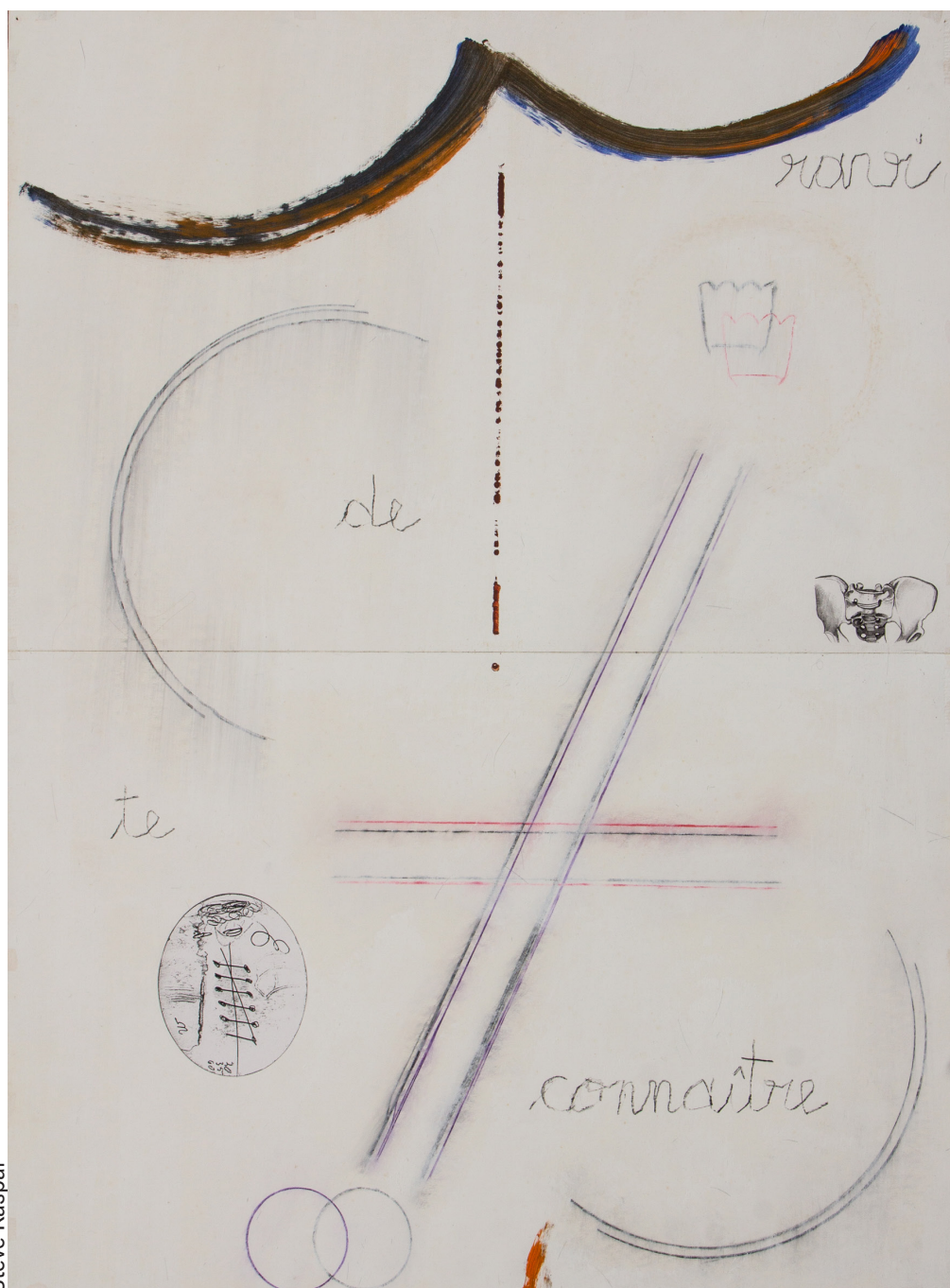


Ravi de te connaître  
Gifts to the Museum  
14.06 > 16.08.26



Steve Kaspar

- Marianne Berenhaut  
Maurice Blaussyld  
Dirk Braeckman  
Raoul De Keyser  
Ronny Delrue  
Marlene Dumas  
Lionel Estève  
Bernard Gaube  
Paul den Hollander  
Kim Jones  
Steve Kaspar  
Barbara et Michael Leisgen  
Mark Manders  
Fausto Melotti  
Éric Poitevin  
José María Sicilia  
Luc Tuymans  
James Welling



# Introduction to the exhibition

Since its foundation, MACS has benefited from the generosity of artists, collectors and galleries, who have donated works to its acquisitions committee. To date, the collection comprises around one hundred works acquired in this way. While some donations have made it possible to complete groups of works otherwise purchased by the Fédération Wallonie-Bruxelles, others have enabled the museum to incorporate works it had previously exhibited and, in some cases, produced. Reflecting the diversity of the collection across disciplines, this ensemble speaks above all to themes and dialectics that are especially present in contemporary art: collective and individual memory, the social and private body, and the natural and mental landscape. Under the sign of the encounter that generates affect (in Spinoza's sense), the exhibition *Ravi de te connaître* offers an invitation to discover part of this collection through a selection of works brought together by affinity. It also provides an opportunity to thank all those who, through their donations, have contributed to enriching the Museum's collection.

**With works from: Marianne Berenhaut, Maurice Blaussyld, Dirk Braeckman, Raoul De Keyser, Ronny Delrue, Marlene Dumas, Lionel Estève, Bernard Gaube, Paul den Hollander, Kim Jones, Steve Kaspar, Barbara et Michael Leisgen, Mark Manders, Fausto Melotti, Éric Poitevin, José María Sicilia, Luc Tuymans, James Welling.**

Luc Tuymans





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# The artists

## Marianne Berenhaut

Marianne Berenhaut (Brussels, Belgium, 1934) is a Belgian sculptor, draughtswoman and visual artist. As a child, she survived the Shoah in hiding, while her parents and one of her brothers did not survive the war. In the 1970s, the soft, saturated bodies of her *Poupées-poubelles* (*Trash Dolls*) conveyed, with a blend of humour and tragedy, a femininity tested by ordeal and marked by resilience. This installation is drawn from the series *Vie privée* (*Private Life*), developed between 1980 and 2000. Collected by the artist, these objects form a veritable archaeology of the everyday and impress us with their powerful evocative force. Here, she brings together a 1940s pram placed on a ladder evoking railway tracks, together with a railway timetable and a black-and-white photograph of a woman. Together, these simple, rigorously arranged objects express a sense of deprivation – implicit in *Vie privée* – the absence caused by war and the absurdity of a path of no return.

## Maurice Blaussyld

In the work of Maurice Blaussyld (Calais, France, 1960), form remains mysterious: it is never truly produced by the artist, but rather recognised by him and revealed to us. Through a mediumistic process, he identifies 'objects' in which the presence of Being takes on new form. Stripped of all forms of vanity, Maurice Blaussyld regards each of his works, whatever the medium, as an 'offering': an act devoid of the creator's pride, and of his ego. In this 'still life', the skull invites us to contemplate the finitude of all things, while also recalling the ritual sacrifice of flesh on an altar table. The painting, whose ingredients are sealed in jars (linseed oil, turpentine), remains in a state of becoming. Imbued with a form of 'mystical materiality', Blaussyld's art suggests that images pre-exist us and endure beyond us, like archetypes.

## Dirk Braeckman

Dirk Braeckman (Eeklo, Belgium, 1958) lives and works in Ghent. Although his black-and-white photographs present simple subjects, they remain charged with a sense of strangeness. Black conceals colour, allowing things to be suggested rather than shown. The grainy, vibrant surface of his large formats stems from a pictorial approach that recalls the artist's earliest vocation. Braeckman tests the materiality of the print, reworking it with paint, chemicals, cutting and rephotography. There is no documentary intent in this fragment of an entomological plate, where neither the specimens nor their labels can be made out. Against a background of many shades of grey, the black beetles seem to float, then almost disappear into the painterly greyness of the image. With no explicit references to time, place, situation or scale, the viewer is invited to interpret an intriguing work that remains open.

## Raoul De Keyser

Raoul De Keyser (Deinze, Belgium, 1930–2012), initially an art journalist, turned to painting at the age of thirty-three. His creative development did not follow a linear path, but was marked by occasional returns to earlier works. His stylistically varied series elude the opposition between abstraction and

Marlene Dumas



figuration. Initially informed by Minimalism and Pop Art, De Keyser made a decisive shift in 1980, developing iconographic motifs – chalked lines, angular forms – while experimenting with different techniques and a broad colour palette. By the late 1980s, the forms had become more taut, more clearly delimited and more sharply differentiated. In this ‘monochrome’ of 1990, the orangey ochre colour seeps indistinctly into the margins of the canvas, like rust. It also finely scores the indeterminate pictorial space, largely dominated by blue, creating an intense luminous contrast.

## **Ronny Delrue**

Ronny Delrue (Heestert, Belgium, 1957) works in painting and drawing. His drawings constitute a primordial exercise in his work: a laboratory of ideas akin to a private journal.

His works are driven by the spontaneous, energetic reflection of the moment, by an emotion, and their titles are reduced to the place, date and time of their ‘birth’. Through an intellectual approach, a mental process, the artist seeks to attain the essential, the very essence of things. To counter the overwhelming abundance of images produced by the ‘brain eaters’, he eliminates the concrete and aesthetic elements of the image and uses a reduced colour palette. His explorations of the mind express the fear of memory loss, of the deterioration of the brain, of the petrification of the head.

## **Marlene Dumas**

Marlene Dumas (Cape Town, South Africa, 1953) lives and works in Amsterdam. She works across painting, collage and drawing. Her youth in apartheid South Africa underpins the political dimension of a body of work that questions communal identities and their representation. Her portraits, with their many typologies, encompass humanity as a whole within a subversive social and aesthetic critique. Dumas has long interrogated the fantasised images of desire. The ink washes and watercolours from her *Pin-up* series, here transposed into lithographs, draw on found images and Polaroids taken in an Amsterdam club. Ambiguous figures emerge: at once strong and fragile, evanescent and opaque, seductive and poisonous. Sinuous lines draw them endlessly into being. The eye is mischievously drawn to the trace of bronze powder that accents the contortionist dancer’s crotch, eyes and mouth.

## **Lionel Estève**

Lionel Estève (Lyon, France, 1967) lives and works in Brussels. As a sculptor, he favours simple materials and modest techniques. He constantly experiments with new materials, driven by a need to work with what is available in his environment. His exhibition of glass plates at the Musée du Verre on the Bois du Cazier site in Charleroi gave him the idea for these sculptures linked to the history of this former coal mining area. In the museum, the artist was struck by the *bousillés*: works made by workers during their breaks from leftover glass, for their own pleasure but also as an assertion of skill, running counter to the long, repetitive labour of their working day. Recalling the site, the artist hand-carves these pieces of coal into four miners. They are gathered together – standing in a circle, as if in discussion, voicing their demands.



Paul den Hollander

## **Bernard Gaube**

Self-taught artist Bernard Gaube (Kisantu, DRC, 1952), began his career as a painter in 1982 after working in ceramics. His vast, polymorphous and serial body of work also encompasses video, digital drawing and writing. Gaube continually questions his practice as a painter, discovering and experimenting as he goes. He paints both variations on historical models and numerous self-portraits. Reflecting on the theorists of modern art, he works within the constraints of geometry and harmony, such as Le Corbusier's Modulor or the golden ratio. The latter informs the series entitled *L'espace 1,2,3*. The apparent abstraction of this canvas needs to be qualified: its sketched forms, sparse colours and construction without perspective nevertheless compose a landscape – an exercise par excellence in free and joyous 'painting'.

## **Paul den Hollander**

Paul den Hollander (Breda, Netherlands, 1950) began his photographic career with *Moments in Time* (1980), a series of suspended fragments of life that seem to extend beyond the frame. A keen botanist, he produced a black-and-white series on gardens and terrariums (1982–84) in which immutable stone stands in contrast to expansive vegetation. Before turning to the *Paysages miniers* of Belgium and northern France (1989–91), *Les Pyramides du Nord* recorded the traces of a bygone industrial activity. Marked by the great quality of its tonal interplay and material effects, his rigorously framed imagery presents elements that are degraded and transformed. The photographer's abstract eye works with stains and runnels, organises repetitive motifs, and captures the *mise en abyme* of rectangles and squares against white and black grounds.

## **Kim Jones**

Kim Jones (San Bernardino, USA, 1944) works in drawing, mail art, sculpture, installation and extreme performance. During the long illness that marked his childhood, he began making his meticulous, labyrinthine 'war drawings'. The Vietnam War during which he delivered mail no doubt helped shape the contours of a practice centred on ordeal, death, odour and trajectories. Another major source of inspiration was the work of Eva Hesse, Bruce Nauman and Edward Kienholz. In the mid-1970s, the artist assumed the alter ego of *Mudman*: his body covered in mud, his head masked in nylon, and a striking structure of branches, threads and fabric carried on his back. Using these same materials, he harnessed his *Dolls* onto disturbing exoskeletons. This three-headed figure might be read as an evocation of Hecate, goddess of crossroads and thresholds, including those that lead to the afterlife and the underworld.

## **Steve Kaspar**

Steve Kaspar (Luxembourg, 1952–2020) began his career as a performer, composer of electroacoustic music, sound poet and painter. From 1989 to 1997, he devoted himself to cycles of drawings, including *Génération* (1992–97). The artist later dedicated himself entirely to sound compositions and video, thereby returning to his initial training at the New Music Theatre in Cologne under the direction of Mauricio Kagel. Steve Kaspar's subtle, fragile art conveys a poetic journey. The drawing sheet freely accommodates forms, video stills, text fragments, imprints, abrasions, stains, and experimentation. His economy of signs, the rudimentary quality

Barbara et Michael Leisgen



of the forms and his terse, awkward written marks all contribute to an esoteric language, to that 'music of the inexpressible' so dear to Vladimir Jankélévitch.

### **Barbara et Michael Leisgen**

In the early 1970s, Barbara (1940, Gengenbach, Germany – 2017, Aachen, Germany) and Michael (1944, Spital am Pyhrn, Austria) Leisgen began making the emblematic black-and-white series *Paysage mimétique* and *Mimesis*. In these works, Barbara's body enters into dialogue with a simple, open natural environment through acts of imitation. Positioned at the centre of the image, Barbara uses symbolic, primal and playful gestures to engage with the natural elements: echoing them, embracing them, encircling them, opening herself to them. Through photography, and through the elimination of perspective, an intimate, empathetic closeness to the forces of nature becomes possible. Barbara's body and the light combine to produce a scene of almost magical intensity, one that exists only for the duration of a fleeting action. These poetic odes to nature draw inspiration from Caspar David Friedrich's *Woman in front of Setting Sun* (1818), in which a woman seen from behind stretches out her arms as if to take possession of the light.

### **Mark Manders**

Since 1986, Mark Manders (Volkel, Netherlands, 1968) has developed in his practice the concept of *Self-Portrait as a Building*: an imaginary building, with its many rooms and items of furniture, in a state of perpetual construction. Painting, drawing, sculpture, installation, writing and publishing continually reconfigure these arrangements, like words in a sentence left open to interpretation. Set on its wooden support, this fragmentary torso, with its stone-like materiality, evokes a distant past. Brought into relation with contemporary items of furniture, the idealised figure raises questions about the possible connections between these combined sculptural forms. Fragile and suspended, the work appears abandoned, as though left mysteriously unfinished by the artist's departure: the trace of a thought process generated by Manders's separate, constructed *persona*.

### **Fausto Melotti**

Fausto Melotti (Rovereto, Italy, 1901 – Milan, Italy, 1986) was a sculptor, painter, draughtsman, ceramicist, musician, engineer and poet. His sculptural work moves constantly between figuration and abstraction. From the late 1940s onwards, the artist developed the dreamlike world of his *Teatrini*, delicate settings in terracotta and metal. Within these precisely defined spaces, chamber-like interiors contain simplified figures and objects in clay or plaster, composing a sculptural narrative in space. Three figures at prayer inhabit this *Clausura*: a communal religious space set apart from the outside world and conducive to contemplation. In Marian colours – white edged with blue – this small mystical theatre shelters the labours and mysteries of passing days. A quiet melancholy poetry emerges from this intimate, precarious place and its modest materials.

### **Éric Poitevin**

Éric Poitevin (Longuyon, France, 1961) creates photographs through a slow, deliberate process, composing fragile portraits, threatened landscapes



James Welling

and still lifes held in suspension, in images that unsettle our gaze. This image belongs to *Chevreuil*, a series created in 1992–93 that brought the artist international recognition. It revisits the hunting still life, a pictorial subgenre that enjoyed considerable popularity in the seventeenth century. Simple and rigorous, without artifice or décor, the composition fixes its attention on the animal that has just died. Seen in close-up, it stands out against the dense black of the background. This quasi-pictorial illusionism gives the image a striking material presence, producing the paradoxical sense of an apparition that still seems alive. The subject's life-size scale and the image's delicate chromatic range heighten the unsettling effect of a work marked by an ambiguous temporality and great visual force.

### **José María Sicilia**

José María Sicilia (Madrid, Spain, 1954) lives and works in Mallorca. In the 1990s, his poetic and formal investigation into the materiality of the object led him to develop a new surface for his paintings. He pours thin layers of warm, white liquid beeswax into a wooden frame, then spreads oil paint across the surface, leaving the result open to chance. The transparency of this living material, combined with the use of glazes, creates a complex and singular play of light which becomes central to his pictorial research. In this series, entitled *La luz que se apaga*, intensely red flowers with very dark centres emerge from or dissolve into an immaterial space. Dazzling and fragile, these monumental flowers fill the entire pictorial field, as if gathering within themselves the whole of nature, in its vital and mortal force.

### **Luc Tuymans**

In the 1980s, Luc Tuymans (Mortsel, Belgium, 1958) restored figurative painting to a central position and inspired an entire generation of artists. Centred on history and memory, his paintings draw on archival images, which they blur and overexpose in order to revitalise them. For this MACS commission, the artist turned to an image from a Super 8 film he shot at the Waterloo Panorama in the 1980s. The protagonists of the legend of Saint George are nowhere to be found. Saint, dragon and princess have been overtaken by blue-grey brushstrokes that open onto an unfathomable expanse. Seen from behind, the spectators – witnesses to this bloody Christian drama – are reduced to five ghostly silhouettes. In the ancient legend, they stand accused of cowardice. Faced with such a spectacle, is the contemporary viewer repelled, alarmed or hypnotised?

### **James Welling**

James Welling (Hartford, USA, 1951) explores the 'states of being' produced by photographic images. Taken in Greece and Italy, the photographs in the series *Cento* draw together fragments borrowed from ancient works, as the Latin title suggests. Welling revisits and revitalises the collotype process, prized in the nineteenth century for the precision of its reproductions. After making a highly saturated colour laser print on a polyester lithographic plate, he applies layers of semi-transparent black or blue ink.

Paint and pigments added by brush introduce imperfections across the surface of the image. The inked plate is exhibited as such, within an ensemble conceived in pictorial terms. The flesh-like quality of the marble and the luminous surfaces of the glassware appear all the more vibrant and tactile because they are shown bare, without glass and within reach.

# The MACS | Grand-Hornu

Established in the former Grand-Hornu colliery (an example of 19th century industrial archaeology now listed as UNESCO world heritage), the MACS is acknowledged as one of the most successful examples in northern Europe of the conversion of an abandoned industrial site into a cultural centre. Since it was opened in 2002, the museum has indeed offered a broad public the opportunity to discover major international exhibitions within an architectural showcase that combines the site's history with contemporary creation.

Located away from major urban centres, the Grand-Hornu site is noted for the "genius of the place" which for 20 years has inspired a number of internationally recognised artists, including Christian Boltanski, Anish Kapoor, Giuseppe Penone, Tony Oursler, Adel Abdessemed, Matt Mullican and Haim Steinbach, to create specific projects here. As an engaged partner alongside the artists, the MACS supports the production of ambitious works, notably through its artists' residency policy, undertaken by the museum's team both in situ and extra-muros (LaToya Ruby Frazier, Fiona Tan and Daniel Turner), and pays particular attention to the visual arts scene in the Wallonia-Brussels Federation through its monograph exhibitions. Together with the Centre for Innovation and Design of the Province of Hainaut (CID), the MACS forms a cultural hub which, has become a popular destination for art lovers and cultural tourism, not least as it can also offer them the pleasures of a park, a gastronomic restaurant and a specialist design and contemporary art shop.

## **Engagement programme and arts education activities**

MACS is dedicated to making contemporary art accessible to everyone through a variety of engagement activities. These include free daily guided tours, creative workshops, family days, meetings, debates, and lectures. The museum places a strong emphasis on serving schoolchildren, for instance, by offering mobile classroom activities as part of the PECA (Cultural and Artistic Education Public Programme). Additionally, MACS is committed to including vulnerable audiences and collaborates with local institutions to create innovative partnerships that support mediation and arts education activities.

ALL ACTIVITIES AND EVENTS ORGANISED AROUND THE EXHIBITION CAN BE FOUND ON THE MUSEUM'S WEBSITE.



## Practical information

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#macshornu

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### MACS

Lucia Bru. Aux choses mêmes  
14.06.26 > 01.11.26

Le Regard éloigné. Un choix dans la collection  
14.06 > 16.08 et 06.09 > 01.11.2026

### CID

Memo. Souvenirs du futur  
29.03 > 30.08.26

Damien Gernay. Mimesis  
14.06 > 15.11.26