

Press release

Reopening of the Fondation Fernet-Branca and vernissage of *Splendore – joie joie joie...*

To the Media

Saint-Louis, April 2, 2024

Dear members of the media

It is with great pleasure that we reopen the doors of the Fondation Fernet-Branca on the occasion of its 20th anniversary, after several months of renovation and upgrading of our 1500 m² of exhibition space. This renovation will enable us to better welcome artists and audiences from all horizons.

Our ambition is to reaffirm our place in the local and international cultural landscape. We want to support contemporary art, both within the region and on the national and international scene, and diversify the range of art we present.

After twenty years of contemporary art exhibitions, following a policy of promoting creation and artistic education for all audiences, we wish to make room for experimentation, for the free exploration of new artistic forms and interventions. While we want to encourage local artistic initiatives, we are also committed to dialogue with the various trends in international contemporary art.

Through exhibitions devoted to artists and themes in tune with current developments, we aim to foster contemporary creation through initiatives such as this carte blanche proposed to Richard Neyroud, exhibition curator, who will initiate our reopening with the exhibition ***Splendore - joie, joie, joie...***

The Fondation Fernet-Branca was founded on the initiative of Jean Ueberschlag and the City of Saint-Louis, but it is through exchanges with the entire trinational region, and beyond through exchanges with international contemporary creation, that our institution will find its place as a cultural pillar. By establishing itself as a place of innovation and artistic dialogue, our foundation will fulfill its mission of supporting contemporary art.

Martine Zimmermann

President of the Fondation Fernet-Branca



Splendore – joie, joie, joie

What if the name of a cocktail (½ Amaretto ½ Fernet-Branca) invented by Marcello Mastroianni during the filming of *Splendor** could be the conception point for an exhibition to mark the reopening of the Fondation Fernet-Branca? What if this cocktail were also the name of a poem by P. P. Pasolini:

*O joy, joy, joy..
Was there any joy left
in this absurd night
prepared for us?**

A joyful cocktail is prepared, and we're no longer sure whether we owe this exhibition to the poem or to the film, or even to the name of the cinema in the small Italian town that is at the heart of Ettore Scola's film: a *Splendor* sign illuminates the front of a cinema that, in the late 1980s, was seeking its audience at a time when television screens predominated. It's at this moment that joy is needed to get the machine going again and, above all, to experience a collective adventure beyond all expectations: *Splendore – joie, joie, joie...*

When *Splendor* takes on an e, it's the poem that speaks: Was there still joy in this absurd night prepared for us? An open question for the artists who responded to this invitation with the breath of the poem.

This joy - at once protective, rebellious, and liberating - is professed at the heart of an exhibition featuring artists who see night, dreams and states of semi-consciousness between (re)awakening and sleep as possible extensions of reality, spearheads, or even tools of prediction.

Richard Neyroud
Curator

* *Splendor* (1989), film directed by Ettore Scola.

** *Splendore* (1943-1949), P. P. Pasolini, in *Poèmes de jeunesse et quelques autres* (English translation, 2024).



Artists

Benedikt Bock

Benedikt Bock (* 1987, Germany) lives and works in Zurich. His artistic research is closely linked to a practice of writing and text as medium. From this stem objects, sculptures, and performances, in which often allegory is employed as a stylistic tool. His films combine personal images with parts of his work-in-progress novel *Robert Zweifel* fictional texts. Benedikt Bock is a finalist in the Swiss Art Awards 2024.

Leolie Greet

Leolie Greet (*1995, Switzerland) lives and works in Biel. In *Splendore – joie, joie, joie...*, the artist articulates ideas that materialize in space, structuring it and linking several elements together. Her installations are like stagings that speak of a world in transformation, told through objects, material associations, gestures in space and fragments of narrative. It's a narrative without beginning or end, self-constructing and self-deconstructing, leaving room for other possibilities and for a collective (re)formulation of our relationships.

Tenki Hiramatsu

Tenki Hiramatsu (* 1986, Japan) lives and works in Berlin. His paintings, evocative of emotional states and diverse visions, tell their own stories without fully revealing themselves. With the appearance of characters, monsters and animals, they create a narrative while allowing an open reading of things. Night and sleep play an important role in his subjects.

Marlijn Karsten

Marlijn Karsten (* 1996, Switzerland) lives and works in Basel. Marlijn Karsten's current focus is about the diversity of the aesthetics of nature. These researches are nourished by the experience of the night, of the intermediate phases between sleeping and falling asleep. It all began on a sleepless night, when speeding cars and the presence of a fly in the bedroom began to make the same sound.

Geneviève Morin

Geneviève Morin (* 1963, Canada) lives and works in Hégenheim and Basel. Her artistic practice ranges from oil painting to watercolour, from drawing to analogue printing techniques. In her work, the visual and emotional reality of dreams and the unconscious are assimilated with everyday impressions. She invests this in her work to break down the barriers between physical, spiritual and dream reality.

Leontios Toumpouris

Leontios Toumpouris (* 1982, Cyprus) lives and works in Nicosia. For this exhibition the artist begins a dialogue with the space, presenting sculptures from a body of recent work and interpreting his essay *About outlines*. Referring to the convergence of memory and fiction, his works come from intuition to suggest speculative projections towards a slow, reciprocal, and sustainable future. A sculptural vocabulary is used to manifest connection with nature and communicate embodied experiences of deep time and materiality.

Noémie Vidonne

Noémie Vidonne (* 1999, France) lives and works in Mulhouse. In her work the artist creates scenes and atmospheres inspired by the spaces she has passed through, the places she has visited in her dreams or those that belong to her past. Whether through her childhood memories or more dreamlike ones, she allows us to experience new environments filled with the memory of her family and its own history.



Program

April 13 – July 7, 2024

Splendore – joie, joie, joie...

With Benedikt Bock, Leolie Greet, Tenki Hiramatsu, Marlijn Karsten, Geneviève Morin, Leontios

Toumpouris, Noémie Vidonne

Curated by Richard Neyroud

April 12, 7 pm

Reopening of the Fondation Fernet-Branca and vernissage

Free admission

April 13, 11 am – 5 pm

Fondation Fernet-Branca open house

Guided tours of the exhibition at 11:30 am & 2 pm

Free admission

June 12, 10 am – 12 pm

Breakfast as part of *Splendore – joie, joie, joie...* with readings by the artists Benedikt Bock & Leontios

Toumpouris

Free admission

10. – 16.06.2024

Free admission

Opening hours:

Wednesday to Sunday, 1 pm to 6 pm

Closed Mondays and Tuesdays

Guided tours:

By appointment only at info@fondationfernet-branca.org

Support

We thank the Saint-Louis City Council and its mayor Pascale Schmidiger for their generous support.

Press

A media tour takes place on April 11, 2024, at 11 am, where the president Martine Zimmermann and the curator Richard Neyroud will be present. Please register at presse@fondationfernet-branca.org. Press images can be found on this [link](#). Should you have any questions or require further information, do not hesitate to contact me.

Yours sincerely

Lukas Zitzer

Communication and press

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