



# HARALD SZEEMANN MUSEUM OF OBSESSIONS

EDITED BY  
GLENN PHILLIPS AND PHILIPP KAISER  
WITH DORIS CHON AND PIETRO RIGOLO

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS BY  
BEATRICE VON BISMARCK  
DORIS CHON  
CAROLYN CHRISTOV-BAKARGIEV  
PHILIPP KAISER  
MEGAN R. LUKE  
GLENN PHILLIPS  
PIETRO RIGOLO  
MARIANA ROQUETTE TEIXEIRA

AND INTERVIEWS WITH  
TOBIA BEZZOLA,  
TANIA BRUGUERA, CHRISTO,  
KLAUS HONNEF, ANDA ROTTENBERG,  
AND GILBERTO ZORIO

THE GETTY RESEARCH INSTITUTE, LOS ANGELES



This publication accompanies the exhibition *Harald Szeemann: Museum of Obsessions*, on view at the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, from February 6 to May 6, 2018.

The exhibition is generously supported by Warren Lichtenstein, in honor of Tommy Lasorda, with additional support from Sotheby's. The exhibition tour is substantially supported by a grant from the Swiss Arts Council Pro Helvetia.

Exhibition Itinerary

Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles  
February 6–May 6, 2018

Kunsthalle Bern  
June 9–September 2, 2018

Kunsthalle Düsseldorf  
October 10, 2018–January 20, 2019

Castello di Rivoli, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin  
February 26, 2019–May 26, 2019

*Grandfather: A Pioneer Like Us*, a reconstruction of Harald Szeemann's Grandfather exhibition (1974), is presented in conjunction with the exhibition at the following venues:

Institute of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles  
February 4–April 22, 2018

Gerechtigkeitsgasse 74, Bern  
June 9–September 2, 2018

Kunsthalle Düsseldorf  
October 10, 2018–January 20, 2019

Castello di Rivoli, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin  
February 26–May 26, 2019

Swiss Institute, New York  
Summer 2019

© 2018 J. Paul Getty Trust

Published by the Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles  
Getty Publications  
1200 Getty Center Drive, Suite 500  
Los Angeles, California 90049-1682  
[www.getty.edu/publications](http://www.getty.edu/publications)

Nola Butler, *Project Editor*  
Karen Jacobson, *Manuscript Editor*  
Catherine Lorenz, *Designer*  
Michelle Woo Deemer, *Production*

Distributed in the United States and Canada by the  
University of Chicago Press

Distributed outside the United States and Canada by  
Yale University Press, London

Printed in Germany

Front cover: Wig stand in front of prints from *La Coiffure Française Illustrée*, 1895–1913, in *Grossvater: Ein Pionier wie wir* (Grandfather: A pioneer like us), Galerie Toni Gerber, Bern, February 16–April 20, 1974. Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard.

Back cover: Harald Szeemann after his trip to Cuba for the Salón de Mayo, 1967. Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard.

Page i: Harald Szeemann at the Kunsthalle Bern during *Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form; Works—Concepts—Processes—Situations—Information*, 1969. Photographer: Harry Shunk.

Page ii: Wig designed by Étienne Szeemann in the eighteenth-century hairstyle known as *la Belle Poule*, featuring a handmade model of a French frigate, n.d., as installed in the exhibition *Grossvater: Ein Pionier wie wir* (Grandfather: A pioneer like us), Galerie Toni Gerber, Bern, February 16–April 20, 1974. Photographer: Klaus Mettig.

Page vi: Harald Szeemann, ca. 1970s.

Page ix: Installation view of *Joseph Beuys*, Kunsthau Zürich, November 26, 1993–February 20, 1994.

Page 390: Ed Ruscha holding the poster he designed for documenta 5, *Befragung der Realität—Bildwelten heute* (Questioning reality—image worlds today), 1972. Photographer: Balthasar Burkhard.

Page 398: Note from James Lee Byars to Harald Szeemann, written on an invitation to a secret presentation of *The Perfect Kiss* at the door of the Pavillon Denon, Palais du Louvre, Paris, June 7, 1975, postmarked June 13, 1975.

Page 406: Harald Szeemann and a “wrapped” Harald Szeemann drawn by Markus Raetz for the invitation to *8 1/2: Documentation 1961–1969*, Éditions Claude Givaudan, Paris, February 5–March 7, 1970.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Phillips, Glenn, 1974– editor. | Kaiser, Philipp, 1972– editor. | Chon, Doris, editor. | Rigolo, Pietro, editor. | Getty Research Institute, host institution, issuing body, organizer.

Title: Harald Szeemann : museum of obsessions / edited by Glenn Phillips and Philipp Kaiser with Doris Chon and Pietro Rigolo ; with contributions by Beatrice von Bismarck, Doris Chon, Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, Philipp Kaiser, Megan R. Luke, Glenn Phillips, Pietro Rigolo, Mariana Roquette Teixeira ; and interviews with Tobia Bezzola, Tania Bruguera, Christo, Klaus Honnef, Anda Rottenberg, and Gilberto Zorio.

Other titles: Harald Szeemann (2018)

Description: Los Angeles : Getty Research Institute [2018] | “This publication accompanies the exhibition Harald Szeemann: Museum of Obsessions, on view at the Getty Research Institute at the Getty Center, Los Angeles, from February 6 to May 6, 2018.” —ECIP galley. | Includes index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2017046327 | ISBN 9781606065594 (hardcover)

Subjects: LCSH: Szeemann, Harald—Criticism and interpretation. | Szeemann, Harald—Exhibitions. | Art museum curators—Switzerland—Exhibitions. | Art critics—Switzerland—Exhibitions. | Art—Exhibitions techniques. | Art—Exhibitions—Philosophy.

Classification: LCC N7483.S97 H36 2018 | DDC 701/.18—dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2017046327>

The Harald Szeemann Archive and Library was acquired by the Getty Research Institute in 2011 and is open to use by researchers. For more information, please visit [http://www.getty.edu/special\\_collections/notable/szeemann.html](http://www.getty.edu/special_collections/notable/szeemann.html).

CONTENTS

vii	<b>FOREWORD</b> A FIRST VIEW INTO THE FABBRICA Thomas W. Gaehtgens
1	<b>INTRODUCTION</b> THE KINGDOM OF OBSESSIONS Glenn Phillips
14	<b>INTERVIEW WITH TOBIA BEZZOLA</b>
27	<b>INTERVIEW WITH CHRISTO</b>
32	<b>INTERVIEW WITH GILBERTO ZORIO</b>
37	<b>INTERVIEW WITH KLAUS HONNEF</b>
47	<b>AVANT-GARDES   PLATES</b>
89	<b>HARALD SZEEMANN'S MUSEUM OF OBSESSIONS, BETWEEN PARODY AND CONSECRATION</b> Doris Chon
111	<b>THE GRANDFATHER EXHIBITION A SORT OF MANIFESTO</b> Mariana Roquette Teixeira
129	<b>REPEAT THE UNIQUE THING LOVE, THE ARTWORK, LIFE</b> Pietro Rigolo
149	<b>UTOPIAS   PLATES</b>
183	<b>AN ART HISTORY OF INTENSIVE INTENTIONS</b> Megan R. Luke

201	<b>THOSE WHO WERE SEEN DANCING</b> HARALD SZEEMANN AND ARMAND SCHULTHESS Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev
219	<b>VISIONARIES   PLATES</b>
249	<b>WHEN ATTITUDES BECOME A PROFESSION</b> HARALD SZEEMANN'S SELF-REFERENTIAL PRACTICE AND THE ART OF THE EXHIBITION Beatrice von Bismarck
265	<b>THE AVANT-GARDE OF SILENCE</b> HARALD SZEEMANN'S SCULPTURE EXHIBITIONS OF THE 1980S Philipp Kaiser
284	<b>INTERVIEW WITH ANDA ROTTENBERG</b>
289	<b>INTERVIEW WITH TANIA BRUGUERA</b>
295	<b>GEOGRAPHIES   PLATES</b>
333	<b>PIONEERS LIKE US</b> Glenn Phillips
359	<b>GRANDFATHERS   PLATES</b>
391	<b>ACKNOWLEDGMENTS</b>
396	<b>CONTRIBUTORS</b>
399	<b>ILLUSTRATION CREDITS</b>
400	<b>INDEX</b>



INTERVIEW WITH  
**GILBERTO ZORIO**

Gilberto Zorio (b. Andorno Micca, Italy, 1944) is an artist whose work Harald Szeemann presented in *Live in Your Head: When Attitudes Become Form; Works—Concepts—Processes—Situations—Information* (1969), documenta 5 (1972), and *L'arte degli anni settanta* (Art of the 1970s, Venice Biennale, 1980). This interview was conducted on November 9, 2016, in his studio in Turin, Italy. Translated from the Italian by Marlene Klein.

**Pietro Rigolo:** I want to begin by asking you about the years from about 1967 to 1969, when you, along with other artists whom the curator Germano Celant had brought together under the term *arte povera*, began to have a certain visibility. How would you describe this period in terms of artistic research and creativity?

**Gilberto Zorio:** I remember this period as a really vital time. There was vitalism, there was imagination, and at least on my part there was enthusiasm and a bit of anger. But everything was pretty happy and high-spirited too. It was a time of positive encounters that were really good for me, because I got to know people who made me think globally and not just from the sidelines. And the exhibitions that were done—they are the proof that those were really great moments.

**PR:** Can you speak about the international network that was emerging at this time and that promoted these new artistic practices?

**GZ:** Here in Turin there was Galleria Sperone, which was very important. Also in Turin there was an artist-traveler named Piero Gilardi as well as Michelangelo Pistoletto, another traveler. It was a meeting place. And a space called Deposito d'Arte Presente, which was really big for the time, opened here in Turin, cofounded by Sperone, Marcello Levi, and a group of collectors. It wasn't a matter of money—as a matter of fact there really wasn't any, or there was very little. But the collectors were very interesting, including Corrado Levi and the great publisher Giulio Einaudi, the madman. And there was the Galleria d'Arte Moderna, which had an extraordinary collection and exhibition program. For example, I first saw the Gutai artists in 1962 in an exhibition there, *Struttura e stile*.

So there were already grounds for communication. In 1968 I traveled to Düsseldorf for Prospekt '68, an extraordinary exhibition/fair, which in my opinion was not an art fair. Every space was run by a gallerist, but the gallerists of this time were really curators. Very positive, very important encounters. Then in October of 1968 I went to Amalfi for the exhibition *Arte povera + azioni povere*. This was when I met Richard Long, Ger van Elk, Jan Dibbets...

**PR:** When did you meet Harald Szeemann for the first time?

**GZ:** In the fall of 1968, at the Deposito d'Arte Presente. The gallerists Ileana and Michael Sonnabend were there that day, along with some American curators. Szeemann came to Turin to start talking about *When Attitudes Become Form*. But he took his time; he spoke about it carefully, explaining his intuition. In the following months he came to Turin a lot.

**PR:** Can you describe the days of the installation? How were the spaces negotiated between the artists? How much did Szeemann push certain choices or certain ideas? Was there a clear plan beforehand about where the works would go?

**GZ:** Yes, sure, there were proposals for the layout and the installation, but the extraordinary experience of the exhibition in Bern was seeing the evolution of the choice of spaces, because everything was mobile, and he continued to move works around right up to the very last second. Szeemann was everywhere, everywhere at once. But let's be clear, he wasn't paternalistic. I wouldn't want him to be taken as a pope with a beard. His presence bred enthusiasm, bred optimism. It was stimulating because he always had an extremely sincere relationship with the artists, even with me when I was really young. He had what you might call a complete relationship with the space. I remember that we talked about spaces, and I told him that the wall was an artificial boundary, like all boundaries, and that it was also interesting to think about what was behind the plaster. What memory does a brick have? And then we talked for half an hour, going up and down the stairs—and while all this was happening, he was still speaking to others, making other suggestions, taking in other news, so he'd interrupt—"I have thirty seconds!" He'd go down to his office, he'd move the pillow, the mattress, make a call, at such a rhythm. I mean, I was having a ton of fun, but I saw some artists who were practically exhausted!

**PR:** Mattress and pillow because he slept in the office?

**GZ:** Because he slept under the desk—not every night but since the hours were completely out of whack, working almost all night, he stretched out there every now and then to keep from keeling over, I think.

**PR:** Let's talk about some of the works you presented in *When Attitudes Become Form*. I'd like you to describe *Torce* [Torches, 1969; p. 62]. When exactly was the work set on fire? What kind of audience was there at that moment, and what were the reactions?





See p. 62.

**GZ:** That work arrived directly from the Sonnabend gallery in Paris, where it had been exhibited for the first time in January 1969. There were two suspended rows of reeds that supported four torches, and after a certain amount of time the torches, as they were burning out, fell through a copper clamp, onto a pile of concrete powder, and went out. It was always moving. It was a tribute—an attention to time, marked by fire.

Fire: a primary element, and the wax, the plant.... There was animal product and vegetal product and the product of human intelligence that united the two: the wax and the wick. Plus time. I really liked this idea. When I proposed it to Szeemann, he said, "Great," and I realized we were both crazy, because exhibiting that work in a public space—it was impossible to even think of it in another museum. I was really impressed by this ability to accept the unacceptable. Because it actually was a bit dangerous. There was a crazy amount of smoke, and the heat emitted by the torches was unbearable. They were windproof torches, really heavy-duty, and they emitted a very intense heat. And the visitors did touch it, which moved a torch and the reed caught fire. Then the work got repaired.

**PR:** Did the torches burn over the course of the exhibition or only at the opening?

**GZ:** Continuously—they continued to light them the whole time. I sent a huge number of them.

**PR:** And can you also talk about *Per purificare le parole* [To purify words, 1969], which is the only work of yours for which, as far as I know, we don't have photographic documentation? It was exhibited in the school in front of the Kunsthalle, right?

**GZ:** I came up with *Per purificare le parole* because I was thinking about the balconies. That school had really beautiful balconies. Bern is slightly hilly, and when you look out the balcony, there's always a panorama.

**PR:** There was a tube, which projected out onto the balcony...

**GZ:** Yes, inside the room there was a mouthpiece. People could speak into a tube that was tied to the balcony and reached outside. At the bottom of the tube there was some pure alcohol. So if people spoke into the tube for a minute or even less, they would have felt drunk. I liked the idea of their words being purified by the alcohol, and I liked that you could not see the sculpture in its entirety.

**PR:** I would like you to reflect on the broader landscape of three important exhibitions in Europe that presciently brought together some of the most important strands of artistic research of their era: *Arte povera + azioni povere*, curated by Germano Celant in Amalfi in 1968; *Op Losse Schroeven*, curated by Wim Beeren in Amsterdam in 1969; and *When Attitudes Become Form* in Bern. You took part in all three exhibitions: where do you see differences between these experiences?

**GZ:** The three experiences were similar in outlook, but the spaces were really different. The space in Amalfi was extraordinarily beautiful and important, because it had been the great republic's naval arsenal. The Stedelijk Museum in Amsterdam was a large museum; they sent us extremely detailed floor plans, so everyone studied them. In Amalfi there was none of this; there were just some kids who helped us. There was a real sense of play. It was recreational, ludic. The experience in Amsterdam was more professional, and there was a really good relationship with the staff. In Bern we were more limited in carrying out the work because there were fewer people helping us, even if Szeemann never stopped working his typical forty-eight hours a day. There's no use denying it: he enjoyed it. He was excited about it; it was his passion. And I also remember the number of photographers that came. There's an extraordinary photograph, in which it looks like I'm already in the midst of the visitors, and it seems like it's the day of the opening—but it's not! It's the day before. People were already coming in. That's something that could never happen now.

**PR:** The journalists came in or the visitors too?

**GZ:** The journalists, the visitors, the gallerists, the collectors... people who were curious, spectators. This was the strength of Szeemann, I think, because later, when he invited me to documenta in 1972, I saw the same traits. I remember that during the installation there were already people coming in and out, completely outside working hours. Actually there were no working hours: there was just dawn, day, sunset, night, and that's it.

**PR:** Let's talk a little bit more about documenta 5. You presented *Pugno fosforescente* [Phosphorescent fist, 1971].

**GZ:** At the Fridericianum, a few months before the opening, Harald, Giovanni Anselmo, Giuseppe Penone, and I walked through the space, and Harald was really worried. He'd realized that there wasn't enough room for everyone. During that walk I saw a fantastic space that was a semicircle, a sort of a dark tunnel. It was like walking into the unknown. I asked if anyone had already picked it. He



gave me some names, the only one of which I understood well was Eva Hesse. I liked her work, so I said, "Good," and I thought about a work I'd made the year before, *Pugno fosforescente*. It's a molded forearm, molded in wax mixed with phosphorus, which is a material that captures light and reemits it when it's dark. And there are some lamps kept pretty far from the object. Otherwise the object would melt because heat melts wax. The space was lit only by these lights, which went on and off.

**PR:** And what about the thematic structure that Szeemann constructed for the exhibition? Were you aware that your work had been included in the section called "Individual Mythologies" and that there were other sections in the exhibition?

**GZ:** Yes, sure.

**PR:** Was this discussed?

**GZ:** No. I made a proposal, and he accepted quite willingly. And when I chose the space, [he said,] "Fantastic, fantastic." He was really happy. I was still young; I wasn't quarrelsome. I really loved discussing things without arguing, without politicking, and "Haraldo," as I used to call him, had done something extraordinary for me. He didn't stir up negative competition. Dialogue, energy, in my opinion, is what he gave, and that's how it was for me.

**PR:** How, in general, would you describe Szeemann's character and personality?

**GZ:** Magnificent. Surely with a heap of defects as big as Mount Everest but with an ocean of magnificent qualities. If only they were like him everywhere—I mean in the field of politics, of science... these kinds of people are needed because they're researchers, they seek life, they search for happiness, and—in my opinion—they find it. And they help others, don't they?

## INTERVIEW WITH KLAUS HONNEF

Klaus Honnef (b. Tilsit, East Prussia, 1939) is an art critic and curator. Together with Konrad Fischer he curated the section "Idee + Idee/Licht" (Idea + idea/light) at documenta 5. This interview was conducted on August 10, 2017, at the offices of the Kunsthalle Düsseldorf. Translated from the German by Elizabeth Tucker.

**Philipp Kaiser:** When did you first meet Harald Szeemann?

**Klaus Honnef:** If I remember correctly, at my apartment in Münster, when he visited me together with Jean-Christophe Ammann and invited me to participate as a curator in documenta 5. This must have been 1970.

**PK:** Had you seen his exhibitions in Bern?

**KH:** I saw the *Attitudes* exhibition but in Krefeld, not in Bern. And I wrote to him once because I had been asked by *Magazin Kunst* to do a special issue on conceptual art. I asked a series of interview questions to artists and art dealers and curators, including Harry Szeemann. So that was my first direct contact.

**Glenn Phillips:** What do you remember about *Attitudes* in Krefeld? We have only a few photographs of the exhibition when it traveled there, and we have very little information from people who saw it there.

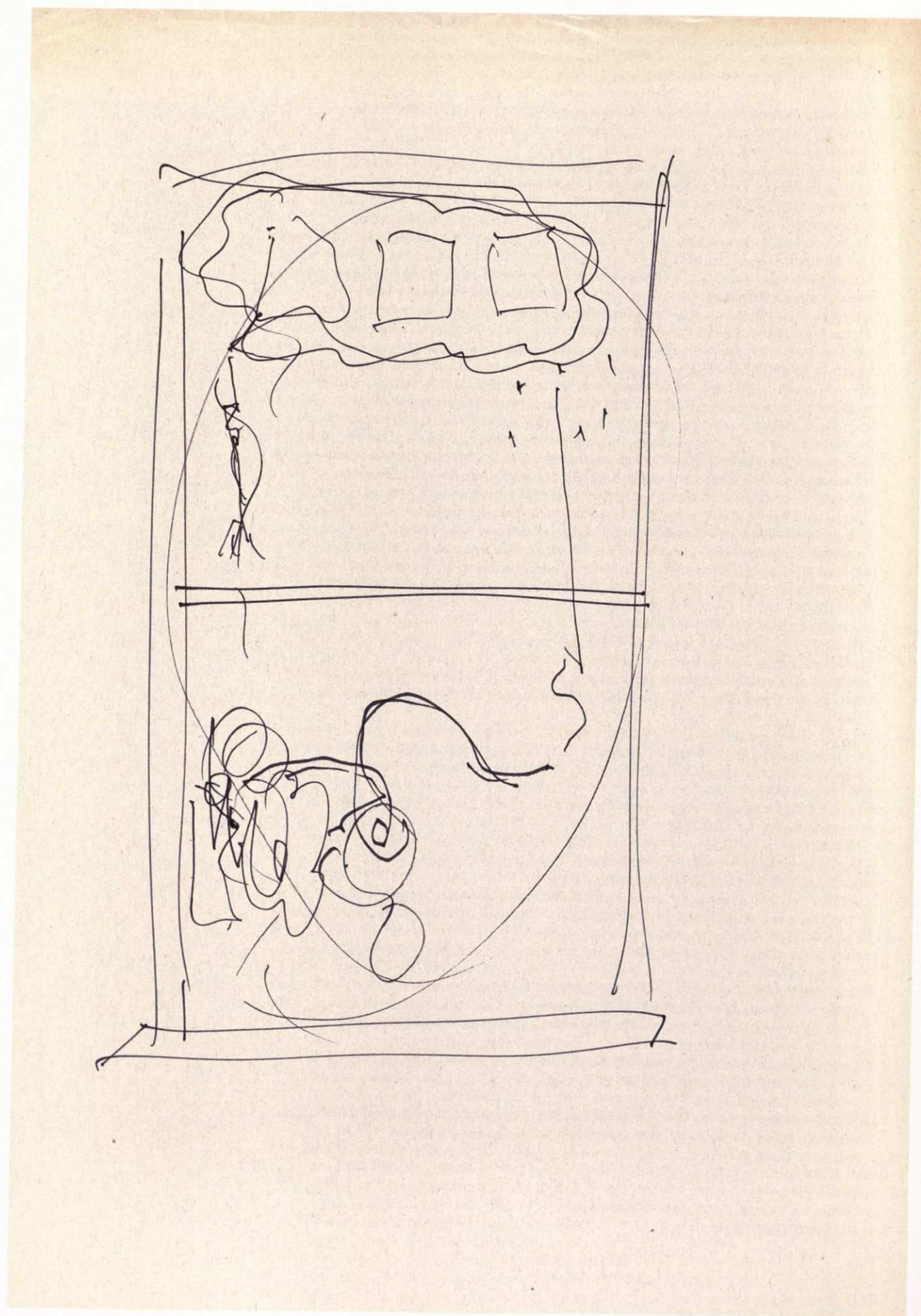
**KH:** For me the exhibition was a kind of conversion experience. You have to imagine the situation in Germany at that time for my generation. We were all very frustrated young people, frustrated by this suffocating cultural climate of the era of Adenauer and his successors. So we were all for changes. We wanted the field of art to go completely against the standard, bourgeois notions—though in Germany, it has to be said, there was only a rudimentary bourgeoisie after the Nazi dictatorship. But we wanted to change things; we wanted to completely transform things in art. So this *Attitudes* exhibition became famous for me and for many others too. We had never seen anything like it before.

**PK:** Did you see the *Happening & Fluxus* exhibition in Cologne in 1970? Do you remember that exhibition and the scandals?

**KH:** I did see *Happening & Fluxus*. Compared with the scandals today, it was not so very wild, but of course there were protests. At that time, in 1970, it was

See p. 53.





## REPEAT THE UNIQUE THING LOVE, THE ARTWORK, LIFE

Pietro Rigolo

As for the rest, I can tell you that the introduction of a ground theme explaining or provoking certain "acts" of the *Mariée* and the bachelors, never came into my mind—but it is likely that my ancestors made me "speak," like them, of what my grandchildren will also say.

—Celibately yours, Marcel Duchamp

I dedicate this exhibition to my, no: to yours, ah yes:  
to our children.

—Harald Szeemann

The trilogy of exhibitions that Harald Szeemann conceived between 1975 and 1983—*Junggesellenmaschinen* / *Les machines célibataires* (The bachelor machines), *Monte Verità* / *Berg der Wahrheit: Le mam-melle della verità* / *Die Brüste der Wahrheit* (Monte Verità: The breasts of truth), and *Der Hang zum Gesamtkunstwerk: Europäische Utopien seit 1800* (Tendency toward the *Gesamtkunstwerk*: European utopias since 1800)—constituted the most intellectually ambitious and complex projects of his long career. These exhibitions addressed modernism through the analysis of its relationships with anarchism, social reform, spiritualism, 'pataphysics, psychoanalysis, and art brut, which had not yet been fully explored at the time. The trilogy presented a complex system of symbols pointing to the meaning of artistic production and creation for the individual artist and society at large and, ultimately, to the relationship between art and life itself. It approached modernity as a stage on which a new awareness of the body emerges. In Szeemann's original and highly personal take on early twentieth-century art and society, a revolution in love, art, and life becomes an instrument by which the limitations of the human body can be exceeded and a new temporality explored. An analysis of Szeemann's presentations of the work of Marcel Duchamp, the writer Alfred Jarry, and the healer Emma Kunz in *Junggesellenmaschinen*, and that of the poet and artist Elisar von Kupffer in *Monte Verità*, with a focus on notions of corporeality and desire, can illuminate

FIGURE 20.

Drawing by Harald Szeemann representing  
Marcel Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her  
Bachelors, Even* (*The Large Glass*), ca. late 1990s.



Szeemann's ideas regarding creativity, authorship, and agency within the museum and in the world at large.

In *Junggesellenmaschinen* (1975–77), Szeemann limned the interaction between the organic body and the machine body in European visual art and literary production roughly between 1875 and 1925. This offered a metaphoric image of sexuality, artistic production, and the relationship with a higher entity. The starting point was Michel Carrouges's book *Les machines célibataires* (1954), which explored similarities between Duchamp's *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even* (*The Large Glass*) (1915–23; p. 225, top) and machines described in the writings of Jarry, Franz Kafka, Raymond Roussel, and others.

The exhibition featured introductory sections dedicated to Leonardo da Vinci's inventions, Greek mythology, Jainism, and the femme fatale. Szeemann's attempt to provide for the first time visualizations in three dimensions of some of the literary machines analyzed in Carrouges's book constituted the core of the show. Surrealism and Dada also played a central role, and Szeemann presented artworks by Hans Bellmer, Salvador Dalí, Francis Picabia, and Man Ray, among others. There were also sections dedicated to machines to make art (including kinetic sculptures by Jean Tinguely and Piotr Kowalski) and machines to make love (featuring Günter Brus's drawings, sex toys, and photographs from early twentieth-century psychiatric manuals on sexual disorders).

The exhibition offered two main interpretations of the bachelor machine. The psychoanalytic reading sees it as a metaphor for the structure and functions of the psychic apparatus and the relationship between id, ego, and superego. From the point of view of physics, these machines would represent an overcoming of the laws of thermodynamics, being based on perpetual motion. The bachelor machines thus represent the dream of a perfect and eternal machine, a substitute for our time-bound lives.

According to Carrouges, the bachelor machine is schematically composed of two parts, one organic and one mechanical, the latter usually placed on top. Between these two parts a closed circuit of pleasure and punishment, life and death is at play. This duality clearly informs *The Large Glass* itself, which is divided into an upper part, the zone of the bride, and a lower one, the zone of the bachelors (fig. 20). The artwork represents a circuit in which two systems feed each other in a continuous loop, a closed circle of movement and energy release, with sexual and voyeuristic connotations. The bottom part—made up of elements such as a sleigh, a chocolate grinder, sieves, a waterwheel, and scissors—clearly conveys the idea of a hydraulic apparatus with mechanical, twitchy movements, which arouses the more suffused, ethereal upper part. Although only the

world of the bachelor is visually machinelike, the two parts are correlated, and one cannot function without the other. According to Carrouges, they are "functionally united, carrying out a mechanical influence one on the other." For this reason, the French author sees it not only as a painting but also as an actual model for a machine.<sup>1</sup>

Carrouges in his book refers to a new dimension of time achieved by the bachelor machine, which is defined in many different ways, such as "illumination," "freedom," or "magic immortality."<sup>2</sup> This could be considered as the esoteric core of all the possible meanings he envisages for the bachelor machines, particularly for *The Large Glass*. Duchamp's work appears both as a mechanical device for the inspiration of love and as an image of the androgynous union of male and female. Particularly prominent in the catalogue is Arturo Schwarz's reading of the artwork, which relies on Carl Jung's analysis of the alchemical process in psychoanalytic terms. Here *The Large Glass* represents transmutation, both physical and psychological, through a union of opposites in a dynamic harmony. The alchemist, like the artist, constitutes for Schwarz the archetype of the rebel and his quest for a permanent revolution and "uninterrupted youth."<sup>3</sup>

*The Large Glass* can also be read through the analysis of the Oedipus complex as carried out by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari in *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (1972), which played an important part in the conceptual framework of *Junggesellenmaschinen*.<sup>4</sup> The artwork would illustrate a process in which desire (sexual desire as well as any kind of aspiration) hovers in the formlessness of the "milky way," the cloud-like shape in the upper part of the work. There it does not need anything: it is pure drive, without meaning or purpose. It is the Law—the system of beliefs and practices that regulates society—which ascribes to the desire a target, structuring a relationship between subject and object that revolves around a sense of lack and absence. The potentiality for change is thus regulated and ultimately neutralized.

Among the literary sources that informed the exhibition, Alfred Jarry played a central role. Szeemann was deeply fascinated by Jarry, whose work he avidly collected (fig. 21).<sup>5</sup> Jarry's novel *Le surmâle* (*The Supermale*, 1902), set in the then near future of the 1920s, depicts the exploits of a man of superhuman strength and physical endurance, André Marcueil, the Supermale of the title. The story develops around two dinner parties at André's house, at which the guests discuss the notion of love and the limits of the human body. This small talk feeds André's narcissistic obsession with overcoming previously set endurance records, and he therefore decides to demonstrate his powers in two consecutive challenges. The first is the ten-thousand-mile race, an intercontinental race between a train and five cyclists fed only with perpetual-motion food, an alcohol- and strychnine-based



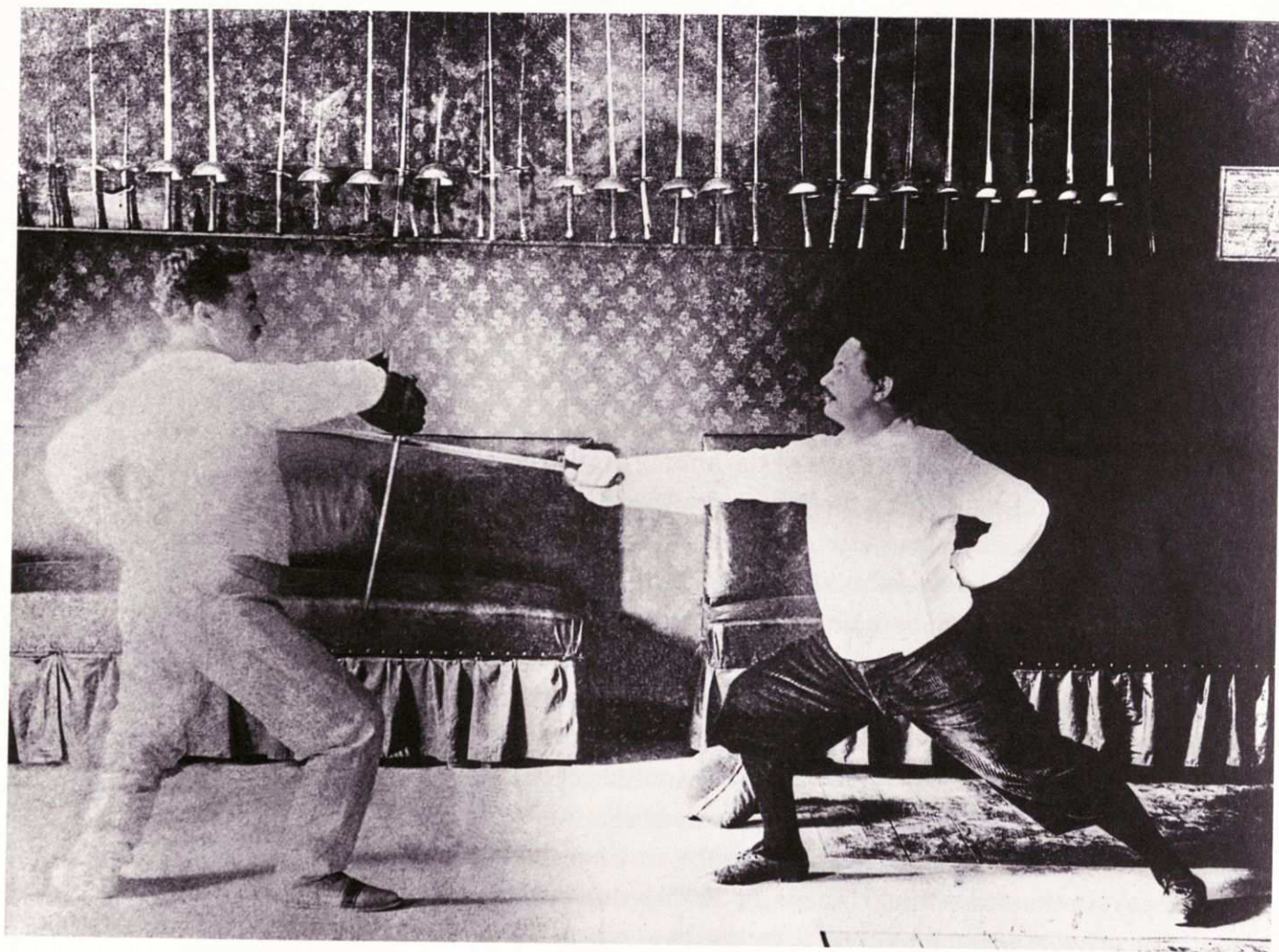


FIGURE 21.  
Alfred Jarry (on the right) at Blavier's  
fencing studio in Laval, France, 1906.

supplement invented by the American scientist William Elson. Riding a bike, the uninvited Supermale is the surprising victor, defeating both the train and the five-racer team. Later in the novel the Supermale breaks the world record for sexual endurance, performing intercourse eighty-two times in twenty-four hours with Elson's daughter, Ellen. Elson realizes that André is machinelike and cannot feel anything for the girl. The scientist and the engineer Arthur Gough therefore secure him to the "love-inspiring machine," which supplies an eleven-thousand-volt electroshock. The Supermale's superior energy defeats the machine, however, which falls in love with André, melts on him, and kills him.

Among the many mechanical apparatuses in *Junggesellenmaschinen*, the love-inspiring machine, which Jarry based on the then recent invention of the electric chair, most clearly represents the interplay between love and death, desire and punishment. The artist Jacques Carelman (1929–2012) was commissioned to create a visualization of it and of the two devices described in Roussel's *Locus Solus* (1914; p. 159). Carelman is best known for his *Catalogue d'objets introuvables* (1969), a mail-order catalog of impossible objects.<sup>6</sup> He later produced some of these objects as artworks, and Szeemann

included one of them, *La bicyclette symétrique* (ca. 1975; fig. 22), a bicycle with two seats and two handlebars pointing in opposite directions, in the exhibition. Carelman's visualization of the love-inspiring machine (fig. 23) represents the muscular Supermale tied naked to the chair, flanked by the authoritarian figures of Gough and Elson. A ghostly projection of Ellen appears above, like the bride in Duchamp's *Large Glass*, pronouncing the words "je l'aime."

The work has a complex and hybrid status in terms of authorship and ownership. In a letter to Michel Baudson, one of the staff members at the Palais des Beaux-Arts in Brussels responsible for the installation of the exhibition, Carelman complained about the fact that the press had not acknowledged his contribution and recommended that some new labels be added close to his artworks: "In this way, I hope no guard will tell me anymore, like in Venice: don't worry, Mr. Roussel, we are going to take good care of your room!"<sup>7</sup> In a letter written to Szeemann a few years later, once the tour was over, the artist asks him to consent to the loan of the three pieces produced for the exhibition, as he was their "co-proprétaire." He also suggests that they could ask 10 percent of the artworks' value as a loan fee and divide it between the two of them.<sup>8</sup>

*Le surmâle* clearly plays a central role in the exhibition, and Szeemann presents the two episodes from the novel in different mediums. The visualization of the love-inspiring machine by Carelman is accompanied by drawings by the French illustrators Chaval (Yvan Francis Le Louarn, 1915–1968) and Tim (Louis Mitelberg, 1919–2002), and the ten-thousand-mile race is the subject of one of the plates of the

FIGURE 22.

*La bicyclette symétrique* (Symmetric bicycle),  
constructed by Jacques Carelman, as installed  
in *Junggesellenmaschinen* / *Les machines*  
*célibataires* (The bachelor machines),  
Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels,  
December 17, 1975–January 18, 1976.

FIGURE 23.

Sculptural visualization of the love-inspiring  
machine from Alfred Jarry's *Le surmâle* (The  
Supermale), constructed by Jacques Carelman,  
ca. 1975. Photograph by Albert Winkler.





*Voyage optique*, a series by Jihel (Jean-Louis Couturier, b. 1947) depicting some of the machines examined in the exhibition.<sup>9</sup> The drawing from *Voyage optique* formally echoes illustrations from a technical manual (p. 152). It is to be read clockwise from upper left to bottom left, following the train and the five cyclists from Paris to Irkutsk, Russia, and then back to Paris. The tracks abruptly invert direction inside the dark structure on the right side of the image, with the Supermale appearing at the very end, where he wins the race.

Jihel, the son of Michel Carrouges, is an elusive artist, illustrator, and political cartoonist who has adopted several pseudonyms during his career. These plates seem to have played for Carrouges a particularly important role in the project, as important as the essays in the catalogue. In the label introducing them, he explains how these artworks are conceivable only within the mental realm and are meant to trigger the creation of mental images of machines: "These drawings are not illustrations but exercises. They have the same function as the critical texts on the bachelor machines. As imaginary images stemming from reading, these images aim at pinning down some reference points for the mental perception of the mental universe of the bachelor machines. After all, it is for this reason that they are presented not with a physical perspective but as flat, in order to act as a springboard for mental perspective."<sup>10</sup> With Jihel's plates we are confronted not only with the attempt to give form to something that is impossible to visualize, a challenge at the core of the exhibition, but also with images that would generate other images in the visitors' heads.

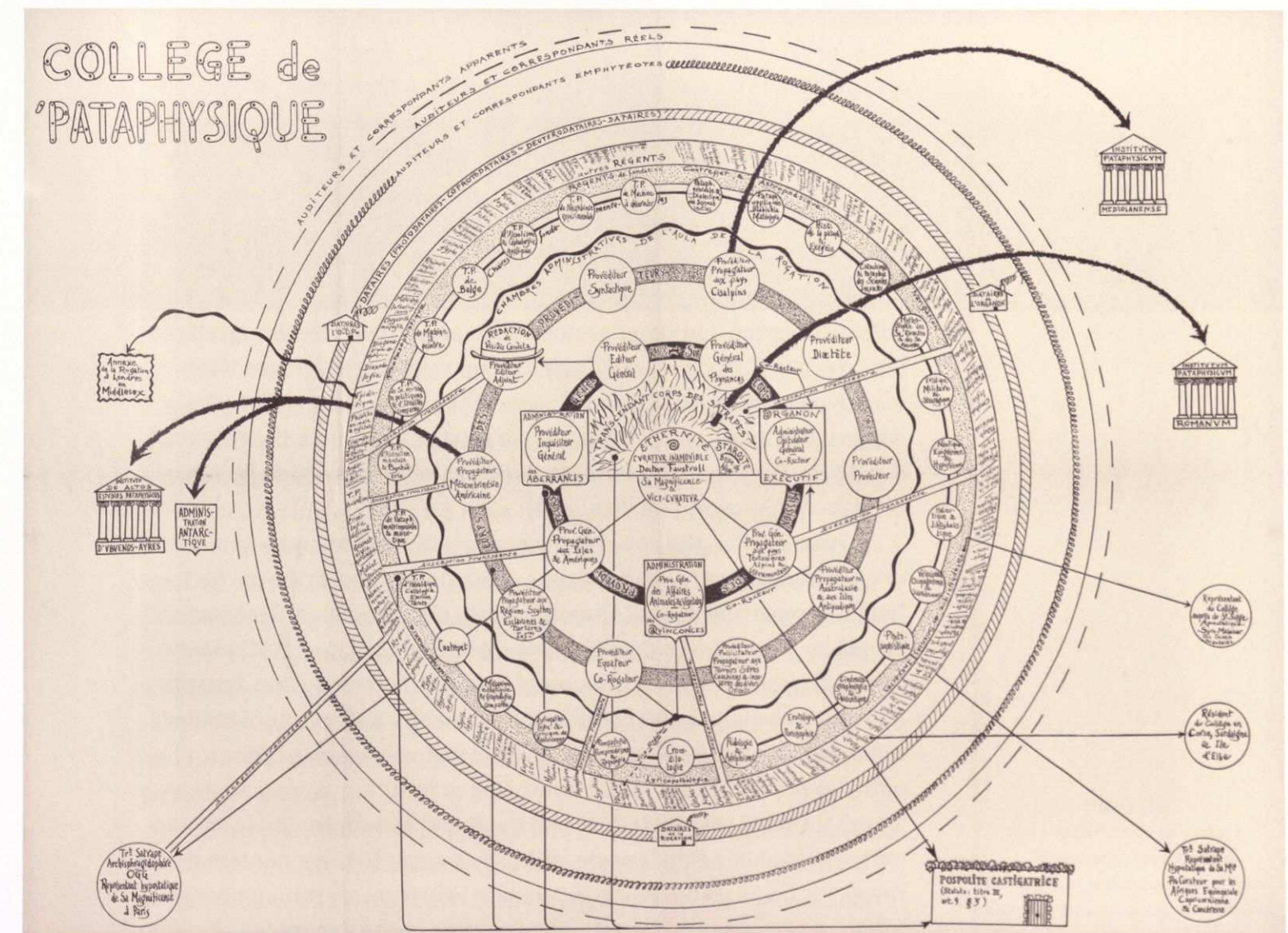
Jarry's importance for Szeemann's practice goes far beyond *Junggesellenmaschinen* and the adventures of the Supermale. The curator's approach to history, art, and his own role as an exhibition maker were deeply rooted in a pataphysical way of thinking, according to which "society and culture are the supreme examples of what happens when imaginary solutions are taken to be real. They become twice as imaginary—firstly because they are fictitious, and secondly because they are not accepted as being fictitious—and, in our eyes, it is this 'all-round' pataphysical character that gives them the invincible powers and strange credit that they hold in the minds of men."<sup>11</sup> 'Pataphysics—which has been variously described as the science of details, of the individual, and of imaginary solutions—is based on the principles of universal equivalence (everything being equal) and of the inversion of contraries. Jarry prophesied "the Science" in his novel *Gestes et opinions du docteur Faustroll pataphysicien* (*Exploits and Opinions of Dr. Faustroll, Pataphysician*, 1898).<sup>12</sup>

Ultimately 'pataphysics is not describable, as it constitutes a strenuous form of resistance to any kind of systematization or any attempt to make sense of the universe, and one of the main objectives of this science without objectives is to ridicule every form of

power and authority. By the time Szeemann moved to Paris to pursue his dissertation in 1956, Jarry had become a cult figure among an elite of intellectuals gathered around the Collège de 'Pataphysique, founded in 1948. Both Carelman and Szeemann were members of the Parisian organization, which came to play a fundamental role in the understanding of 'pataphysics as a delirious structure in which the cult of hierarchy and titles is manifested in an organizational chart with no end and no meaning. In this structure the administration of the institution is everything (fig. 24).

In the catalogue of *Junggesellenmaschinen*, Szeemann's Agentur für geistige Gastarbeit (Agency for spiritual guest labor) is described as stemming directly from his interest in 'pataphysics and its teachings, and his move from institutional curator to independent freelancer after the end of his years at the Kunsthalle Bern as "following a possible pataphysical course." The functioning of his agency is described in a way that aligns it with the delirious closed-circuit machines of the exhibition. Szeemann portrays it as a highly

**FIGURE 24.**  
*Organigramme: Hiérarchies & Administrations du Collège de 'Pataphysique et de l'Ordre de la Grand Gidouille (Paris: Collège de 'Pataphysique 101 E. P. [pataphysical era, ca. 1974]).*





complex, hierarchical institution, a caricature of power that suggests a direct link to the almost hallucinatory bureaucracy of the Collège de 'Pataphysique:

I have an idea. I commission myself, as the Agentur für geistige Gastarbeit, to realize the idea. The Agentur für geistige Gastarbeit comes up with the catchword and the context and engages me to elaborate the concept. I then engage the Agency to implement it. The Agentur für geistige Gastarbeit informs me that I am the only person who can do so. I ask the agency about available funds. The finance department informs me that it has neither funds nor staff at its disposal, at least not for the time being. Grueling meetings of the executive, the legislative, and financial experts decide that if I were to declare my willingness to implement the idea, the others would respect that decision and go along with it. The agency ultimately delegates the decision to me—since I am the agency—and so I take on the task of implementing my idea.<sup>13</sup>

Initially, as the second part of his trilogy, Szeemann worked on an exhibition that was meant to be titled *La Mamma*. In it the curator intended to address maternity and "alternative motherhood," as in cases of women who invested their energies in humanitarian efforts, such as civil rights, the alleviation of suffering, or spiritual evolution. A large central space was to be devoted to Emma Kunz (1892–1963), a Swiss healer and psychic known primarily for her pendulum drawings depicting "a two-dimensional projection of an event taking place outside of space and time," which Szeemann called intensivograms (pp. 234, 235).<sup>14</sup> Kunz played an important role also in *Junggesellenmaschinen*, occupying the final room of the exhibition, which was supposed to represent a bridge to the next exhibition in the trilogy (fig. 25). In Düsseldorf a separate Kunz exhibition, to which Szeemann contributed, was also on display.<sup>15</sup>

Polarization, the power Kunz supposedly had to make new flowers blossom around a primary one, offered the curator the perfect image of maternal energy channeled into other avenues. Szeemann's thoughts about Kunz's drawings are exemplary of his way of reflecting on art: the nondifferentiation of art and life, beauty and artistic relevance as qualities stemming from intensity and purity of intentions, the idea of the artist as a channel through which a higher entity expresses itself, and the favoring of intuition over systematized thinking ("While Indian and English theosophists and German anthroposophists filled tomes, she gave herself to the mountains' rays").<sup>16</sup> Kunz is also seen as a visionary who foresaw through her intuition pressing ecological issues such as ozone depletion.



In *La Mamma* the idea of a feminine deity in ancient civilizations was to be presented as the inverse of the Duchampian bachelor. Mother Earth was meant to exemplify art as integral to life and human relations. Leaving behind a male, self-centered idea of creativity occurring in isolation from the world and fellow humans, the exhibition was to focus on attempts to remake society in a natural setting. Monte Verità, close to Ascona, in the area where Szeemann lived during the last thirty years of his life, offered him both the perfect location and an ideal case study to analyze these dispositions and their outcomes. In the community of Monte Verità, art as separate from life was indeed refused and reintegrated into the landscape and into the reform of daily activities for the sustenance and well-being of the body.

Carrouges believed that the study of the bachelor machines provided the opportunity to analyze a specifically modern myth in our society, in the same way that anthropologists study the persistence of mythological aspects in other cultures. With "local anthropology

FIGURE 25.  
Works by Emma Kunz on display in  
*Junggesellenmaschinen* /  
*Les machines célibataires* (The bachelor  
machines), Palais des Beaux-Arts, Brussels,  
December 17, 1975–January 18, 1976.



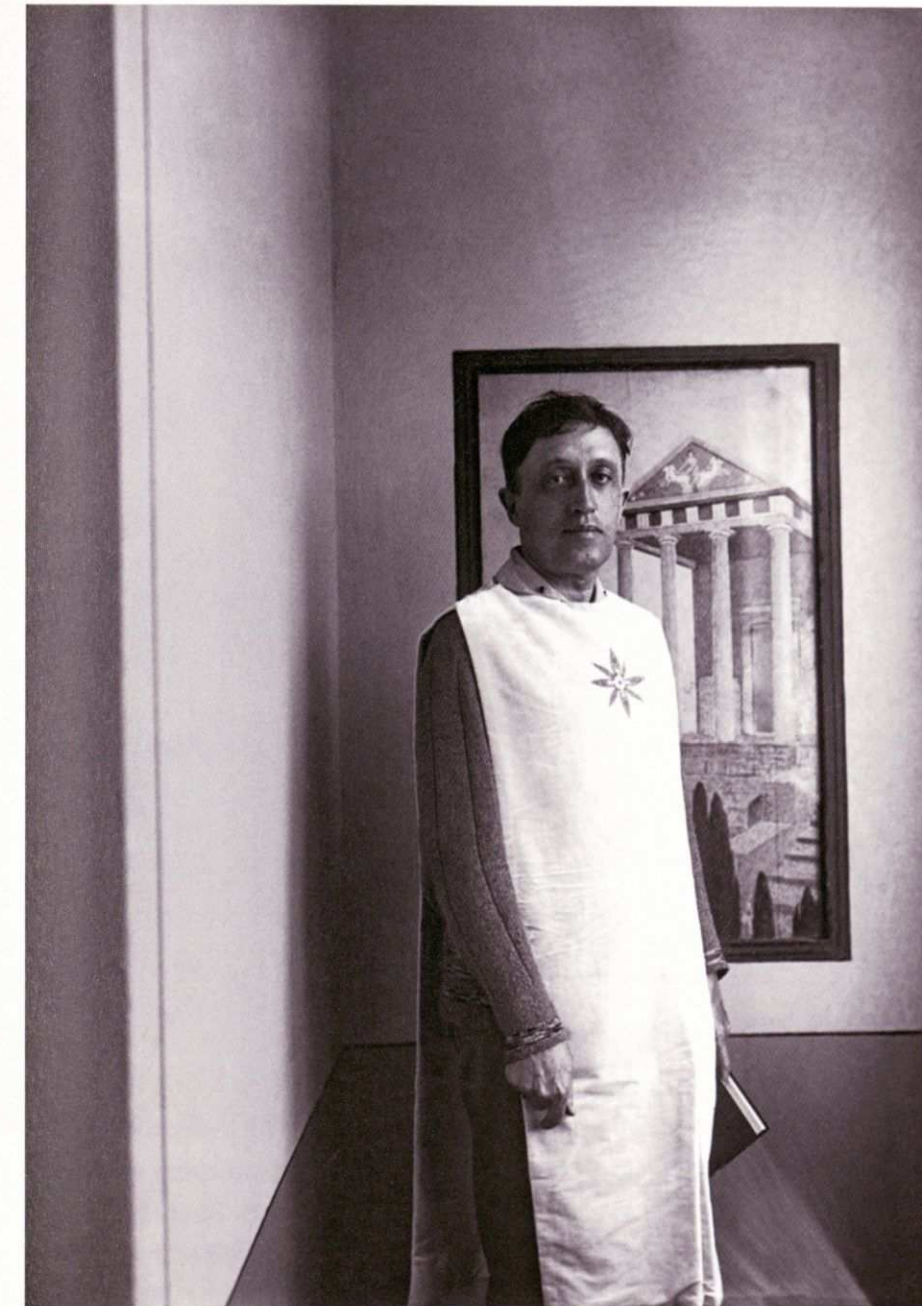
as a contribution to the rediscovery of a modern sacral topology,"<sup>17</sup> Szeemann in *Monte Verità* (1978–80) further developed Carrouges's inquiry into the relationship between modernity and myths by digging out from the history of this site the ancient archetype of the Great Mother, which Jung studied in Ascona.<sup>18</sup>

The story the curator decided to focus on starts in the 1870s, with the sojourn of the anarchist ideologue Mikhail Bakunin in the area, and continues with the constitution of an anarchist group around Erich Mühsam, who settled in Ascona in 1904.<sup>19</sup> A few years earlier a group led by Ida Hofmann, a music teacher, and Henri Oedenkoven, the son of a wealthy Dutch industrialist, established on the hill a vegetarian and naturist sanatorium. Later on Monte Verità became an important center for the development of modern dance, and after World War I the popularity of the region with tourists attracted many artists, particularly from Germany. Szeemann organized all this material into four main topics, which he saw as four breasts of an Artemis of Ephesus-like goddess of truth of his own invention. These were anarchy, *Lebensreform* (life reform) movements, the arts, and psyche and sexual revolution (this last focused on Otto Gross, a pupil of Freud who theorized on the hill a matriarchal society, and the use of ritual sex and drugs for the healing of the self).

With this exhibition, and the museum Szeemann would afterward install permanently in Casa Anatta on Monte Verità, the curator tried to offer a holistic and transhistorical vision of the hill, highlighting the potential for change in all the ideas developed there rather than the actual accomplishments. The exhibition constructs a realm that gives new life to all these failed attempts, linking them to contemporaneous events.<sup>20</sup> At the same time these life experiments are universalized in psychological terms as the infinite field of possibilities that artists are confronted with in their creative process: "[the] museum as the possibility and form for testing connections, preserving the fragile, documenting drives."<sup>21</sup>

Indeed, if the bachelor machine represents the sphere of isolated production that the artist is locked into, Monte Verità, in contrast, offers an image of the various interests and positions that the artist can take on vis-à-vis society. The curator particularly liked to quote Mario Merz: *Monte Verità* "is the representation of the chaos in our head, we the artists are all this in the same moment, although one day we are more this than that."<sup>22</sup>

Among the topics analyzed in the exhibition were those fostered by Elisar von Kupffer (1872–1942; fig. 26) and his partner, Eduard von Mayer (1873–1960). They were the founders of a new religion and a temple built in nearby Minusio between 1927 and 1939, known as the Sanctuary of Artis Elisarion. Clarism—the doctrine to which von Kupffer devoted his life and all his literary and artistic production,



which attracted virtually no followers other than his own partner—was developed in sharp contrast to Christianity. Von Kupffer rejected the notions of a divine being as the universal creator and of the equality of all men before their God. He favored a vision in which two forces, one good and one evil, are always at play. These forces occupy two worlds that are in constant opposition: the Chaotic World, where humans live, and the Clear World of the Blessed, which souls can aspire to reach through a series of reincarnations. The first characteristic of the Chaotic World is the existence of dualities, principally male and female. With a neologism of his invention, von Kupffer calls the blessed beings of his Clear World "araphrodites," a term evoking the union of Ares and Aphrodite, which according to Greek mythology generated Harmonia. In contrast with hermaphrodites, who bear both

FIGURE 26.  
Elisar von Kupffer wearing the symbol of the  
Klaristengemeinschaft, n.d.

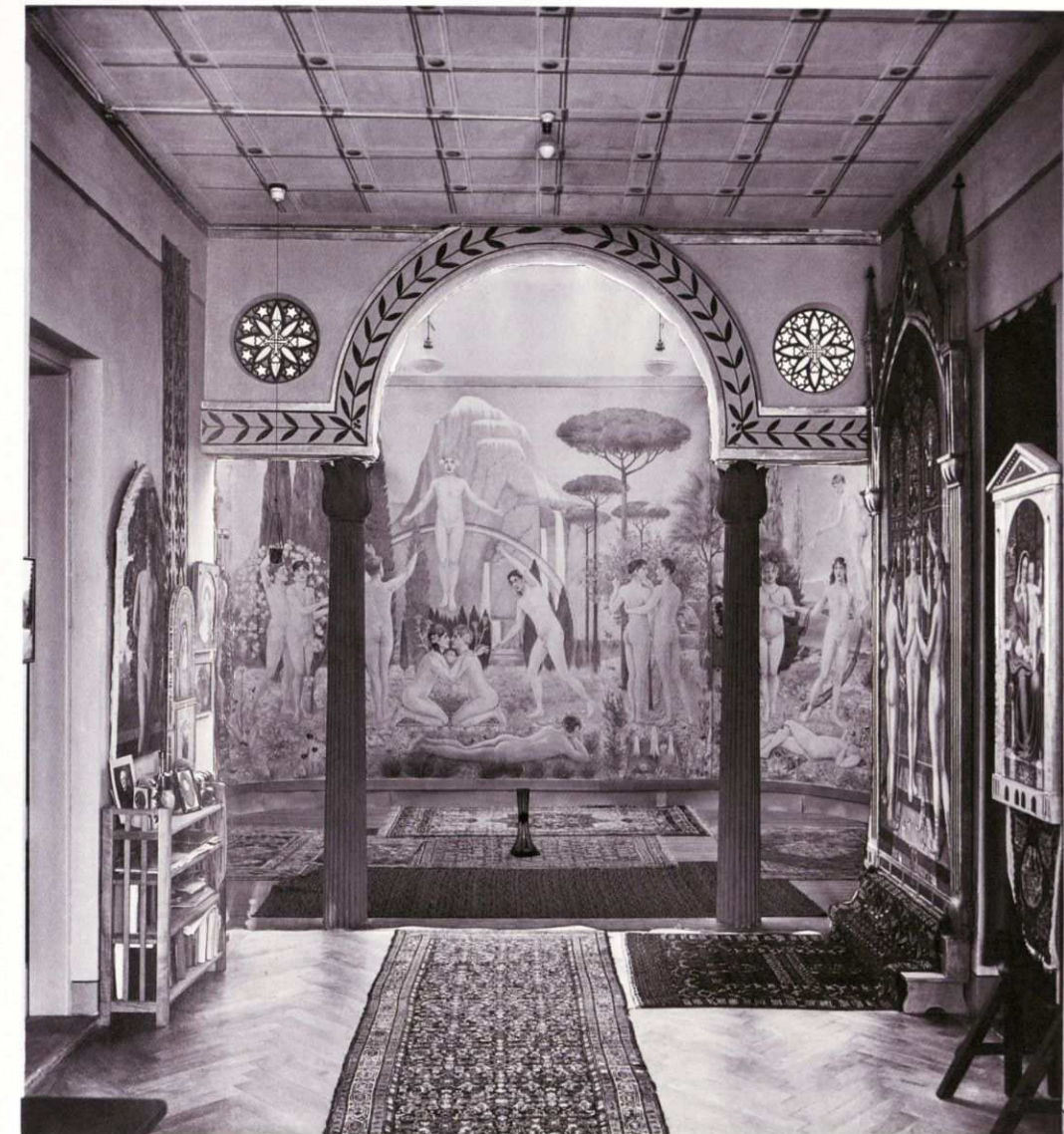


male and female reproductive organs, araphrodites were conceived as beings beyond gender and sexual impulses. These creatures live in an eternal state of falling in love and beauty worship. Thus for von Kupffer life on earth and the mortal body were an intermediate state, to be lived longing for an impending future. The poet described himself as an "exile of the future," belonging not to any lineage or country but to a time to come:

I am an exile on this land  
Where the flowers and the hearts die  
And where thousands of sorrows  
Rule in an intoxicated, voracious war.  
I am an exile—not of the past,  
Nor of a dying race,  
Nor of an annihilated kingdom:  
Of the future!  
Of the future I am an exile,  
Of a clear reign, which comforts the heart.  
I am the messenger of a true God,  
And of love.<sup>23</sup>

Von Kupffer worked for many years on the *Klarwelt der Seligen* (Clear world of the blessed; p. 239), a series of canvases forming an immersive, almost 360-degree visual representation of the paradise the believer was to gain.<sup>24</sup> The entire Sanctuary was meant to symbolize a path from darkness to light, from duality to unity through a circuit that visitors would follow in a space filled with dozens of paintings by the artist (fig. 27). In the mid-1970s, at a moment when the building was abandoned and its destiny uncertain, Szeemann saved the *Klarwelt* and most of von Kupffer's photographic and painterly work from destruction and decided to feature him prominently in the Monte Verità project. Although there is no documented connection between the two residents of Minusio and the *monteveritani*, the Sanctuary came to play a central role for Szeemann in the narrative he was constructing. In Casa Anatta he placed a painting from 1934 by von Kupffer that represented the northern shore of Lake Maggiore. The Sanctuary is depicted exactly halfway between La Baronata, the residence of Bakunin in the 1870s, and Monte Verità. The main themes of the exhibition (anarchy, new forms of spirituality, and *Lebensreform*) were thus visualized within a few miles of one another in a microparadise of intentions and failures.<sup>25</sup>

The panoramic *Klarwelt* was presented with many other canvases from the temple and a selection of publications by von Kupffer and von Mayer. Szeemann also presented two models of the Sanctuary: a small one representing the whole building, made by Claudio



Bertolotti, and a larger one of the rotunda, the space von Kupffer built to house the *Klarwelt*. The latter was realized by Peter Bissegger, a respected set designer living in the area. From this moment on, Bissegger would be a part of Szeemann's team of independent collaborators. Von Kupffer's art and life were offered as a major example of artistic output stemming from the development of new religions and beliefs, alongside Fidus's unrealized Tempel der Erde (Temple of the earth, also presented with a model by Bissegger, fig. 28).<sup>26</sup> Piet Mondrian's most overtly theosophical painting, *Evolution* (1911), was hung in a nearby space. Although von Kupffer's research is not directly ascribable to theosophy or other concurrent spiritual movements, Szeemann clearly saw it as part of a wider tendency to develop a spirituality that would stand as an alternative to patriarchal, monotheistic religions such as Christianity and Judaism that forged society and culture in the West.

The curator sketched in some cases a more formal reading of von Kupffer's paintings,<sup>27</sup> but the artist is more often described as a

FIGURE 27.  
Interior of the Sanctuary Artis Elisarion in Minusio with the *Klarwelt der Seligen* (Clear world of the blessed) as originally installed in the rotunda behind the two columns, photographed ca. late 1930s–1940s.





"philosopher who paints."<sup>28</sup> This should not be seen as a strategy to dismiss von Kupffer's qualities as a craftsman or an artist but rather as an attempt to place these qualities within "an intense art history, that is, an art history oriented not just toward formal criteria but toward the palpable identity of intention and expression."<sup>29</sup> This idea is also present in the essay from 1979 by Ekkehard Hieronimus for the catalogue of the Kunsthalle Basel presentation of the *Klarwelt*: "Elisar von Kupffer was the painter of ideas, and such a painting avoids—whether art criticism likes it or not—any aesthetic or abstract judgment related to art history. We have to ask ourselves not whether one painting stands up next to the other paintings within art history but whether its message corresponds to the thinking and the aim of its creator."<sup>30</sup>

Szeemann retained his love of Monte Verità for the remainder of his life and developed many other projects for the protection of its fragile heritage. On April 18, 1981, he inaugurated both the Museo Casa Anatta and the Museo Elisar von Kupffer, a small space devoted to the life of the artist housed inside the Sanctuary, which had been turned into a public exhibition space for the town of Minusio. In 1983 Casa Selma, one of the wood huts of the vegetarians on Monte Verità, was restored and opened as an additional space for the presentation of the history of the hill. In 1987 von Kupffer's *Klarwelt der*

**FIGURE 28.**  
Claudio Bertolotti's and Peter Bissegger's models of the Sanctuary Artis Elisarion (left) and Bissegger's model of Fidos's Tempel der Erde (center), as installed in *Monte Verità / Berg der Wahrheit: Le mammelle della verità / Die Brüste der Wahrheit* (Monte Verità: The breasts of truth), Kunsthau Zürich, November 17, 1978–January 28, 1979.

*Seligen* was permanently housed in a nearby pavilion designed by Christoph Zürcher. Over the years these came to constitute a constellation of museums devoted to the history of the region. Szeemann envisioned many other projects that would not be realized, such as turning La Baronata into a museum of the history of anarchy or creating a sculpture park on Monte Verità by inviting an artist each summer to have a solo show and to leave an artwork on the hill.<sup>31</sup>

Szeemann concluded the trilogy in 1983–84 with *Der Hang zum Gesamtkunstwerk*, dedicated to the idea of the synthesis of life and all art forms in a total work of art. The exhibition analyzed this utopian idea from 1800 to current times, presenting it as an aspiration, a desire bound to remain in a state of potentiality.<sup>32</sup>

The tension between desire and its fulfillment can be found everywhere in Szeemann's trilogy of exhibitions. It is reflected in the gap between the here and now of the museum space and a future in which *The Large Glass* might become a functioning machine. This tension clearly informed how Szeemann regarded his own profession, and the attempt to visualize what is yet to be realized was the aspect of exhibition making that he valued and enjoyed the most. The temporary exhibition provided him the opportunity to hint at what is yet to come but is impossible in the present. The Museum of Obsessions, the conceptual framework that he would use to link all his projects from the mid-1970s onward, is often described as an attempt to get closer to something that cannot be realized. Each exhibition is the temporary visualization of a museum that in its entirety can exist only in the curator's mind.<sup>33</sup>

*Monte Verità* was conceptualized and realized as the embodiment in a unified space and time of failed attempts at regenerating society that existed over decades. As Szeemann wrote in the catalogue, "Still, MONTE VERITÀ is able to treat this society of the mountain as though utopia had become a reality, as though WE ourselves were one result of this fascinating potential for successful self-realization."<sup>34</sup> Cultural history is revealed as an array of utopian solutions possible only until the moment of their realization, which leads to their inevitable decay into authoritarianism. The visualization of these solutions in an exhibition setting offers instead an in-between space and time in which these ideas can retain their potential for revolution. Szeemann wrote: "Alternatives in the exhibition system are visualized stations of self-realization if the exhibition maker genuinely regards his vocation as something worth living for. This is what we want for ourselves. The problem is, the official exhibition sector no longer represents us, nor does it correspond to the lives we want to live. Filling a given context is something that needs to be done lovingly, but the institutions we have identified with no longer seem to have anything adventurous to offer."<sup>35</sup>



After several years as director of a Kunsthalle, and after the experience of documenta, the curator was reluctant to keep pursuing a profession that was becoming more and more bureaucratic, dependent on politics and the art market. In the decade during which he worked on the trilogy, Szeemann struggled to find a third way between an institutional affiliation that left no room for self-discovery and a position of retreat, in which to pursue his own intellectual quest. It is also important to acknowledge that the years after documenta brought a radical restructuring of his personal life, with his move to Ticino and the start of a new family with his partner, Ingeborg Lüscher, and their newborn daughter, Una. During this complex and exciting time, reimagining the role and position of the artist, the curator, the paternal figure, and even the self was of central concern to Szeemann. If, as Jarry wrote, "the act of love is of no importance, since it can be performed indefinitely,"<sup>36</sup> if the artist becomes just a painting machine, if the museum in the same way requires the curator to become an exhibition machine, is there a way out? How to make your life, as well as what you do, something worth living for? How to "repeat the unique thing: love, the artwork, life"?<sup>37</sup>

Szeemann's choices involved a revolution in his relationship with the power structure of the art system. He decided to pursue a career as independently from institutions as possible, to temporarily but significantly decrease his involvement with contemporary art, and to relocate to a peripheral site. In this moment of profound reevaluation of both his career path and his personal choices, Duchamp, Jarry, Kunz, and von Kupffer played an important role.

The Supermale and the Blessed (and, to a degree, the lives of their respective creators) can be seen as two opposite typologies. The self-centered Supermale is a senseless body that delivers physical performances, without a pause, until exhaustion. The Blessed instead points to a secluded and retired life dominated by faith and to an inactive body that contemplates rather than acts. Between these two polarities lies Duchamp's radical ambiguity and nondetermination, which places desire at the core of human elevation and creativity. Kunz's drawings transcend the bachelors' self-referential creative process. They represent an art form stemming from humility, generosity, and a will to understand, and ultimately heal, the whole of humanity.

Although in different ways, all these artists came to represent a quest for a higher form of knowledge through art, conducted in isolation and at the margins. This resonated with Szeemann's attempt to frame his activities in a new way and to find a new meaning for them: to aspire to an integrated form of living in which dichotomies such as family and work, female and male, life and death, and nature and culture are resolved and a new way to experience time arises, in which every moment is the first.



#### NOTES

Epigraphs: Marcel Duchamp to Michel Carrouges, February 6, 1950, in *Le machine celibi / The Bachelor Machines*, ed. Harald Szeemann and Jean Clair (Venice: Alfieri, 1975), 49; Harald Szeemann, dedication at the end of his essay "The Bachelor Machines," *ibid.*, 11. All translations are by the author unless otherwise noted.

- 1 "Ces deux zones ne sont pas simplement juxtaposées ou seulement accordées par des correspondances plastiques, elles sont fonctionnellement unies, elles exercent l'une sur l'autre une influence mécanique. C'est pour cela que l'œuvre de Duchamp est autre chose qu'une simple tableau, elle est plutôt la maquette d'une machine." Michel Carrouges, *Les machines célibataires* (Paris: Arcanes, 1954), 30–31.
- 2 *Ibid.*, 244.
- 3 See Arturo Schwarz, "The Alchemical Bachelor Machine," in Szeemann and Clair, *Bachelor Machines*, 156–71.
- 4 Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *Anti-Oedipus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*, trans. Robert Hurley, Mark Seem, and Helen R. Lane (New York: Viking, 1977). Szeemann invited Deleuze to contribute to the catalogue, but the archive contains no evidence of a response from the philosopher (see Harald Szeemann Papers, Getty Research Institute, Los Angeles, acc. no. 2011.M.30, box 333, folder 5).
- 5 Szeemann later curated an important exhibition devoted to the author: Alfred Jarry, Kunsthau Zürich, December 14, 1984–March 10, 1985.
- 6 Jacques Carelman, *Catalog of Extraordinary Objects* (London: Abelard-Schuman, 1971).
- 7 "De cette façon-là, j'espère qu'un gardien ne me dira plus, comme ce fut le cas à Venise: Ne vous inquiétez pas, Monsieur Roussel, votre salle sera bien gardée!" Jacques Carelman to Michel Baudson, November 13, 1975, Szeemann Papers, box 334, folder 2.
- 8 Jacques Carelman to Harald Szeemann, June 2, 1978, Archivio di Stato del Canton Ticino, Bellinzona, Fondo Szeemann, 65.1.1.2.
- 9 Tim's illustrations were originally published in the Club Français du Livre edition of *Le surmale* (Paris, 1963). In the exhibition the artist also presented his illustrations for Kafka's "In the Penal Colony." Chaval's drawings were originally published in *Subsidia Pataphysica*, no. 15 (1972). Jihel's four plates, together with four more that were not presented in the show, would later be published by Carrouges in his expanded edition of *Les machines célibataires* (Paris: Éditions du Chêne, 1976).

FIGURE 29.

Harald Szeemann and his daughter Una seen through a facsimile of *The Bride Stripped Bare by Her Bachelors, Even (The Large Glass)*, 1915–23, by Marcel Duchamp, as installed in *Junggesellenmaschinen / Les machines célibataires* (The bachelor machines), Musée des Arts Décoratifs, Paris, April 28–July 5, 1976. Photographer: Harry Shunk.



- 10 "Questi disegni non sono illustrazioni, ma esercizi. Hanno la stessa funzione dei testi critici sulle macchine celibi. Come le immagini immaginarie che nascono dalla lettura, queste immagini grafiche hanno per scopo di fissare dei punti di riferimento per la percezione mentale dell'universo mentale delle macchine celibi. E' per questo d'altronde che essi non sono presentati in prospettiva fisica, ma in tinta piatta per servire di trampolino alla prospettiva mentale." Szeemann Papers, box 44, folder 3.
- 11 Roger Shattuck, *Au seuil de la 'Pataphysique / On the Threshold of 'Pataphysics* (Paris: Collège de 'Pataphysique, [ca. 1963]). This text is a revised and expanded version of his "Superliminal Note," *Evergreen Review* 4 (May-June 1960): 24-33.
- 12 Written in 1898, the novel was first published posthumously in 1911 (Paris: Fasquelle).
- 13 Harald Szeemann, "Bachelor Machines," trans. Jonathan Blower, in *Harald Szeemann: Selected Writings*, ed. Doris Chon, Glenn Phillips, and Pietro Rigolo (Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute, 2018), 105; originally published in Jean Clair and Harald Szeemann, eds., *Le macchine celibi / The Bachelor Machines* (Venice: Alfieri, 1975), 11.
- 14 Harald Szeemann, "Emma Kunz: Swiss Primal Mud, Swiss Mysticism of Light," trans. Elizabeth Tucker, in Chon, Phillips, and Rigolo, *Selected Writings*, 206; originally published as "Schweizer Urschlamm und Lichtmystik," in *Emma Kunz* (Triesenberg, Liechtenstein: Art Selections International, 1975), unpag.
- 15 The exhibition traveled between 1973 and 1976 to Aargauer Kunsthau, Aarau, Switzerland; Centro Culturale San Fedele, Milan; Centrum für Kunst, Vaduz, Liechtenstein; Städtische Kunsthalle, Düsseldorf; and ARC 2, Paris. In Paris the exhibition closed the day before the opening of *Les machines célibataires* at the Musée des Arts Décoratifs. Between November 1974 and January 1975 Szeemann conducted extensive oral history interviews with people who knew the psychic. See Szeemann Papers, boxes 324-26.
- 16 Szeemann, "Swiss Primal Mud," 206.
- 17 The quoted phrase is a translation of the catalogue's subtitle; see Harald Szeemann, ed., *Monte Verità: Berg der Wahrheit; Lokale Anthropologie als Beitrag zur Wiederentdeckung einer neuzeitlichen sakralen Topographie* (Milan: Electa, 1978).
- 18 Jung indeed played a fundamental role in developing the Eranos summer conferences, annual meetings held in the residence of Olga Fröbe-Kapteyn and devoted to the study of ancient civilizations, Eastern philosophies, and psychoanalysis. The psychoanalyst suggested that the 1938 meeting focus on the symbol of the Great Mother and published in the *Eranos-Jahrbuch* for that year his essay "Die psychologischen Aspekte des Mutter-archetypus" (Zurich: Rhein, 1939). Erich Neumann, elaborating on the discussions at Eranos and on the visual material assembled by Fröbe-Kapteyn, would later publish the canonical *Great Mother: An Analysis of the Archetype* (New York: Pantheon, 1955).
- 19 Erich Mühsam (1878-1934) was a German Jewish anarchist, poet, and playwright. Pursued by the police, in 1904 he fled toward Italy and eventually settled in Ascona. In 1908 Mühsam returned to Germany, where he continued his political activities. Arrested on February 28, 1933, a few hours after the Reichstag fire, he was murdered in the Oranienburg concentration camp the following year.
- 20 As Szeemann wrote, "The findings contributed to the illustration of topics that are particularly current and in part explosive today. From philosophical anarchy to life reform, from communes to sexual revolution, from the emancipation of women to people's initiatives against nuclear armament and for the defense of the environment." Harald Szeemann, in "Il luogo delle utopie concrete—La montagna incantata: La storia di Monte Verità raccontata da Harald Szeemann a 'Risk,'" *Risk*, no. 15 (1994): 9.
- 21 Harald Szeemann, "The Museum of Obsessions: Proposal for an Exhibition at the Akademie der Künste in Berlin," trans. Jonathan Blower, in Chon, Phillips, and Rigolo, *Selected Writings*, 78; originally published as "Museum der Obsessionen: Vorschlag für eine Ausstellung in der Akademie der Künste in Berlin" (1974), in *Museum der Obsessionen: Von/über/zu/mit Harald Szeemann* (Berlin: Merve, 1981), 103.
- 22 Mario Merz, in *Mario Merz* (Ascona: Museo Comunale d'Arte Moderna, 1990), 11.
- 23 "Esule sono su questa terra / Laddove muoion i fiori e i cuori / E regnan d'ebbra vorace guerra / Mille dolori. / Son esule io—non del passato, / Né d'una stirpe che va a morire, / E non d'un regno annientato: / D'un avvenire! / Dell'avvenire son esule io, / D'un regno chiaro che regge il cuore. / Araldo sono d'un vero Dio / E dell'amore." Elisar von Kupffer, "Esule dell'avvenire," in *I versi d'un esule* (Bellinzona: Grassi, 1947), 9.
- 24 Von Kupffer would refer to it in bilingual Ticino as either *Klarwelt der Seligen* or *Chiaro Mondo dei Beati*. The painting was started in 1923 and permanently installed in the newly built custom-made space of the Sanctuary's rotunda in 1939.
- 25 Szeemann's label reads, "Il microparadiso tra Monte Verità e La Baronata con al centro il Sanctuary Artis Elisarion" (the microparadise between La Baronata and Monte Verità, with Sanctuary Artis Elisarion in the middle). Szeemann Papers, box 149, folder 2.
- 26 Fidus (Hugo Reinhold Karl Johann Höppener, 1868-1948) was an artist and life reformer strongly influenced by theosophical beliefs. He started developing his design for the Temple of the Earth around 1895, and in 1907 he visited Monte Verità, probably to test the feasibility of the project. Although no direct contact is documented, von Kupffer was clearly influenced by Fidus's project, both in the architecture of the Sanctuary and in the ritual he envisioned inside it.
- 27 Such as in a 2002 lecture at the Centre National de la Danse in Paris, in which he placed von Kupffer's work next to Pierre Puvis de Chavannes's. See Szeemann Papers, box 825, folder 1.

- 28 "Er war ja kein Kunstmaler sondern ein malender u.a. Philosoph." Harald Szeemann to Maria Szakats, undated letter (ca. 1990), Szeemann Papers, box 847, folder 17.
- 29 Harald Szeemann, "Individual Mythologies," trans. Jonathan Blower, in Chon, Phillips, and Rigolo, *Selected Writings*, 66; originally published as "Individuelle Mythologien," *Kunstnachrichten* 9, no. 3 (1972): unpag.
- 30 Ekkehard Hieronimus, "Elisär von Kupffer (1872-1942)," in *Otto Meyer-Amden, Wilhelm von Gloeden, Elisär von Kupffer* (Basel: Kunsthalle Basel, 1979), 4:3.
- 31 See Szeemann Papers, box 417, folder 4, and box 370, folder 2.
- 32 See Megan R. Luke's essay in this volume.
- 33 See Doris Chon's essay in this volume.
- 34 Harald Szeemann, "Monte Verità—Mountain of Truth," trans. Jonathan Blower, in Chon, Phillips, and Rigolo, *Selected Writings*, 126; originally published as "Monte Verità—Berg der Wahrheit," in Szeemann, *Monte Verità*, 8.
- 35 Harald Szeemann, "The Agentur für geistige Gastarbeit in the Service of the Vision for a Museum of Obsessions," trans. Jonathan Blower, in Chon, Phillips, and Rigolo, *Selected Writings*, 84; originally published as "Agentur für geistige Gastarbeit im Dienste der Vision eines Museums der Obsessionen," in *Museum der Obsessionen*, 112.
- 36 Alfred Jarry, *The Supermale*, trans. Barbara Wright (Cambridge, MA: Exact Change, 1999), 3. These are the opening words of the novel, pronounced by the protagonist.
- 37 "Il poter ripetere la cosa unica: amore (Jarry), l'opera d'arte (Duchamp, Tinguely), la vita (Casares)." "Le macchine celibi" (unpublished draft), September 9, 1975, Szeemann Papers, box 329, folder 6.