



## Nicolas Faure (b. 1949)

Photographs featuring the motorway landscape in Valais, from the series *Autoland*, *Landscape A* and *Alles in Ordnung* (1996-2006)

Exhibition from Saturday 18 May to Sunday 16 June

Since the 1990s, Nicolas Faure has been creating a vast corpus of landscape photographs of contemporary Switzerland. In series focusing on motorway landscapes, the photographer looks at the developed land beside the motorway, to which busy motorists pay no attention: this 'nature', which seems wild to us, is in fact entirely created by human beings. Far from the romantic representations and the tourist image that has been meticulously constructed since the 19th century, these images reveal the artificial design of the Swiss landscape. Opening this exhibition devoted to slowness, Nicolas Faure's works contemplate our need for speed in getting around.



## François Boson (b. 1949)

...*Alors la limpidité de l'air le transporter vers les espoirs d'un nouveau printemps...*, 2005-2007, oil on canvas

Exhibition from Tuesday 18 June to Sunday 14 July

An artist who studied at the School of Fine Arts in Sion in the late 1960s, Boson developed his style in the wake of a return to figuration. Inspired by surrealism, 'Then the limpidity of the air will transport him to hopes of another spring...' is made up of three parts, like a religious altarpiece. Filled with objects and figures, references to the artist's personal mythology and art history, they depict an enigmatic, dreamlike and disturbing world: a levitating egg as a symbol of life and rebirth, a suspended dress to express the memory of a body that is no longer there, a pear that will ripen before rotting, etc. A vocabulary the artist uses to express his relationship to the world, bridging the gap between an aspiration for life and freedom and the weight of his human condition. In this immensely blue sky, large rocks seem to hang above the figures: imminent danger or promise of elevation?



"There once was a man I liked, but the first time we made love I was afraid he took a hint. I thought I was still to have side-lying, and found being propped up by the idea that the man in my bed wasn't the right one. I believe in many ways to be the right one. The only really important one for me is the one that takes of itself when I hang my arms around his neck. In the place of Christ and my doubts, I opened my eyes, and realized that he was the one I wanted to stay. It was always to have one. "What happens in silence or the shadow of a man that we can never expect to see and know in our appearance."

## Sophie Calle (b. 1953)

*There was a man I like*, from the series *Histoires vraies* (1988-2003), diptych, black and white photographic print

Exhibition from Wednesday 17 July to Wednesday 13 August

This diptych is part of the series *Histoires vraies* ('True stories') initiated in 1988. In it, the artist confides thirty key episodes in her love life through thirty vignettes comprising a photograph and a brief text, like a public diary. By recounting her romantic relationships, hesitations and missed opportunities, Sophie Calle blurs the lines between exhibitionism and auto-fiction. The format may be reminiscent of a documentary, but the narrative is more like a story. Through these ambivalent devices, the artist plays with the boundary between ostentation and dissimulation, disclosure and mystery. The publications that accompany her work are an invitation to immerse ourselves in these self-narratives.



**Miquel Barceló (b. 1957)**

*Crânes, melon, poisson*, 1995, mixed technique on glued paper on canvas  
Exhibition from Friday 15 August to Thursday 12 September

'Skulls, melons, fish' is a still life of the secular kind, a genre that Barceló has been revisiting in painting since the early 1990s and here pushes to the limits of gestural abstraction. The Spanish artist mixes organic materials into his pigments, then allowing them to oxidise directly on the canvas. Here, beneath the pictorial layer hide a cigarette butt and dead fly. A meticulous exploration of fleeting appearances in the plant and animal worlds, still life is also the privileged genre of *vanitas* and *memento mori*, meditations on the passage of time, the vanity of earthly things and death – all central themes present in Barceló's oeuvre from the outset.



**Alexandre Calame (b. 1810, d. 1864)**

*Torrent de montagne par orage*, 1848,  
oil on canvas  
Exhibition from Saturday 14 September to Sunday 13 October

Recently acquired by the Valais Art Museum, this painting of a 'Mountain stream during a storm' transports us into a Bernese Oberland (highlands) landscape with spectacular atmospheric effects. Alexandre Calame has rendered the structure of the rocks, the strength of the wind in the fir trees, the violence of the mountain stream and the light of a stormy sky with great detail. One of the greatest masters of romantic landscape painting, Calame has painted the unleashing of the elements as the storm approaches with virtuosity, suggesting a feeling of the 'sublime' – that mixture of vertigo, admiration and fear people sometimes feel when they witness the power of nature. Comfortably seated in our armchairs, what do we feel when we see the agitation of the figures at risk of drowning?



**Magdalena Abakanowicz (b. 1930 d. 2017)**

*Structure de Kristine*, 1975, sisal tapestry  
Exhibition from Tuesday 15 October to Sunday 10 November

A pioneer in textile art – which she has been revisiting since the 1960s after studying at the Warsaw Academy of Fine Arts in Poland – Magdalena Abakanowicz was one of the initiators of the New Tapestry movement. Using new techniques and materials, the artist breaks away from the classical traditions of the Aubusson, Beauvais and Gobelins workshops, defying their rules to encourage viewers to use their own imagination. A jumble of folds and knots, entanglement of woven sisal fibres, gaps and undulating shapes give rise to three-dimensional, monumental objects, suggesting an organic, plant-sourced world. This textile artwork – which is a reference to Greek mythology and the weaving Penelope never finished so as to fool her suitors – gives us a sense of the long time it takes...