

# Prix

# Meret

# Oppenheim

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PRESSKIT

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

# 2023



Schweizerische Eidgenossenschaft  
Confédération suisse  
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Swiss Confederation

Federal Department of Home Affairs FDHA  
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Swiss Grand Award for Art  
Prix Meret Oppenheim 2023

12 – 18 June 2023, Messe Basel, Halle 1.1  
Awards Ceremony: 12 June 2023

For the twenty-third time, the Federal Office of Culture (BAK) is awarding the Swiss Grand Prix Art/ Prix Meret Oppenheim to outstanding Swiss artists, architects, curators, researchers and critics. In 2023, these are the art historian and mediator Stanislaus von Moos, the artist Uriel Orlow and the collective Parity Group.

Like art or architecture, the Prix Meret Oppenheim is not timeless, but rather a mirror of social change. This year, we turn the spotlight on issues currently of huge importance by awarding the Swiss Grand Prix Art to the critic von Moos, the artist Orlow and the collective Parity Group. Stanislaus von Moos' coherent mediation of interdisciplinary nexuses and cross-references in his work and Uriel Orlow's critical translation of past readings into a postcolonial present are complemented by the topicality and dynamic innovations of the Parity Group.

In this time of rapid change, which raises questions about the role now to be played in our society by architectural education and all who teach, practice or promote architecture, a collective in constant flux that commits to working towards gender equality and diversity in architecture is a positive role model. Indeed, the work of all three award winners this year is characterised by inclusivity, an interdisciplinary approach, and dialogue with diverse actors. With this selection, the Swiss Grand Prix Art likewise stays abreast of contemporary concerns, alert to new trends and with an eye on the future – qualities, incidentally, which are attributed also to its courageous namesake, Meret Oppenheim.

“I know that any self-respecting architecture critic must emphasize that 90 percent of what is being built today has nothing to do with ‘city’. But we will probably all have to come to terms with the fact that ‘chaos’, precisely because it is so profitable, will continue to be the Swiss and probably also the European city for some time to come.”

*Tränen der Architektur* [The Tears of Architecture], 1989

“One must also take a step or two aside and look at events from outside the culture within which one operates.”

January 2023

Art historian Stanislaus von Moos is internationally known for his perceptive analyses of built environments shaped by complex historical, political, economic, and ideological agendas. His critiques of material culture thus promote a more profound understanding of the world we live in. Inquisitive and engaged, erudite and entertaining, von Moos’s writings resonate with audiences from within and outside of the academy.

Over the past sixty years, von Moos’s work as scholar, curator, and educator has bridged architecture and art, history and criticism, high and low cultures, covering phenomena like urban sprawl as well as artificial landscapes. It has addressed a great range of subjects, from Renaissance military fortifications to 20th century avant-garde art, from pop culture to Minimalism. Underlying these diverse interests – conveyed in a lucid, often ironic tone – lies a consistent concern with architecture and art as emanations of the modern condition. His work has thus provided unexpected insights into the work of architects Le Corbusier, Karl Moser, Max Bill, Robert Venturi and Denise Scott-Brown, Herzog & de Meuron and Rem Koolhaas, as well as artists such as Václav Požárek, Pipilotti Rist, Peter Fischli and David Weiss, among others.

Von Moos studied art history at the University of Zurich. His book *Le Corbusier: Elemente einer Synthese* (1968, the first critical survey of Le Corbusier’s work to appear after the architect’s

death) was translated in five languages and is widely known as a standard text in the scholarship of architectural modernism. In 1971, von Moos founded the journal *archithese*, transforming a humble professional bulletin into a radical theoretical platform. During its first five years and over 24 issues, *archithese* promoted urban, political, theoretical, critical and historical preservation studies – subjects that remain of great relevance in the international architectural discourse. In 1977, *archithese* merged with the journal *Werk* to become *werk archithese*, which von Moos co-edited together with Diego Peverelli for the next three years. Before his professorship in Modern and Contemporary Art at the University of Zurich (1983–2005) he had held teaching positions at Harvard and at the TU Delft. Through his teaching – more recently at institutions like the Accademia di architettura in Mendrisio or Yale University – von Moos has influenced several generations of students, many of them now protagonists in the networks of art and architecture in Switzerland and beyond.

As reflections and observations from outside of architecture, his writings have opened new directions for intra-architectural investigations. Counter to the autonomous discourse promoted by the followers of Aldo Rossi at ETH Zurich, von Moos advanced the heteronomous position of Venturi, Scott Brown & Associates – in *archithese* as well as two monographs in 1987 and 1999 – thus contributing to the charged debates on realism and postmodernism in Switzerland and worldwide. Von Moos is the author of numerous other books and essays. His most recent opus *Erste Hilfe. Architekturdiskurs nach 1940. Eine Schweizer Spurensuche* (2021) postulates 1940 as the beginning of Swiss post-war architecture, offering a fresh reading of the architecture of that era in its local and international context. His new book, *Twentyfive x Herzog & de Meuron* (in collaboration with Arthur Rüegg), will be released in spring 2023.

Stanislaus von Moos, born 1940 in Luzern, studied at ETH and the University of Zurich, lives in Zürich and Ennetbürgen NW.

“We have to deal with the present, but the past is not over. It’s still with us in the form of ghosts, through this *haunting*. Over the years, this has articulated itself in different ways in my practice.”

“Plants are witnesses to European colonial history. They were collected on expeditions by European botanists, renamed, and fed into the European classification system. It was thinking about this that led me to explore plants as actors in their own right, and not just as a backdrop to human history.”

Uriel Orlow’s practice is research-based, process-oriented, and often in dialogue with other disciplines, and often unfolds over extensive periods of time. Projects engage with residues of colonialism, spatial manifestations of memory, social and ecological justice, blind spots in representation and plants as political actors. In *Theatrum Botanicum* (2015–2018) and other multi-part bodies of work created in recent years, Uriel Orlow explores the role of plants as witnesses to European colonial history and climate change, and as bearers of memory. Taking plants as a point of departure, he maps out more-than-human entanglements and seeks other forms of resistance. Earlier works, such as *The Benin Project* (2007/2008) or *Unmade Film* (2012/2013), address the looting of cultural property under colonialism, the need for restitution, and the material and psychological dimensions of places marked by historical trauma.

Uriel Orlow’s multi-media installations focus on specific locations, micro-histories and forms of haunting. In his numerous exhibitions, he connects installation with photography, film, drawing and sound, in order to bring different image-regimes and narrative modes into correspondence. This fragmentation of media reflects the complexity and multi-layered content of his work and invites visitors to move through his exhibitions as active participants. Besides exhibitions, Uriel Orlow realises performative works, including lecture performances, and also collaborates with local communities to realise gardens in London, Lubumbashi and

Kathmandu. His projects evolve out of careful processes of listening and paying attention to often overlooked events on the margins of history and current affairs.

In Switzerland, Uriel Orlow’s works were recently shown at Kunsthalle Nairs in Scuol, and at three venues in Zurich: Kunsthaus, Edition VfO, and We Are AIA in the Löwenbräu-Areal. He currently has a solo exhibition at Casa da Cerca in Lisbon, and work in group shows at the MAMAC in Nice, the Kochi Biennale in India and the Macalline Art Center in Beijing.

Orlow’s work has also been presented in numerous international survey exhibitions, including the 54th Venice Biennale, Manifesta 9 and 12, Genk/ Palermo, and biennales in Berlin, Dakar, Taipei, Sharjah, Moscow, Kathmandu, Guatemala, among others.

His work has also been shown at many international museums and art venues, including the Tate Modern, Tate Britain, Whitechapel Gallery and the ICA in London; the Palais de Tokyo in Paris; Les Complices, Helmhaus and Shedhalle in Zurich; and at various venues in Geneva, Ramallah, Marseille, Cairo, Istanbul, Mexico City, Dublin, New York, Toronto, Melbourne and elsewhere.

Uriel Orlow, born 1973 in Zurich, studied in London at Central Saint Martins College of Art & Design and at the Slade School of Art; and at the University of Geneva; and received his PhD from the University of the Arts in London. He lives and works in Lisbon, London and Zurich.

## PARITY GROUP

“We’ve seen a shift over the last few years, from the early days, when certain topics were just not on the agenda, to the conversation that is now happening, at last. The Parity Group went from being the instigator of these kinds of conversations to being a platform on which a lot of different initiatives began to flourish.”

“To this day, the Parity Group remains a grassroots collective, a fluid, non-tokenizable, and hard-to-pin-down thing that is everyone’s and no one’s, and where many different kinds of people operate as placeholders for one another. Simultaneously, we have become something of an institution inside the institution, a truly effective force. And therein lies our strength.”

The Parity Group is a grassroots initiative, born at the heart of the Department of Architecture (D-ARCH) of the ETH Zurich. Started in 2014 by some of the D-ARCH junior teaching staff, the Parity Group has since steadily established itself as a platform and a network within the educational institution: a platform for debate and action around issues of parity, diversity, inequality and institutional critique; and a network and meeting point for the school’s diverse elements: the students, assistants, lecturers and teachers who want to foreground these essential topics.

In 2016, the Parity Group established the Parity Talks, a symposium devoted to diversity and gender equality, which it has since hosted annually on March 8 – International Women’s Day. In convening international and local guests for this yearly public debate, the Parity Talks forum has become a notable event in the Swiss architectural calendar, and contributes to advancing debate on diversity and inclusion within the architectural community.

The outcomes of the first edition of the Parity Talks enabled the Parity Group to compile and launch the *9 Points for Parity* manifesto, a strategic list of measures designed to improve the gender balance within the D-ARCH. Today, these nine points for parity have been implemented, by and large. Firstly, enforcing the cre-

ation of an official Parity and Diversity Commission and pushing for parity in the selection of jury members, invited critics and new hires. Secondly, taking steps towards an inclusionary approach with more diverse studio briefs, and making space for a broader range of viewpoints and topics in the – at times, student-led – seminars.

In parallel, the Parity Group has continuously promoted a variety of formats and events at the ETH, from film screenings to book clubs, and from workshops to literacy forums, to foster a climate in which debate and action on diversity and parity are part and parcel of the school. In 2021, the Parity Group was instrumental in setting the framework for an external assessment of the D-ARCH by Engagement Arts, a Belgian movement tackling sexism and other structural power abuses in the arts and design. The D-ARCH Dean subsequently took action and is currently implementing the report’s recommendations in the department.

The continuous engagement and work of the Parity Group have brought about a sea change at the D-ARCH, with a ripple effect within the school that has extended to the architectural community in general, as well as to other educational institutions in Switzerland and abroad, which have followed in the Zurich group’s footsteps by setting up parity and diversity initiatives of their own. The Parity Group has been a prime example of how grassroots movements can thrive and have an impact within a large-scale institution, promoting a network of solidarity and shared interests, and forever changing the conversation around parity and diversity within the D-ARCH and beyond.



## PUBLICATION

The Federal Office of Culture's forthcoming publication *Swiss Grand Award for Art / Prix Meret Oppenheim 2023* will contain portraits of the award winners as well as an interview with each of them, the latter conducted with Stanislaus von Moos by Irina Davidovici, with Uriel Orlow by Andrea Thal and Giovanni Carmine, and with Parity Group by Vera Sacchetti.

- ISBN 978-3-907394-04-5
- German, French, Italian, Romansh, English
- Editorial: Gina Bucher
- Graphic Design: Nicolas Polli
- Photography: Florian Spring
- Circulation: 10,000

The publication will be available with the July / August 2023 Kunstbulletin and free copies can be ordered by email: [swissart@bak.admin.ch](mailto:swissart@bak.admin.ch).

## 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, scholars 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.

## 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 2023.

- German, French with subtitles
- Duration: approx. 5 min each

Presentation Swiss Art Awards 2023 exhibition and online from 12 June 2023 under [www.swissartawards.ch](http://www.swissartawards.ch)

## JURY PRIX MERET OPPENHEIM 2023 Federal Art Commission

### President

- Raffael Dörig, Director, Kunsthaus Langenthal

### Members

- Victoria Easton, Architect, Christ & Gantenbein, Basel
- San Keller, Artist, Zurich
- Roman Kurzmeyer, Curator, Teacher and Head of the Ricola Collection, Basel
- Anne-Julie Raccoursier, Artist, Lausanne
- Nicole Schweizer, Conservator of Contemporary Art, Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts, Lausanne
- Una Szeemann, Artist, Zurich and Tegna

### Architecture Experts

- Catherine Gay, Architect, GayMenzel, Monthey
- Jeannette Kuo, Architect, Karamuk Kuo, Zurich

### Commission Secretary

- Léa Fluck, Art historian, Federal Office for Culture

LAUREATES  
2001–2022

2022

- Caroline Bachmann
- Klodin Erb
- Jürg Conzett  
& Gianfranco Bronzini

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 Devanbéry  
& 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 Suermond

- 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  
12 June 2023

- Exhibition  
Swiss Art Awards 2023  
12-18 June 2023  
Halle 1.1, Messe Basel  
Free entrance

Tuesday –Saturday 10am – 8 pm  
Thursday 10am – 10pm  
Sunday 10am – 4 pm  
Details on the website  
[www.schweizerkulturpreise.ch](http://www.schweizerkulturpreise.ch)

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- Press images  
High-resolution portraits of the laureates are  
available at [www.bak.admin.ch/pmo](http://www.bak.admin.ch/pmo)
- Social Media  
[www.swissartawards.ch](http://www.swissartawards.ch)  
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