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PRESS RELEASE



© Charles Fréger, de la série Yokainoshima., 2013-2015.

MUSÉE DES BEAUX-ARTS LE LOCLE

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21.05.2022 - 25.09.2022

CLOTHES

The theme of our exhibitions is clothing, especially the extraordinary costumes that tell us fabulous stories.

As a strong sign of identity, clothing represents both our relationship with our body and our belonging to a community. The history of fashion demonstrates that over the centuries, forms of clothing have changed and with them the silhouettes, whether they are draped in woven, embroidered or printed textiles. **ALEXANDRE GIROD** (1889-1929), a painter from Le Locle who is exhibited on the third floor, excelled in the representation of richly decorated fabrics. As a language, designed to protect, adorn and signify, clothing is both an individual and collective message. Sometimes it is invested with narrative and symbolic functions, particularly in the theatre or the carnival. The exhibition "Fabula", devoted to the work of **CHARLES FRÉGER** (France, 1975), offers a striking portrait of masked traditions around the world. The photographer does not use an ethnological approach to document folk festivals. If he has been travelling around the world for 20 years, it is to draw up an impressively wide inventory of popular rites and traditions across cultures. Fréger first became interested in uniforms, from majorettes to legionnaires, before turning his lens to masquerades. Following a precise protocol, he photographs his subjects in a consciously-intended theatricality: framed in the middle of nature, frozen in carefully elaborated poses, the bodies are buried under incredible costumes to transport us into ancestral tales. In this exhibition, which runs from the ground floor to the second floor, the artist brings together four series from his long-term work devoted to masquerades around the world: "Commedia dell'Arte", produced in Venice, "Yokainoshima" made in Japan, "Wilder Mann" created in 20 European countries and "Cimarron" produced in countries in the Americas, from the USA to Brazil.

On the first floor, the exhibition **PARURES D'ART BRUT** (Art Brut Adornments) presents equally astonishing outfits. These belonged to artists who created outside their community and cultural framework. For the first time, the MBAL brings together works by Art Brut (or Outsider Art) creators. Coming from important collections, these sewn, knitted, embroidered, woven and painted clothes are at the same time protective envelopes, the support of fairy tales or an act of resistance. The same idea of a protective cocoon can be found in the crochet work of the Lausanne-based artist **EMMA LUCY LINFORD** (Switzerland, 1992), exhibited on the ground floor.

The MBAL goes beyond its walls with two other exhibitions: the facade of the museum hosts 100 portraits of people shown from

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behind. If no faces are visible, it is because the people photographed all belong to the Ukrainian civil resistance and are now fighting clandestinely. The portraits by **EMERIC LHUISSET** (France, 1983), taken over the past few weeks in various regions of Ukraine, offer an image of the war that differs from the media coverage continuously running on our screens.

Finally, the MBAL is opening in a new space: please visit our website mbal.ch to discover the **ORBIT_E**, our new digital laboratory. We present "Decompressed Prism", a commission to the artist **SALVATORE VITALE** (Italy, 1986), which questions the body when it is transformed into a controlled technological object.

It is true that in our virtual life we transform ourselves into a character that is no longer fully human. This was also the case before the digital era, when we put on a carnival mask...

Nathalie Herschdorfer

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CHARLES FRÉGER
FABULA



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Over the past twenty years, Charles Fréger has built up a vast collection of portraits, first by focusing on outfits and uniforms, then by exploring masked traditions on every continent. His photographs confront us with secular figures, beings with multiple and ambiguous identities on which our imagination is projected. Four series are brought together in this vast exhibition : “Commedia dell'Arte”, produced in Venice and showing the body play of his masked characters ; “Yokainoshima”, in which the photographer explores the ritual figures of Japan ; “Wilder Mann”, a photographic campaign carried out over many years in 20 European countries ; and “Cimarron”, which takes the photographer to Afro-descendant America, from the southern United States to Peru. Embodying strange, comical, sometimes frightening or extravagant animals or creatures, the figures Fréger photographs give a measure of the variety of customs and cultures around the world. By paying attention to the finery and the solemnity of the pose, the artist leaves us alone in front of these masked figures. It is then up to us to imagine the story of each of the characters.

Charles Fréger (France, 1975) lives and works in Rouen. He studied at the Rouen School of Fine Arts. Since the beginning of the 2000s, he has been pursuing an inventory entitled “Portraits photographiques et uniformes”, carrying out his series in many countries around the world. In his portraits, the characters wear masks, make-up, costumes, ornaments and accessories to tell the story of their culture, their community and their heritage. Fréger has exhibited in various museums and festivals, and has published numerous books, including “Cimarron” (2019), *Yokainoshima* (2016), *Bretonnes* (2015) and *Wilder Mann* (2012). He is a founding member of the European and American photographers' network, Piece of Cake.

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PARURES D'ART BRUT



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PARURES D'ART BRUT

Eccentric, maladjusted, deviant, the creators of Art Brut hardly find a place in the community where they cannot or do not want to fit in. They see their *raison d'être* only in the expression of their fictions : works that they produce as self-taught artists, against the trend, and for which they feel no need for social or cultural recognition or approval.

The singular Art Brut ornaments presented in this exhibition have a strong symbolic significance. Each artist has worn them, making their own body the medium of their expression, except for Kenneth Rasmussen who does not wear his creations. Designed with humble materials, often recovered and transformed, these ceremonial outfits have been sewn, knitted, crocheted, embroidered, woven or painted in a spirit of both enchantment and irony. They have a value of resistance.

Helga Goetze and Giovanni Battista Podestà wear their "preaching" clothes in strange public parades, directly addressing passers-by with the idea of proclaiming moral values. Helga Goetze (1922-2008) goes to the Gedächtniskirche, a church in the heart of Berlin, every day in her costume to denounce inhibitions and taboos and to call for women's sexual liberation. Her motto "Ficken is Frieden" (fucking is peace) is part of her personal "mythology", which she embroiders in colour on her coat and cap.

Giovanni Battista Podestà (1895-1974) also protested in the street in a surprising way. He paraded through the small town of Laveno, with a long beard and long hair, wearing a brightly coloured overcoat, a headdress and a cane, exuberantly decorated. He denounces inequality and social injustice, abuse of power and greed, for which he blames modern, materialistic and capitalist society. Through his inventive and transgressive performances, he defends spiritual values and intends to bring a message of redemption.

The parades of Vahan Poladian (1902 or 1905-1982) are equally lavish but solitary, taking place in the streets of Saint-Raphaël in the south of France. They are organised daily to symbolically celebrate the Eastern splendour of his faraway Armenia, from which he was brutally cut off. Wearing his brightly coloured outfits, often glittering and abundantly decorated with festoons, braids, pendants and medals, he accompanies his public outings with an unquenchable laugh. Playfulness and parody are the order of the day.

The humour and delirious creativity are also present in the works of the Danish Kenneth Rasmussen (1972). Bras, panties and penis protectors, knitted and crocheted in excess and extravagance, evoke jubilant sexual finery.

In contrast, Giuseppe Versino (1882-1963) conceived and created

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MBAL

his works in the extreme isolation of the vast psychiatric hospital of Collegno in Turin, where he was confined. After completing his cleaning duties, he collected used rags and cloths, washed and frayed them before making cords with which he hand wove and assembled a complete outfit - tunic, trousers or dress, headdress, boots and bag. For the creator who wears his costume in summer and winter, even though it weighs more than forty kilos, this body envelope probably has a protective and conjuring dimension, even a saving one.

These marginal creators invent whimsical and intimate adornments for their own use, beyond any cultural framework or officialdom. They allow them to escape from reality, offering them a dreamlike and theatrical adventure.

Lucienne Peiry, curator

The exhibition "Parures d'art brut" is made possible by generous loans from public and private collections. Collection de l'Art Brut, Lausanne. Museo di Antropologia ed Etnografia dell'Università degli Studi di Torino, Italy. Collection of La Fabuloserie, Dicy, France. Bifrost, F.O.F.'s Art school for disabled, Randers, Denmark.

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**COLLECTION
DE L'ART BRUT
LAUSANNE**

La Fabuloserie
musée de l'art hors-les-normes

**MUSEO DI ANTROPOLOGIA
ED ETNOGRAFIA
UNIVERSITÀ DI TORINO**



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EMMA LUCY LINFORD
SECONDE PEAU



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For Emma Lucy Linford, clothing becomes a symbol of protection. Her work revolves around the notion of "re-clothing". It is about clothing as a second skin, the one we put on and take off as needed, but above all the one that protects and shelters us. Both a showcase of intimacy and a social marker for others, it acts as a messenger of the body it conceals. As attempts to exist and resist, particularly against the dictates on the aesthetics of the body, the pieces of the Lausanne-based artist are as much protective layers for the body as they are artifices or reflections of the spirit that hides within. Made of brass wire or crocheted garbage bags, her delicate and airy works float in space, giving an impression of lightness. Emma Lucy Linford's exploration of the crochet technique gives rise to her visual language. This installation - composed of two suspended pieces - is a reflection on the identity and status of the artist in contemporary society. While the first ("The Artist" (or "The Tomb"), 2020), halfway between a sarcophagus and a protective cocoon for the body, was created in the midst of confinement, the second ("The Boudoir", 2021) - produced a year later - was conceived by the artist as an echo of the latter, as a refuge. Both were made to measure, and each in its own way represents a layer of protection for the whole body, in which the artist can withdraw in complete privacy or see the inner void sublimated. Because when the artist is not there, her body is only suggested, perceptible only by the void it forms, floating in space. Emma Lucy Linford symbolically refers us to the idea of "clothing" as a protection for the soul.

Emma Lucy Linford (Switzerland, 1992) lives and works in Lausanne. After a year studying at the Ecole Nationale Supérieure de Beaux-Arts in Paris, she obtained a bachelor's degree in interior design at the Haute Ecole d'art et de design (HEAD) in Geneva in 2015. Her work has been presented in group exhibitions in 2018 at the Ateliers de Bellevaux, then at the MUDAC - Musée cantonal de design et d'arts appliqués contemporains (Lausanne) and at the Museo Villa dei Credi (Bellinzona) in 2020. More recently, her work has been shown at the Galerie C (Neuchâtel) in 2021 and at Valentin61 (Lausanne) in 2022.



The paintings of Alexandre Girod (1889-1929) are fascinating because of the ornamental dimension of the clothing that dominates the composition. The painter from Neuchâtel, who died at the age of 40, is little known by the public. As a solitary artist he was prolific but exhibited rarely. Influenced by the great Spanish masters of his childhood in Madrid and inspired by the Tuscan art of his formative years in Florence, Girod produced allegorical and religious compositions imbued with mysticism, Jura landscapes and full-length portraits.

The two portraits on exhibit illustrate the precision of the artist's pictorial gesture. The simplicity of the lines and the intensity of the colours are placed at the service of the treatment of the fabric. The fabrics, adorned with plant motifs treated in flat colours, impose themselves on the viewer by the power of their execution. While in "Harmonie en bleu" (Portrait de ma femme), their presence competes with the subject by shaping her silhouette, in "Portrait de Madame B. G." they dress the space in which the model is inscribed. These works testify to Girod's interest in decorative composition, which he could fully explore in large format.

Son of a Jura watchmaker expatriated in Spain, Alexandre Girod was born in Madrid in 1889. After interrupting his watchmaking studies in Le Locle, he joined the Ecole des Beaux-Arts in Geneva in 1910 and continued his training in Florence before taking up residence in the mountains of Le Locle in 1913 with his wife, Elisabeth Meylan. The couple's residence at Les Petits-Monts remained their permanent home, despite numerous trips. His work was successful abroad, presented in Madrid in 1922, in London in 1924 and in Paris between 1923 and 1928. Following his sudden death in 1929, his widow opened a museum dedicated to his work in the family estate. Maintained unchanged until 1984, the Musée Alexandre Girod closed its doors for good and the entire collection was transferred to the Museum of Fine Arts in Le Locle the following year.



Ім'я чи псевдонім / First name or pseudonym

Zoryana Ivankiv

Щоб би хотіли, щоб відбувалося зараз? / What would you like to be happening now?

Україна здобула зораків тому наша-
мність і розвивалась, як європейська
державна. Французькі люди, багата
нафрами землею, давня історія,
висока культура - це все грієта-
матко українцями. Ми залучув-
мо не красиве прекрасне життя
в сім'ї європейських народів. Війна,
втримані ролі інтервалом цей процес.
Тоді і мовчати прийшло на нашу
землю.

Як ви думаєте, що відбудеться? / What do you think will happen?

Але українці синько, волеюволю
наші. Європейські цінності для
нас є природними. Ми боремось за
достойне життя в вільній, свободній,
прекрасній нашій Україні. Вірно.
Так буде! Все буде Україною.

Zoryana Ivankiv

— L'Ukraine a gagné son indépendance il y a 30 ans et s'est développée comme un Etat européen. Des travailleurs acharnés, une terre riche en ressources minérales, une histoire ancienne, une grande culture - tout cela est inhérent à l'Ukraine. Nous méritons une vie heureuse et magnifique dans la famille des nations européennes. La guerre, l'invasion russe a interrompu ce processus. Des ennuis et des malheurs sont arrivés à notre pays. Mais les Ukrainiens sont une nation forte et éprise de liberté. Les valeurs européennes sont naturelles pour nous.

— Nous nous battons pour une vie décente dans une belle Ukraine libre. J'y crois ! Cela arrivera ! Tout sera l'Ukraine.

EMERIC LHUISSET

UKRAINE, HUNDRED HIDDEN FACES

The exhibition is located on the outside windows of the museum.

"Some have taken up arms, some are making camouflage nets or Molotov cocktails, others are working on logistics or helping the injured... They are the Ukrainian civil resistance, those who gave up their past life to fight.

These are the people you see in these pictures, these are their hopes, their fears... their faces will remain invisible... for the moment. To protect them while many will certainly be led to continue the struggle in hiding.

But one day these faces will appear to the eyes of all, these faces that I have photographed for later. These faces will appear on the day Ukraine regains its sovereignty. That will be the day when the resistance wins."

The exhibition brings together one hundred portraits taken in March 2022 by Emeric Lhuisset. If no faces are visible, it is because the people photographed all belong to the Ukrainian civil resistance and are now fighting clandestinely. The series echoes the project "Maydan - Hundred Portraits" carried out in Kyiv in September 2014. There, Lhuisset took photographs of 100 demonstrators who became revolutionaries on Maydan Square, the famous independence square in the heart of the Ukrainian capital. Lhuisset photographed 100 people there as a tribute to the 100 who died during the Mayan revolution - the large-scale, severely repressed protest movement that led to the overthrow of the pro-Russian president Viktor Yanukovich in February 2014. This violent revolution, caused by the Ukrainian president's refusal to sign an association agreement with Europe, was seen by the Russian government as a betrayal of the Ukrainian people. Putin then annexed Crimea and supported pro-Russian separatists in the Donbass region in eastern Ukraine. The war that had been going on since 2014 escalated on Thursday 24 February 2022, with a massive Russian invasion of the entire Ukraine. On 13 March 2022, Lhuisset returned to Ukraine to take another 100 photographs, this time of Ukrainian resistance fighters. In 2014, the photographer had asked his subjects two questions: "What do you hope will happen next?", "What do you think will happen?". Eight years later, Lhuisset asks the same questions to the members of the Ukrainian civil resistance. Their answers are as moving and disturbing as before.

Emeric Lhuisset (France, 1983) graduated from the Ecole des Beaux-Arts de Paris and the Ecole Normale Supérieure Ulm - Centre de géostratégie / Université Paris 1 Panthéon-Sorbonne. In parallel to his artistic practice, he teaches contemporary art and geopolitics at Sciences Po. Exhibited and collected in many museums, Lhuisset has won various awards, including the British Journal of Photography International Photography Award 2020, the BMW Residency for Photography 2018, and the Grand Prix Images Vevey - Leica Prize 2017. He is the author of four books. His portraits of Ukrainian resistance fighters are published in 2022 by André Frère Editions and Paradox (Ydoc) and follow the book *Maydan - Hundred portraits*, released by the same publishers in 2014.

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**ORBIT_E
SALVATORE VITALE
DECOMPRESSED PRISM**



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ORBIT_E
SALVATORE VITALE
DECOMPRESSED PRISM

ABOUT ORBIT_E

ORBIT_E is an innovative digital platform and a virtual extension of the MBAL. This experimental and transdisciplinary laboratory for digital creation extends and completes the artistic programme hosted in the physical spaces of the museum.

ORBIT_E allows the MBAL to continue its direct support to artists through the production and dissemination of performative works, while opening a place of inspiration and discovery. It is a unique opportunity to enhance performative practice, to show its diversity, its quality, and thus to contribute to its institutional recognition. By creating new reception conditions (spatiality, distance, etc.), ORBIT_E allows the artistic practice to be experienced in a virtual place while addressing an audience from all over the world.

SALVATORE VITALE

"Decompressed Prism", 2022

Decompressed Prism is a new step in Salvatore Vitale's artistic reflection on technology. The artist continues the experimental approach of this installation, initially conceived in a physical space, the Palazzo Santa Margherita in Milan, by investing Orbit_e, the digital exhibition space that the MBAL launched in 2022. Here he created an original and interactive work that echoes the initial installation.

In the digital space, "Decompressed Prism" takes the form of a non-linear narrative situated at the crossroads of philosophy and technology, in which the artist endeavours to fragment and then reassemble the initial storyline into several chapters. Conceived as an experience for the visitor, the work evolves in a playful space and touches on subjects of reflection important to the artist, such as conscientization, empathy, social realism, space and body. Divided into four parts, each offering in a distinct digital space, a specific theme and an interactive experience of its own, Salvatore Vitale's work combines fictional and documentary elements, video archives, text, sound designs and real data.

"Decompressed Prism" reveals the paradoxes behind the systemic logic of ubiquitous surveillance through automated security tools. Exploring different uses of control technologies in Poland, Slovakia, Switzerland and Italy, the artist questions how these technologies shape our relationship to the world and to ourselves as human beings. Indeed, Salvatore Vitale explores the notion of the body evolving between digitalisation and reality, and the transformation of the latter into a product controlled by technology. Drawing on contemporary philosophical and sociological texts, the artist imagines a different reality in which the visitor is invited to question the possibility of counter-narratives. The work also demonstrates the disturbing normalisation of security and

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rhizomatic surveillance, which should rather give rise to a sense of concern about its impact on human behaviour.

Born in Palermo, Italy, Salvatore Vitale (1986) lives and works in Zurich. For several years, he has been interested in the development and complexity of modern societies. As a visual artist, editor and teacher, his work includes multiple forms of expression : from photography to video, to writing and exhibition design. He is an award-winning artist, lecturer in the Transmedia Storytelling programme at the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts, and co-founder of the international magazine YET. His work is regularly exhibited in Switzerland and abroad, including Holland, Germany, Slovenia and Japan.

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AGENDA

**TABLE
RONDE**
SAMEDI 21 MAI
11H00

**GUERRE ET
PHOTOGRAPHIE,
QUE MONTRER?**

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©Photographie de la série *Ukraine, cent visages cachés*, Emerio Luiset, 2022.

PARTENAIRE MÉDIA

LE TEMPS

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TABLE RONDE

SATURDAY 21ST MAY, 11 AM

"WAR AND PHOTOGRAPHY, WHAT TO SHOW?"

With the participation of :

- Emeric Lhuisset
- Valérie Gorin
- Pascal Hufschmid
- Artiom Missiri
- Anne Wyrsh

Talk moderated by **Nathalie Herschdorfer**, director of MBAL.

Free entrance

The event will be followed by a brunch.

Limited number of participants. Please, reserve your place by phone or mail. Adults: CHF 18.- / Children: CHF 12.- (upon registration)

GUIDED TOURS

On Sundays:

- the 5th June
- the 3rd July
- the 4th September
- the 25th September

Price included in the entrance ticket.

BRUNCH

On Sunday the 19th of June, from 11 am to 2 pm

Between bites, the adults freely visit the exhibitions and the kids do crafts with our mediator.

For children of all ages

Limited space, registration recommended.

Adult : 18.- / Children : 12.-

WORKSHOPS FOR CHILDREN / HOLIDAY SPECIAL

Kids (from 6 to 12 years old) make a craft with our mediator in connection with our exhibition. On registration.

Wednesday 6th July – from 2 PM to 4.30 PM

Wednesday 13th July – from 2 PM to 4.30 PM

Friday 22th July – from 2 PM to 4.30 PM

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Charles Fréger, *Cimarron*, 2014-2018



Charles Fréger, *Cimarron*, 2014-2018



Charles Fréger, *Cimarron*, 2014-2018



Charles Fréger, *Wilder Mann*, 2010-2011



Charles Fréger, *Cimarron*, 2014-2018



Charles Fréger, *Cimarron*, 2014-2018

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Charles Fréger, *Wilder Mann*, 2010-2011



Charles Fréger, *Wilder Mann*, 2010-2011



Charles Fréger, *Wilder Mann*, 2010-2011



Charles Fréger, *Wilder Mann*, 2010-2011



Charles Fréger, *Wilder Mann*, 2010-2011



Charles Fréger, *Yokainoshima*, 2013-2015

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Charles Fréger, *Yokainoshima*, 2013-2015



Charles Fréger, *Yokainoshima*, 2013-2015



Charles Fréger, *Yokainoshima*, 2013-2015

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PARURES D'ART BRUT PRESS IMAGES

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For further details regarding the images and their information, please refer to the attached dropbox document.



Giuseppe Versino, Costume, début du XXe siècle. © Photo Lucienne Peiry



Helga Sophia Goetze, *Mytho Sophie* © Photo Morgane Détraz



Vahan Poladian, *Costume* ©Photo Arnaud Conne



Helga Sophia Goetze, *Ficken Frieden*, © Photo Morgane Détraz



Vahan Poladian, *Sans titre*, ©Photo Arnaud Conne

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EMMA LUCY LINFORD PRESS IMAGES

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Emma Lucy Linford, *le Boudoir*, 2021. ©Photo, Emma Lucy Linford



Emma Lucy Linford, *Le Tombea*, 2020. ©Photo, Emma Lucy Linford



Emma Lucy Linford, *Le Tombea, détail*, 2020. ©Photo, Emma Lucy Linford



Emma Lucy Linford, *Le Tombeau*, 2020. ©Photo, Julien Gremaud



Emma Lucy Linford, *le Boudoir*, 2021. ©Photo, Emma Lucy Linford

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Emeric Lhuisset, Portrait extrait de la série, *Ukraine - Cent visages cachés*, 2022.



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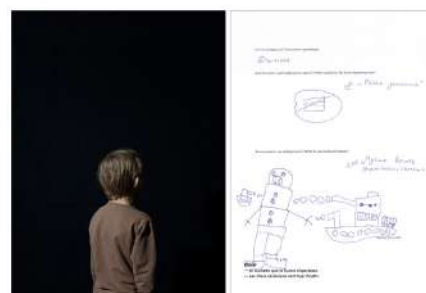
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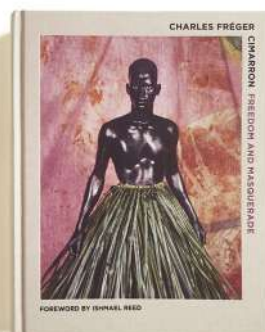


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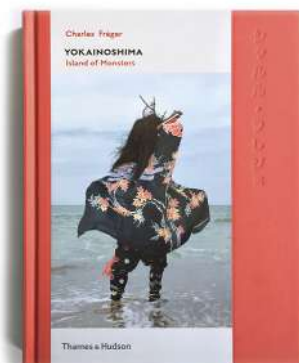
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ISBN: 978-06500-54459-4



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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.

The MBAL's exhibitions receive support from the Loterie Romande.

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

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First Sunday of the month: free

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Friday 20th may, 6 PM.

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