

13 Slavs and Tatars

Sanft Power by the Slavs and Tatars collective - which, in its own words, is dedicated to the regions from the east of the former Berlin Wall to the west of the Great Wall of China - depicts a door that we can easily imagine in solid wood and ironwork, surrounded by motifs reminiscent of oriental architecture. What is usually the strict boundary between inside and outside becomes a soft, permeable woolen partition. It evokes the passage between two worlds, two states or conditions. Crossing it reminds us of that moment when we leave the known for the unknown, the profane for the sacred, the earthly for the celestial.

17, 18 Kasper Bosmans

In Northern mythology, Odin, the one-eyed god, was usually depicted with two ravens. By day they fly over the earth, and by night they return to his shoulder to whisper their observations. This symbiotic relationship in the myth may have been inspired by the prehistoric lifestyle of hunter-gatherer societies, which seem to have developed special bonds with certain animals, including ravens and wolves, particularly during the hunt. Kasper Bosmans drew on these two anecdotes to create these enamelled steel plates, the preferred material for signs in the city of Brussels for centuries, and a traditional technique used by Belgian enamellers, almost all of which have now disappeared.

19 Gaia Vincensini

On Gaia Vincensini's reception desk/chest, pens are linked by small chains as if at a bank counter. Held in place by masks with lock-like pupils, they evoke collective work, but tied up, directed and managed by faceless entities who seem to be under a veil of secrecy. In her practice, the artist transforms our view of what we keep hidden or what we believe to be indestructible: power structures and their behind-the-scenes effects. The same is true of her vault, which hides nothing but emptiness, and whose solidity is only an appearance, since it is made of ceramic, a delicate and fragile material.

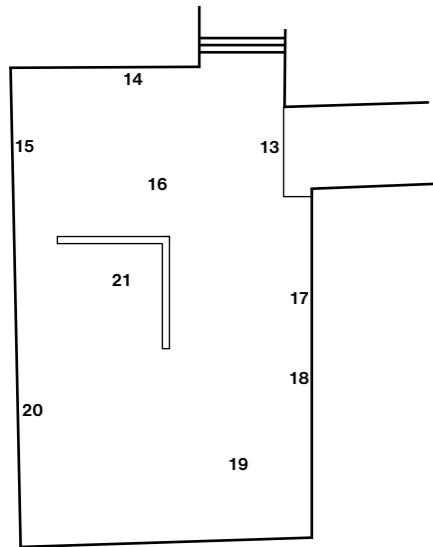
15, 20 Zuzanna Czebatul

The subjects of Zuzanna Czebatul's works are enlarged details of antique tapestries, particularly their lower sections. These include feet, fetish motifs and symbols of mobility (of cultures, of knowledge), and draperies, a kind of mise en abimes of textiles represented by textiles. In these digitally reproduced enlargements, the pixels merge with the weft of the tapestry, reminding us that however smooth and dematerialized an image may appear, it still has a material structure, whether made by craftsman or machine. The artist also evokes the close link that interior design has always had with architecture, acting as a testimony to ideology and cultural and structural domination, whether in an apartment today or in a château in the past.

21 Caroline von Gunten

A chimera with the body of a cat and human limbs, the deep sound of its flutes echoing off the walls of the exhibition space, Caroline von Gunten's clay sculpture questions our relationship with animals. The cat is a species both tame and wild, which seems to stay close to humans by choice; one of the few that uses a particular language to make itself understood by humans; one of the many, on the other hand, to which we often lend human characters or feelings. The air that sings through the mouthpieces of whistles passes into the cat's body, and then into ours. For the artist, all beings are biological vessels that move and share the same breath, the same principle of life, and are thus linked to one another.

Exhibition room



- 13 Slavs and Tatars
Sanft Power, 2022
wollen yarn, metal
- 14 Pamela Rosenkranz
Alien Blue Window (500 S Buena Vista St, Kral), 2021
Lighttex, LED, anodized frame
Courtesy of the artist and Karma International Zurich
- 15 Zuzanna Czebatul
A Trillion Threads Still Weaving (Green Veil), 2023
cotton, polyester, metal
- 16 Sina Oberhänsli
swaying lights, 2020
metal, bronze
- 17 Kasper Bosmans
Odinn Always Winking (One Blue Eye), 2024
enameled steel plate
Courtesy of the artist and Gladstone Gallery
- 18 Kasper Bosmans
Odinn Always Winking, 2024
enameled steel plate
Courtesy of the artist and Gladstone Gallery
- 19 Gaia Vincensini
Synchronized Chaos Solution, 2023
ceramic
- 20 Zuzanna Czebatul
A Trillion Threads Still Weaving (Four Veils), 2023
cotton, polyester, metal
- 21 Caroline von Gunten
Scripting your Reality, 2024
raw clay, compressor

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CAN Centre d'art Neuchâtel, Rue des Moulins 37, CH-2000 Neuchâtel
+41327240160, info@can.ch, www.can.ch, me-di 11-18h, entrée libre
#cancentredartneuchatel @cancentredartneuchatel



Désordre sacré 30.11-26.01.25

With
Kasper Bosmans
Martin Chramosta
Zuzanna Czebatul
Sina Oberhänsli
Marie-Eve Perez
Léopold Rabus
Juana Robles
Pamela Rosenkranz
Slavs and Tatars
Gaia Vincensini
Caroline von Gunten
Lauryn Youden

29.11.24 Opening
Human artefact after all, a performance by Gaia Vincensini accompanied by Nelson Schaub, 9:15pm
Afterparty with Eric3k (bardcore, fanfreluchecore, medieval trance, dance), 22h

18.01.25 Public guided tour, 2pm

Introduction to the exhibition

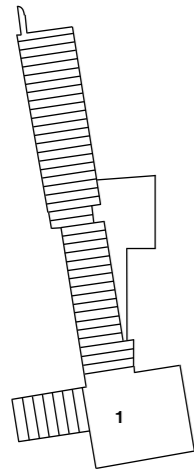
The idea behind the exhibition *Désordre sacré* stems from a collective and general reflection by the curatorial team on the contexts in which CAN is set, whether related to the history of the art center itself, its factory past or its geographical location. In this case, the theme of the Middle Ages was inspired by its location in the heart of Neuchâtel's old town and beneath its castle, where elements of medieval architecture can still be seen. The works exhibited here, all created in the 21st century, were brought together because some of their characteristics seemed to be rooted in this medieval soil.

It's a well-known fact that the first vision that shaped our idea of the Middle Ages dates back to the Renaissance, which sought to reconnect with lost Antiquity by leaping across it. Beyond its obvious artificiality - it seems reductive to unite nearly a thousand years of history under a single name - it has become a historical period that can be understood and studied for its own sake, within its many regional elements. In the context of global history, the Middle Ages thus appear as a specific period (generally situated between the beginning of the 5th and the end of the 15th century) and a specific region of the world that could be described as strictly "european". Many states can lay claim to a medieval origin, and have sometimes used it to construct their idea of the nation in contemporary times. However, it is important to exclude any mythical genealogy, since the plurality of experiences, the discontinuity of temporalities and the scale of social, cultural and territorial changes have been transformative elements over the long term. This is why we must not confuse historical realities with fantasies.

Today, we see this "reinvented Middle Ages" everywhere in pop culture as rich, gigantic imagery. And whatever the reasons for this surge, the choice of aesthetic and narrative elements featured in these reinventions is of particular interest, as it says much more about our contemporary times than about the historical period itself; just as, through the futuristic visions of science fiction, our society projects itself into this distorting mirror, with its fears and aspirations. This imagery is therefore less anodyne, superficial and, above all, far more political than it might at first appear.

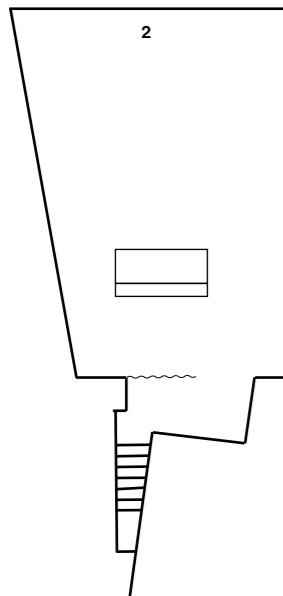
Contemporary art, as a more marginal cultural marker, is also a means of understanding the questioning of an era; it is permeable to popular influences, and this taste for the medieval certainly marks the imagination of artists. What aesthetic elements or "medieval" aspects appear in contemporary works of art, and in what ways? What figures or techniques are taken up by artists? And to what end? The exhibition uses these questions as a common thread, and attempts to find clues through works that are, moreover, highly diverse in terms of both technique and theme.

Bearing



1 Sina Oberhänsli
Stillness in the air, 2024
bronze

Studio



2 Juana Robles
Anastatica, 2021
33'07", n/b and color, Super 8 mm – 2K

1, 6, 7, 11, 16 Sina Oberhänsli

Populated by figures that are sometimes fragile, sometimes eerie, by fantastical and symbolic elements, Sina Oberhänsli's works seem to come from a oneiric world. The beings of this enigmatic universe cannot be defined at first glance, but each creature seems to be endowed with a humble, profound and instinctive voice. Hybrids and carriers of meaning, the various elements join together in a chorus that unites the conscious with the unconscious, beauty with pain, the present with the past, light with shadows.

2 Juana Robles

Joan of Castile, Portuguese queen of the late Middle Ages, whose mental health deteriorated on the death of her husband, was declared insane by her father and brother, and spent 46 years imprisoned in a convent before dying in 1555 at the age of 75. However, it is difficult to assess the true extent of her disorder, as her personal situation was so closely linked to the political interests of her entourage and the territories over which she ruled. Juana Robles' *Anastatica* is a Super 8 mm film inspired by this character. It explores the ambiguous mental and physical condition and questions the control and oppression of the institutional environment. Through an expressionist treatment of light, Juana Robles creates a surreal world in which confinement is a state suspended between life, death and poetry.

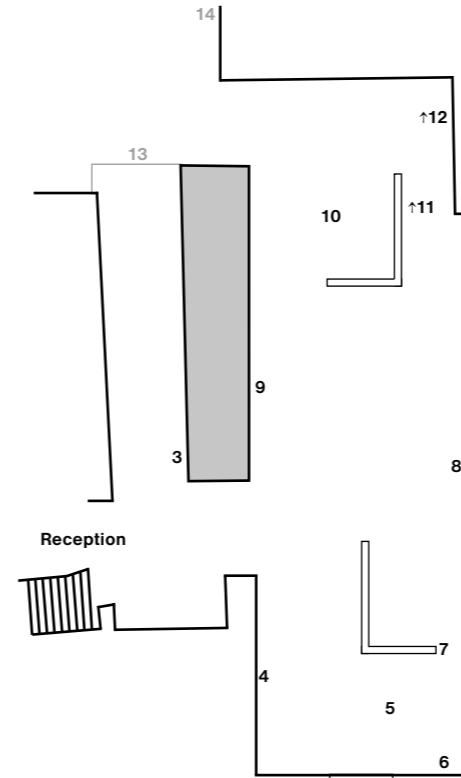
3 Pamela Rosenkranz

By covering a reproduction of a classical painting with a layer of beige-pink acrylic paint, Pamela Rosenkranz challenges notions of subjectivity and materiality: she shifts our gaze from the work's symbolic content to its material elements. She also symbolically links the human body, whose skin is for her the first visual mark, with the canvas by literally placing them one against the other. This acrylic skin thus lies between the glass and the painting, between creation, deterioration and conservation. We might also add that the color associated with this type of painting may refer to their dual "European" origins. The work that greets us at the entrance to the exhibition reminds us that the classical history of painting tells the world from a strictly Western point of view.

4, 9 Lauryn Youden

Lauryn Youden's two shelves contain dried flowers, medicines, herbs, books, candles, ritual objects... All these items document survival strategies developed by the artist and part of the Queer Crip community in a world that discriminates against people with physical or mental disabilities. The artist has accumulated these witnesses and artifacts over the years - from medicines and magics to eclectic practices and theories. These two works are altars dedicated not only to care, whether for ailments of the body or mind, and to the sharing of accumulated knowledge, but they are also dedicated to the journey taken to gather these and to the often painful experiences associated with them.

Exhibition room



- 3 Pamela Rosenkranz
Creation, Deterioration, Conservation (Lemis), 2017
acrylic paint, inkjet print, plexiglas
Courtesy of Sammlung Ricola
- 4 Lauryn Youden
From the Great Above She Opened her Ear to the Great Below, 2020
various matériel
- 5 Marie-Eve Perez
Socle, 2024
glass, lead, tin, steel
- 6 Sina Oberhänsli
Where are my roots?, 2019
glazed ceramic
- 7 Sina Oberhänsli
We used to be, 2019
glazed ceramic
- 8 Léopold Rabus
Oiseau N; Oiseau 27; Oiseau O; Oiseau ?; Oiseau Y; Oiseau J; Oiseau D; Oiseau F, 2022
oil on wood
- 9 Lauryn Youden
To Offer You something, To Bring Relief, 2020
various matériel
- 10 Martin Chramosta
Justizgehäuse; Neues Gehäuse; Haager Gehäuse; Fehlendes Gehäuse; Fehlendes Gehäuse; Archiv Gehäuse, 2024
lacquered iron, ceramics, concrete
- 11 Sina Oberhänsli
From dusk till dawn, 2020
glazed ceramic
- 12 Pamela Rosenkranz
Alien Blue Window (500 S Buena Vista St, Cranim), 2021
Lighttux, LED, anodized frame
Private Collection Switzerland

5 Marie-Eve Perez

Stained glass, as an age-old craft and artistic creation, seems both distant and familiar. Distant because it evokes another age, that of the cathedral builders, but also familiar because this past has left its mark on the places we pass through every day; it's part of our landscape. Marie-Eve Perez interweaves past and present in this work. The repetitive rhombus motif responds to the geometric shape of the volume, which, contrary to tradition, stands out from the architecture and forms an object in its own right. Its title, *Socle* (pedestal in French), leaves us in doubt as to its function. Perhaps it reminds us that stained glass is above all a showcase for light, making it more present to our gaze.

8 Léopold Rabus

At first glance, the subjects of Léopold Rabus's works appear to be ordinary tropical birds, only to discover that their eyes and beaks have been doubled, as if a slight kaleidoscopic shift has taken place. Is the painter playing with our perception, plunging us into a state akin to inebriation? These redoubles, unexpected because they contradict the figurative nature of the painting and the naturalistic style to which it refers, provoke a feeling of strangeness. This sensation perhaps allows us to question our own conception of reality and the distorted vision we can apply to it. How do we view these birds, which in Europe we call exotic because they come from other parts of the world, and which for most of us can only be seen in cages or stuffed?

10 Martin Chramosta

Martin Chramosta refers to his sculptures as "the quaint requiem of an era". Bollards, signposts or tombstones, they seem to have undergone the trials of public space; two of them, whose pedestals are all that can be seen, even appear to have been ripped off. In this work, the artist represents some of the old elements of street furniture that have stood the test of time, even gentrification. Abandoned, outdated, damaged, ugly, bearing signs that have become incomprehensible, they remain in the landscape of our cities, even though we can no longer see them, still standing witnesses to a bygone era and customs.

12, 14 Pamela Rosenkranz

Echoing the shapes of Gothic ogives and bathing the exhibition space in a radical blue, the works in Pamela Rosenkranz's *Alien Blue Window* series evoke both a symbolic sky and a digital screen. They transcend the physicality of color to approach it as a concept, something that has been done very late in human history (until the 19th century, color was mostly associated with the material or surface on which it was found). This intense blue color becomes immaterial because of its source, sensual because of its immersive quality, and evokes the spiritual experience of religious painting.