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**LA SCIA DEL MONTE
OU LES UTOPISTES
MAGNÉTIQUES
23.03 – 15.09.2024**



Ingeborg Lüscher, *La Pupa Proibita*, 2006, capture vidéo. © Ingeborg Lüscher / videoart.ch

M 7 MUSÉE DES
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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](#)

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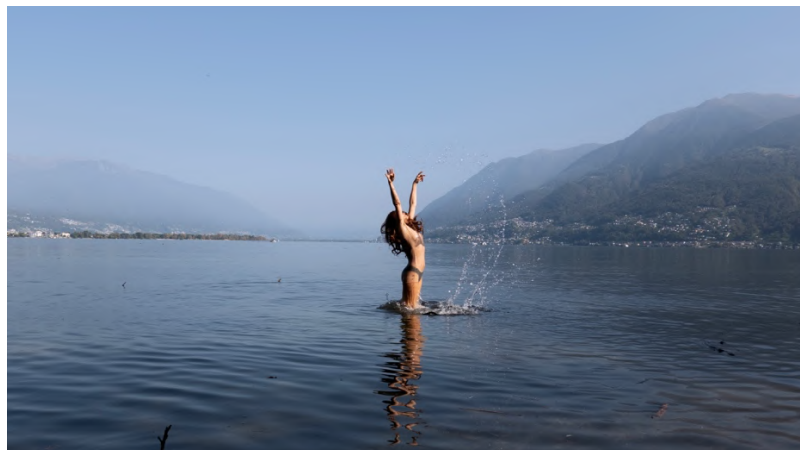


Una Szeemann, *The Birds Said You Move*, 2021-2023. Sculpture en bronze. Photo: Anna Maysuk



(left) Marco Useli, *Elisarion, il chiaro mondo dei beati*, 1\20 série de Gurudeva, 2023. Mix média et pâte d'argent sur papier coton noir, aquaforte et techniques de monotypie. Courtesy : Marco Useli.

(right) Maria Guta & Lauren Huret, croquis préparatoire pour *The Eternal Youth Program series*, 2024. Peinture, impression sur toile, pastel à l'huile, 90 x 130 cm. Courtesy : Maria Guta & Lauren Huret



Maria Guta & Lauren Huret, *Gestures of Ecstasy*, 2024 (installation video en cours), capture vidéo. Courtesy : Maria Guta & Lauren Huret

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INVITED ARTISTS



Fabrizio Dusi, *Utopia*, 2021, Céramique et or de troisième cuisson, 30 x 145 cm. Courtesy: Fabrizio Dusi

MBAL COLLECTION
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MAYA HOTTAREK
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PASCAL MURER
ELENA MURESU
UNA SZEEMANN
THE COOL COUPLE
MARCO USELI
MARIANNE WEREFKIN
MARY WIGMAN

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MONTE VERITÀ, HISTORY



Photographie des invité·e·x·s du sanatorium. © Fondazione Monte Verità, Fondo 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 eurhythm 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 à Monte Verità. © Fondazione Monte Verità, Fondso Harald Szeemann, Fondazione 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 22.03.2024

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 (MBAL) AND 05.09.2024 (CLUB 44)

On 1 June, 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](#)

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[44](#). With a performance by duo The Cool Couple and a session of Biodanza.

On 5 September, 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.

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Wednesday-Sunday: 11.00 am–5.00 pm

Free admission on the first Sunday of the month

PARTNERS



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