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**LA SCIA DEL MONTE  
OU LES UTOPISTES  
MAGNÉTIQUES  
23.03.2024 – 15.09.2024**



Ingeborg Lüscher, *La Pupa Proibita*, 2006. Video. Screen shot. © Ingeborg Lüscher / [videoart.ch](http://videoart.ch)

**M 7** MUSÉE DES  
**B** BEAUX-ARTS  
**L A** LE LOCLE

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## IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF MONTE VERITÀ'S UTOPIAS

In response to the dystopian scenarios confronting our contemporary society, the MBAL has chosen to celebrate utopia through the legacy of the mythical Monte Verità, the Swiss cradle of the avant-garde, revered worldwide. This magnetic oasis on the Monescia hill in Ticino was home to the first alternative, naturist, feminist and vegetarian colony in the early 20th century, a precursor of the counter-culture movements that followed, and has seen a succession of anarchists, thinkers and artists pass through its doors over the years. Consecrated by visionary curator Harald Szeemann, with his exhibition *Monte Verità. Le mammelle della verità* (1978), the hill is still today a place of pilgrimage that awakens, enlightens and consoles. But what remains of the utopias that gravitated around this "Bermuda triangle of the spirit" ?

Created in collaboration with the Fondazione Monte Verità, the exhibition *la scia del monte (the trace of the mountain) ou les utopistes magnétiques (or the magnetic utopians)* brings together 26 contemporary artists, whose creations have been inspired by Monte Verità and its surrounding aura, to resonate with the genius of the place and its female figures. The exhibition offers an eclectic and captivating dialogue between nature, art and spirit, questioning the notion of the "reform of life" desired by the precursors. Exploring all media and techniques, from video art to artificial intelligence, installation, sculpture, painting, photography, engraving, sound and fabric, the exhibition highlights the importance of Switzerland as a land of refuge for free spirits and iconoclasts.

Curators: Federica Chiocchetti, Director, [Museum of Fine Arts Le Locle \(MBAL\)](#), and Nicoletta Mongini, Cultural Director, [Fondazione Monte Verità](#)

# M L B A T



Una Szeemann, *The Birds Said You Move*, 2021-2023. Sculpture en bronze. Photo: Anna Maysuk



(gauche) Marco Useli, Elisarion, *il chiaro mondo dei beati*, 1\20 série de Gurudeva 2023. Courtesy: Marco Useli. (droite) Maria Guta & Lauren Huret, preparatory sketch n°2 for *The Eternal Youth Program series*, painting, 90 x 130 cm, print on canvas, oil pastel, 2024. Courtesy: Maria Guta & Lauren Huret



Maria Guta & Lauren Huret, video still from *Gestures of Ecstasy* (video installation in progress), print and video 4k, 2024. Courtesy: Maria Guta & Lauren Huret

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## INVITED ARTISTS



Fabrizio Dusi, *Utopia*, 2021, céramique et or de troisième cuisson. Courtesy: Fabrizio Dusi

MBAL COLLECTION  
FONDAZIONE MONTE VERITÀ COLLECTION  
TONATIUH AMBROSETTI  
RICCARDO ARENA  
JEAN ARP & SOPHIE TAEUBER  
MARCO CORDERO  
OPPY DE BERNARDO  
FABRIZIO DUSI  
FATTUCCHIERE  
FILIPPO FILLIGER & DOROTHÉE THÉBERT  
OLGA FRÖBE-KAPTEYN  
FRANCESCA GAGLIARDI  
JOHANNA GSCHWEND & MORITZ HOSSLI  
MARIA GUTA & LAUREN HURET  
MAYA HOTTAREK  
LISA LURATI  
INGEBORG LÜSCHER  
GIAIME MELONI  
LUCA MENGONI  
STÉPHANE MERCIER  
PASCAL MURER  
ELENA MURESU  
UNA SZEEMANN  
THE COOL COUPLE  
MARCO USELI  
MARIANNE WEREFKIN  
MARY WIGMAN

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## MONTE VERITÀ, HISTORY

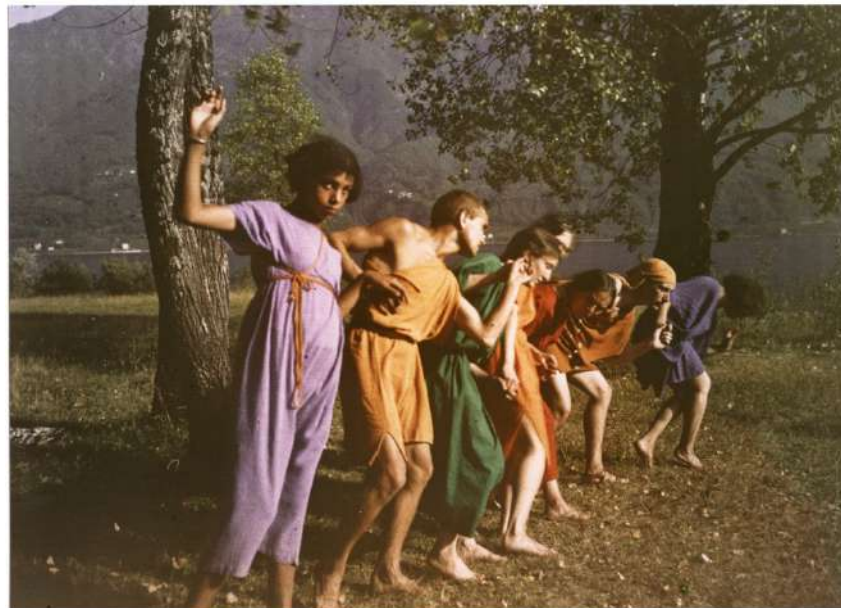


Photography of sanatorium guests. © Fondazione Monte Verità, Fonds Harald Szeemann

At the turn of the 19th and 20th centuries, Ticino became a popular destination for a group of non-conformists seeking to escape a rapidly developing industrial society. Monte Monescia, a deserted hill near the municipality of Ascona above Lake Maggiore, became their sanctuary and the cradle of a community looking to escape the ideologies of both capitalism and communism. The founders reflected a European bourgeoisie in crisis and in search of freedom. Among them, Henry Oedenkoven, son of a wealthy Antwerp industrialist, pianist Ida Hofmann from Montenegro, artist Gusto Gräser and his brother Karl Gräser, Romans from Transylvania. Inspired by theosophy and the Germanic *lebensreform* (reform of life) movement, they immediately renamed the place Monte Verità (Mount of Truth). Dressed in "reform" clothes, replacing corsets and suits with outfits that let their bodies breathe, they cultivate the land, build wooden huts and follow the principles of eurythmy by soaking up the sun. Nature is their center, and they preach its purity, interpreting it symbolically as the ultimate work of art. Their social organization was based on a cooperative and self-sufficient system, aiming at the unity of body and soul. Over time, Monte Verità became a meeting place for theosophists, reformers, anarchists, communists, social democrats, psychoanalysts, writers, artists and emigrants from the two world wars. Personalities such as Hermann Hesse and choreographer Rudolf von Laban, dancers Mary Wigman and

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Isadora Duncan, artists Hugo Ball, Hans Arp, Marianne von Werefkin and Alexej von Jawlensky have stayed on the Monte. The Ascona hill originally housed a sanatorium, then became an artists' community around the 1920s before being purchased by Baron Eduard von der Heydt, a German banker and art collector. The Monte Verità then became a modern hotel center with its iconic Bauhaus-style building, welcoming celebrities from the artistic, political and cultural worlds, and many of the movement's masters such as Gropius, Albers, Bayer, Breuer, Feininger, Schlemmer, Schawinsky and Moholy-Nagy, all seduced and fascinated by the magnetism of a place where - as Ise Gropius said - "our forehead touches the sky...". On the Baron's death, Monte Verità was ceded to the canton of Ticino. Today, this multi-purpose institution houses a cultural and museum center, a hotel, a restaurant and a conference center. Its contemporary international reputation grew thanks to legendary Swiss curator Harald Szeemann's 1978 exhibition, *Monte Verità. Le mammelle della verità* (the udders of truth), "a museum of the mind where every room is a utopia", which is now a permanent installation at the Casa Anatta Museum. The story of Monte Verità as a total art form continues to inspire generations of Swiss and international artists. Each year, a cultural calendar is proposed with exhibitions and meetings dedicated to art, philosophy, literature and social issues.



Group photography with Mary Wigman. © Fondazione Monte Verità, Fonds Harald Szeemann



Groupe de danseuses. © Fondazione Monte Verità, Fonds Harald Szeemann, Fondation Suzanne Perrotet

**Publication in March 2024 of the book *Les voix magnétiques* (*The magnetic voices*) about the female figures who lived at Monte Verità and a collection of images, edited by Federica Chiocchetti and Nicoletta Mongini.**

Paperback format, quadrilingual (German, French, Italian, English), designed by Nicolas Polli.

## **OPENING 22.03.24**

From 11 am to 6 pm, press tour of the exhibition with Federica Chiocchetti, director (MBAL), Nicoletta Mongini, co-curator and cultural director (Fondazione Monte Verità), and invited artists. From 6 pm, public vernissage, with vegetarian aperitif and DJ-set "Rêvità" by DJ leMox.

## **LES ÉTATS MENTAUX GÉNÉRAUX**

**01.06.24 MBAL AND 05.09.24 CLUB 44**

On June 1, the MBAL presents 3 round-table discussions on mental health, meditation and shamanism, organized by Federica Chiocchetti, Samuel Socquet from the program *La médecine et l'invisible* (RTS) and Marie-Léa Zwahlen from Club 44. With a performance by duo The Cool Coople and a session

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of Biodanza. On September 5, Club 44 invites anthropologist Nastassja Martin to present her latest book *À l'est des rêves*.

A rich program accompanies the exhibition (meetings, screenings, hypnosis sessions, relaxation techniques, etc.). Detailed program available soon.

## CONTACTS

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Wednesday-Sunday: 11 am–5 pm  
Free access on the first Sunday of the month

## PARTENAIRES



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