



**UO Gestalt**  
**Sunsthalle Basel**  
**19.5.–13.8.2017**

**Caroline  
 ACHAINTRE**

**Olga  
 BALEMA**

**Joachim  
 BANDAUI**

**Trisha  
 DONNELLY**

**Marcel  
 DUCHAMP**

**Michaela  
 EICHWALD**

**Florence  
 JUNG**

**Eric N.  
 MACK**

**Liz  
 MAGOR**

**Park  
 McARTHUR**

**PAKUI  
 HARDWARE**

**Nathalie  
 PERRIN**

**Tomo  
 SAVIĆ-GEKAN**

**Lucie  
 STAHL**

**Alina  
 SZAPOCZNIKOW**

**Adrián  
 VILLAR ROJAS**

You are greeted by gleaming technoid forms of vaguely human dimensions. Joachim Bandau's too long overlooked, but utterly contemporary-seeming sculptures of the 1960s and 1970s appear to be functional (note their quasi-industrial finishes, their wheels, handles, tubes, and protective rubber casings), yet they are resolutely without purpose. They stand like alien devices, weirdly sensual and creaturely. Nearby, a recent composition involving a thrift store blanket and textile scraps by Eric N. Mack hangs limply; further into the exhibition, other examples of his textile collages are affixed to a curtain railing or swoon onto the floor. Without fixed shape or form and released from the strict geometry of a stretched canvas, Mack's sewn and arranged material remnants are marked by their kinship to commodities and popular culture: street style, Prince, greasy takeout food, a Harlem dog hospital advert, et cetera.

You sense that these works engage a history of painting, just as Caroline Achaintre's hand-tufted rugs do, the latter even more pronouncedly engaging with domesticity, with "women's work," with a dirtiness (of the floors they allude to), and exhibiting a flaccidity that is neither genteel nor heroic. A yet different engagement with the history of painting is that of Michaela Eichwald, whose works feature abstract traces. Those gestural marks stick to cheap imitation leather on which the paint doesn't dry as it would on canvas; it remains tacky for a long time, dust invariably clinging to the gummy surface. All of these works' insistent materiality plays with that most auratic of art history's mediums, rendering it less noble—even debased somehow.

And the vaunted tradition of sculpture, for its part, is made irrepressibly strange (Freud had a name for it, *unheimlich*, or uncanny) by Liz Magor's *Sleepers*. These works are variations on a theme: a doll wrapped in a rubberized silicone cast of a baby blanket, "swaddled" so only the uppermost part of its forehead and hair spill out. "Creepy" is perhaps the best word to describe them. They lie, casually but eerily, on the floor and in your way (indeed, much of Magor's materially confounding oeuvre operates this way, and pieces are scattered throughout the show). So opens the exhibition.

There is no easy way to account for a show that goes by the title *Ungestalt*. The German term signifies neither exactly the English "formlessness" nor the French *informe*, yet shares something of their essence. Indeed, the rather arcane word conveys wildly different senses, which seems perfectly fitting for the present circumstance. It is a description of something that struggles against delineation—indeed, against the clean, articulated wholeness suggested by *Gestalt*. It also describes something clumsy and misshapen, even monstrously so. Under these rubrics, amorphous, gooey, abject, and fugitive emanations might be described as *ungestalt*. Perhaps something that both is a form, and actively undoes that form, comes closest to embodying a term that itself escapes capture. But how might we apprehend this notion not only materially, but also perceptually and conceptually? And how might thinking about it offer a vehicle for understanding the divergent practices of the artists, living and dead, who made these works half a century ago—or as recently as last month?

In the gallery's second room and presented a bit as if in the storage area of a *Wunderkammer*, pedestals abutting pedestals, sculptures, drawings, and photographs are positioned so low that you must get on your knees to properly view them. Here works by Marcel Duchamp and Alina Szapocznikow serve as core historic elements. In the 1950s, long before it was possible to recognize them as "outtakes" of his final artwork, *Étant donnés: 1. La chute d'eau 2. Le gaz d'éclairage* (1946–66), Duchamp produced a series of three strangely formed objects, looking like body casts. Although they don't immediately reveal their indexical counterparts or their relationship to the nude figure in Duchamp's final installation, this trio of so-called "erotic objects" have a curious corporeality and take up an indeterminate

role as both things in themselves and preambles to another artwork beyond them. They encircle a 1971 sculpture by Szapocznikow in polyester resin cast from body parts (a foot, a breast), amalgamated with the ordinary stuff of her studio (pantyhose, newspaper). The Polish sculptor described her works from the late 1960s and early 1970s as nothing more than "awkward objects," which might have been another way of calling them *ungestalt*. Haunting, visceral, sensual, endlessly uncanny: Szapocznikow's body casts, lugubrious forms, and accretions of matter using unorthodox materials, methods, and forms act, much as Duchamp's works here do, as harbingers of the absent but nevertheless disquieting (real) body at the heart of the presentation.

Populating this exhibition are exquisitely ungainly, recalcitrant works that, each in their own way, refuse to be docile, stable, well-balanced. There is something obscene, unsettling, or (quite literally) rotten about them, even when they might also be described as inexplicably attractive, even elegant. Sometimes the artworks' resistance is material: as with Olga Balema's ever so slightly quivering, mechanized and mysterious, or viscous and dripping, always odd sculptural forms; Lucie Stahl's resin-coated photographs that depict hands grasping various dirty industrial or natural elements; the artistic duo Pakui Hardware's industrial shelves and trays with archival NASA images of Mars imprinted on silicone so that they look like diseased skin; or Park McArthur's upright, pocked, partially plastic-draped, scribbled-upon foam pieces that stand like strange sentinels or anti-monuments in the final room of the exhibition.

Sometimes the artworks' resistance is more perceptual than material, as with Trisha Donnelly's two filmic works, one an abstract moving image, the other a still projected image, each hovering somewhere between analog and digital, and each appearing at once present and effaced, almost apparitional. Or Adrián Villar Rojas's comestibles slowly rotting in a crammed refrigerator-freezer. His encased display of domestic entropy—neither entirely solid nor liquid, increasingly oozing the more the audience opens its door to take a look—creates not only a slippage between luxury commodities (lobsters, champagne, scallops, pomegranates) and disgusting waste, but also fills the air of the gallery with its nasty, olfactive signature.

Sometimes the artworks' resistance is conceptual, as Tomo Savić-Gecan's literally self-undoing works. For example the one that is nothing more than its value—a value declining every minute of the exhibition's run. Set at CHF 100,000 at the opening of the show, it dwindles until it announces its own worthlessness. Another piece by him quite literally changes the conditions of the exhibition, impacting humidity levels in the galleries according to unseen forces. Nathalie Perrin's drawings, on the other hand, portray the chaos of a mind that sees connections between wildly divergent points of reference: classical music, military strategy, Russian novels, chess maneuvers, geography. To read them is to trace vertigo-inducing connections between the incomprehensible plenitude of the world and Perrin's scribbled attempt to in some way map it.

*Ungestalt* brings together a subjective ensemble of newly commissioned and existing pieces of drawing, photography, sculpture, textile, and video by fifteen artists and one artistic duo, each of whom has responded to their moment with works characterized by a tantalizing, yet unnerving, volatility. In its amorphous excess, the show also poses the question: How can an exhibition itself become subject to a certain degree of *unforming*? One answer is: through some abdication of control. Accordingly, Florence Jung, known for her various acts of artistic evasion in which rumors or audience sequestration or counterfeit items replace art, was invited to exert her influence upon the exhibition. Her (possible) interventions into every aspect of the show's preparation, presentation, and communication constitute her artwork, the details of which will remain confidential. Her imperceptible, incommunicable influence undoes the exhibition just as the shifting humidity levels and the rot wafting in the air subtly outmaneuver curatorial control, rendering a show that is not quite governable, not quite containable, not quite able to itself achieve *Gestalt*.

**LIST OF WORKS**

Florence Jung  
*Jung52*, 2017  
Performance  
Courtesy the artist

**ONLINE  
KUNSTHALLEBASEL.CH**

Tomo Savić-Gecan  
*Untitled*, 2007–2017  
The value of the artwork is the artwork; the value is in a constant state of devaluation, from the moment the exhibition begins until its closure, at which point the artwork will be worth nothing. You may inquire at Kunsthalle Basel about the value of the artwork at any given moment or consult the website. Courtesy the artist

**ROOM 2**

**1** Eric N. Mack  
*Necklace Sundries*, 2017  
Acrylic and dye on cotton t-shirt, dinner napkin, rope, terrycloth  
167.64 × 213.36 cm  
Courtesy the artist; Moran Bondaroff, Los Angeles; and Simon Lee Gallery, London

**2** Trisha Donnelly  
*Untitled*  
Video  
Flexible dimension  
Courtesy the artist

**3** Liz Magor  
*Bull 1/5*, 2001  
Silicone rubber  
1.5 × 30.5 × 20 cm  
Courtesy the artist and Susan Hobbs Gallery, Toronto

**4** Nathalie Perrin  
*Le Dahlia noir*, 2015  
16 × 11.2 cm  
*Jacob et l'ange I*, 2015  
16 × 11.2 cm  
*Jacob et l'ange II*, 2015  
16 × 11.2 cm  
*La plaire du donakili*, 2017  
70 × 50 cm  
*Ungestalt IV*, 2017  
25.5 × 18.1 cm  
All works pencil on paper  
Courtesy the artist

**ROOM 1**

**1** Joachim Bandau  
*Der Tänzer*, 1968  
Glass fiber reinforced polyester, lacquer  
147 × 88 × 57 cm  
Private collection, Zurich

**2** Eric N. Mack  
*Pelle Pelle*, 2017  
Microfiber blanket, polyester, silk curtains  
254 × 480.06 × 10.16 cm  
Courtesy the artist; Moran Bondaroff, Los Angeles; and Simon Lee Gallery, London

**3** Liz Magor  
*Heavenly Wool Blanket*, 2013  
Platinum cured silicone rubber, wool  
71 × 54.5 × 11.5 cm  
Courtesy the artist and Susan Hobbs Gallery, Toronto

**4** Joachim Bandau  
*Mannequin*, 1974  
C hose couplings, glass fiber reinforced polyester, mannequin segments, malleable cast iron rolls, rubber tube  
196 × 76 × 105 cm  
Courtesy Joachim Bandau; Galerie Thomas Fischer, Berlin; and Galerie Mark Müller, Zurich

**5** Michaela Eichwald  
*Keine Narration*, 2016  
Acrylic, tempera, varnish, wood stain on pleather  
135 × 185 × 4 cm  
Courtesy the artist and Silberkuppe, Berlin

**6** Liz Magor  
*Sleeper 5*, 1999  
Doll head, silicone rubber  
12 × 69 × 15 cm  
Courtesy the artist and Catriona Jeffries, Vancouver

**7** Caroline Achaintre  
*MadCap*, 2017  
Hand tufted wool  
270 × 204 cm  
Courtesy the artist and Arcade, London

**ROOM 4**

**1** Tomo Savić-Gecan  
*Untitled*, 2005–2017  
A mechanism recorded the entry times of visitors to the exhibition *The One*, held at the New General Catalogue Gallery in New York from October 15 to November 14, 2005; the data from that mechanism is shifting the humidity levels at Kunsthalle Basel for the duration of the exhibition *Ungestalt* from May 19 to August 13, 2017. Courtesy the artist

**2** Pakui Hardware  
*Hesitant Hand*, 2017  
UV print on silicone, images from NASA digital archive, plastic, PVC silicone rubber belts, stainless steel, transportation boxes  
Dimension variable  
Courtesy the artists and Exile Gallery, Berlin

**3** Joachim Bandau  
*Fahrbare schwarze Sesselgruppe*, 1971  
Anodized aluminum, C hose couplings, glass fiber reinforced polyester, mannequin segments, rolls, Vacuflex hoses, varnish  
107 × 90.5 × 94 cm, 105 × 90.5 × 94 cm  
Courtesy Joachim Bandau; Galerie Thomas Fischer, Berlin; and Galerie Mark Müller, Zurich

**4** Joachim Bandau  
*Flossenfuss*, 1973  
Glass fiber reinforced polyester, pigmented  
13 × 86 × 91 cm  
Courtesy Joachim Bandau; Galerie Thomas Fischer, Berlin; and Galerie Mark Müller, Zurich

**5** Lucie Stahl  
*Frozen*, 2017  
Inkjet print, aluminum, epoxy resin  
167 × 120 × 2.5 cm  
Collection Artemis Baltoyanni

**6** Lucie Stahl  
*Spill*, 2017  
Inkjet print, aluminum, epoxy resin  
167 × 120 × 2.5 cm  
Courtesy the artist and Freedman Fitzpatrick, Los Angeles

**7** Alina Szapocznikow  
*Untitled* (from the *Expansion* series), 1968  
Polyester resin, polyurethane foam  
90.8 × 59.7 × 5 cm  
Courtesy The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow / Piotr Stanislawski / Galerie Loevenbruck, Paris

**9** Alina Szapocznikow  
*Le pied (Fétiche V)*, 1971  
Colored polyester resin, glass wool, newspaper, nylon tights, plexiglas  
25 × 55 × 36 cm  
The property of Wielkopolskie Towarzystwo Zachęty Sztuk Pięknych

**10** Marcel Duchamp  
*Feuille de vigne femelle*, 1950  
Painted plaster cast  
8.5 × 13 × 11.5 cm  
Private collection

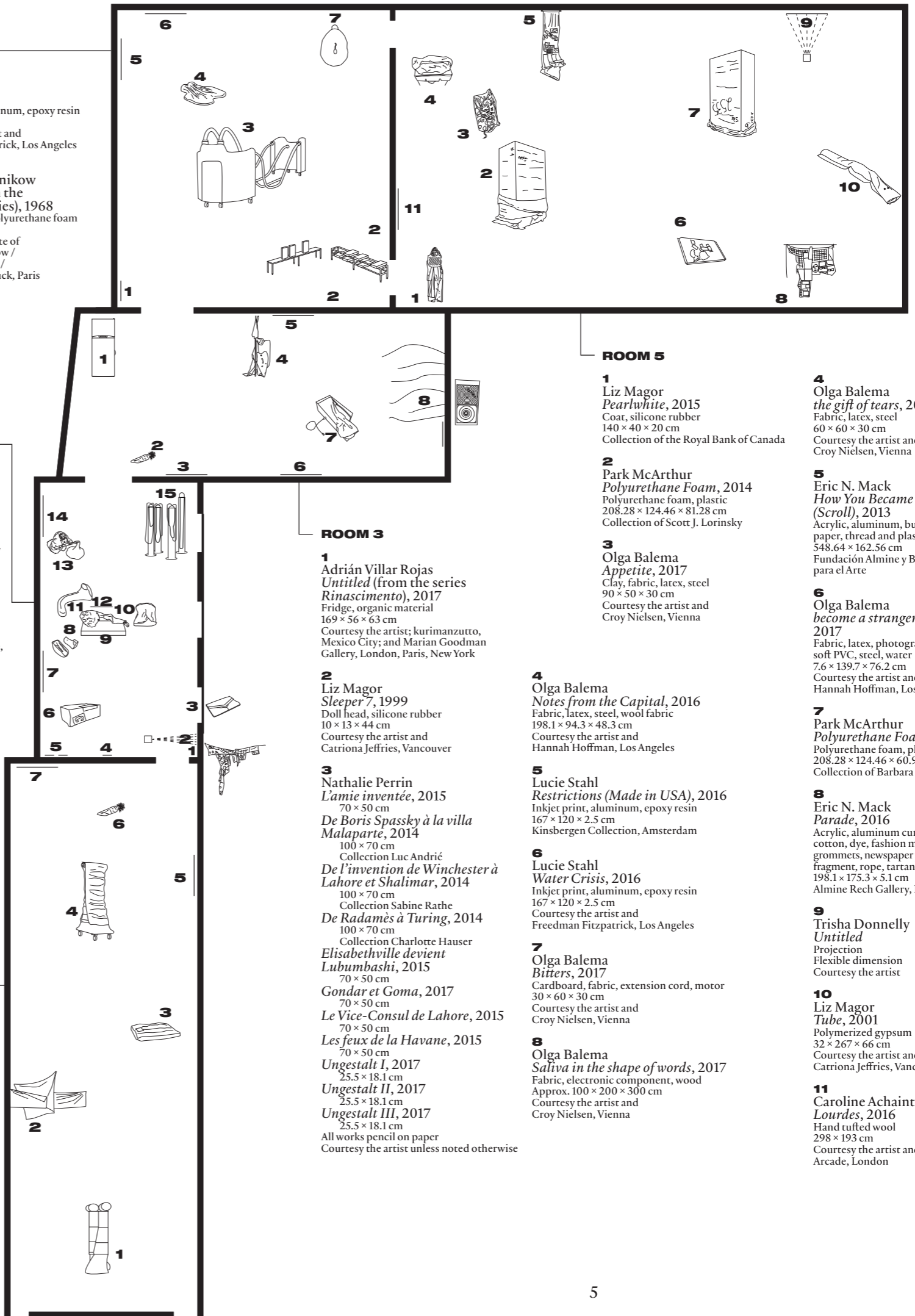
**11** Marcel Duchamp  
*Objet-dard*, 1951  
Copper-electroplated plaster cast with inlaid lead rib  
7.5 × 17.8 × 6 cm  
Private collection

**12** Alina Szapocznikow  
*Sans titre*, 1960  
Pencil on laid paper  
20.7 × 27.8 cm  
Private collection

**13** Alina Szapocznikow  
*Sous la Coupole (La métamorphose)*, 1970  
Nylon tights, polyurethane foam  
36 × 73 × 100 cm  
Courtesy The Estate of Alina Szapocznikow / Piotr Stanislawski / Galerie Loevenbruck, Paris

**14** Michaela Eichwald  
*Tämur*, 2016  
Acrylic and varnish on pleather  
290 × 135 × 4 cm  
Courtesy the artist and Silberkuppe, Berlin

**15** Joachim Bandau  
*Fingerbank*, 1970  
Glass fiber reinforced polyester, mannequin segments, plexiglas, rubber tubes, shower hoses, varnish  
4 parts in total,  
3 parts each 120 × 20 × 20 cm,  
1 part 160 × 20 × 20 cm  
Courtesy Joachim Bandau; Galerie Thomas Fischer, Berlin; and Galerie Mark Müller, Zurich



Caroline Achaintre was born in 1969 in Toulouse, FR;  
she lives and works in London.

Olga Balema was born in 1984 in Lviv, UKR;  
she lives and works in Berlin and New York, USA.

Joachim Bandau was born in 1936 in Cologne, DE;  
he lives and works in Aachen, DE, and Stäfa, CH.

Trisha Donnelly was born in 1974 in San Francisco, USA;  
she lives and works in Düsseldorf, DE, and New York, USA.

Marcel Duchamp was born in 1887 in Blainville-Crevon, FR,  
and died in 1968 in Neuilly-sur-Seine, FR.

Michaela Eichwald was born in 1967 in Cologne, DE;  
she lives and works in Berlin.

Florence Jung was born in 1984 in Fort-de-France, FR;  
she lives and works in Biel/Bienne, CH.

Eric N. Mack was born in 1987 in Columbia, USA;  
he lives and works in New York, USA.

Liz Magor was born in 1948 in Winnipeg, CA;  
she lives and works in Berlin and Vancouver, CA.

Park McArthur was born in 1984 in Raleigh, USA;  
she lives and works in New York, USA.

Pakui Hardware: Neringa Černiauskaitė was born in 1984  
in Klaipėda, LTU, and Ugnius Gelguda was born in 1977 in Vilnius;  
both live and work in Berlin and Vilnius.

Nathalie Perrin was born in 1989 in Geneva, CH;  
she lives and works in La Croix-sur-Lutry, CH.

Tomo Savić-Gecan was born in 1967 in Zagreb;  
he lives and works in Amsterdam.

Lucie Stahl was born in 1977 in Berlin;  
she lives and works in Berlin.

Alina Szapocznikow was born in 1926 in Kalisz, PL,  
and died in 1973 in Passy, FR.

Adrián Villar Rojas was born in 1980 in Rosario, AR;  
he lives and works in Rosario, AR, and New York, USA.

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FABA FUNDACIÓN ALMINE Y BERNARD RUIZ-PICASSO PARA EL ARTE

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## GUIDED TOURS THROUGH THE EXHIBITION

Every Sunday at 3 pm guided tour, in German

21.5.2017, Sunday, 3 pm  
Curator's tour, in English

11.6.2017, Sunday, 3 pm  
Guided tour, in English

29.6.2017, Thursday, 6:30 pm  
Guided tour, in English

## EDUCATION / PUBLIC PROGRAMS

Children's tour *I Spy with My Little Eye!*

11.6.2017, Sunday, 3 pm

6.8.2017, Sunday, 3 pm

A tour and workshop for children,  
from 5 – 10 yrs.,  
in German, by reservation only:

[kunstvermittlung@kunsthallebasel.ch](mailto:kunstvermittlung@kunsthallebasel.ch)

*Lautstark 9* presentation

22.6.2017, Thursday, 5 pm

An audio guide for *Ungestalt* conducted  
by students from Birsfelden secondary  
school; available to all visitors.

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