

MAMCO GENEVA

11.10.17–04.02.18

PRESS KIT

William Leavitt, *Retrospective*

General Idea, *Photographs (1969-1982)*–extended

*Narrative Art*

*Fictional Artists*

Gordon Matta-Clark, *Food*

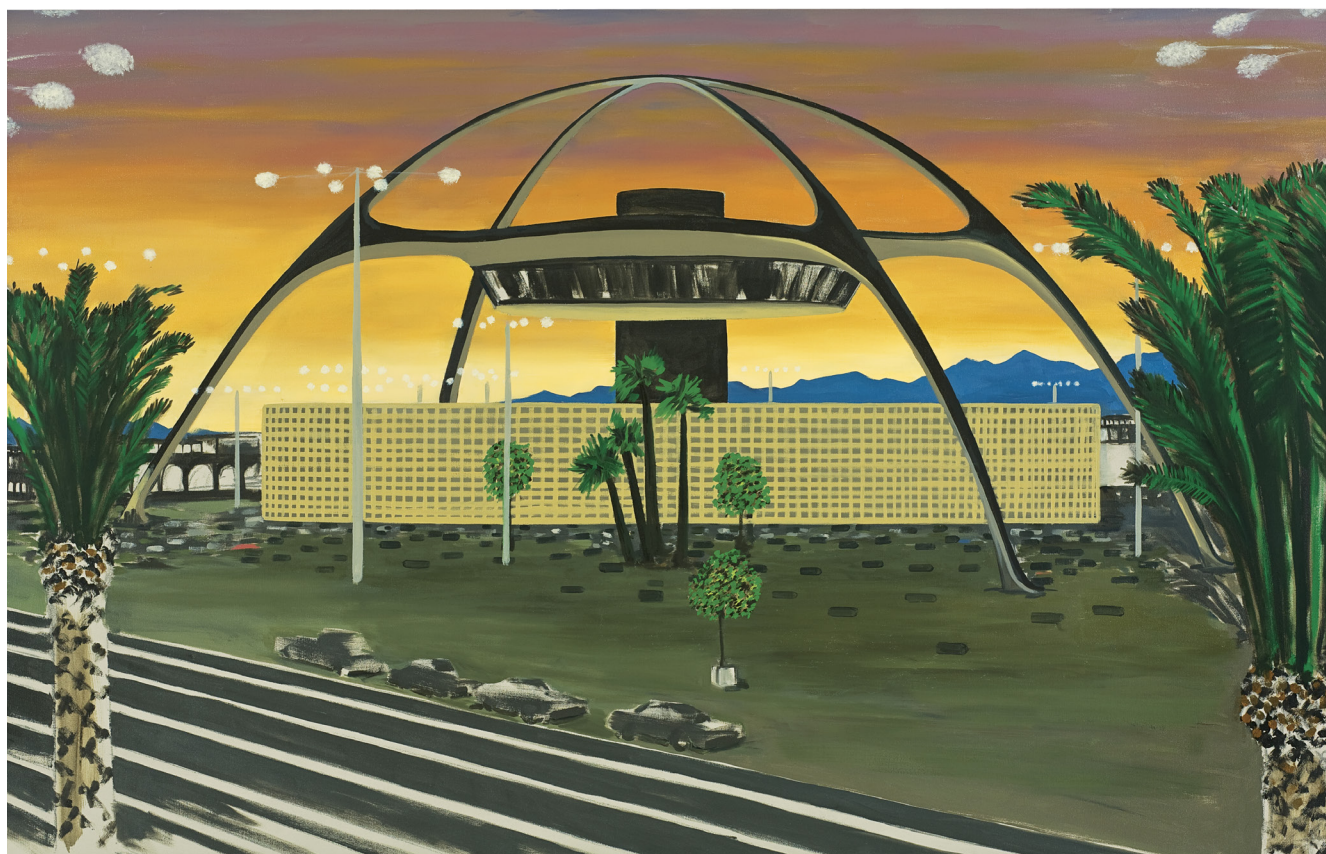
Adrian Piper, *The Mythic Being*

Martha Rosler, *House Beautiful: Bringing the War Home*

Allen Ruppersberg, *The Never Ending Book*

**Opening: Tuesday October 10, 2017 – 6pm**

**10, rue des Vieux-Grenadiers, 1205 Geneva**



William Leavitt, *Theme Restaurant*, 1986.

Oil on canvas. 116,84 × 182,88 cm, Collection Richard S. Massey, Miami (FL)

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**Exhibitions from October 11, 2017 until February 4, 2018**  
**Press conference Tuesday October 10, 2017, 11 am**

This fall, MAMCO is organizing the first European retrospective of William Leavitt (born in 1941, Washington, USA), an historic figure of the Los Angeles art scene. Deployed on the entirety of the first floor, this exhibition brings together pieces ranging between 1970 until now. Through his installations, drawings and paintings, play and sound performances, Leavitt re-examines the production of the Western imaginary, as imposed, since the end of WWII, by the "Hollywood factory." Through a selection of parts of stage sets, the isolation and recombination of fragments coming from everyday culture, which often conceals a conservative social order and politics, the artist turns these representations inside out: he makes us see them as conceptual frameworks in which stories (fictional ones or from our own lives) can be set.

This show, organized by Lionel Bovier and Julien Fronsacq, is thus an opportunity to go back over several issues in art history, whether it be the 1970s movement of

"Narrative Art" or the fictional dimension present in the practice of General Idea, whose exhibition is extended until the beginning of February. Narration is also at the heart of a project devoted to fictional artists by David Lemaire, and the ensemble of works by Adrian Piper and Martha Rosler, respectively brought together by Elise Lammer and Sophie Costes.

This sequence is the third phase of a method of investigation into the art of the past decades, inaugurated by *Zeitgeist* in spring, and then continued with the series of exhibitions organized around the retrospective of Kelley Walker in the summer. In this way, MAMCO has been offering, via a system of nested presentations, a prismatic reading of the artistic movements and debates that have traversed our era. This singular museographical proposition, the result of the collective work of the curators of the MAMCO and its associated curators, is itself set in the heritage of the "global exhibition" concept, which has been prevalent in the museum ever since its opening in the 1990s.

# Allen Ruppersberg, *The Never Ending Book*. *Part One: The Old Poems (For My Mother)*, 2007

An exhibition organized by Paul Bernard

A pivotal figure of the Californian Conceptual art scene, Allen Ruppersberg (born in 1944 in Cleveland) has, since the end of the 1960s, been pursuing an atypical practice, which favors no medium in particular. The corpus of his works, which the artist describes as "scenes," thus includes installations, performances, multiples, paintings, sculptures, drawings, books, photographs, videos, but also, as of 1969, a bar and a hotel, which prefigure in part the relational aesthetic of the early 1990s.

This heterogeneity provides a glimpse of a working method, based around three main operations: the compulsive collection of popular cultural and "debased" forms (including postcards, calendars, books, comics, educational films, records, etc.); the appropriation of these forms and their displacement into art registers; finally, from one work to another, a partial and fragmentary recycling, as in a permanent work in progress. The result is a series of combinatory plays between texts and images, in which narrative fragments, intertextuality and reminiscence draw up a panorama of the different myths that mould a culture. Ruppersberg insists on the way in which individuals interiorize such tales, saying "we all remain, as social beings, collections."

The installation *The Never Ending Book. Part One: The Old Poems (For My Mother)* is an exemplary instance. On the walls and props, pages taken from his collection are reproduced and laid out randomly. In boxes, this collection is partly presented to the public, who can, in turn, put together their own poems. The work thus brings out the ambiguous relationship between the intimate and the public via a literally infinite book. As Allan McCollum wrote, in a text devoted to Ruppersberg: "There is something paradoxical about our relationships with books: they are publicly produced but privately read and written." There is an autobiographical dimension in Ruppersberg's work; in the pages that make up *The Never Ending Book*, the attentive reader will detect in the background the portrait of a woman. Ruppersberg again: "Look for narrative of any kind narration. Anti-narrative, non-narrative, para-narrative, post-narrative, bad narrative."

# MAMCO GENEVE

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The Museum is open Tuesday through Friday from noon to 6pm, the first Wednesday of the month until 9pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 11am to 6pm. Closed on Mondays.

Regular admission: CHF 8.–  
Reduced admission: CHF 6.–  
Group admission: CHF 4.–

## Partners

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The exhibition of William Leavitt benefits from the support of the Fondation du Jubilé de la Mobilière Suisse Société Coopérative and of the Greene Naftali Gallery, New York.

The General Idea's exhibition received the generous support of Le Laboratoire and ReproSolution, Geneva.

MAMCO's fourth floor "A collection of spaces" exhibition would not have been possible without the essential support of Fondation Leenaards.

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