

2. Art Safiental (7th July to 21st October 2018)

Alps Art Academy (28th June to 7th July 2018)

Land Art in Safiental: Between horizontal and vertical

On 7th and 8th of July the second international Land Art exhibition Art Safiental opens under the title 'Horizontal-Vertical'.

Over 14 works of contemporary Land Art will be free to explore and experience throughout the summer and autumn in the entire Safiental in Switzerland, from Versam to Tenna, Safien Platz to Turrahus and Wanna. In the run-up to the outdoor biennial, the summer school Alps Art Academy (28th June -7th July) brings 35 art students from 20 countries to Safiental, where they will contribute their own artworks and performances. On June 30th/July 1st a public symposium will be held in Tenna which will highlight Land Art in an international context. At the end of the exhibition there will be a small publication on the theme, documenting the works produced in 2018.

The first Alps Art Academy and Art Safiental took place in 2016 and was a great success with residents of the valley as well as visitors, the national art scene and the media: the image of the Null Stern Hotel went around the world. Many Safians still talk about the clothesline between the two bridges at Versamer Tobel or the "Stammtisch" (regulars' table) on the Tenner Chrüz. It was an easy decision to let the art festival take place every two years in the future from 2018 onwards with under the lead of Naturpark Beverin'. This year's Art Safiental (7.7.-21.10.), as well as the preceding summer school Alps Art Academy (28.6.-7.7.), are mainly devoted to the theme Horizontal-Vertical. Artistic Director Johannes M. Hedinger, who founded the biennial and academy in 2016 and has been its director since then, is responsible for this year's programme. The biennial brings together historical positions from the Land Art of the 1970s with contemporary interpretations of the landscape. "While the canonical positions from the American West often deal with the horizontal, representatives of the Alpine countries have almost no other choice geographically than to deal with the vertical. In this field of tension between mountain and plain, most of the works of this year's show are repositioning and reinventing the landscape"(J. Hedinger).

Experience works of art - incorporated into and surrounded by nature

Many of the artists participating in the exhibition travelled to the valley last year to choose a location for their installations and interventions. Thanks to the experience of the first biennial, a longer lead time and better embedding in the valley, more complex productions will be possible this year. In the case of the Zurich artist *Bob Gramsma*, for example, this means being able to use a whole lake as a production site: When the Zervreila power plants were draining the water in May, the artist built an 8x8 metre, 10 ton concrete shell on the lake floor which was lifted by the sheer pressure of the returning water providing the Egschisee with a new landmark. In the rear of the valley the monumental intervention, 'Himmel III', by the Swiss-Austrian duo *Bildstein / Glatz* catapults the view from the horizontal to the vertical. The resettlement of the Tenner Chrüz also promises to be a highlight as the Grand Old Lady of American Land Art, *Lita Albuquerque*, will create the sculpture 'HEarth' on this high vantage point. The sculpture depicts a woman lying on the ground listening to the depths of the planet and not only that, she also communicates with the other side of the globe. Off the coast of New Zealand, another identical figure will be placed in the next few months thus creating the greatest possible (vertical) connection. The English *DIG Collective* works with depth and will dig a 2x2x2m large hole in Tenna which, at the end of the exhibition, will be filled with memorabilia from valley dwellers and visitors. In the temporary hole museum in the old dairy in Tenna, the prospective gifts to the earth can be viewed until the end of the exhibition. All that is visible of the work of Berlin based artist Mirja Busch are the small plaques which mark the sight at which she has buried stones from original world-famous American Land Art works such as the Spiral Jetty, the Double Negative or the Sun Tunnels along a ten kilometre line in the Safien Valley, with only small plaques marking the sites.

A total of 14 Land Art works, some of them large format, will be on display in Safiental this year, more than twice as many as in 2016. The spectrum ranges from the art historical position of two-time Documenta participant *Ingeborg Lüscher* to the young savages of the post-digital era (*Paul Barsch & Tilman Hornig*). There will be a reunion with *Com & Com's* work *Bergkanzel* (Mountain Pulpit), except that this time it will be installed 25 kilometres from its 2016 location, giving it a completely new view of the valley. Although most of the works can be experienced outdoors, some also lead indoors, with locations such as a church (*Roman Signer*) or guest houses (*HR Fricker*). The whole body becomes the experience when a stable becomes a camera obscura for the surrounding landscape (*Ueli Alder*) or when entering the old Acla tunnel to find a video work by *Gabriela Gerber and Lukas Bardill* deep within. There are also research and ephemeral projects: The American artist *Steve Rowell* addresses water energy and follows the water through three valleys, from the Valsler Tal into the Safiental to the Domleschg. The Zurich-based duo *Marianne Halter and Mario Marchisella* create a subtle audio work in the valley with a native bee colony. At the beginning of the Valley at the railway station Versam-Safien the visitors are welcome by a digital rock painting by US-Argentinian artist *Analia Saban*.

Self-awareness and local participation

Practically all of the art works presented at Art Safiental are accessible via hiking trails but can also be reached by public transport. Occasionally you will have to walk 60 to 90 minutes to reach a work. If you want to see all 14 works, a day is hardly enough. We recommend that you take at least two days to visit the whole exhibition. The exact locations can be found on the free art hiking map, available from 7th July at all Safiental Tourism information points as well as in the village shops and restaurants and on <http://www.artsafiental.ch>. Information about the work and the artist is presented at every site. The Berghotel Alpenblick in Tenna also has a small library of books on Land Art.

Art Safiental and the Alps Art Academy would not be possible without diverse partners and sponsors as well as the goodwill and committed participation of many local residents. Local people, landowners, local craftsmen and volunteers often participate. For Safiental municipality president Thomas Buchli the Safiers are a decisive factor in the project's success: "Through the Alps Art Academy and Art Safiental 2016, a wonderful approach was found to bring art into the landscape and thus out of the urban metropolises. Safiental has shown that the worlds of artists and locals are not so far apart and that exciting, sometimes controversial dialogues can arise. The world of art is visiting the Safiental ... I'm looking forward to the next round!"

For Jolanda Rechsteiner, managing director of Safiental Tourism and project manager for the Alps Art Academy / Art Safiental, the various art interventions appeal to both locals, regulars and new visitors alike: "The Land Art installations of the first Art Safiental in 2016 were successful right away, opening new perspectives in everyday locations, adding value and meaning to what already existed and providing new impulses. Thus, unique places and moods were created in symbiosis between art, nature and encounter. The slowly growing, largely archaic and authentic cultural landscape combined wonderfully with contemporary, temporary land art. With the project we could address a new guest segment in the field of cultural tourism. So the Safiental is ready for the second edition of the Alps Art Academy and the inspiring Biennale Art Safiental! "

Alps Art Academy, with 35 participants from 20 countries

Immediately before Art Safiental, the second Alps Art Academy will take place from June 28th to July 7th. This ten-day summer school is aimed at artists and art students from all over the world who want to delve deeper into contemporary Land Art topics. Advertised in December 2017, the 35 seats were quickly filled. The participants will travel from all over Europe as well as from the USA, Canada, Argentina, South Africa, Australia, Russia, Hong Kong and India, which promises a perspective-rich exchange of experience. Classes as well as artistic works and activities will take place in and around Tenna, where the Berghotel Alpenblick forms the actual centre of the Alps Art Academy.

In addition to daily practical and theoretical workshops, there are five Master Classes on Land Art-related topics. The afternoons are available for work on individual projects and excursions. Visits will be made to places and institutions in and around the Safiental which also, in the broadest sense, constitute interventions into the landscape - such as the Zervreila hydroelectric power station in Safien Platz, the Gonzenbergwerk Sargans or the Magletsch military bunker. Evening talks by artists participating in Art Safiental offer academy participants a further opportunity for dialogue.

Public international symposium in Tenna

On the first weekend of the academy (Saturday, 30.6./Sunday, 1.7.) a symposium will be held in the gymnasium at Tenna, which will be open to the public. Under the title 'New Tendencies in Land and Environmental Art: Horizontal - Vertical', faculty members of the Academy, together with guest speakers (theoreticians, curators and artists), address current issues of land art and public alpine art. The exact program can be found at <http://www.alpsartacademy.ch/aaa2018/programm/symposium/>. Academy participants, locals and residents of the Safiental can attend the symposium free of charge, external guests pay a flat rate (120 CHF for both days including food, 60 or 80 CHF for one day). Registration is open until 27.6. at info@alpsartacademy.com.

Events und Publication

At the opening (7./8.7.) and closing (21.10.) as well as during the duration of the exhibition various actions and mediation initiatives will take place. On four Sundays, part of the exhibition can be hiked together with an artist participating in Art Safiental. These guided tours will be complemented with a picnic (Dates: 22.7., 19.8., 23.9., 7.10.). Further dates and the programme can be found at <http://www.artsafiental.ch>. A small publication will be presented at the closing of the event.

Information and contacts

www.artsafiental.ch: List of artists, works, events, art hiking map, photos, videos

www.alpsartacademy.ch: Symposium, works of participants, photos, videos

www.safiental.ch/tourismus: Accommodation and tourist offers, Tel +41 81 630 60 16

Facebook: @alpsartacademy

Instagram: @alpsartacademy

Hashtags: #artsafiental #alpsartacademy

Artist List

Lita Albuquerque (USA), Ueli Alder (CH), Paul Barsch & Tilman Hornig (D), Bildstein | Glatz (A/CH), Mirja Busch (D), Com&Com (CH), DIG Collective (UK), HR Fricker (CH), Gabriela Gerber & Lukas Bardill (CH), Bob Gramsma (CH/NL), Ingeborg Lüscher (CH), Marianne Halter & Mario Marchisella (CH), Steve Rowell (USA), Analia Saban (ARG/USA), Roman Signer (CH)