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Schweizer Grand Prix Kunst  
Grand Prix suisse d'art  
Gran Premio svizzero d'arte  
Grond premi svizzer d'art  
Swiss Grand Award for Art



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
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Confederaziun svizra

Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA  
Federal Office of Culture FOC

Swiss Grand Award for Art  
Prix Meret Oppenheim 2022  
for

Caroline Bachmann  
Jürg Conzett &  
Gianfranco Bronzini  
Klodin Erb

Swiss Grand Award for Art  
Prix Meret Oppenheim 2022

13 – 19 June 2022  
Messe Basel, Halle 1.1

Awards Ceremony  
13 June 2022

For the 22nd time, the Federal Office of Culture (FOC) is presenting the Swiss Grand Award for Art / Prix Meret Oppenheim to outstanding Swiss culture practitioners: In 2022 they are the artists Caroline Bachmann and Klodin Erb, as well as the engineers duo Jürg Conzett & Gianfranco Bronzini. The laudations on the occasion of the awards ceremony will be held by artist and Prix Meret Oppenheim laureate Claudia Müller, civil engineer and journalist Clementine Hegner-van Rooden, and art historian and curator Kathleen Bühler.

Upon recommendation of the Federal Art Commission, the Swiss Grand Award for Art / Prix Meret Oppenheim is awarded to individuals in the fields of art, art education and architecture whose work is particularly topical and relevant to Swiss artistic and architectural production.

The Federal Office of Culture is also producing the Swiss Grand Award for Art / Prix Meret Oppenheim 2022 publication, containing interviews in which the laureates offer a deeper insight into their work. It will be enclosed with the Kunstbulletin July / August 2022.

The Swiss Art Awards exhibition, which showcases the participants in the second round of the Swiss Art Competition, also includes film portraits of the Swiss Grand Award for Art / Prix Meret Oppenheim 2022 recipients.

# Caroline Bachmann

“It’s all about light!”  
Caroline Bachmann

Caroline Bachmann is a painter. She divides her time between Cully, in the Lavaux region of Switzerland, and Berlin, where she routinely goes to paint several times a year. After graduating from the Academy of Decorative Arts in Geneva in 1988, she lived in Barcelona and then in Rome, returning to Switzerland in 2003. In 2007, she became joint head of the Painting and Drawing Department at the Haute école d’art et de design (HEAD) in Geneva, along with Peter Roesch. There, she and the teaching staff ran a project on the importance of the studio and the ideas of freedom, autonomy and encounter.

Between 2004 and 2014, she worked with Stefan Banz. In 2009, the duo set up the Kunsthalle Marcel Duchamp (KMD) in Cully to accompany a symposium on Duchamp and the Forestay Waterfall, a nearby attraction that he photographed during a stay in Switzerland and subsequently included in his work *Étant donnés*. First and foremost a “conceptual” institution, KMD is also a place for research and publishing, offering artists a venue for exhibitions in a miniature museum with a view of the lake.

In 2013, a painting research project involving Duchamp led her towards a group of early 20th-century artists who were influenced by the American Dadaists. Through her conversation with them, and their precise yet transcendent relationship with nature, she fashioned the synthetic and almost dreamlike pictorial language that characterises her works.

Since then, her studio practice has become very slow and invariably figurative; her primary aim is to deepen, extend and even dilute production time to a degree that she had never attempted before. She taught herself oil painting for the project and works with the malleable, plastic nature of temporality, evolving a new technique of layering and transparency.

She also explores the dimension of weather, in an investigation of the infinite variations of the outdoor environment. Having recorded details of lines, colours, light and temperature outside, she constructs and reconstructs the painting in her studio, revealing the weather (or rather the weather’s impact on her) in terms of form, memory and affects.

She works on a number of paintings at the same time, producing multiple, interconnected temporalities and subjects. For all its rationality, her work is organised according to the customary categories of painting, from landscape to still life. Her views of Lake Geneva and the mountains at night or at dawn are as much homages to the infinite renewal of a local landscape as they are a cosmic celebration of the marriage of the elements. Her portraits of female artists working in Switzerland and abroad, or painters of the past, are located within a tradition but are also a kind of manifesto: the one of a painting that connects places, times and figures. Caroline Bachmann’s painting thus becomes a vehicle conveying us to an unknown location, which may be past, present or future.

Caroline Bachmann, \*1963 in Lausanne, lives between Cully and Berlin

JURY REPORT: “At heart, Caroline Bachmann is a conceptual painter, although her images depict landscapes, glances towards the sky, human faces and even walls. A statement that at first glance appears contradictory proves on closer inspection to be a conceptual gaze, but one that commits emotional moments to the rectangular format of the image. The sophistication that leads from theoretical reflection on the image to the image’s emotional presence is what, in the eyes of the jury, earns her this award, especially as her work is also a continuation of art-historical aspects from within the tradition of painting.”

# Jürg Conzett & Gianfranco Bronzini

“I always try to eke out a bit of freedom so that  
I can experiment with the opposite.  
That means exploring the poles of old – new,  
spectacular – unspectacular, and build – don’t build.”  
Jürg Conzett

“Jürg talked about the freedom to try out the opposite.  
That’s unbelievably important. I suppose the reason  
our projects are so different is that we’re  
always prepared to change our minds during a process  
and be won over by better arguments and solutions.”  
Gianfranco Bronzini

Jürg Conzett and Gianfranco Bronzini are a reminder that the engineer’s craft is also, and invariably, a part of our built culture. That is largely because they see themselves not as service providers to famous architects, but as designers in their own right. In their projects, they are guided by a single goal: to ensure that their interventions in the landscape, the city or the existing fabric are appropriate—in terms of construction, economics and aesthetics. As such, Conzett and Bronzini are carrying on the tradition of the great Swiss engineers Robert Maillart and Christian Menn.

Their designs are the product of an intensive thought process. Their tactic is that they always try out the opposite, in order to find the solution that is most intelligent, both technologically and aesthetically. Conzett and Bronzini can opt for an attention-grabbing solution such as the slender Negrelli footbridge over the tracks leading out of Zurich’s main railway station, the bold suspension bridge spanning the Viamala Gorge, or the Wonder Bridge at the Technorama in Winterthur; or go for something laid-back and unassuming, and on occasion will even propose a smaller and more modest bridge to a client. Because, as Bronzini explains, “we don’t just want to build bridges”.

Conzett and Bronzini’s unique, often detective-like working method has made them highly sought-after for civil engineering projects. They have collaborated fruitfully with architects such as Meili + Peter (wood industry school in Biel), Miller + Maranta (Volta schoolhouse), Peter Zumthor (Swiss Sound Pavilion, EXPO Hanover) and Diener & Diener (Kongresshaus and Tonhalle Zurich).

Conzett and Bronzini have been working together since 1994 and have had their own engineering consultancy in Chur since 1996. Both have building in their blood: Conzett’s father was a surveyor and cartographer; Bronzini grew up in an environment of skilled manual labour, with a father who was a guest worker in the building trade. Conzett studied at the Swiss Federal Institutes of Technology in Lausanne and Zurich; Bronzini completed an apprenticeship as a civil engineering draughtsman before studying at the Eastern Switzerland University of Applied Sciences (OST).

Both have a profound respect for the existing fabric, which comes through in their surveys of infrastructure projects for the Rhaetian Railway and civil engineering departments. “Actually, we like what we’re analysing, and never set out to change as much as possible. There’s a kind of reluctance to intervene too drastically. It’s an instinctive desire to preserve historic monuments”, explains Conzett.

The duo are also researchers. Conzett’s “Wegleitung zur Gestaltung von Stützmauern” (Guidelines on the design of retaining walls) emphasise that in mountainous cantons, retaining walls must also be designed in accordance with uniform principles. In the 2010 publication “Landschaft und Kunstbauten” (Landscape and Structures),

the Swiss contribution to the 12th International Architecture Exhibition in Venice, he and photographer Martin Linsi laid out the essence of the engineer's art. Conzett and Bronzini have received a number of awards for their work, including the Prix Acier steel and metal construction prize in 2021 for the Negrelli footbridge.

Jürg Conzett, \*1956 in Aarau, lives in Tamins

Gianfranco Bronzini, \*1967 in Poschiavo, lives in Bonaduz

JURY REPORT: "Jürg Conzett and Gianfranco Bronzini are much more than the engineers of many of Switzerland's most beautiful bridges. Their holistic approach to design is instrumental in many works where the structure entirely defines the architecture. This universal attitude, linked to a sustainable vision for each project, is reflected in their capacity for innovation, whatever the material they are using. By choosing Conzett and Bronzini as laureates in the architecture category, the jury wishes to highlight the importance of the engineer's art for the *Baukultur*."

# Klodin Erb

“I have absolutely no need to talk about how I paint  
or how my paintings come about.  
I’m much more interested in why someone paints and  
the feelings they experience when they’re doing it.”

Klodin Erb

In her expressive and fantastical pictorial worlds, Klodin Erb reacts like a seismograph to the social and media moods and situations of the present day. Her core medium—the basis of her work—is painting. Often, the theme dictates the form: she tailors her techniques to the topic she is dealing with, underlining, emphasising, accentuating and interweaving form and content to maximise the expressive power of painting. The content of her pictures is always located in the present moment. Formal influences come from popular and web culture and from art history, together with a love of experimentation and a continual probing of the limits of painting.

A precise observer of her surroundings, and of the world in which we live, Klodin Erb is interested in how our social structures are changing, and the challenges we face in the here and now. Just as people—and thus our society—evolve, so she constantly interrogates and renews her work as an artist, driving it constantly forwards. Forays into other media, such as film, installation and collage, prove to be extremely inspiring and fruitful ways of generating new kinds of image, which she then incorporates into her painting.

Klodin Erb studied fine art at the School of Art and Design Zurich (now the Zurich University of the Arts). Her works have been shown in numerous solo and group exhibitions at venues including the Helen Dahm Museum, Oetwil am See, 2022 (S), Museum Langmatt, Baden, 2022 (G), Centre culturel suisse, Paris, 2022 (G), Museum im Bellpark, Kriens, 2020 (G), Kunstmuseum Winterthur, 2019 (G), Kunstmuseum Solothurn, 2019 (G), Kunsthaus Pasquart, Biel, 2018 (S), Museum der Brotkultur, Ulm, 2018 (G), Kunstmuseum Luzern, 2017 (G), Kunstmuseum Bern, 2017 (G), Villa Bernasconi, Geneva, 2017 (G), Aargauer Kunsthaus, Aarau, 2014 (G), Kunstmuseum Olten, 2013 (G), Haus für Kunst Uri, Altdorf, 2011 (G), Kunst(Zeug) Haus, Rapperswil, 2010 (G), and Museum zu Allerheiligen, Schaffhausen, 2008 (S).

Works by Klodin Erb are held in the collections of various museums including the Kunstmuseum Bern, Museum zu Allerheiligen, Schaffhausen, Bündner Kunstmuseum, Chur and Kunsthaus Pasquart, Biel as well as major public and private collections. Klodin Erb has been a lecturer in the Art and Design Department of the Lucerne University of Applied Sciences and Arts since 2018.

Klodin Erb, \*1963 in Winterthur, lives in Zurich

**JURY REPORT:** “Klodin Erb is a painter through and through. She is a great storyteller, layering motifs interspersed with pure painterliness to capture precarious moments in the existence of the creaturely in individual images, series and video works. She is driven by a curiosity about motifs and a painterly energy that, over the years, have led her to develop an unmistakable signature style. Refusing to rest on her laurels, she tirelessly pushes painting further and further out of its comfort zone, fearlessly confronting risks along the way. The jury was won over by her uncompromising artistry.”

## PUBLICATION

The Federal Office of Culture is publishing "Swiss Grand Award for Art / Prix Meret Oppenheim 2022", containing portraits of the award winners and interviews. The interviews were conducted by Yann Chateigné Tytelman (independent curator, Brussels) with Caroline Bachmann, Fanni Fetzer (director of the Kunstmuseum Luzern) with Klodin Erb and Karin Salm (cultural journalist, Winterthur) with Jürg Conzett and Gianfranco Bronzini.

- ISBN 978-3-9525420-7-1
- German, French, Italian, English
- Editorial: Gina Bucher
- Graphic Design: Martina Brassel
- Photography: Lena Amuat
- Circulation: 10 000

The publication will be available with the July /August 2022 Kunstbulletin and free copies can be ordered by email [swissart@bak.admin.ch](mailto:swissart@bak.admin.ch).

## FILM PORTRAITS

Director Marie-Eve Hildbrand (Terrain Vague, Lausanne) is producing film portraits of the laureates of the Swiss Grand Award for Art / Prix Meret Oppenheim 2022.

- German, French with subtitles
- Duration: approx. 7 min each

### Trailers

- Caroline Bachmann: [youtu.be/pbP5BDCQY0c](https://youtu.be/pbP5BDCQY0c)
- Jürg Conzett & Gianfranco Bronzini: [youtu.be/rLs2n9O4rLY](https://youtu.be/rLs2n9O4rLY)
- Klodin Erb: [youtu.be/wm2rzDXEYk4](https://youtu.be/wm2rzDXEYk4)

### Presentation

Swiss Art Awards 2022 exhibition and online from 13 June 2022

## SWISS GRAND AWARD FOR ART / PRIX MERET OPPENHEIM

Created in 2001 by the Federal Office for Culture in collaboration with the Federal Art Commission, the Swiss Grand Award for Art / Prix Meret Oppenheim is awarded on the recommendation of the Commission to artists, architects, curators, researchers and critics, whose internationally renowned work is of particular relevance and importance to Swiss artistic and architectural practice. Each award carries prize money of CHF 40 000.

## JURY PRIX MERET OPPENHEIM 2022 Federal Art Commission

### President

- Raffael Dörig, Director, Kunsthaus Langenthal

### Members

- Laura Arici, Art historian, Zurich
- Victoria Easton, Architect, Christ & Gantenbein, Basel
- Julie Enckell Julliard, Head of Cultural Development Department, HEAD, Geneva
- San Keller, Artist, Zurich
- Anne-Julie Raccoursier, Artist, Lausanne

### Architecture Experts

- Jeannette Kuo, Architect, Karamuk Kuo, Zurich
- Tanya Zein, Architect, FAZ architectes, Geneva

### New Members since January 2022

- Roman Kurzmeyer, Curator, Teacher and Head of the Ricola Collection, Basel
- Nicole Schweizer, Conservator of Contemporary Art, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne
- Una Szeemann, Artist, Zurich and Tegna

### Commission Secretary

- Léa Fluck, Federal Office for Culture

LAUREATES  
2001 – 2021

- 2021 Georges Descombes  
Esther Eppstein  
Vivian Suter
- 2020 Marc Bauer  
Barbara Buser  
& Eric Honegger  
Koyo Kouoh
- 2019 Meili Peter Architekten  
Shirana Shahbazi  
Samuel Schellenberg
- 2018 Sylvie Fleury  
Thomas Hirschhorn  
Luigi Snozzi
- 2017 Peter Märkli  
Daniela Keiser  
Philip Ursprung
- 2016 Adelina von Fürstenberg  
Christian Philipp Müller  
Martin Steinmann
- 2015 Christoph Büchel  
Olivier Mosset  
Urs Stahel  
Staufer / Hasler
- 2014 Anton Bruhin  
Catherine Quéloz  
Pipilotti Rist  
pool Architekten
- 2013 Thomas Huber  
Quintus Miller  
& Paola Maranta  
Marc-Olivier Wahler
- 2012 Bice Curiger  
Niele Toroni  
Günther Vogt
- 2011 John Armleder  
Patrick Devanthery  
& Inès Lamunière  
Silvia Gmür  
Ingeborg Lüscher  
Guido Nussbaum
- 2010 Gion A. Caminada  
Yan Duyvendak  
Claudia & Julia Müller  
Annette Schindler  
Roman Signer
- 2009 Ursula Biemann  
Roger Diener  
Christian Marclay  
Muda Mathis  
& Sus Zwick  
Ingrid Wildi Merino
- 2008 edition fink (Georg Rutishauser)  
Mariann Grunder  
Manon  
Mario Pagliarani  
Arthur Rüegg
- 2007 Véronique Bacchetta  
Kurt W. Forster  
Peter Roesch  
Anselm Stalder
- 2006 Dario Gamboni  
Markus Raetz  
Catherine Schelbert  
Robert Suermondt  
Rolf Winnewisser  
Peter Zumthor
- 2005 Miriam Cahn  
Alexander Fickert  
& Katharina Knapkiewicz  
Johannes Gachnang  
Gianni Motti  
Václav Požárek  
Michel Ritter
- 2004 Christine Binswanger  
& Harry Gugger  
Roman Kurzmeier  
Peter Regli  
Hannes Rickli
- 2003 Silvia Bächli  
Rudolf Blättler  
Hervé Graumann  
Harm Lux  
Claude Sandoz
- 2002 Ian Anüll  
Hannes Brunner  
Marie José Burki  
Relax:  
Marie Antoinette Chiarenza,  
Daniel Croptier,  
Daniel Hauser  
Renée Levi
- 2001 Peter Kamm  
Ilona Rüegg  
George Steinmann

## DATES

- Awards Ceremony  
Swiss Grand Award for Art / Prix Meret Oppenheim  
and Swiss Art Awards  
13 June 2022

- Exhibition  
Swiss Art Awards 2022  
13–19 June 2022  
Halle 1.1, Messe Basel  
Free entrance

Tuesday – Saturday 10 am – 8 pm  
Thursday 10 am – 10 pm  
Sunday 10 am – 4 pm

Details on the website  
[schweizerkulturpreise.ch](http://schweizerkulturpreise.ch)

## CONTACTS

- Information on the Confederation's culture awards  
Danielle Nanchen Davi  
Chief of the section cultural Production  
Federal Office of Culture  
+ 41 58 464 98 23  
[danielle.nanchen@bak.admin.ch](mailto:danielle.nanchen@bak.admin.ch)
- Information on the Swiss Art Awards  
Léa Fluck  
Federal Office of Culture  
[lea.fluck@bak.admin.ch](mailto:lea.fluck@bak.admin.ch)
- Media services  
[media-kunst@schweizerkulturpreise.ch](mailto:media-kunst@schweizerkulturpreise.ch)
- Press images  
High-resolution portraits of the laureates are available at [bak.admin.ch/pmo](http://bak.admin.ch/pmo)
- Social Media  
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