



**Press preview:**

Tuesday, 19 October 2021, 10:30 am

**Opening:**

Tuesday, 19 October 2021, 6:30 pm

**Pressematerial:**

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**Écrits d'Art Brut – Wild Expression & Thought**  
**20 October 2021 – 23 January 2022**

**A major group exhibition to be held at Museum Tinguely from 20 October 2021 to 23 January 2022 will bring together the myriad writings of thirteen international Art Brut authors. These writers, most of whom lived or live as hermits or outcasts on the fringes of society, create their own world without even knowing that what they are doing belongs to the realm of the fine arts. They leave their mark on all sorts of supports, including embroidered cloth and painted walls. The works from a dozen museums as well as public and private collections in Europe and Brazil are being shown together here in Switzerland for the first time. The documentary films and photographs flanking them portray these unusual creators in their own homes or at their place of work and so invite visitors to immerse themselves in worlds that were never intended for public consumption.**

Declarations of love, letters of rage, poems, prayers, erotic messages, pleas, diary-like notes, and utopian narratives: The in many cases little-known writings of Art brut creators astonish and fascinate. Mostly written behind closed doors, in silence and in secret, they often bear no address or were intended for a dreamlike or spiritual addressee.

The texts, written in peculiar calligraphy, scribbled, or hastily noted, at times embroidered or fervently carved in stone, are often accompanied by pictures or drawings. They reveal an astonishing creativity, spring from an urgent need to express oneself, and represent a kind of silent resistance.

Writing encourages introspection and becomes an important creative resource, at times paving the way for a search for identity or the invention of another life, and at other times enabling the construction of a new world or the reshaping of the cosmos. Slips and sheets of paper, booklets and volumes, body decoration and textiles become carriers of extravagant personal inscriptions, poetic and concrete at the same time. They

support the persistent search of their authors: the search for the essence of things and words.

The thirteen authors – eccentric diarists, letter writers, or utopian authors, discovered by Jean Dubuffet or more recently – are free of any desire for publicity. They are imaginative and uninhibited in their approach and playful in their use of syntax, grammar, and orthography. Instead of paying attention to conventions and norms, Adolf Wölfli, Arthur Bispo do Rosário, and Giovanni Battista Podestà – whom Jean Tinguely particularly appreciated – preferred to deal with new linguistic creations, semantic games, or graphic labyrinths of words, sentences, and signs. Line by line, they shake up and defy rules, since their intention is neither to communicate nor to exchange information. Instead, thoughts take their course; ideas, often confusing, form, and their imagination seems to surprise the writers themselves. Writing takes on a performative value.

The fragile, textile works of the Brazilian Arthur Bispo do Rosário included in the show *Écrits d'Art Brut – Wild Expression & Thought* are being exhibited here in Switzerland for the first time. The only living artist represented in the exhibition is Pascal Vonlanthen from Switzerland. Some of his drawings are likewise shown here for the first time, as are some of the works of Fernando Nannetti. The film about Vonlanthen's work was shot in the run-up to the exhibition. There are also videos that give visitors a glimpse of the lives led by the other, now deceased authors, while rare portrait photographs lend the scenography a human face.

Another highlight is a destroyed work by Marie Lieb (1844–1917), all that survives of which are the two photographs of 1894 preserved in the archives of Heidelberg Psychiatric Clinic, which was reconstructed by the artist Mali Genest specially for the exhibition.

The catalogue *Écrits d'art brut. Graphomanes extravagants* by Lucienne Peiry contains numerous texts as well as some 150 illustrations. (In French, 288 pages, € 31, ISBN 9782021447682)

With works by: Arthur Bispo do Rosário, Giovanni Bosco, Marie Lieb, Heinrich Anton Müller, Fernando Nannetti, Laure Pigeon, Giovanni Battista Podestà, Armand Schulthess, Constance Schwartzlin-Berberat, Charles Steffen, Pascal Vonlanthen, Adolf Wölfli und Carlo Zinelli.

Curator: Lucienne Peiry  
Scenography: Sarah Nedir

#### What is Art Brut?

Art Brut is a term that subsumes works by self-taught authors who develop their own means of expression and often work in complete isolation or at least in a highly reclusive manner – exclusively for themselves and outside all artistic circles. Often, they do not care about social conventions, refuse to follow cultural rules, and defy established norms. Instead, they create symbolic universes and cultivate a playful approach to forms of representation, ways of looking at things, and technical means. They create their works both imaginatively and unabashedly, without being conscious of the fact that they are working in the field of art.

**General Information Museum Tinguely:**

**Exhibition title:** Écrits d'Art Brut – Wild Expression & Thought

**Address:** Museum Tinguely | Paul Sacher-Anlage 1 | 4002 Basel

**Opening:** Tuesday, 19 October 2021, 6:30 pm

**Duration :** 20 October 2021 – 23 January 2022

**Opening hours:** Tuesday – Sunday, daily from 11 am–6 pm

**Website:** [www.tinguely.ch](http://www.tinguely.ch)

**Social Media:** @museumtinguely | #museumtinguely | #tinguely | #artbrut | #wildegedanken | #wildthought

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**Museum Tinguely is subject to the Covid certificate requirement. Therefore, we ask you to present your certificate and your identity card at the entrance.**

Bildlegende, 1. Seite: Giovanni Bosco, Wandmalerei in Castellammare del Golfo (Sizilien), 2000 Foto © Associazione Outsider  
Art Giovanni Bosco, Castellammare del Golfo Foto: Magali Koenig; Archives de la Collection de l'Art Brut, Lausanne