

8.10.2011 - 15.1.2012

Palais de Rumine
Place de la Riponne 6
Lausanne
ma-me 11h-18h
je 11h-20h
ve-di 11h-17h

Quand l'art fait rire

canton de
vaud

mcb-a
MUSÉE CANTONAL
DES BEAUX-ARTS
LAUSANNE

We are pleased to invite you to
the press conference of the exhibition

INCONGRUOUS.
WHEN ART MAKES US LAUGH

on Friday, 7 October 2011, at 11 am
Please contact our press service.

**GENERAL
INFORMATION**

Opening reception	Friday, 7 October, 6 pm
Curators	Bernard Fibicher, director Marco Costantini, researcher at the MCBA Federica Martini, researcher at the MCBA
Media contact	Loïse Cuendet, loise.cuendet@vd.ch Direct phone number : +41 (0) 21 316 34 48 To download press material : www.mcba.ch >press relations Username : mcba-presse Password : gpresse
Address	Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts / Lausanne Palais de Rumine, place de la Riponne 6 CH-1014 Lausanne Tél. +41 (0)21 316 34 45 Fax. +41 (0)21 316 34 46 info.beaux-arts@vd.ch www.mcba.ch
Opening hours	Tuesday to Wednesday 11 am to 6 pm Thursday 11 am to 8 pm Friday to Sunday 11 am to 5 pm 26 December et 2 January : 11 am – 5 pm Closed on Monday, 25 December and 1 January
Tickets	Adults : CHF 10.- Pensioners, students, apprentices : CHF 8.- Under 16 : free 1st Saturday of each month : free
Access	Metro: station Riponne-M. Béjart Bus: n° 8 stop at Riponne, n°1 and 2, stop at rue Neuve

INCONGRUOUS.

WHEN ART MAKES US LAUGH

THEME

Art is a serious business. Artists do not poke fun at their clients, whoever they may be – emperors, kings, princes, ambassadors, private individuals or art dealers – unless they know it will be taken well. The creed of the bourgeoisie is based on reason and reasonable people are serious people. Laughter, on the other hand, deforms the human face, it can become a weapon of diabolical seduction and a menace to propriety and the established order. Historically art has never made a good bedfellow for laughter, humour and comedy. There is a basic incongruity between the two domains.

Of course there are domains in which laughter slots right in: comedy, satire, pastiche and burlesque. In the visual arts it has been confined to the grotesque and caricature, whereas the smile, belly laugh and subtle irony all find their way into artistic creation. Artists have always been as interested in the physical aspect of laughter (the face as a mirror of the state of the soul) as in laughter as a release mechanism: most of the time it is in fact the result of a difference, a paradox, a variance – an incongruity.

In the seventeenth century, humour became a tool which the artist used for purposes of criticism, contestation and subversion, and which he applied inside the art system or brandished in the direction of society with its standards and conventions, its consensus, morality, harmony and order. Around 1900 derision was employed as a safeguard against the absurdity of existence and horrors of war, and later as a defence against all sorts of totalitarian regimes, including that of the late-twentieth-century "*panludisme festif*" (Georges Minois). But will the spirit of amusement, incessant fun, standardized and programmable laughter, and generalized derision bring about the "death of laughter"?

EXHIBITION

This exhibition brings together artworks dating from between the seventeenth century and the modern day held in the collections of the Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, or which have been lent by a great many public and private collectors. It is structured in seven sections and three solo presentations.

As an introduction (*The Word for Laughter*, Room 1) suggests that a painting or sculpture in itself is rarely amusing. It can become so when the artist includes text, language, irony, literary references or narration, and when the work is isolated from the strict context of art and becomes a social phenomenon or symptom: in short, when an incongruous distance is created between the work and its "environment".

The *Grand Gallery of Laughter* (Room 2) assembles portraits of smiling or laughing individuals, known or anonymous, whether in the form of paintings, drawings, engravings, photographs or sculptures, proving that laughter is first and foremost a physical phenomenon of extraordinary diversity, one that fluctuates between the two extremes of a barely sketched smile and a burst of hilarity. Whether contagious or a liberator, laughter is also capable of deforming a face and making it a disquieting and deceptive mask.

Caricature, notably by the hand of Daumier (Room 3), becomes a means of social criticism, while pastiche – as exemplified by Valentin Carron, who alters one of Giacometti's threadlike figures into a golf-player, or Sylvie Fleury, who creates a Mondrian-like work by adding red fur to a grid of black lines – employs the heritage of art history in a "scholarly" and humorous manner.

Artists are just as aware as clowns of the traditional means of making

people laugh (Room 4), for example, by falling over, crashing into things – Bas Jan Ader; contortion – Anna and Bernhard Blume getting to grips with the complexities of constructivism; and slapstick and the rituals of laughter (Room 5). In his video installation *Clown Torture* (Room 6), Bruce Nauman presents us with a clown in situations linked to surveillance, torture and mental alienation in which the laughter has its origin in a dark form of humour. Next comes a very fine example of laughter employed as a means for political criticism: in his large installation *The Truth*, Nedko Solakov (Room 7) presents (fictional) documents, interviews and other means of propaganda supposedly used by the Soviets to prove that the world is in fact flat.

The installation *Canned Laughter* by Yoshua Okon (Room 8) shows workers wearing uniforms with designer labels marked "Bergson" mass-producing laughter in cans, while in the nearby video lounge compilations of humorous videos – some of which historic: William Wegman; others created ad hoc: Anne Rochat – can be discovered.

Room 9 presents a historic overview of the study of the laughing human face from Le Brun to Arnulf Rainer and Luc Andrié, who take the expressive capacity of the face and body to grotesque limits in an obsessional role play. The exhibition ends on a satirical note with the wall drawings of Dan Perjovschi (Room 10) made in situ by the artist, who has drawn on his enormous fund of observations, stories and jokes that he has combined with current affairs (local and global events) and the context of the museum.

CURATORS

Bernard Fibicher, director, Marco Costantini and Federica Martini, researchers at the MCBA.

CATALOGUE

The 192-page catalogue published by InFolio with many colour illustrations contains essays by: Paul Ardenne, Christian Besson, Marco Costantini, Bernard Fibicher, Philippe Kaenel, Lauren Laz, Federico Luisetti, Federica Martini, Georges Minois, Alexandra Schüssler and Benjamin Stroun.

85 INTERNATIONAL ARTISTS

George **Achille-Fould** – Bas Jan **Ader** – Omar **Alessandro** – Luc **Andrié** – Marc-Louis **Arlaud** – Jean **Audran** – John **Baldessari** – Ernst **Barlach** – Glen **Baxter** – Guy **Ben-Ner** – **Berclaz de Sierre** – Olivier **Blanckart et Arnaud Labelle-Rojoux** – Anna et Bernhard **Blume** – Christian **Boltanski** – Félix **Bracquemond** – Olaf **Breuning** – Marcel **Broodthaers** – Reto **Camenisch** – Valentin **Carron** – Maurizio **Cattelan** – Narcisse **Chaillou** – Antoine **Coypel** – Honoré **Daumier** – Wim **Delvoye** – Cecilia **Edefalk** – Gertrude **Fehr** – Sylvie **Fleury** – Ceal **Floyer** – Mario **Garcia Torres** – Aert de **Gelder** (cercle de) – Aloïs **Godinat** – Nan **Goldin** – Rodney **Graham** – Gottfried **Helwein** – Marc **Horowitz** – Thomas **Huber** – Bethan **Huws** – Martin **Kersels** – Peter **Land** – Annie **Leibovitz** – Sherrie **Levine** – Jean-Étienne **Liotard** – Urs **Lüthi** – Quentin **Metsys** (cercle de) – Yue **Min Jun** – Lucia **Moholy-Nagy** – Jean **Mohr** – Jonathan **Monk** – Gianni **Motti** – Vik **Muniz** – Bruce **Nauman** – Yoshua **Okon** – Christodoulos **Panayiotou** – Sandrine **Pelletier** – Dan **Perjovschi** – Shannon **Plumb** – Richard **Prince** – Doris **Quarella** – Markus **Raetz** – Arnulf **Rainer** – Christian **Robert-Tissot** – Léo-Paul **Robert** – Anne **Rochat** – Ana **Roldan** – Medardo **Rosso** – Jean-Pierre **Saint-Ours** – Arthur **Sapeck** – Peter **Saul** – Georg-Friedrich **Schmidt** – Jim **Shaw** – Nedko **Solakov** – Hans **Steiner** – **Ernest T.** – **Taroop & Glabel** – Jean **Tinguely** – Francis **Traunig** – Tse Su-Mei – Félix **Vallotton** – Adrian **Van Ostade** (d'après) – Edouard **Vuillard** – Andy **Warhol** – William **Wegman** – Sabine **Weiss** – Shi **Xinning**

YOUNG PEOPLE'S ACTIVITIES

AUDIO-GUIDE FOR KIDS



Exhibition visit with guided commentary

Over 8 years of age, French only, approx. 30'
free

FAMILY VISITS

Visits for families with children from the age of 6

Sunday 6 November and 4 December at 15h

EVENTS

Funny face workshop

With the comedienne and clown Cordélia Loup, for 7–12 year olds

Thursday 27 and Friday 28 October, 9h30-12h or 14h-16h30

Places must be reserved

CHF 15.- (CHF 12.- for a second child)

Humorous tales

Wednesday 2 November at 15h, for 5 year-olds and up

By the storytellers from L'Oreille qui parle,

Mouvement des Aînés-Vaud

Free

SCHOOLS

Guided visit for teachers

Wednesday 12 October at 12h30 and 17h

By Sandrine Moeschler, mediator

Places must be reserved

Guided school visits

Thursdays and Fridays from 9h

Places must be reserved 10 days in advance

Free

Activities to download

On www.mcba>learning>schoools

For 12 year-olds and up

Educational experiences / in collaboration with HEP-Vaud, UER Art et Technologie

HEP and the MCBA invite teachers to share their experiences arising from school trips to the exhibition.

Wednesday 11 January 2012 at 14h

Places must be reserved

RESERVATIONS:

021 316 34 45 or info.beaux-arts@vd.ch

EVENTS

EVENTS

Humorous tales

Wednesday 2 November at 15h, for 5 year-olds and up
By the storytellers from L'Oreille qui parle,
Mouvement des Aînés-Vaud
Free

The physiognomy of laughing. On advice given to artistes

Conference run by Martial Guédron
Professor of art history at Strasbourg University
Thursday 10 November at 20h
Free

Fou (rire)

Concert by l'ensemBle baBel
Thursday 12 and Friday 13 January at 20h
Sunday 15 January at 17h
Free

THURSDAYS AT THE MCBA

Guided tours at 6.30 pm

20 and 27 October, with Bernard Fibicher, director and curator
10 November, 1st and 15 December, with Federica Martini et Marco
Costantini, curators

Guided tours at 12.30 pm

3 November, with Sandrine Moeschler, mediator
24 November et 8 December, with Bernard Fibicher

Guided Tour for the Friends of the Museum at 6.30 pm

13 October, with Federica Martini and Marco Costantini

SATURDAYS AT THE MCBA

Free of charge

5 November, 3 December 2011 et 7 janvier 2012

FAMILY SUNDAYS

Visits for families with children from the age of 6

Sunday 6 November and 4 December at 15h

PRIVATE GUIDED TOURS

Private guided tours (French and English)

are available for groups of up to 25 people on request
Price : CHF 120.- + admission charges

ROOM GUIDE

Focused presentation

General introduction on a room-by-room basis
Free

PRESS IMAGES

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Lucia Moholy-Nagy

Madame Palmer, femme de ménage, Londres, s.d.
Photographie, 40.3x30.1 cm
Musée de l'Elysée, Lausanne
©ProLitteris

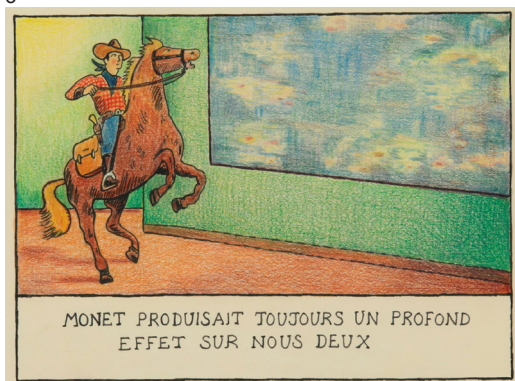
2



Jean Audran

Le Ris, d'après Charles le Brun, 1727
Gravure, 27x21 cm
Collection privée
Photo : Nora Rupp, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne

3



Glen Baxter

Sans titre (Monet produisait toujours un profond effet sur nous deux), 2003
Crayons de couleurs et encre, 26x38 cm
Collection Frac Haute-Normandie
Photo : Marc Damage

4



Olaf Breuning

Easter Bunnies, 2005
Photographie couleur sur toile, 300x500 cm
Courtoisie galerie Nicola von Senger, Zurich

5



Quentin Metsys (cercle de)

Scène grivoise, 1er quart du 17e siècle
Huile sur toile, 100x122 cm
Musée des Beaux-Arts, Bordeaux
Photo : Lysiane Gauthier

6



Vik Muniz

Clown Skull, 1989-1990
Plastique moulé, 21x13x19.5 cm
Daros Latinamerica Collection, Zurich
Photo : Peter Schälchli, Zurich

PRESS IMAGES

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Marcel Broodthaers

Tour de Babel, 1966

Bois, verre, ouate, imprimés,
95x50x50 cm

Don en 1966 de la New Smith Gallery, Bruxelles,
Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne

Photo : J.-C. Ducret, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne

8



George Achille-Fould

Madame Satan : séduction, s.d.

Huile sur toile, 215x115 cm

Musée Antoine Lécuyer, Saint-Quentin

Photo : Gérard Dufrêne

9



Valentin Carron

L'homme qui swing II, 2007

Bois, métal, résine et peinture acrylique, 225x140x51.5 cm

Collection Ringier, Zurich

10



Jean-Etienne Liotard

Liotard riant, vers 1770

Huile sur toile, 84x74 cm

Musée d'art et d'histoire, Ville de Genève, inv. N. 1825-11

Photo : Bettina Jacot-Descombes

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Poster