. In total, there are 270 portraits of artists from over 40 countries, each with three to five texts by renowned experts. Each year, artists were invited to create a work of art produced by the publisher in a limited edition. These were *carte blanche* pieces in which all forms and media were possible. Parkett encouraged the artists to let their creativity flow. This unique collection of objects includes prints, sculptures, installations, digital art, photographs, paintings, drawings, sound pieces and many other surprising objects. Never intended to be secondary works of art, the editions produced by Parkett, according to the precise instructions given by the artists, were intended to represent the very essence of their art or to reveal an unexpected dimension of their work.

Nearly 90 works are brought together here, illustrating the richness and diversity of ideas, inspirations and sensibilities that these artists have brought to Parkett and to art in general. The exhibition presents editions by women artists with whom Parkett has collaborated. It includes Louise Bourgeois, Sophie Calle, Maria Lassnig, Meret Oppenheim, Yayoi Kusama, but also Cao Fei, Marlene Dumas, Sylvie Fleury, Camille Henrot, Jenny Holzer, Julie Mehretu, Beatriz Milhazes, Cady Noland, Mai-Thu Perret, Pipilotti Rist, Dayanita Singh, Haegue Yang, Hito Steyerl and Kara Walker.

From 1984 to 2017, Parkett has created an extraordinary collection of multiples about and with artists from all over the world (Parkett's archives are now at the Luma cultural centre in Arles). While printmaking was often the chosen technique thirty years ago, the media have diversified over the years. Today, the life of Parkett

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+41 (0)32 933 89 50
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continues in the form of an online and offline archive. In the past few years important exhibitions have taken place at MoMA in New York, Whitechapel in London, UCCA in Beijing, Centre Pompidou in Paris, Kunsthaus in Zurich, or STPI in Singapore. Besides the fact that their publications and editions are collected by major museums and collectors worldwide, their website presents all their books and editions and offers new perspectives for the research, study and acquisition of contemporary artworks. *A Time Capsule* shows how joyful, inventive and innovative art can be. An exhibition curated by the MBAL in collaboration with Parkett Editions, Zurich/New York.

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+41 (0)32 933 89 50
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SOPHIE WIETLISBACH

PLAKAT, THESIS P.S., ADVOCATE



© Sophie Wietlisbach, *Plakat*, ECAL, 2020

Sophie Wietlisbach has specialised in typography, a particularly Swiss field and tradition. Impressed by the quality of her work, the MBAL is offering an exhibition space to the young graphic designer who received the EXECAL award last year for her research work *Caractères SA*, *Setag*, *Novatype* and *The Police*. Her work offers a contemporary interpretation of three typefaces from Swiss type manufacturers active between 1941 and 1997: *Caractères SA*, developed in Le Locle and Neuchâtel; *Setag*, in Bassecourt and *Novatype*, in Delémont. Wietlisbach has thus conducted research on an industry that disappeared with the arrival of digital technology. During the 20th century, typewritten documents quickly replaced handwritten letters and typewriters soon became indispensable. A large part of the world's type production was produced in Switzerland, especially in the Jura region. Wietlisbach's research focuses in particular on the history of these three companies in a region that benefits from the high-precision mechanical skills associated with the watchmaking industry. The digital interpretations created by Sophie Wietlisbach offer a contemporary version of these three writing styles, adapted for modern use. With *Plakat, Thesis P.S., Advocate*, the artist plays with the different textures, unit systems and mechanical heritage of these fonts. Historical objects related to the making of typefaces complete her installation. Her work reveals itself as a powerful form of plastic language, which, under its enigmatic aspect, resonates with a singular facet of the history of the Jura.

Sophie Wietlisbach (Switzerland, 1993) focuses on poster design, editorial graphics and type design. After graduating in visual communication at the Bern University of the Arts, she continued her studies at the ECAL where she obtained a master's degree with honours in 2020. She is currently working as an assistant for the Type Design Master at the ECAL.

The MBAL would like to thank the Musée de la machine à écrire in Lausanne for the objects on loan.

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+41 (0)32 933 89 50
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BILLIE ZANGEWA**DOMESTIC LIFE**

© Billie Zangewa, *Sweet Dreams*, 2010, Billie Zangewa et Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, Seoul, Londres

Exhibited for the first time in Switzerland, Billie Zangewa questions gender stereotypes and racial prejudices through art that uses everyday life as a pretext for political reflection on identity. The Malawian artist's colourful, cut and sewn fabric "paintings" are a tribute to personal experience, intimacy, femininity and black consciousness. Her singular practice combines the graphic side of the print, the pictorial work of colour and the volumes of the sculpture. The artist builds a committed work whose political dimension, in particular in favour of women, marginalized and reduced to silence, is simply suggested. By exposing the private and intimate space as represented in *Mother and Child* (2015), she questions the representation, role and condition of women not only in South African society, but also more globally. Driven by a desire to generate positive imagery of black beauty, works such as *The Future Waits For No One* (2011) and *Sweet Dreams* (2010) convey the image of a triumphant, strong, determined woman, free of her body and choices, most of which are self-portraits. Working mainly with brightly coloured silk scraps, the artist is inspired by photographs to create her compositions. She begins by drawing patterns on old newspapers, then thinks about the shades of colour and the reflections that different layers can produce. The artist then cuts out pieces of different fabrics and pins them in place before attaching them by hand, never by machine. Framed or pinned, as if floating on the wall, her works sometimes have surprising cuts, creating a kind of formal transgression that represents the strongest mark of violence in her work.

Born in 1973 in Malawi, Billie Zangewa grew up in Zimbabwe and Botswana. She discovered the artistic potential of textiles in her mother's sewing workshops, which gave her a passion for fabrics and embroidery. After studying art and printmaking at Rhodes University in Grahamstown, South Africa, she worked in fashion and advertising before devoting herself entirely to her artistic practice. Working between London and Johannesburg, Billie Zangewa has been exhibiting in Botswana and South Africa since 1997. Her work has been shown internationally for the past 15 years. In 2021, she will participate in the exhibition *The Power of My Hands* at the Musée d'Art moderne de Paris. In autumn 2021, she will have her first solo exhibition at the Museum of the African Diaspora in San Francisco, USA.

This exhibition was realized in close collaboration with the Lehmann Maupin Gallery (New York) and thanks to the generosity of private collectors.

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EVENTS

GUIDED TOURS

Sundays 7 November, 5 December, and 9 January at 2.30 pm
Included in the entrance ticket

JOURNÉE DES ARTS GRAPHIQUES

Saturday 13 and Sunday 14 November from 11 am

Rip Machina

As part of the Triennale, the MBAL welcomes in residence the Neuchâtel collective RIP MACHINA which installs in the museum a hybrid machine printing graphic and typographic compositions through sound recordings! Attend the performance of the artists at the Journées des arts graphiques.

BRUNCH

Sunday 28 November from 11 am to 2 pm

Between bites, the adults freely visit the exhibitions and the little ones do a Christmas crafts with our mediator.

For children of all ages

Limited space, registration recommended.

Adult : 18.- / Children : 12.-

WORKSHOP

Saturday 18 December from 2 pm to 5 pm

FÉMININ·E·X?

Try the game of illustration and linocut around the perception and definition of femininity! In the company of the Atelier Vacarme, creative and feminist workshop in Lausanne. Initiation course for adults. Registration required. 50.- (includes equipment and gourmet coffee)

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© Laia Abril , *Shrinky Recipe, On Rape*, 2020. Courtesy Les Filles du Calvaire, Paris.



© Laia Abril , *Chastity Belt, On Rape*, 2020. Courtesy Les Filles du Calvaire, Paris.



© Laia Abril , *Ala Kachuu, (Bride Kidnapping), Kyrgyzstan, On Rape*, 2020. Courtesy Les Filles du Calvaire, Paris.

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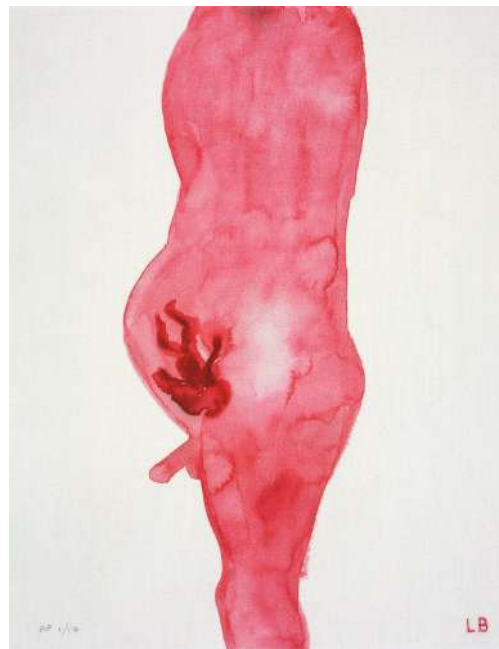
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LOUISE BOURGEOIS · PRESS IMAGES

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Louise Bourgeois, *Art is a guaranty of sanity*, 1999, drypoint on paper, 120.6 x 93.9 cm, Photo Christopher Burke
© The Easton Foundation / 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich



Louise Bourgeois, *The Maternal Man*, 2008, Archival dyes printed on cloth, 26.6 x 20.3 cm. Photo: Christopher Burke
© The Easton Foundation / 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich



Louise Bourgeois, *Sainte Sébastienne*, 1992, litograph and letterpress on paper, 30.5 x 43.22cm, Photo Christopher Burke
© The Easton Foundation / 2021, ProLitteris, Zurich



Louise Bourgeois, *The hour is devoted to revenge*, 1999, litograph and letterpress on paper, 30.5 x 42.22 cm, Photo Christopher Burke
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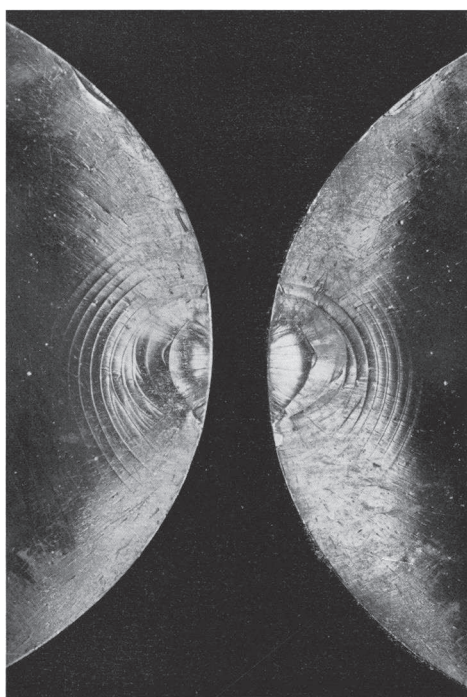
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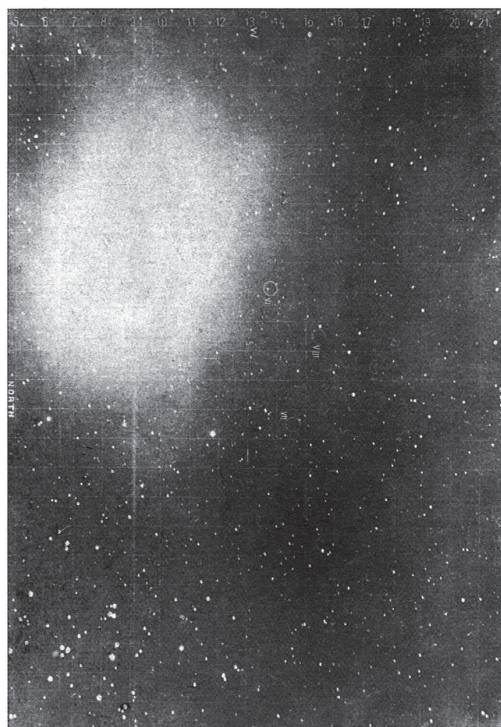
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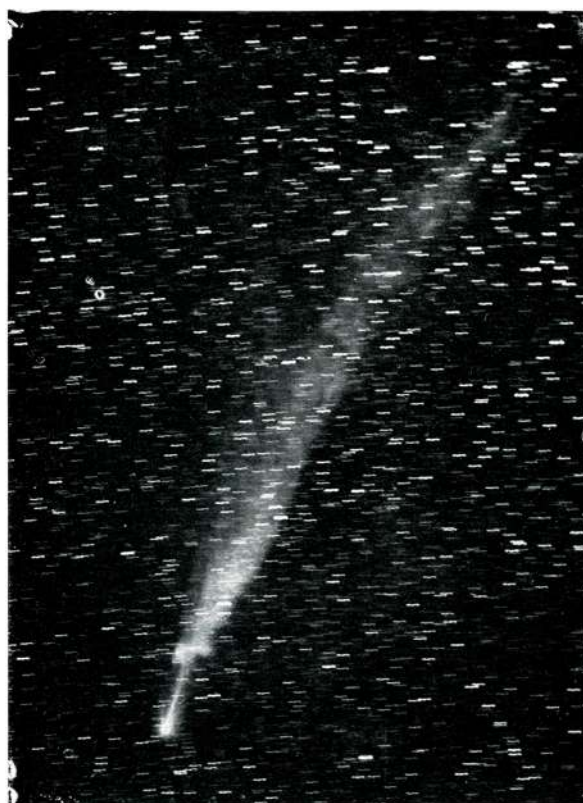
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© Batia Suter, *Domestic Night* (detail), 2018



© Batia Suter, *Domestic Night* (detail), 2018



© Batia Suter, *Domestic Night* (detail), 2018

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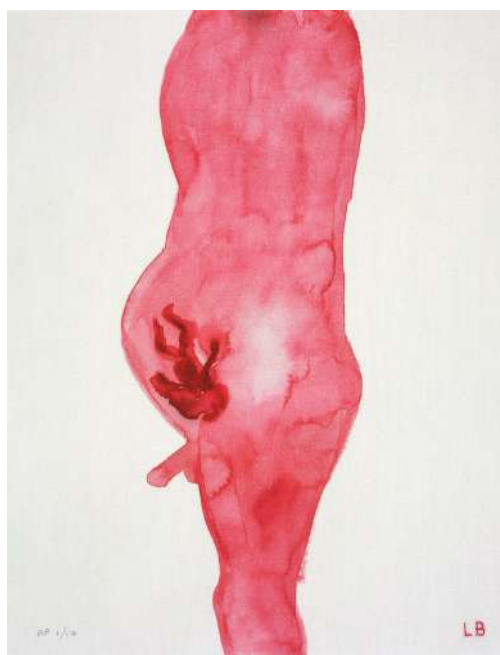
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© Pipilotti Rist, *The Help*, 2004, courtesy Parkett Editions Zurich-New York



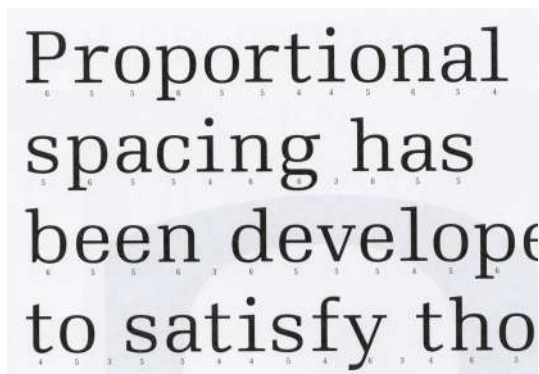
Louise Bourgeois, *The Maternal Man*, 2008, Archival dyes printed on cloth, 26.6 x 20.3 cm. Photo: Christopher Burke
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© Sophie Wietlisbach, *Thesis P.S* (détails), ECAL, 2020



© Sophie Wietlisbach, *Plakat, Thesis P.S, Advocate*, ECAL, 2020



© Sophie Wietlisbach, *Plakat*, ECAL, 2020

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© Billie Zangewa, *The Future Waits for No One*, 2011, Billie Zangewa et Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, Seoul, Londres



© Billie Zangewa, *The Inquisition*, 2007, Billie Zangewa et Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, Seoul, Londres



© Billie Zangewa, *Sweet Dreams*, 2010, Billie Zangewa et Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, Seoul, Londres



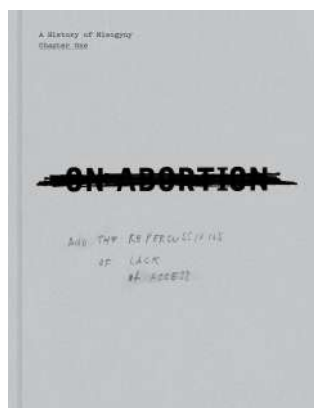
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© Billie Zangewa, *Great Expectations*, 2017, Billie Zangewa et Lehmann Maupin, New York, Hong Kong, Seoul, Londres

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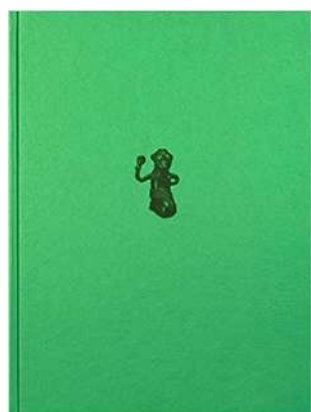
On Abortion: And the Repercussions of Lack of Access

Laia Abril et Ramon Pez
Published by Dewi Lewis Publishing
Pages: 196
Publication date : 2018
ISBN: 978-1-911306-24-5



Louise Bourgeois: The Return of the Repressed: Psychoanalytic Writings

Louise Bourgeois, Philip Larratt-Smith, Elisabeth Bronfen, Donald Kuspit
Published by Violette Editions
Pages : 500
Publication date : 2012
ISBN : 1900828375



Parallel Encyclopedia 2 Revised Edition

Batia Suter
Published by Roma Publications
Pages: 592
Publication date : 2018
ISBN : 9789492811141



Billie Zangewa : Plasticienne

Pierre Jaccaud
Published by les carnets de la création
Pages: 24
Publication date : 2017
ISBN : 9782351370841

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The Museum of Fine Arts relies on public funding from the city of Le Locle and the Société des Beaux-Arts et du Musée, Le Locle.

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Batia Suter's exhibition was supported by Pro Helvetia.

The programme intended to the young audience is supported by the Foundation Pierre Mercier.

Nivarox-FAR S.A is also one of the sponsor of MBAL.



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ADMISSIONS

CONTACT

Musée des beaux-arts
Marie-Anne Calame 6
CH-2400 Le Locle
+41 (0)32 933 89 50
mbal@ne.ch
www.mbal.ch

HOURS

Wed – Sun, 11.00 AM – 5.00 PM

PRICES

Adults: CHF 8.-
Senior citizens, students, apprentices, unemployed: CHF 5.-
Children, young people under 16 and art students: free
First Sunday of the month: free

OPENING

Thursday, October 22th at 6 pm

MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTS LE LOCLE

Marie-Anne-Calame 6
CH-2400 Le Locle
+41 (0)32 933 89 50
mbal@ne.ch • www.mbal.ch

PRESS CONTACT

Morgane Paillard
T +41 (0)32 933 89 50
morgane.paillard@ne.ch