

MAMCO GENEVE

30.05–09.09.18

PRESS KIT

Rasheed Araeen, *A Retrospective*

Vaclav Pozarek

We Began by Measuring Distance

Cabinet d'arts graphiques

Julije Knifer

Opening: May 29, 6 pm

10, rue des Vieux-Grenadiers, 1205 Geneva



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PRESS RELEASE

Rasheed Araeen, *A Retrospective*
Vaclav Pozarek
We Began by Measuring Distance
Cabinet d'arts graphiques
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Opening: May 29, 6 pm
Press Conference: May 29, 11 am

This summer, on occasion of the retrospective devoted to the Pakistani artist Rasheed Araeen, MAMCO is inaugurating the first phase of its reflections concerning the internationalization of its exhibition corpus and the emergence of a world art history.

RASHEED ARAEEN

The political relationship that Rasheed Araeen has with so-called "minimal" forms, and his commitment to postcolonial theory, gave his practice an exemplary value in the "de-colonization" process of art history in the second half of the 20th century. For, the Western hegemony of museums and historiographical institutions had imposed the myth of a "universal museum of modern art" whose truly ideological nature can now be gauged. It is thus both the resonances of an evolutionary and progressive vision of art history, and the cultural contexts under consideration, which have today been put into question by the inclusion of other narratives.

Rasheed Araeen was born in 1935 in Karachi (Pakistan), where, with no formal artistic education, he produced his first works during the 1950s, which already attested to his interest in the geometric compositions suited to an expression of his impressions. When he arrived in London in 1964, as a qualified engineer, Araeen was struck by Anthony Caro's colored metal sculptures. By the end of the 1960s, he had developed his own language, based on the use of simple forms, and the notion of symmetry, as can be seen in his first *Structures*. Apart from their constructive and minimal aspect, these sculptures are also an invitation to a relationship with the

spectators, who can sometimes alter their arrangements. The retrospective, spanning a 60 years' career, leads the visitors through five chapters, from the works of the 1950s, through the sculptures of the 1960s and 1970s; then, following his increasingly affirmed political commitment in the 1980s, to the series of cruciform panels from the 1980s-1990s; and his most recent pieces, brought together under the title *Homecoming*.

As Nick Aikens explains, Araeen's practice has constantly rethought the formal, ideological, and political affirmations of Eurocentric modernism. This questioning lies at the heart of his practice, both in artistic and intellectual terms. It fed both into his involvement with the Black Panthers movement in the 1972, and the setting-up of the review *Third Text* in 1987. It underlay his performances in the 1970s, and his para-minimal *Structures*. What is more, it led to his identity self-portraits from the early 1980s and his photographic compositions from the same period. And, as we can be reminded by the paintings from the recent *Opus* series, inspired by Islamic decorative art, Araeen responds to the universalist pretensions of Western modernism by an affirmation of the multiple origins of abstract language.

Yet, the globalizing imperative to bring in "differences" is not enough to resolve the issues coming from a dominant ideology. For a museum like MAMCO, what is at stake is rather to gauge to what extent taking into account these differences modifies our understanding of the forms and practices we collect. What should be considered is our conception of recent historiography, and the

division of its periods, as much as the aesthetic contours applied to the movements in question. For example, how we do see the museum collection containing the work of Siah Armajani (*1939), an Iranian artist who emigrated to the USA, or of Julije Knifer (1924–2004), a Croatian artist who was based in Paris, through the prism of Rasheed Araeen's show? Can the equation that this artist has established between symmetry and democracy help to shed light on the symbolism at the heart of Armajani's work? Doesn't the irony in his re-combinable *Structures* bring to mind the view that the members of the Gorgona group, with whom Knifer participated between 1959 and 1966, had of creation? In other words, is it possible for a museum to construct different conceptual tools, aesthetic categories, and other narratives of the passing of time as we see it, while exhibiting these artists, and thus exposing ourselves to such forms?

VACLAV POZAREK

These questions lie at the heart of the new exhibitions in the summer 2018 sequence, such as the one devoted to the Czech artist Vaclav Pozarek, with its invitation to measure the impact of Eastern European art (before the fall of the Wall) on the abstract vocabulary of an artist working in Switzerland since the 1970s.

After film studies in Prague, Vaclav Pozarek (*1940, Budweis, today in the Czech Republic), moved to Hamburg and then London. He there entered Saint Martin's School of Art, in Anthony Caro's class, before setting up home in Bern. It was his interest in concrete art, and in particular Richard Paul Lohse, that initially attracted him to Switzerland. There, he developed a particular synthesis of constructivist principles and questions concerning the application of the arts to reality. He has since focused on sculpture and drawing, but has also produced installations, photographs, and films. For his solo exhibitions, Pozarek often designs logotypes, as is the case for the exhibition at the MAMCO, covering more than 500m² on the 2nd floor, and bringing together a good forty

pieces, from the 1970s to today.

His sculptures vary between abstraction and "concrete objects": the proportions allude turn by turn to an elementary or singular form of furnishing, while other set-ups bring to mind sophisticated woodwork or panelling. These apparently abstract designs have an inexpressible dimension, as a form of architecture or else the ornamentation of a façade. While seeming to be part of the history of Minimalist sculpture, which had lastingly freed itself from mimetic depiction, or the plinth, Vaclav Pozarek corrupts modern orthodoxy thanks to his use of craft techniques and vernacular allusions.

WE BEGAN BY MEASURING DISTANCE

A selection of works from the collection of the Sharjah Art Foundation, a reference Middle-East institution, organized by its director Hoor Al Qasimi, responds to the invitation to broaden the frame of reference of practices under review at MAMCO and to set up a series of echoes to Rasheed Araeen's retrospective. It allows for the discovery, for the first time in Switzerland, of such artists as Hassan Sharif, Marwan Rechmaoui, and Basma Al Sharif.

CABINET D'ARTS GRAPHIQUES

Finally, this summer also marks the opening of a Cabinet devoted to practices such as illustration and graphic novels. After a space devoted to the Fluxus group, and built up around the ECART archives, along with a Cabinet of concrete poetry, this third space, which is neither permanent nor ephemeral, has been conceived as an interface between MAMCO's exhibitions and a field of creation that chimes with local work. For, the history of comic books can generally be traced back to 1827, in Geneva, with the work of Rodolphe Töpffer. The presence of a large number of authors, and the setting-up of fresh training schemes with the ESD, will allow for a new resonance between the museum and the city. The programming of this Cabinet, entrusted to Fabrice Stroun, will be inaugurated by a presentation of work by the Japanese artist Yūchi Yokoyama, selected in collaboration with Mathis Gasser.

Rasheed Araeen

A Retrospective

Organized by Nick Aikens and Paul Bernard, the exhibition was first presented at the Van Abbemuseum in Eindhoven. The exhibition is supported by the Stanley Thomas Johnson Stiftung.

Spanning more than 60 years, this exhibition offers the first comprehensive survey of the work of Rasheed Araeen. It is structured across five chapters unfolding on two levels of the museum: on the first floor are presented Araeen's early experiments in painting in Karachi in the 1950s and early 1960s; his geometric *Structures* after his arrival in London in 1964; key pieces from the 1970s and 1980s following Araeen's political awakening; and his nine panel cruciform works from the 1980s and 1990s. On the third floor, new geometric paintings are displayed in a large room alongside the participative work *Zero to Infinity*. Materials relating to Araeen's writing, editorial, and curatorial projects are also presented, as well as a Reading Room, located among the collection of Minimal and Conceptual art of the museum on the 3rd floor. This unprecedented configuration stresses how much Araeen's practice continues to challenge a Eurocentric approach to art and its modernist history.

In the Beginning

The room presents Araeen's early experiments in painting, drawing, and sculpture whilst he was living in Karachi, until 1964. Without a formal artistic training, Araeen's early work depicts the places and people of Pakistan's most populous city. By the late 1950s Araeen was exploring abstraction, working from memory and the imagination, rather than directly from life. He began using geometric forms, such as squares and triangles; he also became fascinated by ideas of fluidity, movement, and transformation embodied in water and fire and evident in his use of curved lines. These formal interests, as well as his training as an engineer, would come to play formative roles in his art work.

Geometry and Symmetry

Following his arrival in London in 1964, Araeen saw the colored metal sculpture of Anthony Caro, which he describes as having a strong effect on him. Araeen's own Minimalist language, however, drew on geometry and symmetry. Araeen's interest in symmetry stemmed from its lack of hierarchy with one side always being equal to the other. By the end of the 1960s Araeen became fascinated by the relationship between symmetry and asymmetry, which he saw as a defining condition of the world. He began exposing his geometric *Structures* and forms to human interaction and natural elements.

Becoming Political

By 1971 Araeen had become disillusioned with the endemic racism in Britain and its art establishment. He started reading anti-colonial writers such as Frantz Fanon. In 1972, he joined the Black Panthers Movement and, from 1973 until 1975, he actively took part in the group Artistsfor Democracy, formed by David Medalla. His artwork started incorporating collage, photography, installation, performance, writing, and editing. Formal and conceptual concerns remained, such as his use of the grid and the series format. He continued producing and incorporating his geometric *Structures* into his work. From 1975 onwards, Araeen started using his own image, body, and the format of self-portraiture as the focus of his investigations into representation.

In Pursuit of a Significant Language

In the 1980s and 1990s Araeen found an aesthetic language that brought together his investigations into abstraction and geome-

try with his political concerns. His lattice reliefs, *Structures*, and use of monochrome were combined with photo-montages that drew on images of the artist himself or referenced contemporary socio-political events.

In the mid-1980s Araeen embarked on the *Cruciform* series. The use of the cross, the color green (a significant color in Islamic cultures), and a broad range of references create what has been described as a “complex allegorical space,” charting opposing but dependent ideologies and views of the world.

Homecoming

In 2011 Araeen returned to painting. The *Homecoming* series, presented alongside the recent *Opus* paintings, take their starting point from the names of intellectuals and mathematicians from the Abbasid era (750-1258), the golden era of Islamic thinking. Calligraphy is treated within the formal language of painterly abstraction. As with the patterned surfaces of the *Opus* paintings, inspired by Islamic crafts, Araeen’s recent painting redirects modernism away from the West in the 20th century, repositioning it historically and geographically. These paintings are accompanied by two new lattice structures referencing Kazimir Malevich’s *Black Square*. The 64 cubes of *Zero to Infinity* are intended for visitors to play with and reconfigure—an invitation to use the equal properties of geometry and symmetry to create new and endless possibilities.

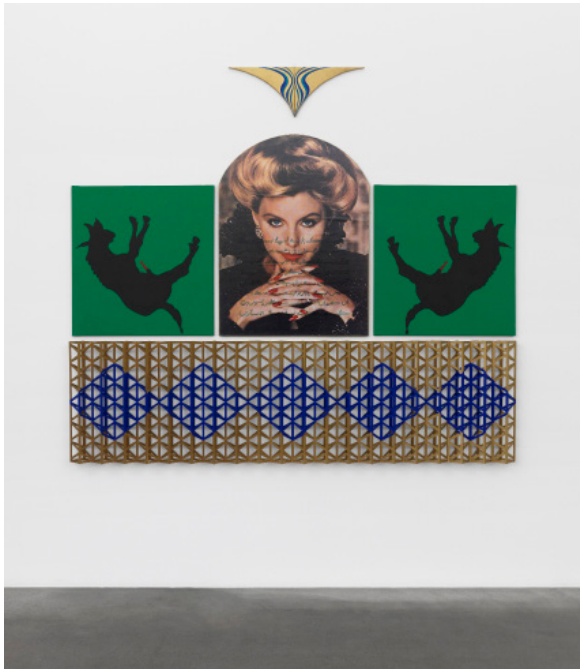
Reading Room, 2017

A series of documents related to projects by Rasheed Araeen are gathered in the Apartment. Among them, the conceptual diagrams combining educational, environmental, and political concerns included in his publication *Art Beyond Art* (2010). The book cements his long-held belief in arts capacity to bring about transformation in the world. The “living room” of the Apartment hosts a Reading Room. On top of Araeen’s *Structures* are issues of *Third Text*, the journal Araeen founded and edited from 1987-2011, for you

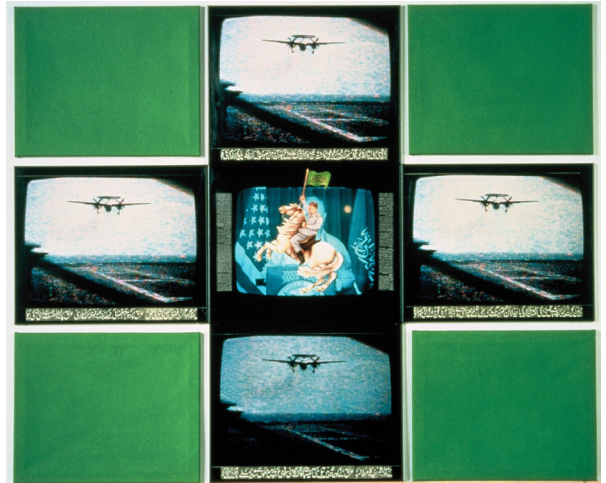
to read. As art historian John Roberts writes, *Third Text* became “the primary site of debate on race, representation, and British and global culture” as well as the fields of post-colonial theory and “negritude.” The Reading Room finds here a significant echo within the Minimal and Conceptual works which surround it and invite us to interrogate the Western narratives of the modernity.

Rasheed Araeen

A Retrospective



Rasheed Araeen, *Sonay Ke Chirya (Golden Bird)*, 1986,
Fukuoka Asian Art Museum Collection
Photo : Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva



Rasheed Araeen, *White Stallion*, 1991
Collage ; 162,5 x 199 cm
Collection Imperial War Museum, London



Rasheed Araeen
Exhibition view, MAMCO Geneva, 2018
Photo : Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva



Rasheed Araeen
Exhibition view, MAMCO Geneva, 2018
Photo : Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva

A Retrospective



Rasheed Araeen
Exhibition view, MAMCO Geneva, 2018
Photo : Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva



Rasheed Araeen
Exhibition view, MAMCO Geneva, 2018
Photo : Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva

Vaclav Pozarek

The exhibition is organized by Lionel Bovier and Fabrice Stroun, assisted by Lisa Kaczmarek. It received the generous support from the Ernst Göhner Stiftung.

Vaclav Pozarek was born in 1940 in Budweis, in what is now the Czech Republic. He studied film and subsequently moved to Hamburg and London, where he studied under Anthony Caro at the Saint Martin's School of Art. His interest in Concrete art, and the work of Richard Paul Lohse in particular, drew him to Switzerland, and the city of Berne. There, he developed a unique synthesis of the principles of Constructivism and the application of the arts to everyday reality. Pozarek focuses principally on sculpture and drawing, but he has also produced installations, photography, and film. He often designs logos for his solo exhibitions, as he did for his MAMCO show, which presents 40 works dating from the 1970s to the present.

Pozarek's works of the 1970s are shaped by their contemporary context—the reception and critique of Minimalism in Europe—while his output in the 1980s develops its own unique vocabulary, reflecting on the art object. Like his contemporaries Reinhard Mucha, Jan Vercruyssen, or Didier Vermeiren, Pozarek treats sculpture as an intermediary state between everyday reality and the world of culture.

His works are part abstract, part “concrete objects”: their proportions evoke elementary forms and furniture, while some of his assemblages suggest sophisticated joinery or panelling. His seemingly abstract drawings incorporate a figurative dimension, reminiscent of architectural plans or ornamentation on a façade.

Pozarek appears to embrace the Minimalist sculptural tradition, free from the constraints of mimetic representation or the hegemony of the plinth, while at the same time challenging and corrupting this modern orthodoxy

through the use of craft techniques and vernacular references.

His witty, determinedly anti-nostalgic works of the 1990s and 2000s intensify his examination of the realm of the object: pseudo-functional forms, architectural fragments, and meditations on use are presented as sculptures for the visitor to decipher.

Today, as the exhibition demonstrates, Pozarek's corpus occupies a unique place on the Swiss art scene: by redefining an Eastern European modernist heritage through an international vocabulary, his work contributes to the broadening of the question of the vernacular and the status of art objects.

Vaclav Pozarek



Vaclav Pozarek, *Paradies Tür*, 1992
Wood ; 103 x 109 x 6 cm
Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Francesca Pia, Zurich



Vaclav Pozarek, *Vertikalen von Dunhill, fett*, 2014
Pencil and pen on paper ; 63 x 78 x 2 cm
Courtesy the artist and
Galerie Francesca Pia, Zurich



Vaclav Pozarek, *Wand*, 1994
Stained wood ; 289 x 85.5 x 76 cm
Collection Kunstmuseum Winterthur,
Purchase with Legacy Erna and Curt Burgauer, 2004
Schweizerisches Institut für Kunstwissenschaft,
Zurich, Photographer Philipp Hitz



Vaclav Pozarek, *Suzuki*, 1984
Fabric on copper bar ; 202 x 123 x 6 cm
Collection Ricola, Laufen

We Began by Measuring Distance

Basma Al Sharif, Bouchra Khalili, Taus Makhacheva,
Nikla Oblak & Primož Novak, Melik Ohanian, Marwan
Rechmaoui, Hassan Sharif

The exhibition is curated by Hoor Al Qasimi and was made possible thanks to the generous support of the Sharjah Art Foundation

We Began by Measuring Distance presents artists born between 1960 and 1980, from a broad range of cultural horizons (Europe, Russia, North Africa, the Middle and Far East). Most of the works come from Sharjah Art Foundation's collection to respond to MAMCO's invitation to present a selection of projects in counterpoint to our current cycle of exhibitions.

Central to the selection is the work of Hassan Sharif (1951–2016). Active in Sharjah from the 1970s, travelling regularly between his base in the Emirates and London, Sharif opposed calligraphic abstraction from the 1980s onwards, and developed a multidisciplinary practice combining drawing, photographs, texts, and installation that seeks to articulate the space and its measure to its sculptural transformation and its physical experience. The selection of works presented here reinforces the role and importance of the "system" in Sharif's oeuvre—an echo of the redefinition of the concept of "structure" and geometry in the work of Rasheed Araeen.

The exhibition takes its title from a film by Basma Alsharif (*1983): innocent-seeming, "neutral" measurements gradually take on a political hue, and ultimately challenge how History itself is translated into images and sound.

The Mapping Journey Project by Bouchra Khalili (*1975) is a series of cartographic presentations of the journeys undertaken by migrants gaining illegal entry into Europe. Slovenian artists Nika Oblak and Primož Novak (active as a duo since 2003) apply an inverse logic with a performance tracing a north-south itinerary from Ljubljana to Sharjah.

Marwan Rechmaoui's sculpture (*1964) is a meticulous reproduction of the 60 districts making up the map of Beirut in rubber: a reminder of how cartography can preserve the trace of the conflicts and divisions that have marked the city's complex history.

Melik Ohanian (*1969) explores cinema's ability to communicate a sense of space and time: for eleven consecutive days, a 100-metre section of rail track was laid over the course of a day, to produce a four-minute travelling shot.

We Began by Measuring Distance conceives of space by turns as a landscape to be journeyed through, and as a performative territory. As such, it explores the relationship of narrative to History, and of documentation to politics.

Hassan Sharif



Hassan Sharif, *Jumping No. 1*, 1983
Photographs and pencil on mounting board
98 x 73.5 cm
Artist copy
Courtesy Estate of Hassan Sharif and Gallery Isabelle van den Eynde

Julije Knifer

The exhibition is organized by Lionel Bovier and Sophie Costes.

Julije Knifer was born in Croatia in 1924, and settled in France in the early 1990s—first in Sète, then in Nice, and subsequently in Paris, where he died in 2004. From 1950 to 1956, he studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Zagreb where he discovered abstraction, notably through the work of the Russian Suprematists. Knifer's later work was often associated with a "concrete" abstraction, a form explored in many different variations throughout the post-war period in Europe, such as the Zero Group or the work of François Morellet.

From 1959 to 1966, Julije Knifer was also part of Gorgona, an informal grouping of artists, poets, and critics who refused to work under a prescriptive manifesto or program and sought to demystify the experience of art. The Gorgona project centered on the group's belief that the material status of a work of art was less important than its essential idea, and that artistic practice was inseparable from everyday life. The *Gorgona* journal, published until 1966, disseminated the group's ideas throughout the former Yugoslavia and Eastern Europe.

From 1960 onwards, Julije Knifer concentrated on a motif that fuelled all of his subsequent work: meandering lines. On paper and canvas alike, each composition—mostly using a minimalist black and white palette—is organized as a series of variations. Knifer described these serial works as a journey "without progression or regression," and readily declared that he had "doubtless already produced his last work and not yet begun his first."

On closer examination, we see that the meanders follow a rhythm defined by the disposition of their verticals. The works—

sometimes diptychs or polyptychs—echo and reach out to one another, like elements in an organized, collective scheme. The viewer's gaze follows the rectilinear meanders in each case, inviting us to experience and reflect on the passage of time.

MAMCO possesses several works by Knifer, gifted to the museum by the artist's Estate, which also left on long-term loan an important ensemble of drawings and pictures.

Julije Knifer



Julije Knifer, exhibition view, MAMCO Geneva, 2018.
Photo : Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva



Julije Knifer, exhibition view, MAMCO Geneva, 2018.
Photo : Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva

Cabinet d'arts graphiques

Yūichi Yokoyama

The Cabinet d'arts graphiques is generously supported by the Fondation Leenaards.

The Graphic Arts Room is devoted to disciplines outside the field of fine arts in the strictest sense, but which are nonetheless recognized as expressive art forms in their own right: these include illustration, graphic design, and comic books. The semi-permanent space is conceived as an interface between the exhibitions presented at MAMCO and a creative field with close connections to the museum's locality. Program curator Fabrice Stroun presents the space's inaugural exhibition, featuring works by Japanese artist Yūichi Yokoyama, chosen in collaboration with Mathis Gasser.

Yūichi Yokoyama (*1967, Miyazaki) is one of the most experimental comic-book artists of his generation. A graduate of Tokyo's Musashino Art University, he relinquished painting in the early 1990s to focus on manga—the Japanese term used since the 18th century to describe albums of caricatures, and which became synonymous with comic books in the second half of the Meiji era. Yokoyama's shift to manga reflected his urge to make pictures in sequence, incorporating a temporal dimension, though his stories eschew classical narrative frameworks: with no beginning nor end, they deploy a broad, eclectic range of cut-out and graphic effects. His occasional human representations resemble digital avatars, or the figures in architectural models or drawings, rather than individual, psychologically rounded characters.

Yūichi Yokoyama readily acknowledges the influence of Mono-Ha ("The School of Things"), a Japanese neo-avant-garde group that explored the interaction between industrial materials such as steel, glass, or concrete, and natural elements such as wood, stone or fire. Mono-Ha artists were

interested in both the allegorical power of their chosen materials, and the ways in which their chiefly monumental, minimalist works alter the viewer's visual, spatial and temporal experience.

MAMCO's exhibition focuses on an 18 pages story titled *Astronauts* and presented in two forms: as black and white original pages in ink and adhesive screen-tones, and as colored preparatory sketches. The artist's process is hereby made apparent. Working through a fable associated with post-War Japanese science fiction comic books, Yūichi Yokoyama develops a singularly abstract visual syntax. The sound effects accompanying his bewildering imagery merge with the aerial dances of his characters and their speed lines, emphasizing the unique parameters of his chosen medium just at it redefines our very understanding of what a comic book can be.

Cabinet d'arts graphiques Yūichi Yokoyama



Yûichi Yokoyama, exhibition view, MAMCO Geneva, 2018
Photo: Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva



Yûichi Yokoyama, *Astronautes*, original plates.
Yûichi Yokoyama, *Room*, éditions Harmonica backs, 2013
coll. MEL compagnie des arts

A Collection of Spaces

MAMCO's fourth floor re-opens after a few weeks of renovation works, in a brand-new configuration gathering artists' spaces. On one hand are artworks which have entered the museum's collection, and on the other, new spaces dedicated to archives and curated in collaboration with artists.

Claude Rutault's Inventaire (1989-1994) gathers the entirety of his definitions/methods, represented by raw canvases, canvases painted in white or painted over in gray, as a way to record their current state of realisation—respectively non-realised, realised, or cancelled. This ensemble, first presented at MAMCO in 1994 and integrated since within the museum's collection, is a form of seismograph of Rutault's practice. It is now re-installed following the artist's wish, and an outside wall allows the update of any of the works.

Sarkis' L'Atelier depuis 19380, set up at the MAMCO since 1994, is the only environment which still bears witness to the wooden "cabins" that characterized the museum when it first opened. The artist considers this space as a "travel studio" which, once or twice a year, he occupies to resume his work. What is on display in this space is however not the fabrication of a particular piece, but rather the sedimentation of his work. Some works are thus hung, displaced, sometimes removed, put in dialogue with one another, as if part of a maintenance ritual. Surrounding the studio the presentation of other projects from the artist of which the museum keeps an important number in its collection.

These two historical artists' spaces adjoin rooms dedicated to the Ecart Archives and the Concrete Poetry Cabinet of Maurizio Nannucci and Gabriele Detterer.

The post-Fluxus activities of the Ecart group have found a location for their re-emergence in Geneva, thanks to the HEAD Geneva, the Print Room of the Musée d'art et d'histoire and the complicity of John Armleder. They are exhibited through a new operatory mode which allows at once to resume the archives'

inventory work and to update projects from the 1970s.

Finally, the *Concrete Poetry Cabinet* is dedicated to an international artistic and literary movement which widespread from Europe to South America as well as in Asia. As early as the 1950s, artists such as Augusto and Haroldo De Campos, Bob Cobbing, Eugen Gomringer, Jiri Kolar, Ferdinand Kriwet, Robert Lax, Franz Mon, Seiichi Nii-kuni, Dieter Roth, Gerhard Rühm, Emmet Williams, or Henri Chopin, produced poems, books, and sound pieces by using information technologies available at the time (typewriter, Verifax copier, Letraset, offset, etc.). The Cabinet is made of 30'000 artworks and documents brought together by Zona Achives, which under the auspices of Maurizio Nannucci, is one of the biggest private collection on Europe.

This gathering of artists' spaces on the fourth floor of the museum is intended both to offer a representation of the singularity of the MAMCO collections—through the emphasis on protocol, score and collaboration with the artist as nodal points of the collection's politics—, and to allow ephemeral, performative and living forms to find a place in its midst. This articulation between archives, collections, and performative formats is also a proposition which is new for the museographic field and its codified practices.

Sophie Costes, Curator in charge of the MAMCO collections, worked on the re-deployment of Sarkis' studio and, with artist Emilie Parendeau, of Rutault's inventory; Paul Bernard, Curator at the MAMCO, was in charge of the organization of the Concrete Poetry Cabinet; and the Ecart display was organized by Lionel Bovier and David Lemaire, Curator at the MAMCO.

The Concrete Poetry Cabinet and the Ecart space are generously supported by Fondation Leenaards.

A Collection of Spaces



Cabinet de poésie concrète, exhibition view, MAMCO, 2017
Collection Zona Archives, Florence. Photo: Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva



Sarkis, *L'Atelier depuis 19380*, 1994-2017. Exhibition view MAMCO, 2017
Collection MAMCO, Photo: Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva

L' Appartement

The “Apartment” is no ordinary exhibition space. Located on the museum’s third floor, it is a reconstruction of the Paris apartment where, from 1975 to 1991, Ghislain Mollet-Viéville worked to promote Minimal and Conceptual art. Calling himself an “art agent,” Mollet-Viéville initially organized his living and work space to conform with the protocols of the works in his collection, before deciding to yield to the consequences of their “dematerialization” and move to a new apartment with no visible works. This meant his collection could be entrusted to MAMCO when it opened, in 1994. In 2016-2017, the private Foundation of the museum acquired a large part of it .

This selection of 25 works is representative of the work of the first-generation Minimalist artists such as Carl Andre, Donald Judd, and John McCracken, and of their Conceptual counterparts—Joseph Kosuth, Sol LeWitt, and Lawrence Weiner, for example. If the former explore a lexicon of elementary, logical, and radical forms that keep at bay any anthropomorphism and narrative features, the latter mainly offer protocols for execution, turning the collector into an agent on whom the works’ material existence depends. Both have dispensed with pedestals, frames, lighting, and all other *mise-en-scène* props, in favor of an immediate intellectual and sensory experience.

Compared with MAMCO’s other galleries, the “Apartment” sets the works the challenge of a domestic setting. For visitors this means the opportunity to experience them on more intimate terms, in a space where they are invited to step outside the conventions, whether attending a lecture, a special event, or simply pausing to read and to linger a while in the company of works that have been talking among themselves for several decades now.

L'Appartement



Exhibition view of L'Appartement
Photo: Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva



Exhibition view of L'Appartement
Photo : Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Geneva

Prix culturel Manor 2018

MAMCO GENEVE
30.05.18-09.09.18

Prix culturel Manor 2018



Photo: Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Genève



Photo: Annik Wetter – MAMCO, Genève

Pablo Picasso's *Buste de mousquetaire* was painted in 1968 and acquired in 2017 by the Web community QoQa.ch. The 40,000 shares costing 50 CHF required for the acquisition of this painting, all found takers in ... 48 hours, thus marking the first acquisition of an important work of modern art by an online community.

While this acquisition process differs from those used in museums, it still brings to mind an historical Swiss precedent. 50 years ago, the City of Basel suggested to its inhabitants to increase, by referendum, the amount of their taxes, in order to acquire two canvases by the very same Picasso. When the "yes" won, the painter, quite moved by the attitude of the population, gifted of two others.

The few periods when Picasso (1881–1973) stopped painting were followed by extremely fertile times of artistic production. As of 1935, while the Spanish Civil War was raging, he did not touch a paint brush for two years. When he picked one up again, in 1937, it was to produce *Guernica*. During the 1960s, a serious illness stopped him from painting. When his convalescence was over, in 1967, the figure of a mousquetaire emerged in his work, and was never to leave him again. Based on his renewed readings of the works of Alexandre Dumas and Shakespeare, and his rediscovery of such old masters as El Greco, Velasquez and, in particular, Rembrandt, this character of mousquetaire became an alter-ego of the painter. Its attributes bring to mind the subjects of Rembrandt's *Night Watch*, thus displaying the painter's fascination for the Golden Age of Dutch painting. Through this figure reminiscent of the world of childhood, magic, farces, and masquerades, he swam against the tide of the era's main artistic trends (abstraction and minima-

lism). In this way, Picasso showed that, as John Richardson wrote "he felt free to do whatever he wanted, in whatever way he wanted, regardless of correctness, political, social or artistic."

This project, which allows MAMCO to consider new ways of bringing digital media into the museum realm, is realized in partnership with QoQa.ch.

MAMCO GENEVE

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The Museum is open Tuesday through Friday from
noon to 6pm, the first Wednesday of the month
until 9pm, and Saturday and Sunday from 11am
to 6pm. Closed on Mondays.

Regular admission: CHF 15.-
Reduced admission: CHF 10.-
Group admission: CHF 5.-

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