

New MBAL exhibition brings together Swiss and international multidisciplinary creators



Jeanne Jacob, Les chuchotements, 2025. Courtesy of the artist.

LE LOCLE.- The MBAL is presenting, as part of its 2026 season, the exhibition *Pour tout faire, il faut une fleur* (To do everything, you need a flower). Conceived by Swiss artist, graphic designer, publisher, and educator Nicolas Polli, the project offers an original reflection on the intersections between photography, graphic design, and hybrid artistic practices. The exhibition brings together a constellation of Swiss and international creators from diverse disciplines, united by a common desire to blur traditional boundaries between artistic fields. Upcycling and circularity are at the heart of this investigation, where raw materials and creative processes intermingle to generate new beginnings.

The exhibition arises from a need to understand how different areas of graphic arts interconnect with one another. It explores particularly the ambivalence of an era marked both by professional hyper-specialization and by a growing demand for versatility—a tension reflected in Nicolas Polli's own career as a photographer, graphic designer, publisher, and educator.

Through a dynamic and immersive scenography, the exhibition highlights a generation of artists whose paths escape conventional classifications. It emphasizes stories of training, overlapping influences, the imagination of childhood, and contemporary forms of collaboration and transmission. The selected artists dissect in depth the cycle of things: tools merge with final outcomes, behind-the-scenes processes become central pieces themselves, actions provoke reactions, and repetitions generate differences.

Recycling of materials is central to this process: for example, design elements created by one of the artists, originally made from materials salvaged from past exhibitions, are repurposed again as structures intended to host the works on display. In this way, the exhibition can be understood as an exploration of processes, where even mistakes become grounds for experimentation.

It is an ambitious project, deeply rooted in the Swiss context while remaining resolutely international, and it speaks as much to art lovers as to emerging creators in search of alternative models of practice.

Conceived as a space for dialogue, the exhibition brings together photographic works as well as publications, graphic installations, editorial objects, personal archives, as well as painting and sculpture. It also features a participatory installation designed for children in the Salle Marie-Anne Calame and the adjacent space, offering young visitors an opportunity to engage directly with the themes of the exhibition.

In order to reinforce the idea of circularity and self-production, a publication has been designed that serves both as a catalogue and as an accompanying text in the exhibition rooms. Five sheets in 70 × 100 cm offset format will be printed in multiple copies and made available to visitors in the cafeteria area. These are made to be taken, folded and assembled by the public, so that they can be consulted throughout the exhibition. The sheets thus form a self-produced "catalogue," extending the exhibition experience through a participatory gesture.

Artists featured

Ayed Arafah • Ruth van Beek • Linus Bill & Adrien Horni • Alina Frieske • Sabine Hess • Jeanne Jacob • Enzo Mari • Aldo Mozzini • Nicolas Polli • Olga Prader • Erin O'Keefe • Peter Fischli & David Weiss

Nicolas Polli

As a professional in the field of graphic arts, Nicolas Polli is at the heart of these concerns. Born in 1989 in Brusino Arsizio, Switzerland, Polli is a Swiss photographer, graphic designer, editor, and educator. He studied Art Direction at ECAL—École cantonale d'art de Lausanne—where he received his Master's degree.

Polli works fluidly between personal projects and commercial commissions. His photographic work has been exhibited nationally and internationally, and he has published two monographs.

Between 2012 and 2020, he co-founded and co-edited YETmagazine, a publication devoted to contemporary photography that gained international recognition and received a Swiss Design Award. In 2018 and 2020 he was awarded the Swiss Design Award.

In 2016, he began developing his independent studio, Atelier CIAO, specialising in editorial design and still life photography. After working with several publishers, he founded his own experimental editorial platform, CIAO Press, which focuses on contemporary photography, illustration, and design.

Polli has taught photography and photobook design at various universities and, since 2021, has been a resident at Atelier Robert in Biel/Bienne.

ART DAILY

International
23 juillet 2026