

Kunsthalle Bern

Press release, 19 January 2015

Exhibition *Morgenröte, aurora borealis and Levantin: into your solar plexus*,
30 January – 7 June 2015, curated by Donatella Bernardi

To all interested parties.

The 29th of January will mark the opening of Kunsthalle Bern's next exhibition, entitled *Morgenröte, aurora borealis and Levantin: into your solar plexus*. Kunsthalle Bern's guest curator, Geneva-born artist and art historian Donatella Bernardi, used the private photographic archive of her uncle and godfather Alfonso Bernardi as a point of departure for a visual journey that spans many subjects and several artistic fields and media. On the basis of spectacular photographs taken by Alfonso Bernardi during his expeditions in the Himalaya and the Middle East in the 1970s, the exhibition establishes intricate connections to the history of Swiss art, as well as to modern and contemporary Lebanese art – all the while resembling a veritable cabinet of curiosities.

We are very pleased to announce a number of collaborations with local, national and international institutional partners that all played a significant part in the successful realization of this project. The Swiss Federal Art Collection (Bundeskunstsammlung) will generously loan a number of important works to Kunsthalle Bern: Hans Bachmann, Jean Louis Auguste and Pauline de Beaumont, Egidio De Rubelli, Andreas Dobler, Walter Eggimann, Franz Fedier, Werner Hartmann, Konrad Hofer, Gustave-Auguste Jeanneret, Heinz-Peter Kohler, Charles L'Eplattenier, Katja Schenker and Hugo Wetli will all figure in the exhibition. Moreover, the Robert Walser Center Bern, the Bernese University of the Arts (HKB) and the Sommerakademie im Zentrum Paul Klee will support Kunsthalle Bern in organizing various events related to the exhibition. Kunsthalle Bern will also work alongside the mineralogical collection at the Muséum d'Histoire Naturelle / Muséum Genève: rock formations from the museum's image database are to serve as templates for an expansive work, set to be created gradually after opening day. These rock formations allude to Luciano Bernardi, the curator's father, a botanist who passed on his love of nature and its manifold forms to his daughter. Since the exhibition is conceived as a kind of *event*, an open-ended work-in-progress, Kunsthalle Bern will also present the incremental creation of other works. Starting on opening day, visitors will be able to observe fresco artist Sara Baldi during her painterly ascent of a Nepalese eight-thousander. Furthermore, we will show works by the Lebanese artist Saloua Raouda Choukair and her daughter Hala Schoukair, the visual composition of which recalls Robert Walser's Micrograms.

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Consequently, the exhibition explores the power of intergenerational relationships, biographical disruptions and latent familial traumas in shaping identity. As artists, and as heirs of a problematic past, both Donatella Bernardi and Hala Schoukair are confronted with such questions – and reflect their origins in their works.

We would already like to direct your attention to selected highlights among the comprehensive list of events that will support and accompany the exhibition. Apart from our usual formats (guided tours, the culinary guided tour *Kunst zum Sattwerden* and the artist's talk), several artists and researchers are going to enrich the exhibition with performances, workshops and lectures. Cultural theorist Jason Francis Mc Gimsey will reflect on the notion of the 'event' ('Ereignis') along with art students from Stockholm (Royal Institute of Art) and Bern (HKB) on the 5th and 6th of March – with a slapstick performance by the artist duo Lars and Olav on the 16th of May serving as a sort of counterpoint. The exhibition will end with a bang on the weekend of the 6th and 7th of June, featuring an eight-hour atmospheric musical performance by Franz Treichler, member of *The Young Gods* and winner of the Swiss Music Award, and a public tour guided by Donatella Bernardi herself.

We would be pleased to welcome you to our press conference on the 29th of January at 11 a. m. at Kunsthalle Bern. The opening of the exhibition will take place on the same day at 6 p. m.

For further information, please contact our press liaison Luise Baumgartner:

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