

HARALD SZEEMANN

**Museum
of Obsessions**

October 13th, 2018 – January 20th, 2019

KUNSTHALLE DÜSSELDORF

HARALD SZEEMANN

**Museum
of Obsessions**

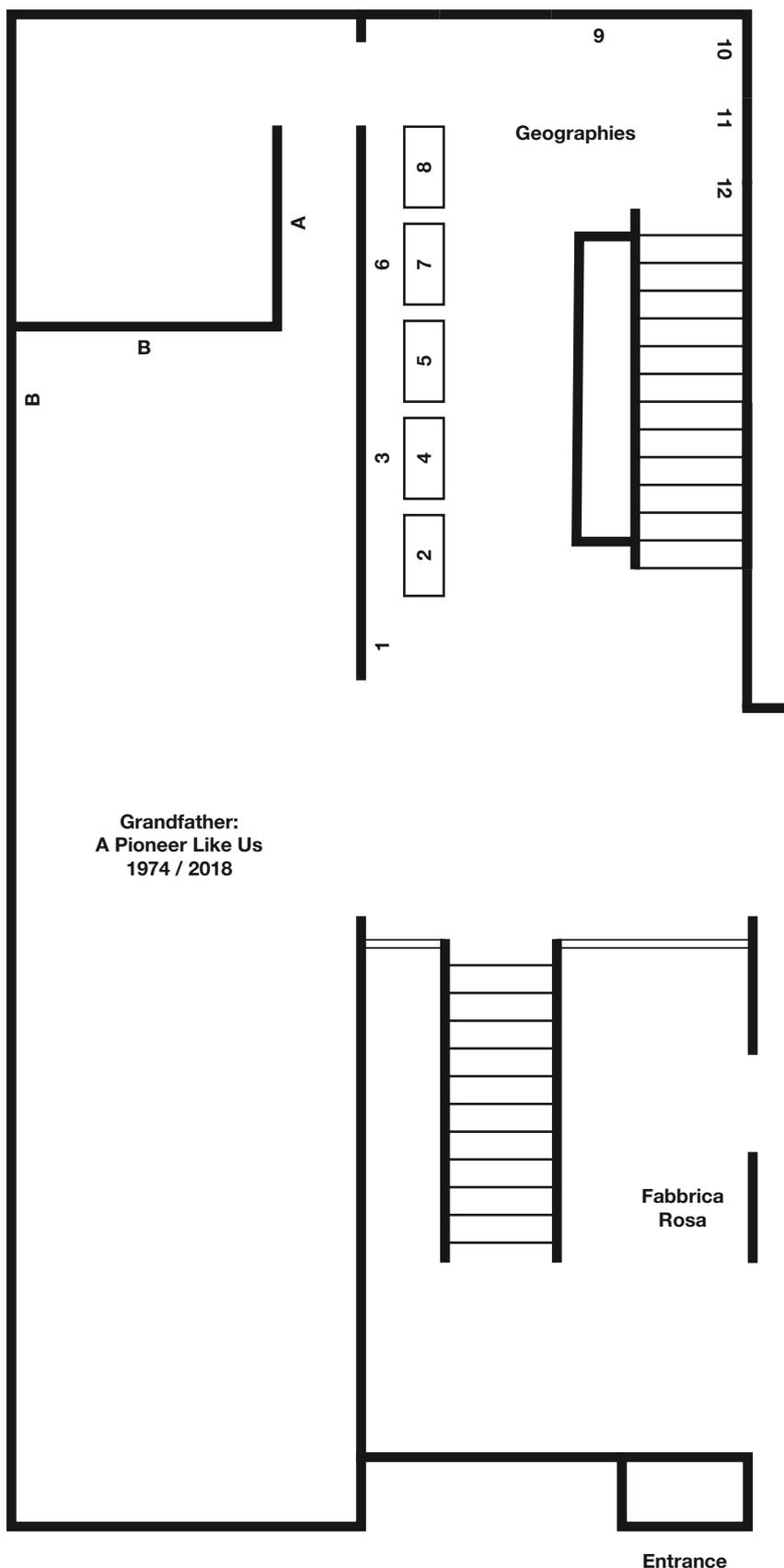
Harald Szeemann

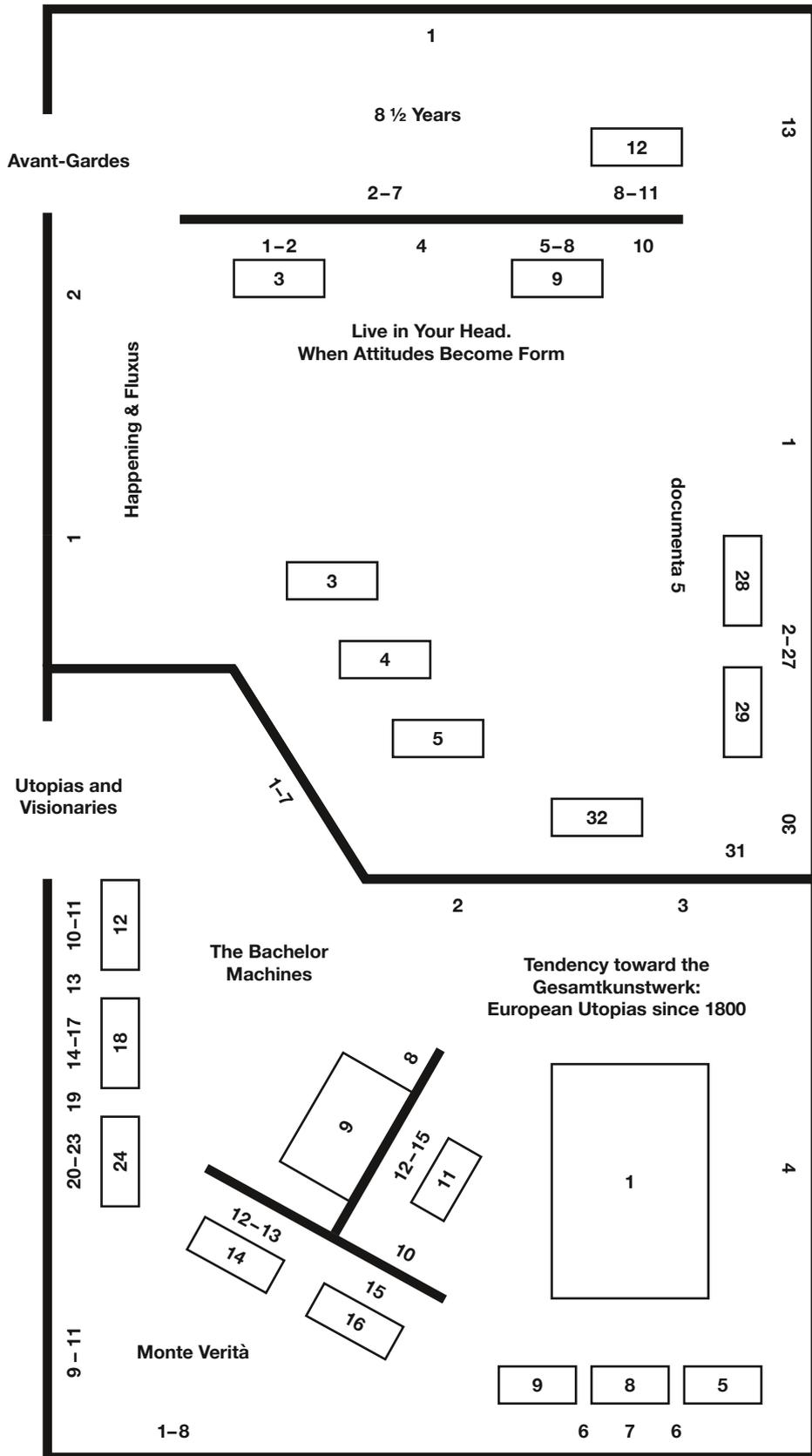
Museum of Obsessions

One of the most distinguished advocates of conceptual art and postminimalism, and a figure who became synonymous with the advent of globalism in contemporary art, Harald Szeemann (Swiss, 1933–2005) developed a new form of exhibition-making that centered on close collaborations with artists and a sweeping international vision of contemporary culture. Szeemann's exhibitions covered vast areas of research, challenging traditional narratives of art history and often embracing creative fields outside the visual arts. For each of his more than 150 installations and exhibitions, Szeemann added materials to his vast library and research archive, which he referred to as the "Museum of Obsessions". His museum comprised not only the physical place of the archive but also a mental landscape that encompassed all moments of genius and artistic intensity treated in Szeemann's exhibitions, both realized and unrealized, past and future.

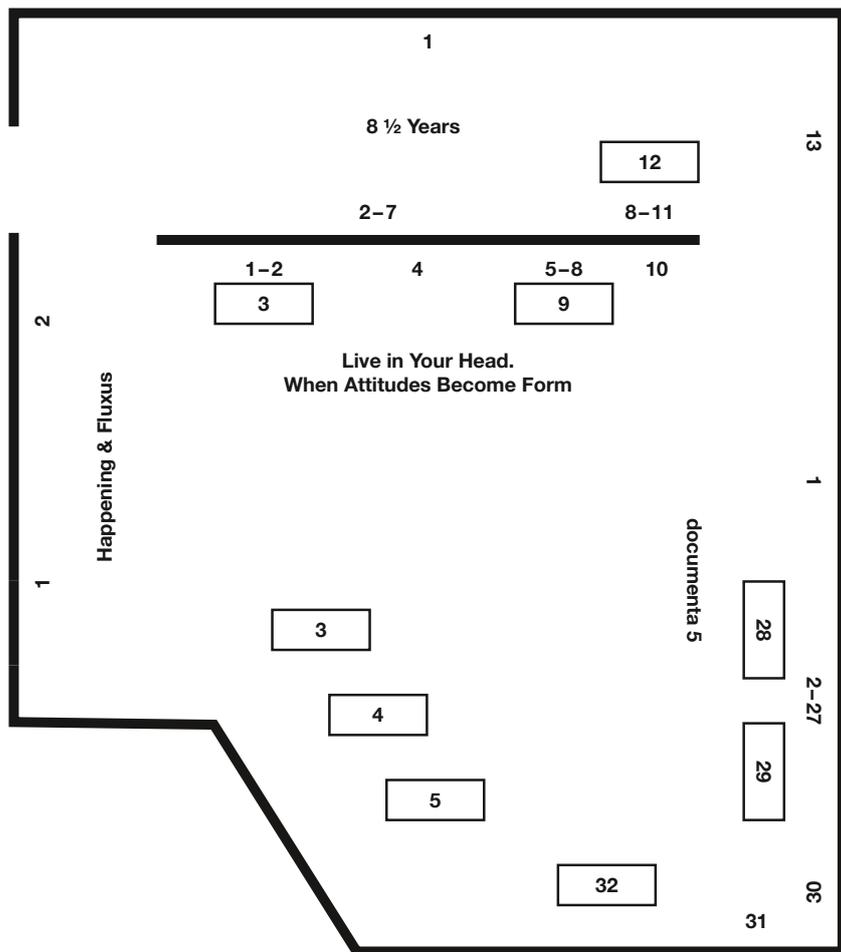
This exhibition is divided into thematic sections. "Avant-Gardes" (2nd floor) addresses Szeemann's early exhibitions and his engagement with the artistic vanguards of the 1960s and early 1970s. "Utopias and Visionaries" (the light blue Room on the 1st floor) explores a trilogy of exhibitions Szeemann organized in the 1970s and 1980s that rewrote the narrative of early twentieth-century modernism as a story of alternative political movements, mystical worldviews, and utopian ideologies. In the Foyer, "Geographies" examines Szeemann's own Swiss identity, his penchant for travel, and his focus on broad international exhibitions and regional presentations later in his career. A reconstruction of Szeemann's 1974 exhibition *Grandfather: a Pioneer Like Us* is on view in the so called "Seitenlichtsaal" on the 1st floor.

The exhibitions have been organized by the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, in cooperation with the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf. Curated by Glenn Phillips and Philipp Kaiser together with Doris Chon and Pietro Rigolo.





Avant-Gardes



8 1/2 Years

In 1961, at age twenty-eight, Szeemann was appointed director of the Kunsthalle Bern in Switzerland, becoming one of the youngest museum directors in the world. During his 8½-year tenure, Szeemann transformed the Kunsthalle into an international showcase, focusing on the most current developments in contemporary art while developing innovative historical and thematic exhibitions. Among these projects were surveys of kinetic art, art of the mentally ill, religious folk art, and science fiction as visual culture. Szeemann looked at historical modernism through exhibitions of surrealism, Francis Picabia, Wassily Kandinsky, Kazimir Malevich, and Marcel Duchamp. He frequently exhibited American artists during this time, including projects by Robert Rauschenberg, Andy Warhol, and Roy Lichtenstein. He was the first curator to commission artists Christo and Jeanne-Claude to wrap a building. *Wrapped Kunsthalle, Bern, Switzerland, 1967–68* (1968) was a project developed for the Kunsthalle's fiftieth anniversary. Szeemann built close relationships with artists, and his archive is rich

with artists' letters, proposals, and drawings from this period. The entrance wall in this room reproduces a selection of posters from the more than fifty exhibitions that were held at the Kunsthalle Bern during Szeemann's tenure.

1. Exhibition posters Kunsthalle Bern from 1961–1969

2. Drawings for Christo and Jeanne-Claude's *Wrapped Kunsthalle, Bern, Switzerland, 1967–68* 1968

Christo
(Bulgarian-born American, b. 1935)
Pencil on paper

3. Drawing of *Electric Nail, Proposal for the Exhibition 12 Environments* (1968)
ca. 1968

Günther Uecker
(German, b. 1930)
Ink and felt marker on paper

4. Letter of Invitation to Szeemann with a Hand-Drawn Map of Several Places in Switzerland 1971

Jean Tinguely
(Swiss, 1925–1991)
Manuscript letter with ink, felt marker, and colored pencil sketches

5. *This Way Brown, Proposals for the Exhibition Plans and Projects as Art* (1969)

April 15, 1969

Stanley Brouwn
(Suriname-born Dutch, 1935–2017)
Manuscript letter with ink sketches

6 Unsolicited Proposal to NASA Sent to Szeemann for the Exhibition *Plans and Projects as Art* (1969)

April 2, 1969

Stephen Kaltenbach
(American, b. 1940)
Typescript letter and gelatin silver print

7. Harald Szeemann's Letter of Resignation from the Kunsthalle Bern
May 10, 1969

Harald Szeemann
Manuscript letter

8.–12.

Agentur für geistige Gastarbeit

Szeemann founded his Agentur für geistige Gastarbeit (Agency for Spiritual Guest Labor) in 1969 in the wake of his resignation from the Kunsthalle Bern. Emancipated from any official museum institution, he established himself as one of the first independent curators. "Guest Labor" refers to Szeemann's identity as the grandson of a Hungarian immigrant as well as to the political plight of migrant laborers in Switzerland, who had suffered increased discrimination in recent years. This touted outsider status acknowledges Szeemann's new-found identity as an independent agent doing the *geistige* (spiritual or intellectual) work of curating for institutions on a temporary basis. Szeemann had a series of stamps made bearing the agency's name and its various mottoes, including *Besitz durch freie Aktionen ersetzen* (Replace Property with Free Actions) and *SELBST* (SELF). These designs and mottoes made their way onto his fax letterhead and packing tape, which were used in the daily operation of his business. In this way, Szeemann realized his own utopic vision of a freelance curatorial agency as a "one-man team," unburdened by the bureaucracy of an official institution.

Wall, from left to right

8. List of Possible Names and Mottoes for Szeemann's Agency 1970

Harald Szeemann
Typescript
Among the names and mottoes that Szeemann considered for his agency were "Agency that Profits from the Generation Gap," "Agency for Temporary Show Business," "Accomplishments," and "Maybe."

9.+10. Two Stamp Compositions Made with Szeemann's Stamps early 1970s

Harald Szeemann
Stamped and hand-drawn ink on paper
Facsimile

11. Szeemann's Fax Letterhead

Harald Szeemann
Facsimile

In case

12. Stamps and Packing Tape

ca. 1969–1975; ca. 2004

Harald Szeemann
Mixed media

Screens

13. Harald Szeemann – The Bern Years

Produced by IMAGE and CONTENT /
Reto Caduff for Kunsthalle Bern /
The Getty Research Institute

Live in Your Head. When Attitudes Become Form

In 1968, Szeemann was approached by the public relations firm Ruder Finn and the tobacco conglomerate Philip Morris to produce a major corporate-sponsored exhibition of recent art. Szeemann embarked on a whirlwind of travel in search of new talent. The resulting exhibition, *Live in Your Head. When Attitudes Become Form* (1969), became perhaps the most infamous exhibition of the 1960s – a sprawling, incredible, infuriating display of mostly younger artists on the verge of fame. The project surveyed related tendencies in art movements across the United States and Europe, focusing on conceptual and process-based practices. Many artists made their works directly on site, nearly destroying the Kunsthalle Bern in the process: Richard Serra splashed 460 pounds of molten lead against the walls and tiled floor; Joseph Beuys smeared the corners with margarine; Lawrence Weiner removed a section of permanent wall; Robert Morris created a pile of flammable and oil-soaked materials to be burned at the end of the exhibition; and Michael Heizer used a wrecking ball to smash up the plaza outside the museum. The exhibition sparked an international controversy that ultimately led to Szeemann's resignation from the Kunsthalle – and propelled his career to new heights of fame.

1. Four Poster Concept Drawings for *When Attitudes Become Form* ca. 1969

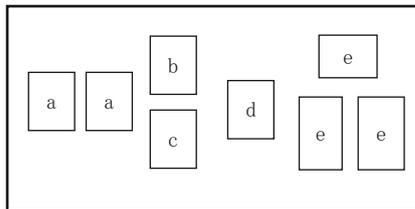
Markus Raetz
(Swiss, b. 1941)
Ink on paper

2. *Bern Mirror Displacement* 1969

Robert Smithson
(American, 1938–1973)
Gelatin silver prints

Szeemann produced these six photographs, part of Robert Smithson's *Mirror Displacement* series, according to instructions provided by Smithson. An enlargement from the series was exhibited in *When Attitudes Become Form*.

3. In case



a. Szeemann's Address List for His Visit to New York 1968

Harald Szeemann
Ink on paper

b. Szeemann's Address List for His Visit to Los Angeles 1968

Harald Szeemann
Ink on paper

c. Szeemann's Address List for His Visit to San Francisco 1968

Harald Szeemann
Ink on paper

d. Catalog for *When Attitudes Become Form*

Harald Szeemann,
editor (Bern: Kunsthalle Bern, 1969)
Szeemann modeled this exhibition catalog after his own burgeoning archive. Many of the artist entries mimic his files for that artist.

e. Installation View of Art by Telephone and Two Related Letters from Walter De Maria

1969; 1969; March 25, 1969
Walter De Maria
(American, 1935–2013)
Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard
Gelatin silver print
Typescript letters with annotations in ink

Projected

4. Slideshow of Images from *When Attitudes Become Form* (1969)

5. *Wind in Water: Snow, December 15, 1968*

1968
Hans Haacke
(German, b. 1936)
Xerox on board

This work was exhibited in *When Attitudes Become Form*.

6. Photograph of the Roof of the Kunsthalle, Bern, Being Occupied by the Radiation from Uranyl Nitrate (UO₂(NO₃)₂) 1969

Robert Barry
(American, b. 1936)
Gelatin silver print

As his contribution to *When Attitudes Become Form*, artist Robert Barry placed mildly radioactive uranyl nitrate on the roof of the Kunsthalle Bern.

7. Instructions for Representing Uranyl Nitrate (UO₂(NO₃)₂) in the *When Attitudes Become Form* Exhibition Catalog 1969

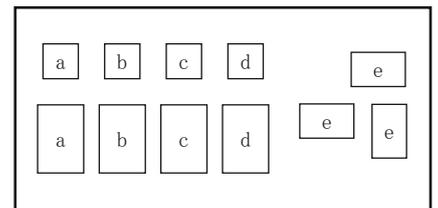
Robert Barry
(American, b. 1936)
Typescript

8. *Contract for Purchase of a Concept Tableau* 1967

Edward Kienholz
(American, 1927–1994) Printed paper
Printed paper

This work was exhibited in *When Attitudes Become Form*.

9. In case



a. Installation View of Specifications for a Piece with Combustible Materials and Related Proposal 1969; February 24, 1969

Robert Morris
(American, b. 1931)
Photographer: Harry Shunk
Exhibition print
Typescript letter

b. Installation View of *Torches and Related Sketch*

1969; February 22, 1969

Gilberto Zorio
(Italian, b. 1944)
Photographers: Harry Shunk and János Kender
Exhibition print
Manuscript letter with ink sketches

c. Installation View of *Reeds with an Arc Lamp* and Related Sketch

1969; February 22, 1969

Gilberto Zorio

(Italian, b. 1944)

Photographers: Harry Shunk and János Kender

Exhibition print

Manuscript letter with ink sketches

d. Installation View of *Torsion* and Related Letter

1969; February 18, 1969

Giovanni Anselmo

(Italian, b. 1934)

Photographers: Harry Shunk and János Kender

Exhibition print

Typescript letter with pencil sketches

Anselmo's letter proposed several sculptures, including *Torsion*.

e. Installation View of *Walking Tour in the Berner Oberland (March 19–22, 1969)* and Two Related Documents

1969; 1968; 1969

Richard Long

(English, b. 1945)

Photographers: Harry Shunk and János Kender

Exhibition print

Ink and pencil on paper and Manuscript letter

10. *Remembering When Attitudes Become Form, 2017*

Documentary video, 9 min

Produced by IMAGE and CONTENT /

Reto Caduff for the Getty Research Institute

documenta 5

A key commission for Szeemann came in 1970, when he was appointed secretary general of *documenta 5* (1972), the fifth iteration of *documenta*, the major international art exposition held every five years in Kassel, Germany. Setting the overall artistic direction for the project and overseeing a team of prominent curators, Szeemann set out to revitalize and radicalize *documenta*'s program. *Questioning Reality – Image Worlds Today* is widely regarded as the most significant and ambitious exhibition of the 1970s. Featuring more than 200 artists, the massive exhibition encompassed a remarkable range of subjects, including conceptual art, postminimalism, light and space art, performance art, video art, pop art, and photorealism, alongside galleries devoted to political propaganda, advertising imagery, architectural utopias, science fiction, artist's museums, and art of the mentally ill. Planned surveys of socialist realism from Russia and China were canceled due to political concerns. The largest section, personally organized by Szeemann, was called "Individual Mythologies", his term denoting the visual worlds created by artists beyond the confines of style or movements. *documenta 5*, which featured 100 days of events, performances, actions, screenings, protests, and Happenings, set a new standard for international survey exhibitions.

Projected

1. Slideshow of Images from *documenta 5* (1972)

Wall from left to right

2. *Calling German Names*
1972

James Lee Byars

(American, 1932–1997)

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

3. *Astral Projections: Adam and Eve in the Castle Gardens*
1972

Paul Cotton

(American, b. 1939)

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

4. Ed Ruscha with his poster for *documenta 5*
1972

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

5. Gino De Dominicis Standing Next to His Video *Gino De Dominicis Is Watching You: Third Solution of Immortality*

1972

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

6. *Accelerazione = sogno, numeri di Fibonacci al neon e motocicletta fantasma*

1972

Mario Merz

(Italy, 1925–2003)

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

7. *Michael Asher*

1972

Edward Kienholz

(American, 1927–1994)

8. *Five Car Stud*

1972

Edward Kienholz

(American, 1927–1994)

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

9. David Medalla and John Dugger Sitting on the *People's Participation Pavilion*

1972

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

10. *Da inventare sul posto*

1972

Jannis Kounellis

(Italy / b. Greece, 1936–2017)

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

11. *Thinking Room*

1972

Ben Vautier

(French, b. 1935)

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

12. *Cross-Fronts*

1972

Vito Acconci

(American, 1940–2017)

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

13. Joseph Beuys and Abraham David Christian in *Boxing Match for Direct Democracy, Refereed by Anatol* in Ben Vautier's Installation

1972

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

14. Gilbert and George

1972

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

15. Joseph Beuys in His *Information Office of the Organization for Direct Democracy Referendum*

1972

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

16. *Boîte-en-valise*

1972

Marcel Duchamp

(France, 1887–1968)

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

*

blps

1967–2015

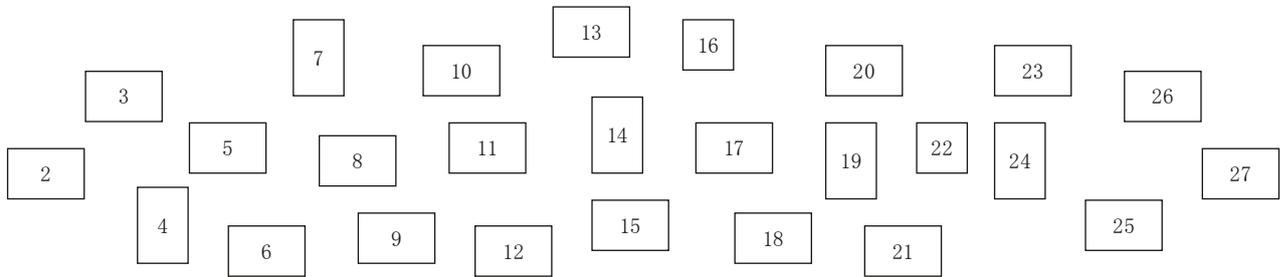
Richard Artschwager

(American, 1923–2013)

Mixed media

Seen in various locations throughout the galleries, Richard Artschwager's playful *blps* are designed to fill spaces that are normally considered "bad" for traditional art: high and low spots on walls, tight corners, doors: anywhere there is space. *Blps* are usually black and are made of materials ranging from wood and polyester to spray paint and vinyl. Artschwager exhibited several dozen *blps* in *When Attitudes Become Form*, including on the radiators, in the bathrooms, on the roof, on top of posters, and on the exterior of the building.

Lent by the Estate of Richard Artschwager,
Courtesy of Gagosian Gallery



17. Keith (1970), Joe (1969), and Phil (1969)

1972

Chuck Close

(American, b. 1940)

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

18. Biokinetic Landscape

1972

HA Schult

(German, b. 1939)

19. Oasis No. 7

1972

Haus-Rucker-Co.

(Austria)

20. Kassel Corridor: Elliptical Space

1972

Bruce Nauman

(American, b. 1941)

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

21. Circuit

1972

Richard Serra

(American, b. 1938)

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

22. Primary Demonstration

1972

Klaus Rinke

(German, b. 1939)

23. Mouse Museum (1965–77)

1972

Claes Oldenburg

(Swedish-born American, b. 1929)

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

24. Ark Pyramide

1972

Paul Thek

(American, 1933–1988)

25. The Aeromodeller

1972

Panamarenko

(Belgian, b. 1940)

Photographer: Leonardo Bezzola

26. Harald Szeemann und Ingeborg Lüscher

1972

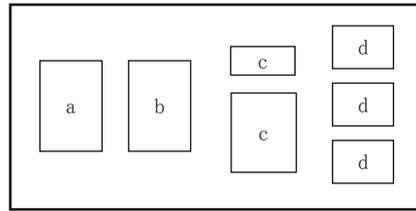
Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

27. Harald Szeemann on the Last Night of *documenta 5*

1972

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard

28. In case



a. Catalog for the Exhibition

documenta 5: Questioning Reality – Image Worlds Today

Harald Szeemann, editor;

Ed Ruscha, cover design

(American, b. 1937)

Kassel: Documenta GmbH /

C. Bertelsmann Verlag, 1972

b. Exhibition of an Exhibition

1972

Daniel Buren

(French, b. 1938)

From Harald Szeemann, ed., *documenta 5:*

Questioning Reality – Image Worlds Today

(Kassel: Documenta GmbH / C. Bertelsmann

Verlag, 1972), p. 17.29

Some of the artists featured in *documenta 5*, including Daniel Buren and Robert Smithson, complained that Szeemann's grand themes subsumed their works into the curator's personal vision. Buren went so far as to claim that the artists had become brushstrokes in Szeemann's painting. Szeemann nonetheless welcomed such criticism, even publishing their complaints in the catalog.

Exhibition of an exhibition

More and more, the subject of an exhibition tends to no longer be the exhibition of works of art but the exhibition of the exhibition as a work of art. Here, it is the *documenta* team, headed by Harald Szeemann, that exposes (works) and exposes itself (to critiques). The works presented are carefully chosen strokes of color in the painting composed by each section (room) as a whole. There is even an order to these colors, these being defined and composed according to the design (drawing) of the section (selection) in which they spread out / present themselves. These sections (castrations) are themselves carefully chosen "strokes of color" in the painting that compose the exhibition as a whole, and in its very principle, which appear only

by placing themselves under the protection of the organizer, who reunifies the art by rendering it equal in the showcase/screen he prepares for it. It is the organizer who assumes the contradictions; *it is he who protects them. It is true, then, that the exhibition asserts itself as its own subject and its own subject as work of art.*

The exhibition is indeed the "valorizing receptacle" wherein art is not only played out but also damaged, because, if the work was revealed just yesterday thanks to the Museum, it now serves only as a decorative gimmick in the survival of the Museum as painting – a painting whose author is none other than the organizer of the exhibition. And the artist throws himself and his work into this trap, because the artist and his work, as usual powerless to art, can only exhibit another: the organizer. Hence, the exhibition as work of art, as the limit of the exhibition of art. Thus, the limits that art itself created to serve as its own refuge turn against it by imitating it, and the refuge of art, constituted by these limits, reveals itself to be the justification, the reality, and the tomb.

Daniel Buren, February 1972

c. Letter from Ed Ruscha with Reference Photos for the Work *Spread*

May 3, 1972

Ed Ruscha

(American, b. 1937)

Typescript letter with ink sketches

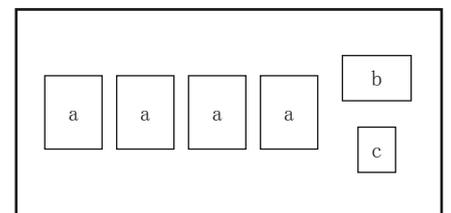
Gelatin silver prints

d. Telegrams Inviting Richard Nixon, Chairman Mao, and the Queen of England to Attend *documenta 5* 1972

James Lee Byars

(USA, 1932–1997)

29. In case



**a. Letter from Richard Serra
Regarding His Work in *documenta 5*
ca. 1972**

Richard Serra
(American, b. 1938)
Manuscript letter with ink sketches and
facsimiles

**b. Proposal Sketches for
*documenta 5***

ca. 1972
Mario Merz
(Italian, 1925–2003)
Manuscript letter with ink sketches

**c. Postcard from Carl Andre
Declining to Participate in
*documenta 5***

March 10, 1972
Carl Andre
(American, b. 1935)
Manuscript letter with ink sketch

Screen
**30. *documenta 5* -
Kunst der Welt '72**

Hessischer Rundfunk
43 min
**Dokumente zur *documenta 5*
in Kassel**
WDR
44 min

**31. In case
James Lee Byars**

The work of James Lee Byars ranges from the monumental to the nearly invisible. Szeemann included Byars in multiple projects over more than thirty years. Byars's projects for the exhibition *documenta 5* included a performance in which he stood atop the Museum Fridericianum in Kassel while calling out German names through a golden megaphone. A passionate producer of mail art, Byars sent Szeemann hundreds of artworks, including long painted scrolls, enormous sheets of folded tissue paper, and fragile works containing glitter, seeds, or pigment.

In case, clockwise from top left
***You Missed My Masterpiece*
1975**

James Lee Byars
(American, 1932–1997)
Colored pencil on paper
James Lee Byars sent this mail artwork to Szeemann written on an invitation to a secret presentation of his performance *The Perfect Kiss*.

Letter from James Lee Byars

1986
James Lee Byars
(American, 1932–1997)
Colored pencil and red pigment on paper

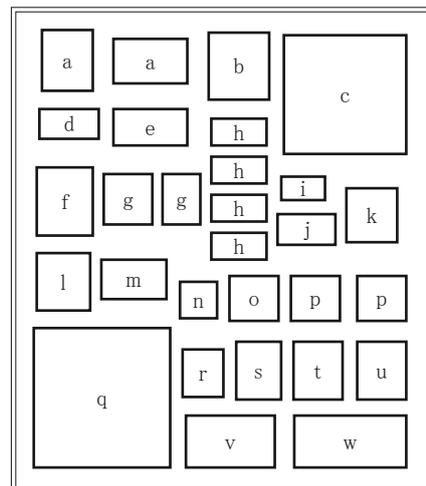
Harry
ca. 1975
James Lee Byars
(American, 1932–1997)
Stamped gold foil

Happening & Fluxus

After resigning from the Kunsthalle Bern, Szeemann became the practitioner of a new profession: the independent curator, proposing projects to museums on a freelance basis. His first major commission came from the Kölnischer Kunstverein in Cologne, Germany, for the exhibition *Happening & Fluxus* (1970), co-organized with the artist Wolf Vostell. *Happening & Fluxus* aimed to historicize the 1960s, outlining the networks of performance artists who had laid the foundations for the present scene. Artists were each given a small space to display their work, but the core of the exhibition was the *Dokumentationsstrasse* (Documentation Street), a line of bulletin board-style displays through the middle of the exhibition. More than 600 photographs and documents charted an international development of performance art spanning not only the U.S. and Western Europe but also Scandinavia, Eastern Europe, and Japan. Yet most of this careful research was overshadowed by the chaotic opening performances, many of which offended the public and consumed the press. Particularly scandalous were the artists associated with Vienna Actionism, whose sexually suggestive and violent performances were seen to cross a moral line. Vostell's project – a pregnant cow that would have given birth in the galleries – was seized by police, leading to protests by the artists.

Projection
**1. Slideshow of Images from
Happening & Fluxus (1970)**

2. In case



Drawn from Szeemann's archive and other collections at the Getty Research Institute, the materials in this frame relate to the development of *Happening & Fluxus* and include original artworks and documentary materials from the exhibition. This presentation is inspired by the "bulletin board" format Szeemann used to display more than 600 pieces of historical ephemera within the exhibition, a system that he referred to as the *Dokumentationsstrasse* (Documentation Street).

**a. Two Photographs from the
Edition *The O.M. Theater: Ten
Original Photos and Seven Signed
Objects***

1971
Hermann Nitsch
(Austrian, b. 1938)
Gelatin silver prints

**b. Flyer Announcing Screening
of Films in Kirchheim unter Teck,
Germany**

1968
Otto Muehl
(Austrian, 1925–2013)
Ink and felt marker on paper

c. *Self-Painting II*

1964
Günter Brus
(Austrian, b. 1938)
Gelatin silver print

d. *TV Bra for Living Sculpture*

1970
Nam June Paik
(South Korean-born American, 1932–2006)
Performer: Charlotte Moorman
(American, 1933–1991)
Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard
Exhibition print

e. *Anybody Can Have an Idea*

ca. 1970
Ben Vautier
(French, b. 1935)
Ink on paper

f. Conditions for Performing Fluxus Published Compositions, Films, & Tapes

ca. 1965

George Maciunas
(Lithuanian-born American, 1931–1978)
Printed paper

g. Instant Sperm

1966

Tetsumi Kudō
(Japanese, 1935–1990)
Mixed media

h. Telegramm von Al Hansen

1970

Al Hansen
(American, 1927–1995)

i. Joseph Beuys Hanging a Poster for Refusal to Vote

1970

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard
Gelatin silver print

j. Cow

1970

Wolf Vostell
(German, 1932–1998)
Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard
Exhibition print

k. Letter Protesting the Censorship of Cow, Signed by Szeemann and Participating Artists

5. November 1970

Typescript letter

l. Letter of Invitation to Participate in Happening & Fluxus Sent to Allan Kaprow

28. Dezember 1969

Harald Szeemann
Typescript letter with annotations in ink

m. Front and Back Cover of Dokumentationsstrasse Checklist and Happening & Fluxus Brochures

1970

Cover drawings by
Wolf Vostell
(German, 1932–1998)

n. Letter from Milan Knížák

ca. 1970

Milan Knížák
(Czech, b. 1940)
Typescript

o. Categorized Artist List

ca. 1970

Harald Szeemann
Typescript

p. Proposal for Flux Toilet

ca. 1970

George Maciunas
(Lithuanian-born American, 1931–1978)
Typescript letter with ink sketch and facsimile

q. Poster for Ray Gun Theater

1961

Claes Oldenburg
(Swedish-born American, b. 1929)
Ink and pencil on paper

r. Store Days II

1962

Claes Oldenburg
(Swedish-born American, b. 1929)
Photographer: Robert McElroy
Exhibition print

s. Letter from Nam June Paik

1970

Nam June Paik
(South Korean-born American, 1932–2006)
Manuscript letter

t. Sketch of Exhibition Floor Plan

ca. 1970

Harald Szeemann
Ink on paper

u. Letter from Ray Johnson

August 5, 1970

Ray Johnson
(American, 1927–1995)
Typescript letter with ink sketch

v. Nekropolis II

1962

Claes Oldenburg
(Swedish-born American, b. 1929)
Photographer: Robert McElroy
Gelatin silver print

w. Yard

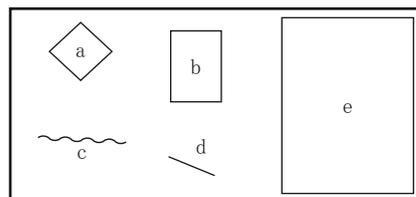
1967 / 1970

Allan Kaprow
(American, 1927–2006)
Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard
Exhibition print

Fluxus

Fluxus was an international movement of loosely affiliated artists whose practice defies easy classification. Working with art, poetry, music, and performance, Fluxus artists were as likely to present their work in the form of concerts as exhibitions, and most published innovative scores and editions that provide instructions for performances, games, and interactive activities. For *Happening & Fluxus*, George Maciunas used his exhibition space to present a survey of multiples from dozens of Fluxus artists from the United States, Europe, and Japan. The multiples arranged here, drawn from various archives at the Getty Research Institute, are from editions exhibited in *Happening & Fluxus*.

3. In case



a. Endless Box

1965

Mieko Shiomi
(Japanese, b. 1938)
Mixed media

b. Flux Chess

1965–1966

Takako Saitō
(Japanese, b. 1929)
Mixed media

c. Bead Puzzle

1965

George Brecht
(American, 1926–2008)
Mixed media

d. Stamp Out Stamping

1965

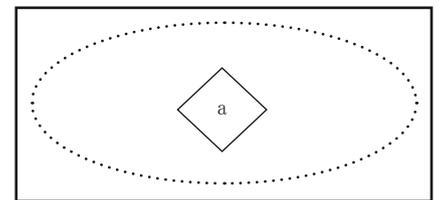
George Brecht
(American, 1926–2008)
Wood and rubber stamp

e. Fluxus cc V TRE Fluxus (Fluxus Newspaper no. 2), Cover

February 1964

George Maciunas
(Lithuanian-born American, 1931–1978)
Offset lithograph on paper

4. In case

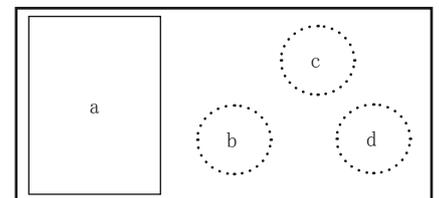


a. Flux Year Box 2

1966

Various artists
Mixed media

5. In case



a. Advertisement for Perpetual Fluxusfest in Fluxus Vacuum TRapEzoid (Fluxus Newspaper no. 5)

März 1965

George Maciunas
(Lithuanian-born American, 1931–1978)
Offset lithograph on paper

b. A Flux Suicide Kit

1967

Ben Vautier
(French, b. 1935)
Mixed media

c. Flux Dreams

1969

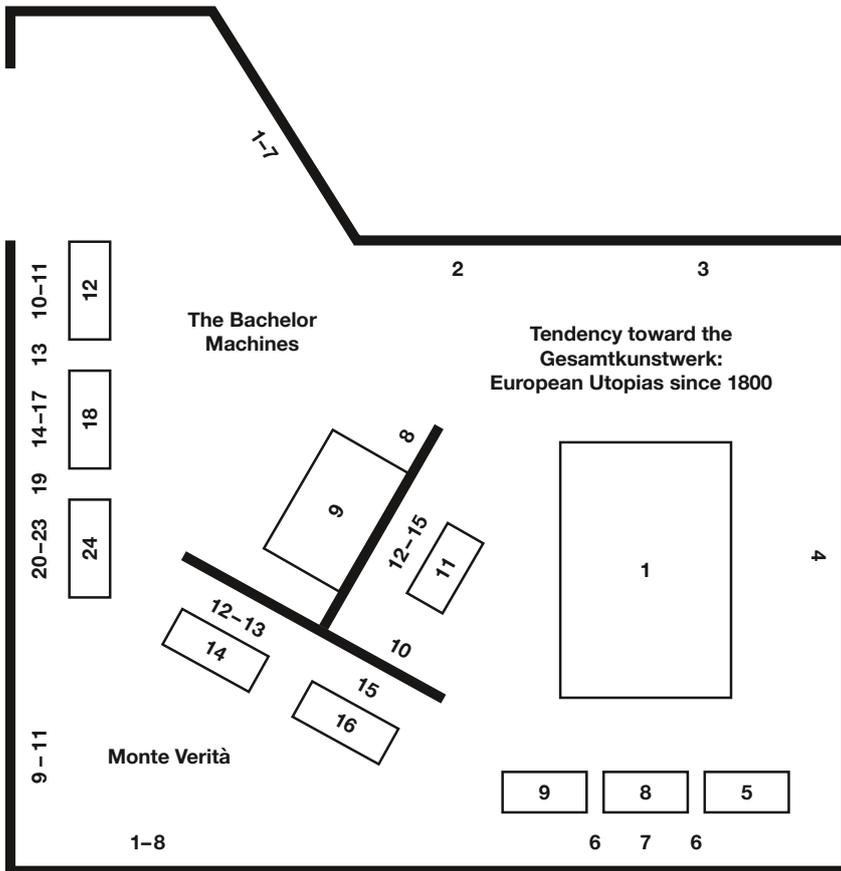
Milan Knížák
(Czech, b. 1940)
Mixed media

d. Fluxholes

1964

Ben Vautier
(French, b. 1935)
Mixed media

Utopias and Visionaries



manifestations of some of these literary machines, commissioning large-scale visual interpretations of impossible mechanical apparatuses. While grounded in surrealist and Dada art, the survey featured models of Leonardo da Vinci's inventions, objects from popular culture, and recent works of kinetic art. As the first large-scale project of his Agency for Spiritual Guest Labor, the exhibition presented many logistical challenges for Szeemann. It toured to seven venues over a period of more than two years.

1. *291, no. 5-6*
Juli-August 1915
Francis Picabia
(French, 1879-1953)
Color lithograph

2. *391, nos. 6, 7, 5*
1919
Francis Picabia
(French, 1879-1953)
Color lithograph and stamped ink
These works were exhibited in
The Bachelor Machines.

3. *Poster for the Exhibition The Bachelor Machines*
ca. 1975
Harald Szeemann
Screenprint

Utopias and Visionaries

In the decade following *documenta 5*, Szeemann reduced his involvement with contemporary art and moved to Ticino, the Italian-speaking southern part of Switzerland.

After *Grandfather: a Pioneer Like Us* (1974), a reconstruction of which is on view on the 1st floor, he focused on a complex trilogy of exhibitions. With *The Bachelor Machines* (1975), *Monte Verità* (1978), and *Tendency toward the Gesamtkunstwerk* (1983), Szeemann presented a new reading of modernity. These projects can be seen as an attempt to re-radicalize early twentieth-century avant-gardes as a series of shifting moments of artistic engagement and revolutionary ideas rather than a chronological series of aesthetic developments.

Documents and artworks from these three exhibitions are complemented by material from Szeemann's research collections related to ideas that he saw as utopian models: 'pataphysics, anarchism, and life reform movements, as well as his own personal utopia, the Agency for Spiritual Guest Labor. Sections on the "visionary" artists include those to whom Szeemann returned again

and again throughout his career. These figures – mystics, autodidacts, artists deemed mentally ill, and other imaginative geniuses – substantially shaped Szeemann's understanding of the creative process and of the role art can play in society.

The Bachelor Machines

This 1975 exhibition analyzed the increasing prevalence of a machine aesthetic in European visual art and literature between roughly 1875 and 1925. A complex and difficult exhibition – with sections devoted to Jainism, Greek mythology, anthropomorphism, robots and androids, femmes fatales, and art and lovemaking machines – it had at its core the notion of the machine célibataire (bachelor machine). The starting point was Michel Carrouges's 1954 book of the same title, which had first proposed similarities between Marcel Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass)* (1915-1923) and machines described in the works of writers Alfred Jarry, Franz Kafka, Raymond Roussel, and others. Szeemann created physical

Emma Kunz

Emma Kunz (1892-1963) was a Swiss healer and a psychic. As an aid to her spiritual quest and guided by a pendulum, she produced hundreds of colored drawings on graph paper, which she considered diagrams of mystical knowledge rather than artworks. Never exhibited during Kunz's lifetime, these drawings illustrate relations between physical phenomena, such as the movements of her pendulum, and forces that oversee life in the universe. The cross and, more generally, a convergence of horizontal and vertical planes are recurrent themes in her compositions, representing suffering on earth and the overcoming of evil through spiritual evolution. At the end of her life, Kunz devoted herself to experiments with magnetism, making flowers generate new blooms and influencing the weather.

In the early 1970s, Szeemann extensively researched Kunz and featured her works in *The Bachelor Machines* and in many later shows. In Szeemann's reading, Kunz's drawings transcended the bachelors' narcissistic creative process. They represent an art form stemming from humility, generosity, and a will to understand and heal humanity.

4. Untitled
ca. 1940s–1950s

Emma Kunz
(Swiss, 1892–1963)
Lead or colored pencil, and crayon on
graph paper
Lent by a private collection, Switzerland

This drawing was purchased in 1974 by artist Meret Oppenheim following the first public display of Kunz's work. Kunz and Oppenheim were among the very few women artists featured in *The Bachelor Machines*.

5. The Pendulum Kunz Used to Make Drawings

ca. 1950s
Photographer unknown
Exhibition print

6. Emma Kunz in her work space
1958

Photographer unknown
Exhibition print

7. Emma Kunz's Marigold Experiment, in which Twelve Blooms Grew from the Flower after Applying Magnetic Force

1953
Photographer unknown
Exhibition print

8. Sketch for a Sculptural Visualization of the "Torture Machine" from Franz Kafka's *In the Penal Colony*

ca. 1975
Harald Szeemann
Ink on paper

9. Sculptural Visualization of the "Torture Machine" from Franz Kafka's *In the Penal Colony*
1975

Werner Ruck and Paul Gysin,
model makers

In Franz Kafka's short story *In the Penal Colony* (*In der Strafkolonie*, written 1914, published 1919), set on an unnamed island, the officer in charge subjects himself to an old execution machine in disrepair. The machine is designed to inscribe a death sentence upon its victim's body before subjecting him to twelve hours of torture followed by death. When the machine malfunctions, the officer is stabbed to death and dies immediately. The sculptural visualization of this machine that only existed in literature was designed by Szeemann based on a preliminary sketch published by Michel Carrouges and realized in the workshop of the Loeb department store in Bern.

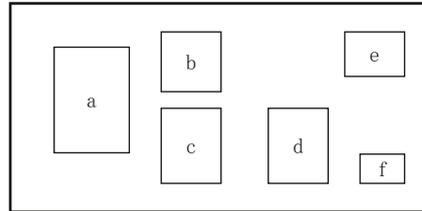
10. Three Literary Visualizations in the Style of Plans for a Machine
ca. 1975

Jean-Louis Couturier (A. Jihel)
(Frensh, b. 1947)

11. Illustrations Relating to *The Machine for Reading Roussel*

ca. 1964
Juan Esteban-Fassio
(Argentinian, 1924–1980)

12. In case



a. Title Designs for *The Bachelor Machines*

ca. 1975
(Swiss, b. 1941)
Ink on paper

b. Sculptural Visualization of "The Diamond" from Raymond Roussel's *Locus Solus*

1975
Model maker: Jacques Carelman
Photographer: Albert Winkler
Gelatin silver print

c. Sketch for a Sculptural Visualization of "The Diamond" from Raymond Roussel's *Locus Solus*

ca. 1975
Harald Szeemann

d. Notes

ca. 1975
Harald Szeemann

e. Cards Used in *The Machine for Reading Roussel*

ca. 1960s
Juan Esteban Fassio
(Argentinian, 1924–1980)

f. Photograph of *The Machine for Reading Roussel*

ca. 1960s
Juan Esteban Fassio
(Argentinian, 1924–1980)

13. Etching after Marcel Duchamp's *Coffee Grinder* (1911)

ca. 1912
Jacques Villon
(French, 1875–1963)
After Marcel Duchamp
(French, 1887–1968)
Etching

This work was exhibited in *The Bachelor Machines*.

Alfred Jarry

Alfred Jarry (1873–1907) was a playwright, theater impresario, novelist, and visual artist. His work anticipated many of the developments of twentieth-century culture, such as the theater of the absurd, Dada, and surrealism. In the magazines he edited, as well as in his novels and artworks, Jarry reappropriated disparate visual and literary elements from the past and offered them a radical new context, providing Szeemann with a model for his own curatorial practice. Jarry's play *Ubu Roi* (King Ubu, 1896) marked the beginning of a new era in modern theater. Developed from a farce Jarry wrote with schoolmates about one of their high school teachers, the childish, evil, greedy, and, above all, stupid character of Ubu challenged all of the literary conventions of the time, while its author, with his highly artificial persona and eccentric behaviors, inspired a whole generation of artists. The novel *The Supermale* (1902), central in Szeemann's exhibition *The Bachelor Machines*, offers a frightening view of the future, in which bicyclists are fed alcohol and strychnine-based "perpetual-motion food," and a "love-inspiring machine" ends up electrocuting the protagonist. The rare photographs of Jarry, his publications, and the artworks on view here are from Szeemann's extensive collection.

14. *L'Oeuvre, no. 5*

Paris: La Belle Édition, May 1912

15. Profile of Mère Ubu and "Merdre"

December 15, 1895

Alfred Jarry

(French, 1873–1907)

Ink on the back of a mourning card

"Merdre" is a distortion of the French merde (shit). It is the opening line of Jarry's *Ubu Roi* (King Ubu), and greatly contributed to the scandal the play provoked when it was first performed on December 10, 1896, at the Théâtre de l'Oeuvre in Paris.

16. *Ubu Roi* (King Ubu)

ca. 1896

Alfred Jarry

(French, 1873–1907)

Linocut

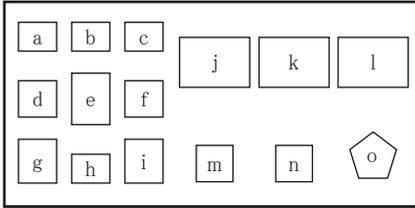
17. The Three "Palotins"

Alfred Jarry

(French, 1873–1907)

From Alfred Jarry, *Les minutes de sable*: Mémorial (Paris: Éditions du Mercure de France, 1894), n.p.

18. In case



a.–i. Nine Photographs Related to Alfred Jarry

Gelatin silver prints

a. Alfred Jarry and Andrée Terrasse-Bonnard Giving Butcher's Leftovers to Two Cats

ca. 1900

Attributed to Claude Terrasse
(French, 1867–1923)

b. Le Tripode, a Building Alfred Jarry Designed in Le Coudray as His Residence and for Storage for His Bicycle and Canoe

1907

Attributed to Gabrielle Vallette
(French, 1898–1984)

c. Alfred Jarry and Charles and Jean Terrasse, Noisy-le-Grand, France

ca. 1900

Attributed to Claude Terrasse
(French, 1867–1923)

d. Pierre Bonnard's Wife Marthe, a Friend, and Pierre Bonnard in the Artist's Studio, with the Ubu Puppet Hanging on the Wall behind Them

ca. 1900

Photographer unknown

e. Alfred Jarry and Alfred Vallette

1898

Photographer unknown

f. Pierre Bonnard's Studio

ca. 1900

Photographer unknown

g. The Three Graces

1898

Photographer unknown

Alfred Jarry, André-Ferdinand Hérold (background), Rachilde (Marguerite ValletteEymery), and Marie-Thérèse Collière, shown in Corbeil. The title may derive from the fact that Jarry is wearing Rachilde's shoes.

h. Alfred Jarry and Fencing Master Blavier at Blavier's Studio in Laval

1906

Photographer unknown

i. Puppet of King Ubu for the Production at the Théâtre des Phynances in 1888

ca. 1900

Photographer unknown

j. César-Antechrjst

Alfred Jarry

(French, 1873–1907)

Paris: Éditions du Mercure de France, 1895

k. Booklet of Postage Stamps Featuring Pataphysical Symbols and Figures

Paris: Collège de 'Pataphysique, ca. 1960s

l. *Black Minutes of Memorial Sand*

Alfred Jarry

(French, 1873–1907)

Paris: Éditions du Mercure de France, 1894

m. *Tatane*

Alfred Jarry

(Frankreich, 1873–1907)

Paris: Collège de 'Pataphysique, 1954

n. *Unknown Jarry*

Jean Mollet

(French, 1877–1964)

o. *Spring Sun*

Alfred Jarry

(French, 1873–1907), author

Pierre Bonnard

(French, 1867–1947), illustrator

Paris: Collège de 'Pataphysique, 1957

'Pataphysik

As prophesied by writer and visual artist Alfred Jarry in his writings, 'pataphysics has been variously described as the science of details and of the individual, as well as the science of imaginary solutions. 'Pataphysics is based on the principles of universal equivalence (everything is the same) and of the inversion of contraries. 'Pataphysics is therefore not describable, as all possible descriptions are valid and all are the same.

The main objectives of this science-without-objectives include ridiculing every form of power and authority, and embracing and celebrating absurdity and contradictions.

'Pataphysics constitutes a strenuous form of resistance toward any kind of systematization or attempt to make sense of the universe.

By the time Szeemann moved to Paris in 1956, Jarry had become a cult figure among intellectuals gathered around the Collège de 'Pataphysique, founded in 1948 and still active. The Collège plays a fundamental role in the understanding of 'pataphysics as a delirious structure in which the cult of hierarchy and titles is manifested in an organizational chart with no end and, ultimately, no meaning. Its poignant parody of institutional bureaucracy played a role in Szeemann's elaboration of his own Agency for Spiritual Guest Labor.

19. "What Is the Collège of 'Pataphysics?" Informational Sheet

Paris: Collège de 'Pataphysique, ca. 1950s

20. *Rose Sélavý and I Escape from the Bruises of the Eskimos in Exquisite Words*

1924

Marcel Duchamp

(French, 1887–1968)

Ink and colored pencil on paper

21. *Spiral Jetty*

1970

Robert Smithson

(American, 1938–1973)

Photographer: Gianfranco Gorgoni

Gelatin silver print

22. Floor Plan for the *Museum of Obsessions*

ca. 1975

Harald Szeemann

Ink on paper (facsimile)

The spiral is one of the quintessential pataphysical symbols, representing the belly of King Ubu, the overweight hero of Jarry's plays; it can be found everywhere in twentieth-century culture. Presented here are examples from the work of Marcel Duchamp, a member of the Collège de 'Pataphysique, and Robert Smithson, who made notes about Jarry while working on his major earthwork *Spiral Jetty*. Szeemann, who was also a member of the Collège, used a spiral as the central motif for this sketch of his *Museum of Obsessions*, which featured four sections dedicated to the natural elements.

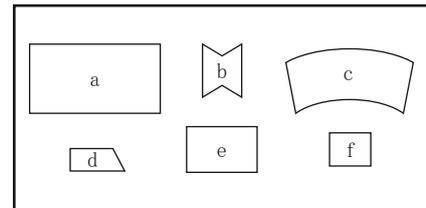
On wall, left to right

23. Postcards Telling the Story of Alfred Jarry's Life

ca. 1980

P. J. Dunbar Printed paper

24. In case



a. *Planisphere of the Pataphysical World*

ca. 1950er–1960er Jahre

Juan Esteban Fassio

(Argentine, 1924–1980)

Gouache, pencil, colored pencil, and ink on lithograph

b. Letter to the Transcendent Satrap Raymond Queneau, Chief Conservator O. G. G., by the T. S. Latis

Emmanuel Peillet

(French, 1914–1973)

Paris: Collège de 'Pataphysique, 1969

c. *Subsidia Pataphysica, nos. 0–10*

Paris: Collège de 'Pataphysique, 1965–1970

d. *Proteus*

Philippe Quinault

(French, 1635–1688)

Paris: Collège de 'Pataphysique, 1958

e. Address List for the Collège de 'Pataphysique

ca. 1956

Typescript

Among the members listed on this page are artists Marcel Duchamp and Max Ernst; actors Groucho, Chico, and Harpo Marx; and poet and screenwriter Jacques Prévert and his dog Ergé..

f. *Haha: An Unpublished Treatise by Bosse-de-Nage*

Paris: Collège de 'Pataphysique, ca. 1950

Bosse-de-Nage is a character from Alfred Jarry's *Exploits and Opinions of Dr. Faustroll, Pataphysician* (written 1898, published 1911). A hydrocephalic baboon who can only say "haha," he is the Starosta – a title from ancient Slavic designating a leader – of the Collège de 'Pataphysique, assistant to the Unmovable Curator (Dr. Faustroll, the fictional and permanent head of the institution).

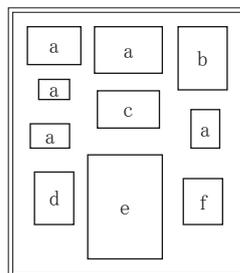
Monte Verità

The exhibition *Monte Verità* (1978) focused on the history of the creative communities formed on and near a hill of the same name in Ascona, Switzerland, close to where Szeemann relocated in the 1970s. Since the 1870s, when anarchist ideologue Mikhail Bakunin lived in the region, it had been a center where many utopian experiments and other attempts to transform society were tested.

At the beginning of the twentieth century, a group led by Ida Hofmann, a music teacher, and Henri Oedenkoven, the son of a wealthy Dutch industrialist, established a vegetarian and nudist sanatorium on the hill. After World War I, the success of Ascona as a lakeside resort attracted many artists, and Monte Verità became an important center for the development of modern dance.

In his exhibition, Szeemann sought to offer a holistic and transhistoric vision of the mountain, highlighting the symbolism and potential for change in the events that occurred there. History was organized into four main topics, which Szeemann saw as the breasts of a goddess of Truth, a deity of his own invention. Szeemann conducted extensive research on the history of Monte Verità and, for the rest of his life, continued to champion and defend the site's fragile heritage. The exhibition was later developed into a permanent museum installed in Casa Anatta, one of the main buildings of the sanatorium.

1. In case



a. Five Photographs of Monte Verità Residents

ca. 1900–1920

Photographers unknown
Gelatin silver prints

b. Henri Oedenkoven

ca. 1900–1920

Photographer unknown
Gelatin silver print

c. *Monte Verità: Truth without Poetry*

Ida Hofmann

Lorch: Röhm, 1906

d. *Ascona: A Brochure*

Erich Mühsam

Locarno: Verlag von Birger Carlson, 1905

e. "Ascona, the German Artists' Paradise on Lake Maggiore"

Hans Ludwig

In *Stuttgarter Illustrierte*, no. 6 (1932), p. 125

f. *Tours in Ticino: Walks around Ascona; Monte Verità as a Center for Excursions*

Ascona: Kurhotel Monte Verità, 1929

Nos. c, d, and f were exhibited in Monte Verità.

On wall, top

2. Plan of the Settlement above Ascona, January 1914

1914

Alexander Wilhelm de Beauclair

Ink and colored pencil on paper

De Beauclair was an artist and the secretary of the Monte Verità Vegetarian Society. This map was exhibited in Monte Verità.

On wall, bottom

3. Photograph of Monte Verità

ca. 1920er Jahre

Photographer unknown
Exhibition print

On wall, top

4. Poster for the Exhibition

Monte Verità

1975

Paul Brühwiler

(Swiss, b. 1939)

Offset lithograph

In case

5. *Monte Verità Tureen*

ca. 1920s

Porcelain

Life Reform

Following the heavy industrialization of Europe at the start of the twentieth century, communities promoting a healthy lifestyle and humankind's reintegration into nature began to flourish. Monte Verità played a prominent role in this movement, which was particularly potent in German-speaking countries and is usually referred to as *Lebensreform* (life reform).

In 1900, a small group of vegetarians relocated to the hill. Gusto Gräser, the most radical among the original settlers, immediately distanced himself from the ambitions of Henri Oedenkoven and Ida Hofmann and went to live in a nearby cave. With funds provided by Oedenkoven's family, the two main buildings on the property were completed in 1904, and Monte Verità became a sanatorium that operated until 1920. Remedies at the health resort included a strict vegetarian diet, nude sunbathing, and outdoor physical activity. In 1926, the compound was acquired by banker and art collector Eduard von der Heydt, who built a modernist hotel on the hill.

On wall, top

6. Photograph of Totimo, Suzanne Perrottet, Katja Wulff, Maja Lederer, Betty Baaron Samoa, and Rudolf von Laban at Monte Verità

1914

Photographer: Johann Adam

Meisenbach

Exhibition print

Between 1913 and 1918, Rudolf von Laban, one of the pioneers of modern dance in Europe, established a *Schule für Kunst* (School for Art) on Monte Verità. Besides dance and rhythm classes, the curriculum included cooking, gardening, and sewing.

On wall, bottom

7. Sun Walkers

ca. 1905

Fidus (Hugo Höppener)

(German, 1868–1948)

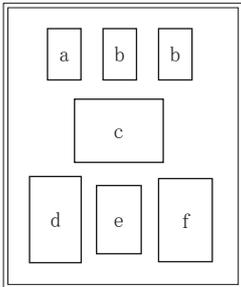
Lithograph

These works were exhibited in Monte Verità.

Lent by a private collection

In frame

8.



a. A Vegetarian at Monte Verità

ca. 1900–1920

Photographer unknown

Gelatin silver print

b. Two Postcards of a Family of Vegetarians in Blankenburg, Germany

ca. 1890er–1900er Jahre

Photographers unknown

Gelatin silver prints

Life reform was a widespread movement in Germany and Switzerland between the end of the nineteenth century and the advent of Nazism. The postcard on the right promotes the healthy life choices of the vegetarian family by listing the types of fruits, nuts, and vegetables in their diet.

c. Monte Verità Residents

ca. 1900er–1920er Jahre

Photographer unknown

Gelatin silver print

d. Journal for the Dissemination of a Higher World View

Hermann Schutz-Suppiger, editor

Ascona: Hastinapura, ca. 1910s

e. Vegetabilismus! Vegetarismus! 1905

Ida Hofmann

Self-published

In this leaflet, self-published by Hofmann while on Monte Verità, the founder of the vegetarian commune promotes the new lifestyle. “Vegetabilismus” advocates for a strict diet, similar to veganism, in which all animal products, salt, alcohol, tobacco, coffee, and other stimulants are forbidden.

f. Guide to Health through Fasting and an Energetic Diet

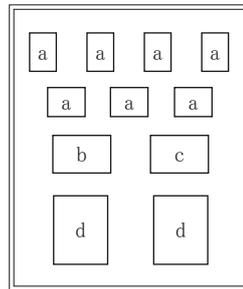
Ferdinand Bauer

Freiburg: Lorenz, 1901

Nos. a, d, and e were exhibited in Monte Verità.

In frame

9.



Karl und Gusto Gräser

The Gräser brothers were among the founders of the vegetarian commune at Monte Verità. Gusto used short texts, poems, and drawings on postcards and notes to share his beliefs on the “return to nature” and pacifism, whereas Karl designed highly original furniture out of wooden sticks and branches.

a. Seven Jahrleiter with Paintings

ca. 1900–1930

Gusto Gräser

(German, 1879–1958)

First row: Colored pencil and hand color on paper

Second row: Ink on paper

b. Karl Gräser

ca. 1900–1920

Photographer unknown

Gelatin silver print

c. Furniture Designed by Karl Gräser

ca. 1900–1920

Photographer unknown

Exhibition print

d. Letter to Adolf Stocksmayr Sent from Prison

August 28, 1918

Gusto Gräser

(German, 1879–1958)

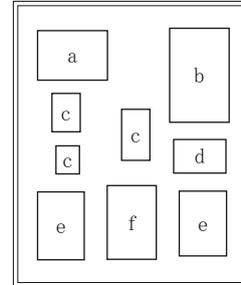
Manuscript letter and facsimile

In the summer of 1918, Gusto Gräser was arrested in Zurich for not having a Swiss residence permit. Gräser

wrote this letter from prison to the artist Adolf Stocksmayr, a member of the vegetarian commune who was then living in Ascona. Gräser laments that he is still waiting to appear in court, inquires about how Stocksmayr’s family is doing on Monte Verità, and discusses the publication of his pictures.

In frame

10.



Ernst Frick

Frick moved to Ascona in 1911.

After years of subversive activity as a political activist, he began painting and was one of the founders of the expressionist artist society *Der grosse Bär* (The Great Bear). Frick was also a self-taught archaeologist who conducted pioneering research on Celtic settlements in the region. The handwritten notes detail Frick’s study of the origins of the name *Ascona*.

a. Untitled Landscape

1921

Ernst Frick

(Swiss, 1881–1956)

Color relief and pencil on paper

b. Sketch

1942–1943

Ernst Frick

(Swiss, 1881–1956)

Pencil on paper

c. Three Photographs of Ernst Frick

ca. 1930

Photographers unknown

Gelatin silver prints

d. Sunrise, January 6, 1948

1948

Ernst Frick

(Schweiz, 1881–1956)

Ink and hand color on paper

e. Notes on the Possible Celtic Origins of the Name Ascona

ca. 1910–1930

Ernst Frick

(Swiss, 1881–1956)

Ink on paper

f. Untitled Landscape

1917

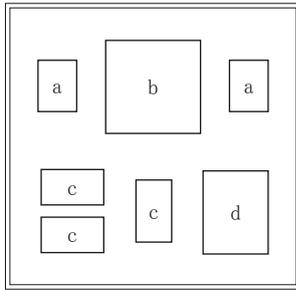
Ernst Frick

(Swiss, 1881–1956)

Crayon and hand color on paper

In frame

11.



Charlotte Bara

Charlotte Bara was one of the many dancers who gravitated to Monte Verità. Her work was highly influenced by Eastern imagery and was always suffused with religious meanings. In the 1920s, she founded her own theater in Ascona and operated a school for dance, theater, and singing.

a. Two Programs for Dance Performances by Charlotte Bara
ca. 1920s

b. Poster of the Dancer Charlotte Bara
ca. 1920s
Any Pohl
Lithograph
This poster was exhibited in *Monte Verità*.

c. Three Photographs of Charlotte Bara
ca. 1920er Jahre
Photographers unknown
Gelatin silver prints

d. "Ritual Dance," Newspaper Article on Charlotte Bara
1926–1927
Ulfrid Herrmanns
In *Familien-Wochenblatt*, no. 15
(July 1926–July 1927), p. 346

Alternative politische Bewegungen

The history of anarchism and other alternative political movements played an important role for Szeemann as both an area of scholarly research and a utopian ideal that symbolized his admiration for individual and artistic freedoms and the subversion of oppressive societal rules. Szeemann found that same spirit in many of the artworks he admired.

The selection of left-wing, anarchist, and pacifist journals and documents on view are from Szeemann's personal collection; some were featured in exhibitions such as *Monte Verità*. The antifascist magazine *Fontana Martina* (1931–1932) by the communist typographer Fritz Jordi was published by an artist colony founded in 1928 in the village

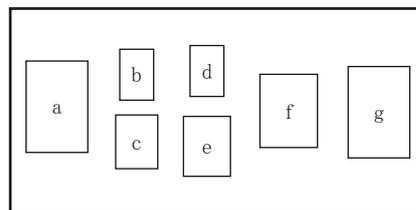
of Fontana Martina, near Ascona. In the remarkable expressionist woodcuts featured on the magazine's covers, scenes of police brutality and social unrest are interspersed with depictions of the quiet farm life of the commune.

On wall, left to right

12. Facsimile of the print *Stammbaum des modernen Sozialismus (Family Tree of Modern Socialism)*
from *Tages Anzeiger Magazin*, n. 49 (1972)

13. *Fontana Martina*, Nr. 7, 11, 14, 16
Fritz Jordi and Heinrich Vogeler, editors
Ronco s. Ascona: Bergpresse, 1932
These works were exhibited in *Monte Verità*.

14. In case



a. *Revolution*, Nr. 1
October 15, 1913
Hans Leybold, editor
Munich: H. F. S. Bachmair, 1913

b. *Michael Bakunin: The Revolutionary Anarchism*
Hans Müller
Zurich: Sozialistische Verlagsgenossenschaft, 1919

c. *Kain*, no. 4
July 1912
Erich Mühsam
Munich: Kain-Verlag, 1912

d. *Anarchist Program*
Ericco Malatesta
Brussels: Les Arts Graphiques, 1920

e. *An-Archie, a Poem on Anarchism*
1919
Author unknown
Ink on paper

An-Archy

Wanting no governance does not mean wanting to be without law. It means the opposite: knowing the highest and most deeply inhering law and respecting this alone; recognizing all governance only as a pathetic and ruinous surrogate of this law, and therefore condemning it.

The chaos that pencil-pushers today like to call "anarchy," thoughtlessly or in slander, is nothing other than the stunned and shattered priorarchy that war created, in which it manifestly was smashed – the priorarchy, which today will be patched together again, as always after the explosions it engenders.

f. *Polis*, Nr. 10
September 1, 1907
Johannes Widmer, editor
Zurich

g. *The Communist International*, no. 6
Petrograd: Smolny, 1919

Elisàr von Kupffer

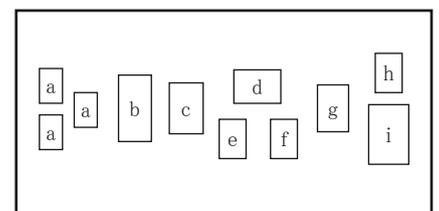
Writer, artist, and early gay-rights advocate Elisàr von Kupffer (1872–1942), also known as Elisarion, moved permanently to Ticino in 1915 together with his partner, the philosopher Eduard von Mayer. In Switzerland, the two were able to accomplish their dream of building the Sanctuary of Art, a temple for Clarism, the religion they founded. Its doctrine foresees a path of spiritual elevation through reincarnation, leading to an afterlife in which all dualities – above all, male and female – are transcended in a new world characterized by peace and harmonic beauty.

In the late 1970s, Szeemann played a crucial role in preserving Elisarion's estate, especially *The Clear World of the Blessed*, a series of canvases forming an immersive, almost 360-degree visual representation of heaven, originally installed in a custom-made octagonal space in the Sanctuary. Szeemann saw Elisarion's quest for beauty and love as part of a wider attempt to reformulate life and society in the region, and as a key element of the history of intentions and failures he was exploring in *Monte Verità*.

On wall

15. Two Studies for Sections of the Panoramic Painting *The Clear World of the Blessed*
ca. 1923–1939
Elisàr von Kupffer
(Estonian-born Swiss, 1872–1942)
Tempera on canvas
Lent by the City of Minusio, Donation Elisàr von Kupffer and Eduard von Mayer

16. In case



a. *Three Self-Portraits*
ca. 1900–1920
Elisàr von Kupffer
(Estonian-born Swiss, 1872–1942)
Gelatin silver prints

Von Kupffer was also a photographer. The figures in his paintings are often self-portraits, modeled after his staged photographs. These photos were exhibited in *Monte Verità*.

**b. Reproduction of the painting
*On the Way to the Sacred***

ca. 1919

Elisàr von Kupffer
(Estonian-born Swiss, 1872–1942)
Gelatin silver print on board

**c. Interior View of the Sanctuary
Artis Elisarion in Minusio,
Switzerland**

ca. late 1930s–1940s

Photographer unknown
Gelatin silver print

**d. Letter to Emil Zetzsche with
a Lock of von Kupffer's Hair**
1914

Elisàr von Kupffer
(Estonian-born Swiss, 1872–1942)
Mixed media

**e. Sanctuary Artis Elisarion,
Locarno-Minusio: a Selection of
Press Reviews through January
1930**

1930

Elisàr von Kupffer
(Estonian-born Swiss, 1872–1942)

**f. Hand-Drawn Floor Plan for the
Elisarion**

ca. 1937

Elisàr von Kupffer
(Estonian-born Swiss, 1872–1942)
Ink on paper

**g. Same-Sex Courtly Love and Love
between Friends in World Literature**

Elisàr von Kupffer, editor
Berlin: Adolf Brand Verlag, 1900

This book, edited by von Kupffer in 1900, is the first modern anthology of homoerotic literature. The author compiled passages covering centuries of literature, from the Bible to his own poetry, and included sources from Europe, the Mediterranean basin, and Japan.

**h. Postcard for the Sanctuary
Artis Elisarion**

ca. 1920s–1930s

**i. Harald Szeemann Installing
*The Clear World of the Blessed***

ca. 1978

Photographer unknown
Gelatin silver print

Tendency toward the Gesamtkunstwerk: European Utopias since 1800

Szeemann's 1983 exhibition *Tendency toward the Gesamtkunstwerk: European Utopias since 1800* was among his most ambitious. The term Gesamtkunstwerk (total work of art) originated with the German opera composer and theater director Richard Wagner, who sought to bring together all of the arts – poetry, music, dance, and the visual – to achieve a heightened sensory awareness. This increased attentiveness would free audience members from the doldrums of life in a technological age, allowing them to return to nature. Szeemann's exhibition took Wagner's concept of the Gesamtkunstwerk as his point of departure, expanding across media to include visual, cinematic, dance, performance, and audio works by some four dozen visionaries. He included an installation by Joseph Beuys, musical scores by John Cage, paintings by Wassily Kandinsky, architectural models of Rudolf Steiner's *Goetheanum* (1910–1913) and French postman Ferdinand Cheval's *Ideal Palace* (1879–1912), and a full-scale reconstruction of Kurt Schwitters's immersive environment *Merzbau* (1920–1936).

Facteur Cheval

French artist Ferdinand Cheval (1836–1924) was born into a peasant family in the rural village of Charmes sur l'Herbasse near Hauterives. He was identified by his profession as Facteur (Postman) Cheval; his postal route was an almost thirty-kilometer journey each day by foot. Cheval began building an idealized palace following a vision, with no prior sculptural or architectural training. He collected rocks that he found on his daily postal route—first in his pockets, then in a bucket, and finally in a wheelbarrow. Over the course of 33 years, he gradually realized the *Palais Idéal* that he saw in his dream, completing it in 1912. The palace still stands today as an historical monument. Cheval was a key figure in Szeemann's pantheon of visionary artists and he went so far as to commission a model of the postman's idealized

palace so that he could feature it in exhibitions including *Tendency toward the Gesamtkunstwerk* (1983), Biennale d'art contemporain de Lyon *L'Autre* (1997), and *Money and value: The last taboo* (2002).

Pedestal

**1. Model of Ferdinand Cheval's
*Le Palais Idéal***

ca. 1983

Alain Duperron, model maker
Lent by Ingeborg Lüscher

Screen

2. *From Vision to Nail*
2017

Documentary video, 8 min
Produced by IMAGE and CONTENT /
Reto Caduff for the Getty Research Institute

Screen

**3. Installation shots of
*Bachelor Machines, Monte
Verità and Tendency toward the
Gesamtkunstwerk***

Armand Schulthess

Armand Schulthess (1901–1972) retired and moved to Auessio, near Monte Verità, in 1952. He retreated from society and began recording his thoughts and knowledge in hand-made books. He inscribed data such as chemical formulas, horoscopes, and historic dates and names onto tin-can lids, bundles of paper, and pieces of wood. Schulthess arranged thousands of these objects around his hillside property, accumulating an encyclopedia of knowledge in the forest.

Ingeborg Lüscher met Schulthess in the last years of his life and began documenting his activity, which she presented at *documenta 5*. Lüscher and Szeemann, by then a couple, saved some of Schulthess's work from destruction.

Schulthess continued to feature in Szeemann's exhibitions. In *The Bachelor Machines*, his work embodied the hermit awaiting the arrival of his bride. In *Monte Verità*, his forest retreat comprised the last utopia in a century-long history of the region. And in *Tendency toward the Gesamtkunstwerk*, Schulthess represented the futile endeavor to reconcile nature and human knowledge. In significant ways, Schulthess's and Szeemann's lives mirror one another. Szeemann, the globetrotting curator, took refuge in the environs of Monte Verità and created his personal *Museum of Obsessions* in the Fabbrica Rosa, his office and archive.

4. Encyclopedia in the Forest
1952–1972

Armand Schulthess
(Swiss, 1901–1972)
Photography and installation:

Documentation about A. S., 1972

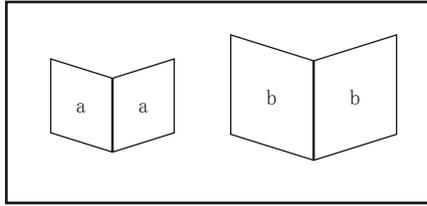
Photo panels with b/w photographs, taken in the forest of A. S., 10 units. These works were shown at documenta 5.

Ingeborg Lüscher

(German-born Swiss, b. 1936)

Mixed media and photographic prints
Lent by Ingeborg Lüscher

5. In case



a. Lithograph in *The Dissolution of Cities* 1920

Bruno Taut
(German, 1880–1938)

In Bruno Taut, *Die Auflösung der Städte*; or, *Die Erde eine gute Wohnung*; as well as in: *Der Weg zur Alpenen Architektur*; In *30 Zeichnungen* (Hagen in West: Folkwang-Verlag, 1920), p. 11

b. *The Balls! The Circles! The Wheels!, Lithograph in Alpine Architecture*

Bruno Taut

(German, 1880–1938)

In Bruno Taut, *Alpine Architektur*
(Hagen in West: Folkwang-Verlag, 1919), pl. 28

On wall

6. Untitled

Oskar Schlemmer

(German, 1888–1943)

Photolithographs

From *10 Zeichnungen* (Stuttgart: Eidos-Presse, 1947), a suite of ten prints

These publications by key modernist artists of the early twentieth century were exhibited by Szeemann in *Tendency toward the Gesamtkunstwerk*.

7. Poster for the Exhibition *Tendency toward the Gesamtkunstwerk: European Utopias since 1800* 1983

Markus Raetz

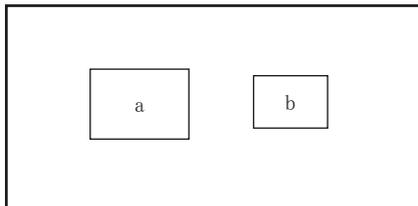
(Swiss, b. 1941)

Albin Uldry

(Swiss, b. 1932)

Offset lithograph

8. In case



a. Views of the Goetheanum in Dornach

Rudolf Steiner

(Austrian, 1861–1925), Architect
Photographer unknown

In *Nachrichten für Mitglieder/was in der Anthroposophischen Gesellschaft vorgeht* (Dornach: Allgemeine Anthroposophische Gesellschaft, 1929), special no. 8, n.p.

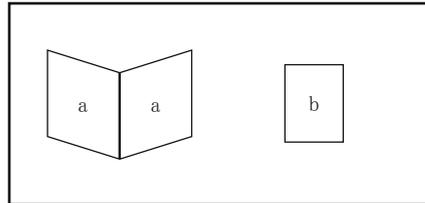
b. Color Lithograph in *Festivals of Life and Art*

Peter Behrens

(German, 1868–1940)

In Peter Behrens, *Feste des Lebens und der Kunst: Eine Betrachtung des Theaters als höchsten Kultursymbols* (Leipzig: Eugen Diederichs, 1900), p. 4–5

9. In case



a. *Lyrical, Color Woodcut in Sounds*

Wassily Kandinsky

(Russian, 1866–1944)

In Wassily Kandinsky, *Klänge* (Munich: R. Piper, 1913), n.p.

These publications by key modernist artists of the early twentieth century were exhibited by Szeemann in *Tendency toward the Gesamtkunstwerk*.

b. *Kunstismus, 1914–1924*

(*The Isms of Art*)

El Lissitzky

(Russian, 1890–1941)

Erlenbach-Zürich: Eugen Rentsch, 1925

Adolf Wölfli

Swiss artist Adolf Wölfli (1864–1930) was born in Bowil, near Bern, and orphaned at a young age. Following repeated allegations of sexual assault, he was diagnosed with schizophrenia and institutionalized in 1895 at Waldau Mental Asylum, where he spent the rest of his life. With no prior training, he spontaneously began making artwork, inventing his own pictorial language. He produced more than two dozen enormous and elaborate handmade books that, through drawings, collages, and musical notations, narrated and illustrated his fictional autobiography and imagined travels. Wölfli produced hundreds of single-sheet compositions for sale, which he called *Bread Art*. His extraordinary work was forgotten after his death but rediscovered in 1945 by Jean Dubuffet, the artist and champion of art brut (raw or outsider art). Szeemann exhibited Wölfli's work in *Art of the Mentally III*

(1963). In 1972, he reintroduced Wölfli to a contemporary audience in the context of the “Individual Mythologies” section of *documenta 5*, which included a replica of the artist's room at Waldau, complete with furniture and stacks of his notebooks. Szeemann continued to exhibit Wölfli's work in subsequent exhibitions, including *Tendency toward the Gesamtkunstwerk* (1983), *Visionary Switzerland* (1991), and *Money and Value: The Last Taboo* (2002).

10. Bridal Ring 1905

Adolf Wölfli

(Swiss, 1864–1930)

Pencil on paper

Sammlung Prinzhorn

11. Model of Richard Wagner's Bayreuth Festival Theater ca. 1883

Alain Duperron, model maker

Lent by Una Szeemann and Ingeborg Lüscher

This intricate cutaway-view model reproduces Richard Wagner's Bayreuth Festival Theater. Constructed between 1872 and 1876, the historic structure was based on Wagner's designs, which he adapted from architect Gottfried Semper's unrealized plans for an opera house in Munich. This was one of several architectural models that Szeemann specially commissioned for *Tendency toward the Gesamtkunstwerk*.

On wall, left to right

12. *Day*

1805

Philipp Otto Runge

(German, 1777–1810)

13. *Morning*

1805

Philipp Otto Runge

(German, 1777–1810)

14. *Evening*

1805

Philipp Otto Runge

(German, 1777–1810)

15. *Night*

1805

Philipp Otto Runge

(German, 1777–1810)

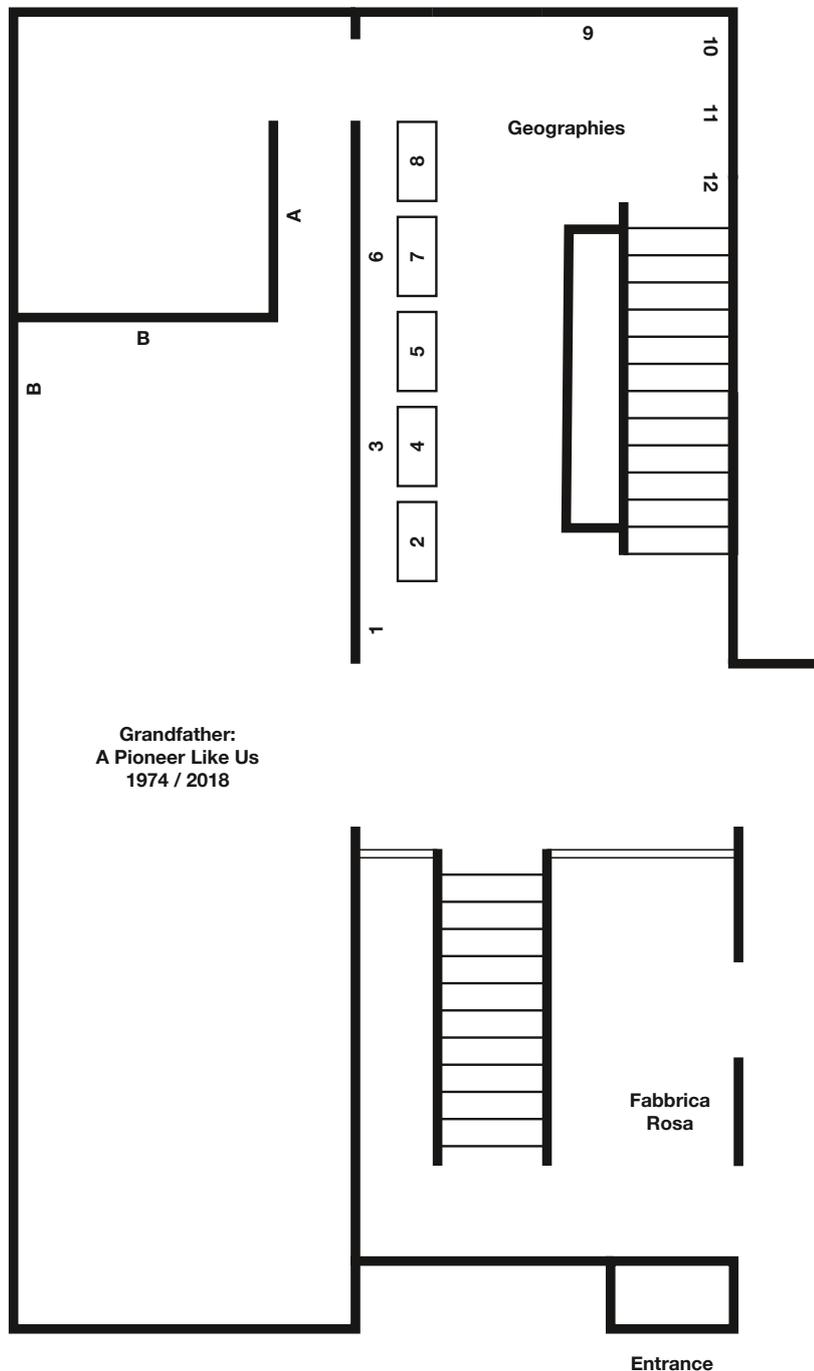
Printmakers: Johann Adolph Darnstedt (German, 1769–1844) and Ephraim Gottlieb Krüger (German, 1756–1834)

Facsimiles

Runge's *Times of Day* series are considered monuments of German Romanticism. They represent the arrival and departure of light and, by extension, the organic process of birth, growth, decay, and death. Runge developed a highly personal iconography across this series that was celebrated by his contemporaries, including Johann Wolfgang von Goethe.

Geographies

Szeemann's interest in distant countries and cultures was evident from an early age: a series of bound notebooks dating back to his high school years compose an exquisitely executed geography assignment. In his most elegant calligraphy, the future curator describes nations and cultures around the globe and illustrates them with hand-drawn maps, flags, costumes, topographic features, and charts of demographic features, and charts of demographic statistics. His fascination with foreign places and customs evolved into a passion for travel, which dove-tailed seamlessly with his chosen profession. Szeemann's monumental accumulation of airline-issued luggage tags attests to the extent and frequency of his global travels. This lifestyle upset Szeemann's mother. In a letter dated April 29, 1968, she expressed concern about not only her son's continued cigarette smoking and proclivity for whiskey but also his preference for using his British passport over his Swiss one (Szeemann held dual citizenship through his British-born father). His mother questioned, in particular, the legality of his 1967 trip to Cuba to attend, at the invitation of artist Wifredo Lam, the *Salón de Mayo*, where he collected political tracts and books about the Cuban Revolution.

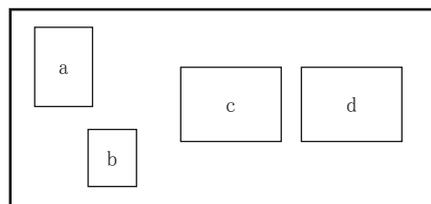


Screen

1. Slideshow of images from Harald Szeemann's exhibitions, 1991–2005

Notebooks,
Passports, Cuba

2. In case



a. Drawing of Australia, in Szeemann's High School Geography Notebook ca. 1948–1952 Harald Szeemann

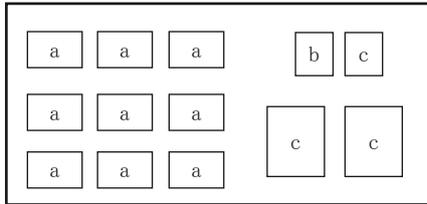
b. Szeemann's High School Geography Notebook ca. 1948–1952 Harald Szeemann

c. Szeemann's High School Topography Notebook ca. 1948–1952 Harald Szeemann

d. Szeemann's High School Project on Mexico ca. 1952 Harald Szeemann and Hans Frank Scheurer

3. *Je Pense Donc Je Suisse* 1992 Ben Vautier (French, b. 1935) Screenprint

4. In case



a. Szeemann's Train Passes 1967–1983

b. Szeemann's British Passport Issued 1968

c. Szeemann's Swiss Passport Issued 1952

c. Letter to Szeemann from His Mother

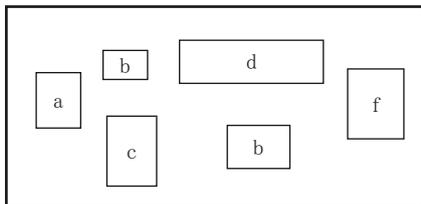
April 29, 1968

Julie Szeemann-Kambly
Typescript letter

By 1967, the once-prestigious Salon de Mai (May Salon), an annual contemporary art exhibition held in Paris, had lost much of its European audience to documenta. The organizers decided to move that year's exhibition to Havana, Cuba, which, following the Cuban Revolution, had taken on mythic proportions as a center of intellectual life.

Many of the artists and curators who attended the Salón de Mayo saw it as a gesture of solidarity with the Cuban people, countering the "cultural blockade" by the United States. Over the course of one long July night, more than eighty artists worked together on a collective mural that manifested the revolutionary spirit of both the country and the exhibition.

5. In case



a. Portrait of Harald Szeemann with Cuban Hat and Cigar 1967

Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard
Gelatin silver print

b. Photograph and Commemorative Stamp of the Collaborative Mural Painted by the Artists Attending the Salón de Mayo 1967

Photographer: Alberto Korda
Gelatin silver print
Printed paper

c. Letter of Invitation to the Salón de Mayo in Cuba 10. Juni 1967

Wifredo Lam
(Cuban, 1902–1982)
Typescript letter

d. Poster Commemorating the Second Declaration of Havana on February 4, 1962 1962

Printed paper

f. *Verde Olivo*, vol. 8, no. 28

Havana: Dirección Política de las Fuerzas
Armadas Revolucionarias, 1967

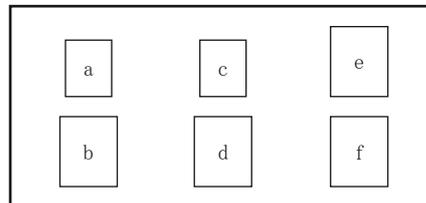
Szeemann collected a number of
political journals and print materials
during his trip to Cuba.

6. *Suiza no existe* 1992

Ben Vautier
(French, b. 1935)
Screenprint

These are the two posters that
artist Ben Vautier designed for the
Swiss Pavilion curated by Harald
Szeemann for EXPO '92 in Seville,
Spain. Szeemann's pavilion presented
a heterogeneous country lacking
a common language, culture, or
artistic style, a point referenced by
the poster, "Suiza no existe" (Switzer-
land does not exist). "Je pense donc
je suisse nods" to the philosopher
Descartes's "I think, therefore I am"
and the Swiss ethos of neutrality.

7. In case



a. Catalog for the Exhibition *Visionary Switzerland* Harald Szeemann, editor Aarau: Sauerländer, 1991

b. Floor Plan Sketch for the Exhibition *Visionary Switzerland* ca. 1991 Harald Szeemann Ink on paper

c. Brochure for the Swiss Pavilion at EXPO '92 in Seville, Spain 1992 Harald Szeemann Basel: Messe Basel, Task Force Sevilla, 1992

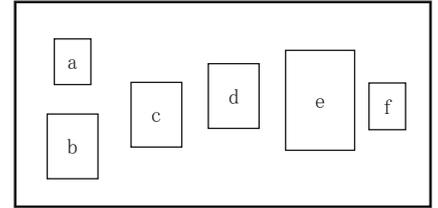
d. Sketch for the Wallpaper Design Used in the Swiss Pavilion at EXPO '92 ca. 1992 Harald Szeemann Ink on paper

e. Catalog for the Exhibition *Austria in a Net of Roses* Harald Szeemann, editor Vienna: Springer, 1996

f. Floor Plan Sketch for the Exhibition *Austria in a Net of Roses* ca. 1996

Harald Szeemann
Ink on paper

8. In case



a. Catalog for the Exhibition *Epicenter Ljubljana*

Mika Briški, editor
Ljubljana: Moderna Galerija Ljubljana, 1997

b. Letter to Jason Rhoades 27. Oktober 1998 Harald Szeemann Typescript

Szeemann first saw the work of
Jason Rhoades in Zurich, visited him
in Los Angeles, and then included
his work in exhibitions in Ljubljana,
Lyon, Appenzell, Venice, and Zurich.
Rhoades visited Monte Verità with
Szeemann in 1998. The "spiral in your
belly" mentioned in this letter refer-
ences 'pataphysics and the spiral
belly of Alfred Jarry's Ubu Roi (King
Ubu).

c. Artists' Names Drawn in the Shape of a Fountain for *Blood & Honey: The Future Lies in the Balkans* ca. 2003 Harald Szeemann Ink on paper

d. Catalog for the Exhibition *Visionary Belgium: It Happened Near Us* Harald Szeemann, editor Brussels: Fonds Mercator, 2005

e. Floor Plan Sketch for the Exhibition *Visionary Belgium: It Happened Near Us* 27. Juli 2004 Harald Szeemann Ink on paper

Visionary Belgium was Szeemann's
final exhibition. He fell ill a few months
before it opened and passed away
during its installation. a note at the
bottom of this floor plan reads "But
there is still so much to do! Goodbye
Harald."

f. Catalog for the Exhibition *Visionary Belgium: It Happened Near Us* Harald Szeemann, editor Brussels: Fonds Mercator, 2005

9. *Travel Sculpture*, Luggage Tags from Szeemann's Travels

ca. late 1960s–2004

Harald Szeemann

Mixed media

10. Poster for *22 Young Swiss*

1969

Offset lithograph

One of the final projects during Szeemann's tenure at the Kunsthalle Bern, *22 Young Swiss* was curated by Edy de Wilde, from Amsterdam's Stedelijk Museum, with input from Szeemann, who introduced de Wilde to a number of local artists. Szeemann included this poster from the project in several of his later shows, including the Swiss Pavilion at EXPO '92 in Seville, Spain.

11. Poster in English and Albanian for the Tirana Biennale 2

2003

Harald Szeemann

Chromolithograph

Szeemann was invited to participate as an artist (rather than as a curator) by the organizers of the Tirana Biennale in Albania. In response, he produced this poster, featuring artist Jean Dubuffet's musings on the essential characteristics of Switzerland.

Screen

12. *Remembering Harry*, 2017

Documentary video, 8 min 9 sec

Produced by IMAGE and CONTENT /

Reto Caduff for the Getty Research Institute

A. Letters from artists to Harald Szeemann

B. Photographs and video documenting the installation of the *Grandfather* exhibition

Fabbrica Rosa

Interior Panning Shots of the Fabbrica Rosa, Szeemann's Archive and Library

2011

12 Min

Produced by the Getty Research Institute

Over the course of his long career, Harald Szeemann built unparalleled archival collections that were astonishing in breadth and depth. He described them as part of a *Museum of Obsessions*. Szeemann amassed files on more than 22,000 artists, including ephemera, correspondence, artworks, and other materials. More than 50,000 photographs document his projects, exhibitions, and the artists with whom he was associated. His library contained more than 25,000 volumes. This footage documents Szeemann's archive and library in Maggia, Switzerland, in 2011, prior to its transport to the Getty Research Institute.

Grandfather: A Pioneer Like Us

Following the conclusion of his exhibition *documenta 5* in 1972, Szeemann found himself with no commission and no immediate prospects. Undaunted, he began to curate an exhibition in his apartment. *Grandfather: a Pioneer Like Us* (1974) examined the fascinating life of Szeemann's grandfather, Étienne Szeemann, an inventive hairdresser and wigmaker who had developed his own permanent wave machine. Part artist's museum and part surrealist experiment, the exhibition used the possessions of Szeemann's grandfather – more than one thousand objects – to produce a series of dynamic and surprising juxtapositions that simultaneously explored the contours of his grandfather's biography, the migrations of people across Europe and the course of wars in the twentieth century, the development of hairdressing as a parallel modernism with its own visionaries and avant-gardes, and the essence of curating itself as a creative and meaningful activity. Szeemann retained most of the objects from the exhibition within his archive. The Getty Research Institute, in collaboration with Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, has produced a full-scale reconstruction of this exhibition as part of *Harald Szeemann: Museum of Obsessions*.

Kunsthalle Düsseldorf gGmbH
Grabbeplatz 4
40213 Düsseldorf
Tel. +49 (0)211 89 96 243
Fax +49 (0)211 89 29 168
mail@kunsthalle-duesseldorf.de
www.kunsthalle-duesseldorf.de

Director:
Gregor Jansen

Managing Director:
Ariane Berger

Curators:
Dana Bergmann
Anna Brohm
Jasmina Merz
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