

MAMCO GENÈVE

PRESS RELEASE

MAMCO 2019 PROGRAM

“What do pictures want?” W.J.T. Mitchell, a central figure in “visual studies” in the US, has been asking the question for more than twenty years. Above all, visual studies seeks to establish a new “iconology”—to consider pictures not solely as objects or vehicles for meaning, but also in terms of their relationship to the society within which they were made.

The English language makes a clear distinction between “picture” and “image”: “picture” refers to an image and its support, while “image” is a transferable term, from one medium to another. An image may even survive the destruction of its physical support.

This is precisely what artists such as Wade Guyton, Kelley Walker, and Seth Price, or Walead Beshty, Hito Steyerl, and Laura Owens, set out to prove in the early 2000s: namely, that the image has acquired a new status, forged over the course of the twentieth century, connected first and foremost to its “technical reproducibility” and subsequently to its emerging role as an “informational surface.”

Up to the turn of the twentieth century, our perception of an image was conditioned by its technique—witness the segregation of painting and photography (the former unique, the latter published in numbered editions), or abstract and figurative images. Subsequently, however, our perception of an image’s “medium” expanded to encompass a much wider definition and message embracing the ensemble of practices that make its genesis and presentation possible—not only canvas and paint, for example, but also the chassis, studio, gallery, museum, and the systems underpinning the art market or its critical reception. This evolution in the concept of the image, from the abandoning of the traditional categories of “fine art” to the ontological shifts in the visual regimen, is the focus of the upcoming series of exhibitions at MAMCO.

Episode 1: a simultaneous presentation of two superficially opposing painterly practices demonstrates how the figurative image can *also* function as an interrogatory or representative form, and how an abstract image may *also* derive from lived, sensory experience, and demand a phenomenological response—a dialectic explored in spring 2019, in parallel retrospectives of the work of René Daniëls and Marcia Hafif.

Daniëls creates works that address the context of their making and display, each picture both reflecting and challenging the practice of painting itself, while Hafif’s “abstract” paintings of the 1960s are suffused with the glimpsed memory of Roman landscapes, and her monochromes express the artist’s authentically “materiological” investigation. Within the series of rooms devoted to the “inventory” of Hafif’s work, a major installation *in situ* by Richard Nonas is anchored in the same exploration of space and perception. Similarly, on the second floor—which features an ensemble of works from René Daniëls’s “bow tie” series—Martin Kippenberger’s *MOMAs* is a reminder of the connections that may be forged (centred on a kind

of institutional critique) between the Dutch painter's work and the German artist's museographical fictions.

Episode 2: summer 2019, a major exhibition of the work of Walead Besthy and a number of other solo and group shows explore the image as the outcome of a process, more "software" than "hardware." Produced by a "program," Walead Bashty's works also examine the apparatus of their genesis and emergence, or their links to the real world, and confront one of the most distinctive legacies of Conceptual art: the understanding that art may inhere less in the object itself and more in its surroundings, in the things that bring an object to life when we "use" it, look at it, display it and interpret it.

Episode 3, autumn 2019: trace two radical, experimental approaches of painting, with retrospectives of the work of Martin Barré and Rosemarie Castoro. Barré holds a special place in the history of post-war painting in Europe, not least for his use of aerosol sprays in his work of the 1960s. The show gives an insight into the career of an artist in full command of the sensitive, intellectual, chromatic and physical possibilities of "pictorial form," constantly seeking and finding new ways to occupy the canvas and its surrounding space. Rosemarie Castoro began painting in the mid-1960s. Taking Barré's spatial explorations a stage further, Castoro extends the picture space to that of the body, and architecture. Her conceptual, poetic, minimalist, gendered work combines Institutional Critique with a "drag" aesthetic and an examination of the legacy of modernism.

Mirabaud's gift: in 2019, MAMCO is free for all!

MAMCO is delighted to announce that admission to the museum will be free of charge throughout 2019, thanks to a generous gift from Mirabaud, in celebration of the company's 200th anniversary.

The gift furthers Mirabaud's commitment to MAMCO as part of the company's growing involvement in contemporary art. As a partner company to MAMCO since 2017, Mirabaud supports the museum's development activities, in particular the project 'In Course of Acquisition'.

Free admission to MAMCO in 2019 reflects the museum's determination to make contemporary art accessible to the widest possible public. We thank Mirabaud for their support in implementing this policy of outreach and sharing.

MAMCO GENEVE

Winter 2019 sequence

FEB 27, 2019 – MAY 5, 2019 Opening FEB 26, 2019

- René Daniels, *Fragments d'un roman inachevé*. Organized by Paul Bernard, in collaboration with Devrim Bayar, the exhibition was first shown at WIELS, Brussels
- Marcia Hafif, *Inventaire*. Organized by Lionel Bovier and Sophie Costes
- Martin Kippenberger, *The Museum of Modern Art Syros*. Organized by Sophie Costes and Samuel Gross, in collaboration with the Swiss Institute in Roma. The exhibition was first shown at Fondazione Sant'Elia, Palermo. With the generous support of Fondation genevoise de bienfaisance Valeria Rossi di Montelera
- Richard Nonas, *Riverrun (from Swerve to Bend)*. Organized by Lionel Bovier and Sophie Costes
- Collection(s)

Summer 2019 sequence

MAY 29 – SEPT 8, 2019 Opening MAY 28, 2019

- Walead Beshty. Organized by Lionel Bovier
- Martin Kippenberger, *The Museum of Modern Art Syros*. Organized by Sophie Costes and Samuel Gross, in collaboration with the Swiss Institute of Roma. With the generous support of Fondation genevoise de bienfaisance Valeria Rossi di Montelera
- Collection(s)

Fall 2019 sequence

OCT 9 – FEB 2, 2019 Opening OCT 8 2019

- Martin Barré. Organized by Clément Dirié
- Rosemarie Castoro. Organized by Julien Fronsacq
- Collection(s)

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