

**Media release**  
**Zurich, 22 March 2024**

## **Kunsthhaus Zürich presents 'Born Digital. Video art in the new millennium'**

**What happens when digital natives create an exhibition? They go in search of pixels and find them in the media art collection at the Kunsthhaus Zürich. From 7 June to 29 September 2024, the Kunsthhaus presents ten works that embody the spirit of the new millennium, in a show that will appeal to art enthusiasts, video fans and tech nerds alike.**

There's a hidden gem at the heart of the Kunsthhaus Zürich: a media art collection that is one of the largest in Switzerland. Luca Rey (31), a research assistant in the Collection of Prints and Drawings, and media art conservator Éléonore Bernard (31) have delved into the more than 600 works that make up the collection and are now curating their first exhibition together. The ten pieces they have selected for 'Born Digital' were all created between 2000 and 2005.

### ROBOTS, MANGAS AND PERFORMATIVE PIRACY

The thematic focus of the works chosen is on aspects of the digital transformation: Yves Netzhammer's (b. 1970, Switzerland) 'Die umgekehrte Rüstung' (The Reversed Armory, 2002) makes compelling use of the then-novel aesthetic of CGI. In Cao Fei's (b. 1978, China) 'Cosplayers' (2004), young Chinese people in the booming and fast-growing city of Guangzhou dress up in costumes representing their manga and computer game heroes, overlaying virtual worlds and reality. In the large three-channel video installation 'A Woman under the Influence – to cut a long story short' (2003) by Tatjana Marušić (b. 1971, Croatia/Switzerland), clips from a TV movie are digitally edited to the point of unrecognizability, and reassembled into an entirely new glitch aesthetic strongly reminiscent of digital image distortion. Another focus is on works that particularly convey the zeitgeist of the new millennium: 'La Suisse existe' (2000) by Christoph Büchel (b. 1966, Switzerland) presents Adolf Ogi's speech marking the new millennium, which the artist has recorded in an act of performative piracy and thus transposed into the context of art. In his address, the President of the Confederation at the time calls on the Swiss population to be courageous and carry on. This blends seamlessly into 'I love Switzerland' (2002) by the Swiss video artist duo Com&Com, Marcus Gossolt (b. 1969) and Johannes M. Hedinger

(b. 1971), which dramatizes and parodies Swiss national pride using simple digital video technology.

The other artists whose video works appear are Rita McBride (b. 1960, USA), Diana Thater (b. 1962, USA), Susann Walder (1959–2015, CH), Gabriela Gerber / Lukas Bardill (b. 1970 / b. 1968, Switzerland) and Zilla Leutenegger (b. 1968, Switzerland). While preparing the exhibition, Luca Rey and Éléonore Bernard had the opportunity to consult many of the artists on how to display their works correctly and preserve them in the best possible way. Thanks to its variety of presentation formats, the exhibition will appeal to both art enthusiasts and technology fans.

### QUESTIONS OF TIME IN AN AGE OF TECHNOLOGICAL CHANGE

The 1990s saw the advent of a technological transformation in video art, as digital storage media such as DVDs replaced analogue video cassettes. The works of many artists from this period reflect on globalization and mirror the radical technologization of society. Since the start of the new millennium, creatives have been inspired by products of popular culture such as video games. These are complemented by CGI (computer-generated imagery), hacking and new forms of image distortion such as 'glitches', all of which have left their mark on video art. Increasingly, artists working in all disciplines are using digital technologies to produce their works, for installations and multimedia collages. That wider usage has transformed the aesthetic of the artworks, their relationship to space and time and, with it, the sensory experience for the viewer. The discourse has also widened to encompass questions such as: How do we train our perception to cope with the daily deluge of moving images? How do artists react to the shift from analogue to digital? What themes distinguish the new perspectives that have gained access to the global canon since the millennium? What is the relevance of video to the art of the 2000s, and what means of production does it use?

### ACCOMPANYING PUBLICATION ALSO COVERS ART AND MEDIA HISTORY

To reflect on both art and media history, exhibition creators Éléonore Bernard and Luca Rey complement the video works with a selection of especially representative DVD covers illustrating the transition from analogue to digital media. A publication that broadens the focus of the exhibition includes contributions by Éléonore Bernard, Sophie Bunz, Simone Gehr, Tony Kranz, Luca Rey, Alia Slater, Annine Soland, Kim Stengl and Laura Vuille, a foreword by Ann Demeester and an interview with Tobia Bezzola and Mirjam Varadinis. It is the latest in a series of collection publications. Entitled 'Born Digital. Medienkunst 1995–2005', it will be available from the Kunsthaus shop and bookstores from 6 June (Scheidegger & Spiess, 96 pages, in German).

The exhibition, along with the media preservation and art-historical analysis required, has been supported by Memoriav, the Association for the preservation of the audiovisual heritage of Switzerland. The Dr Georg and Josi Guggenheim Foundation is also supporting the exhibition.

### GENERAL INFORMATION

Kunsthaus Zürich, Heimplatz, CH-8001 Zurich

Tel. +41 (0)44 253 84 84, [www.kunsthhaus.ch](http://www.kunsthhaus.ch)

For details of tickets and prices, opening hours and events see [www.kunsthhaus.ch/en/besuch-planen/](http://www.kunsthhaus.ch/en/besuch-planen/) and [www.kunsthhaus.ch/en/besuch-planen/agenda/](http://www.kunsthhaus.ch/en/besuch-planen/agenda/). Tickets can be obtained from the cash desk or in advance at [www.kunsthhaus.ch](http://www.kunsthhaus.ch).

Zurich Tourism, tourist information office in Zurich main railway station, tel. +41 44 215 40 00, [info@zuerich.com](mailto:info@zuerich.com), [www.zuerich.com](http://www.zuerich.com).

### INVITATION TO THE MEDIA BRIEFING AND CONTACT FOR EDITORS

The preview of the exhibition takes place on 6 June from 10 a.m. to 12 midday. Welcome by Kunsthhaus Director Ann Demeester and introduction by Luca Rey and Éléonore Bernard at 11 a.m.

Media releases and images to download as well as an overview of dates for media briefings can be found at [www.kunsthhaus.ch/en/medien-bereich](http://www.kunsthhaus.ch/en/medien-bereich). For further information, contact: Kunsthhaus Zürich, Kristin Steiner, [kristin.steiner@kunsthhaus.ch](mailto:kristin.steiner@kunsthhaus.ch), tel. +41 (0)44 253 84 13.