

EL GRAN GRITO

**«Next Generation» Graduation Exhibition Bachelor and Master
Institute Art Gender Nature HGK Basel FHNW**

Kunsthhaus Baselland

Press preview Friday 25 August 2023, 11 am

Opening Friday 25 August 2023, 5 – 9 pm

Exhibition 26 August – 10 September 2023

Finissage Sunday 10 September 2023, 3 – 5 pm

Ester Alemayehu Hatle, Kristian Suvatne Augland, Nefeli Chrysa Avgeris, Ikum Basil, Léon Bloch, Amélie Bodenmann, Florent Bonzon, Paloma Bosquê, Leonardo Bürgi Tenorio, Saturne Camus-Govoroff, Noa & Lara Castro Lema, Laurie De Jesus Lagares, Yukari Egger, Claudia Gutiérrez Marfull, Arbion Hamdiu, Johanna Helfer, Susi Hinz, Pat Homse, Alona Hrekova, Gilles Jacot, La-Im Kim, Kilian Kistler, Peter Kradolfer, Camille Lambelet, Floris Maniscalco, Grégoire-Cesare Marcel, Elena Matamoro, Janu Maya, Ramiro Oller, Patrick Gerhard Ostrowsky, Anastasia Pavlou, Emmanuel Joan Pidrè Starosta, Margherita Raso, Nina Rieben, Nadiia Rohozhyna, Lilli Schaugg, Alan Sierra, Virginie Sistik, Anastasiia Ulianchyk, Oleksandra Ulianchyk, Linus Weber, Jodok Wehrli, Vital Z'Brun

Curated by El Palomar and Chus Martínez

Curatorial Assistance: Tabea Rothfuchs

Press: Anna Francke

Program

Opening Friday 25 August 2023, 5 – 9 pm

5:30 pm welcoming and introduction by Ines Goldbach, El Palomar and Chus Martínez

Performance program: coming soon

Finissage Sunday 10 September 2023, 3 – 5 pm

Performance program: coming soon

More information: dertank.ch/diplom-2023

Kunsthhaus Baselland

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Opening hours: Tuesday to Sunday 11 am – 5 pm

During Kunsttage Basel: 26 and 27 August 2023 11 am – 6 pm

EL GRAN GRITO is part of Kunsttage Basel (25 – 27 August 2023).

kunsttagebasel.ch

With EL GRAN GRITO (the great scream), this year's graduation exhibition of the bachelor and master students, the Institute Art Gender Nature, Basel Academy of Art and Design FHNW becomes the guest of the Kunsthau Baselland for the eighth time. The presentation of new works by nearly 50 emerging artists in a leading art institution is here supported by the special nature of the graduation exhibition itself in the education of artists, who are transitioning from the sensitive environment of the art academy to the challenges of working as professional artists. To emphasize this unique set of conditions, each year a renowned guest curator is invited to curate the exhibition together with Chus Martínez, head of the Institute Art Gender Nature. Our 2023 guest is El Palomar, a collective founded in Barcelona in 2013 that focuses on the investigation, recovery, and production of queer art and memories to review the hidden history related to gender politics.

Part 1: Context

The title of this year's edition of our graduation exhibition is EL GRAN GRITO—the great scream. This is not referring to a scream of pain but to a collective scream of liberation. We feel, finally, liberated from the conditions imposed upon life by the pandemic. It feels great to be able to meet and talk without a mask and move again, and to be together without the many restrictions we experienced. And yet it is also true that the pandemic did not help the world change for the better, and nor did we, the inhabitants of our planet. The pandemic accelerated a social schism that was already latent, but that is now bold and expressing itself in the worst possible ways. Economic conditions changed and surely have a bad influence in our decision making, but not only. Our cultural conditions were altered as well and we are living in disagreement about our future paths, which will undoubtedly have severe consequences for all of us.

In this respect, it is always useful to perform a memory exercise and try to recall when our problems began. Yet there is not one point of origin of our issues, and surely it all depends on the point of view of the community that is looking into the past. Still, it is worthwhile to reconstruct the story of what we consider relevant in the culture to understand why we moved on from certain values. An interesting moment, for sure, was the insecurity produced by a recent form of supra national organization called the European Union. Sure, Switzerland has never been part of it, and yet it participates in its processes osmotically, so to say.

Around the time of the EU's emergence, the main preoccupation of certain sectors in cultural politics was the danger of a growing sense of un-relatedness to Europe from the part of the citizenship. For this reason—in a perhaps almost unconscious way—the cities and their mayors played a major role during the first decade of the Union. Cities like Barcelona, Paris, and Copenhagen presented themselves as cities of art and culture and many events, festivals, exhibitions—and initiatives of all kinds—were organized outside the walls of the already existing institutions. Scandinavian cities were known for their performance festivals during their long summer nights; Barcelona for its great branding and back up of electronic sound and art... Manifesta, the nomadic biennial, also emerged from this context. European cities played at that time the role of communities capable of staying put, connected with themselves, able to address various identities without the risk of bland nationalisms. Cities were a little like Roman republics inside the Union.

Those were, as well, the golden years of curating independently, of constant and intense public exchange among practitioners. However, years passed and it was clear that the majority of European citizens would not oppose the Union. Budgets reduced and programs were defined and launched directly from Brussels. The funding of independent initiatives diminished and the importance of the old and big patrimonial projects reignited. Big museums, with their new buildings, tested the capacity of countries to attract not only cultural practitioners, artists, curators, and musicians but tourism en mass. A different kind of energy was engaged and contemporary daily practices were—again—relegated to the underground, to the narrative of the niche and the elite.

Meanwhile, inequity kept growing and with it the elites, who had had a very strong comeback in the media, in the US presidency, in the Emirates, in the very many countries accustomed to a high level of tolerance and visibility of inequality. This wave of empowered and encouraged wealth was now creating alliances, speaking the language of art and culture and defining institutions and initiatives with the

languages we use for public endeavors and democratic spaces. True, the public realm is poor and some private sectors—like luxury and technology—are not. It is not difficult to describe few consequences of this—and we will leave it to you to believe or not that public values of democracy, real inclusion and freedom can be defended also by companies.

But yes, we will use the opportunity here to call for conversation rounds, for a mutual observation and a careful design of possible scenarios and actions to enable art and culture to moderate social and collective experience. Indeed, who are we to do so, right? Just an art academy in Switzerland. Indeed, in our boldness, we believe in the constituency of our community and in the immense value of education. Contrary to others, we do not think that we are going to be facing social protests or upheavals to counterbalance the many processes of public impoverishment we are constantly undergoing. We believe that we may rather implode in poverty and sadness due to a sentiment of loss and the growing anxiety produced by the lack of perspectives.

To that end, art education is not a matter of skills and the production of works—not as understood by and taught within the Institute Art Gender Nature HGK Basel FHNW—nor a given acquired by practice and hours of work. Art education names a deep research into the bonds that can be created and implemented through experience in the social realm to secure a sense of the self extended out toward the collective. Art education is the name of the development of languages, methods, practices, situations and also artworks aimed at activating experience as the driving force that motivates us towards freedom, empathy, love, health, relevance, friendship... If this is so, and it is, how then can we prepare for the transformations ahead if we do not feel relevant and connected, if we do not have a sense of sensing life and being sensed by others as meaningful? Art education concerns itself with being able—again and again—to produce this experience of sympathy and connection at the core of the social.

Part 2: The Graduation Exhibition

This year at the Institute Art Gender Nature HGK Basel FHNW, as in many prior years, the graduation exhibition is co-curated with guests. El Palomar, this year's co-curators, are a collective duo of artists originally from Spain whose work is deeply concerned with equality, diversity, and gender. Their practice revolves around the moving image, curating, media installations, performance, and music, while their productions are focused on trans discourses and empowerment, as well as debate around the possibility of a world in full acceptance of the self determination of identity. That said, the graduation exhibition contains works by artists finishing their bachelor's and master's programs at the Institute Art Gender Nature HGK Basel FHNW.

The production of such an exhibition is more complex than you may imagine. It involves an understanding of the place we are in, the physical space, but also the physical circumstance of sharing the space with so many other artists. This knowledge, of course, determines the decision-making processes of the works, since we know we are to conceive an exhibition together and the presence of each work must be nourished by the experience of the works around it. The conversations about the ideas and proposals of the works begin at the opening of the academic year, and at least three rounds of meetings with the curators, the assistant curator—Tabea Rothfuchs—and the technical team take place. Conceptual considerations go hand in hand with display possibilities. Artists are not only aware of the materials and the languages—performance, painting, digital animation, sculpture, poetry, drawing—but of the nature of the devices and the elements that shape the final presentation of their work. Talking about *the how*—the how of sound, the how of placement, the how of duration—is a crucial way to assist artists to generate an imagination of the work once it is ready. Then, in parallel to these conversations, the long, hard work of production takes place.

This is not a thematic exhibition. This is a continuous exhibition, one that creates a flow of viewing works together, connecting ways of doing and forms of addressing concerns that are for you to discover. All the works take your presence as a viewer strongly into account. Your experience of the works—and this is different from you liking or disliking an artwork—is fundamental to maintaining a collective experience of the cultural space we are producing and insisting upon. Through all of the works runs an imagination of the world as a shared place; the simple and fundamental fact of living together creates conditions for collective experiences of pain and joy that allow us to understand better who we are in relation with others. This comprehensive force hopefully provokes conversations and ideas that compels you to be

closer to one another. This closeness performed in the public space of an art exhibition is fundamental to avoid polarization and the risk of totalitarian fantasies and practices.

We extend our gratitude to Kunsthaus Baselland, its director Ines Goldbach and her team, for collaborating with us to host our graduation exhibition for the eighth time. This is also an important year for Kunsthaus Baselland, and for our Institute, since the next time you will come to our graduation exhibition it will be held at the new building of Kunsthaus Baselland at Dreispitz, next door to the campus of the HGK Basel FHNW. This, then, is our most sweet farewell to the space that has been so welcoming to us for eight lucky years. We would also like to thank the entire team of the Institute Art Gender Nature for their guidance and support, and, last but not least, we thank all the participating artists for their brilliant works, their trust in us and in themselves, and the continuous exchange.

Chus Martínez and El Palomar

El Palomar is an art project focused on the investigation and production of queer art and memories to review the hidden history related to gender politics. Founded in 2013 by artists Mariokissme and R. Marcos Mota, El Palomar evolved into a pioneering, multifaceted art project for catalyzing contemporary art, rethinking institutions, and artistic research. They are committed to bringing queer politics into the cultural field. El Palomar has realized numerous exhibitions, workshops, demonstrations, music videos, archives, performances and reenactments, among others.

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T W E A K L A E

