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Gagosian Gstaad to Present Group Exhibition of Modern and Contemporary Swiss Artists, with an Additional Focus on Art Brut

Swiss Made: From Ferdinand Hodler to Urs Fischer Opens July 15, 2022



Urs Fischer, *Varnish Tarnish*, 2022, aluminum composite panel, aluminum honeycomb, polyurethane adhesive, epoxy primer, gesso, solvent-based screen printing paint, and water-based screen printing paint, 72 × 96 inches (182.9 × 243.8 cm) © Urs Fischer

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To be simple is not always as easy as it seems.
—Ferdinand Hodler

NEW YORK, July 7, 2022—Gagosian Gstaad is pleased to announce *Swiss Made: From Ferdinand Hodler to Urs Fischer*, a group exhibition of painting, drawing, and sculpture by modern and contemporary Swiss artists, and figures associated with art brut.

Swiss Made was inspired in part by *Visionary Switzerland*, a traveling exhibition curated by Harald Szeemann in 1992 for Kunsthaus Zürich. Szeemann framed his selection of work by iconoclastic artists in conscious opposition to the reductive notion of a Swiss “national” aesthetic, contradicting the widespread perception of Switzerland as a country without a history. The exhibition underscored the continuing influence of Constructivism and explored the legacy of the art brut tendency first identified and promoted by Jean Dubuffet in 1947.

Similarly, *Swiss Made* integrates the modern and the contemporary, juxtaposing work by key twentieth-century figures with that of contemporary descendants. Among several works by Ferdinand Hodler are a striking 1916 self-portrait drawing and *Die Technik* (1896/97), a characteristic work on paper from the artist’s Symbolist period. Hodler is known for his development of “parallelism,” a style

that emphasizes the symmetry and rhythm that he believed underpin society; his work after 1900 also displays an expressionist bent in its use of strong color and geometrical simplification. A trio of works by Paul Klee includes *Sommerhäuser* (1926), a playful oil-and-watercolor depiction of a cluster of holiday homes, and *Maske aus Zis-we-sen* (1933), a watercolor portrayal of a horned head that exemplifies the artist's repeated use of the mask as a complex motif that shifts between the humorous, the melancholic, and the macabre.

Among the present-day contributors to *Swiss Made* are Louise Bonnet and Heidi Bucher. In Urs Fischer's large screenprinted panel *Varnish Tarnish* (2022), the image of a face in close-up with eyes shut is partially and tantalizingly obscured by a fragment of a second visage. Peter Fischli and David Weiss's *Pflanze* (1987), which represents its eponymous subject—a plant—in dense black synthetic rubber, belongs to an extended series of takes on ordinary objects that renders them strange through association with mass production and sexual fetishism. And in the mirrored painting *Anamazon (Yield)* (2021), Pamela Rosenkranz continues her contiguous investigations into the ecosystem of the Amazon and the operation of the online retail giant that appropriated its name.

Finally, works by Aloïse Corbaz (1886–1964) and Adolf Wölfli (1864–1930) represent the practices of two Swiss artists who exercised their creativity without academic training, and outside professional circles. The paintings and drawings of Lausanne-born Corbaz were included in Dubuffet's foundational collection of art by psychiatric patients; she was also among very few such artists to achieve significant critical acclaim. Her contribution to *Swiss Made* is a depiction of a group of voluptuous female figures, rendered in vivid color and with an evident horror vacui that also distinguishes Wölfli's approach to composition. These artists' idiosyncratic visions join those of contemporaries and near contemporaries working within the established art world to reveal the story of visual practice in Switzerland as surprisingly heterogeneous and colored by a healthy refusal to conform.

Featured artists include Balthus, Max Bill, Louise Bonnet, Heidi Bucher, Aloïse Corbaz, Urs Fischer, Peter Fischli and David Weiss, Augusto Giacometti, Ferdinand Hodler, Paul Klee, Meret Oppenheim, Ugo Rondinone, Pamela Rosenkranz, Setsuko, Louis Soutter, Jean Tinguely, Felix Vallotton, and Adolf Wölfli.

#SwissMade

Swiss Made: From Ferdinand Hodler to Urs Fischer

Opening reception: Friday, July 15, 12–8pm

July 15–September 17, 2022

Promenade 79, Gstaad

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