

GOWEN at Art Genève 2025

Yayoi Kusama, Sylvie Lambert, Sébastien Mettraux, Joana Vasconcelos, Jérôme Zonder

Stand D23

January 30 – February 2, 2025

Palexpo, Geneva

VIP Preview 29 January (by invitation only)

Courtesy of the Artist and GOWEN. © Atelier Joana Vasconcelos.



Joana Vasconcelos, *Black And White*, 2022, handmade woollen crochet, polyester, on canvas, plywood, 190 x 140 x 40 cm.

For the 13th edition of Art Genève, GOWEN is honoured to present a group show by five artists. Following the gallery's critically acclaimed presentation of *Valkyrie Mumbet*, 2020 by Portuguese artist **Joana Vasconcelos** (b. 1971, Paris) at the fair in 2024, this year's exhibition includes a notable textile work by the artist from her *Crochet paintings* series. Alongside Vasconcelos's largescale work is a new acrylic on canvas by French-Canadian artist **Sylvie Lambert** (b. 1984, Montréal), a series of monochrome linocuts on paper and an oil on canvas by **Sébastien Mettraux** (b. 1984, Vallorbe) and a painting by Japanese artist **Yayoi Kusama**.

In his very first participation with the gallery, **Jérôme Zonder** (b. 1974, Paris) will present a signature work in graphite and charcoal on paper.

As the sole representative gallery of **Joana Vasconcelos** in Switzerland since 2017, GOWEN has collaborated with the artist on numerous projects including off-site interventions. The presentation of *Valkyrie Mumbet* in 2024 was the very first on this scale by a gallery at an art fair.

In the *Crochet Paintings*, Vasconcelos questions boundaries between painting and sculpture, inspired by classical landscapes, in a technique most often associated with domesticity. Her voluminous pieces appear as undulating compositions akin to hills and valleys, creating a dialogue that evokes both body and nature, the figurative and the abstract in playful, engaging contemporary landscapes. Humorously contrasting with the large, gestural, often masculine paintings of the American abstract expressionists, her large 'paintings' crafted in small repetitive gestures in crochet adopt a technique more akin to the handmade and feminine arena.

Yayoi Kusama's decades-long career spans painting, drawing, collage, sculpture, performance, film, printmaking and environmental art as well as literature, fashion and product design. In 2016, she was awarded the Order of Culture by the Emperor of Japan, becoming the first woman to be honoured with the prestigious medal for drawings and sculptures. She appeared on TIME Magazine's list of 100 most influential people in the world and named the world's most popular artist. Kusama's practice reflects a lifelong preoccupation with the infinite and sublime, and themes of cosmic infinity or personal obsession, as found in pattern and repetition. This will be the first time ever that Joana Vasconcelos is presented alongside Kusama.

The unfamiliar environments of **Sylvie Lambert** in which decor, reality, fantasy and fiction intertwine call into question what is normal. Shaped by the artist's personal journey, her inquiries result in narratives which can be equally poetic, humorous, particularly of the second degree, and slightly dystopic, portraying subjects which seem, at times, incongruous. Lambert, who originates from Quebec, keeps an intuitive, spiritual trace of her Iroquois Native American heritage which, together with later French and Swiss influences defines her artistic practice. Having a very arborescent system of thinking, probably exacerbated by Quebec culture that uses words in a highly imaginative way, Lambert has a particular manner of self-expression, conceiving canvases like sentence elements, where it is enough to modify a single



Sylvie Lambert, *Tree Unity*, 2024, Acrylic on canvas 150 x 120 cm.

letter, the context or the interlocutor for changing the meaning of the phrase. Sensitive to the fertile relationship between the elements in any form of communication, whether oral or visual, Lambert considers that words have a history and can make a highly powerful imprint. With images, the artist's belief is that they have the power to be even more universal and intuitive.



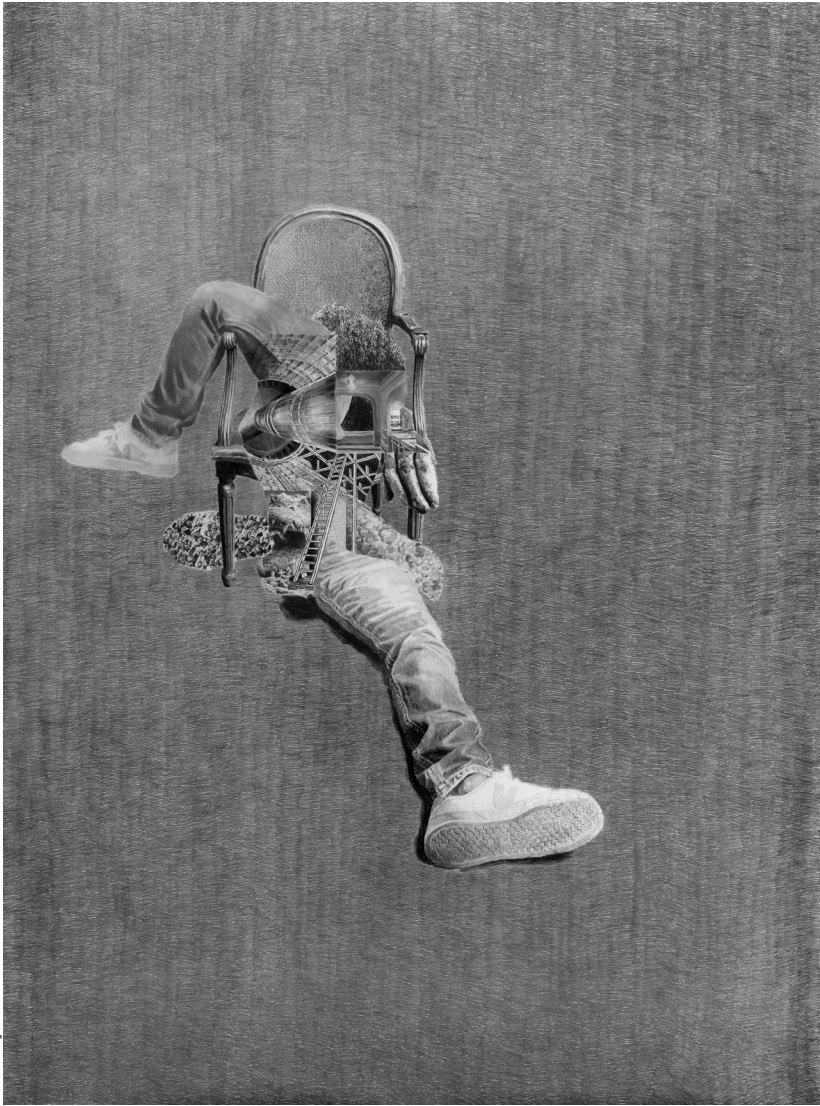
Sébastien Mettraux, *In Silico 19*, 2021, Oil on canvas, 120 x 100 cm.

Throughout his career, **Sébastien Mettraux** has drawn on his native Swiss environment as well as locations further afield, assimilating characteristic topics and subjects on which he bases his artistic direction. Since 2020, Mettraux has turned towards the natural environment to focus on structures: roots, generic forms of plants or fractal objects which define a new path for the artist. "After 15 years of working on constructed, functional, predictable, and man-made forms, I now have an interest in the random, for what we cannot calculate, for the accident, for the organic" states Mettraux.

In series such as *In Silico*, the artist, to some degree, breaks away from figuration as he has practiced it thus far, now leaning towards abstraction (without ever really reaching it). With a focus on structure, the essence of plant or natural forms rather than their final form, Mettraux is "convinced that we find in this observation a form of coherence, even the expression of a truth".

Works from *Rendered Entropy*, the artist's most recent series explore the representation of reality and the unpredictability of entropy. His series of lithocuts, for which he won the Recognition Prize from the Swiss Foundation for Graphic Arts in 2024 demonstrates Mettraux's versatility of technique, often exploring 3D technologies, to complement his painting and sculptural practice.

Courtesy of the Artist and GOWEN. © The Artist and Galerie Nathalie Obadia.



Jérôme Zonder, *Étude pour un portrait de Pierre-François #44*, 2023, Graphite and charcoal on paper, 214,5 x 164,5 x 5 cm.

Jérôme Zonder has, for the last 20 years, developed a virtuosic work centered on the constantly reinvented practice of drawing. The variations in the scale of his works - realized in lead pencil and charcoal - generate spatial circulation games: the visitor strolls spatially and mentally through the mysteries of an extremely vivid polygraphic system. In his work, there are neighboring references to Albrecht Dürer, Robert Crumb, Rembrandt, Charles Burns, Otto Dix and Walt Disney, and together, these compose narratives with eclectic, sometimes cruel themes: "Narration pulls us into the drawing, and only the body keeps us on the surface. Drawing, for me, is existing constantly between distance and proximity, figuration and abstraction, attraction and repulsion."