

NEW RELEASE

Kunstforum Wien
Flying High
Künstlerinnen der Art Brut
(Women Artists of Art Brut)

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Art and emancipation: For the first time ever, the Kunstforum Wien puts the spotlight of the art public on female positions within Art Brut.

The discourse on Art Brut has gained extra dimensions in recent years. The term Art Brut now goes beyond an exclusive focus on works from psychiatric institutions and today also encompasses »mediumistic« artists (i.e., steered by a spirit), so-called »lone wolves«, and works by artists with disabilities.

Historical barriers between Art Brut and »high« art seem to be rapidly breaking down, aesthetic criteria are gaining in relevance over diagnostic interest and the artists' »eccentricity«; what has been hidden or marginalised until now is being washed to the surface. For more than a decade, Art Brut museums have been mushrooming all over the world. Over and above this, Art Brut is being shifted more and more into the spotlight of the international art public.

A history of women's art is always closely interwoven with the history of emancipation, and in the case of Art Brut the constellation is all the more precarious. For decades, exclusively male discoverers and propagandists of the genre – psychiatrists and artists – have addressed the work of creative women patients in a way that can only be described as a process of elimination. In the groundbreaking book *Die Bildneri der Geisteskranken (The Plastic Activity of the Mentally Ill)* by the Heidelberg art historian and psychiatrist Hans Prinzhorn (1922), the chapter planned for the outstanding Else Blankenhorn was sacrificed to »the demands of budgetary cuts«. It was not until 2004 that the Prinzhorn Collection was reviewed from the perspective of gender-specific differences.

Also with regard to the Haus der Künstler (Artists' House) in Gugging, Austria, everything revolved around a purely male department. It was only recently that occasional women artists were discovered from the era of Leo Navratil. However, Jean Dubuffet, the founder of the term »Art Brut«, did actually promote one woman artist: Aloïse Corbaz.

For the first time, the exhibition in the Bank Austria Kunstforum Wien is presenting a comprehensive show of the women artists of Art Brut, in all their diversity, their international relevance, their historical and contemporary dimension: 316 works by 93 women artists from 21 countries.

The book includes essays by Ingrid Brugger, Edward M. Gómez, Elmar R. Gruber, Sarah Lombardi, Hannah Rieger, Thomas Röske, Veronika Rudorfer, Barbara Safarova, Gisela Steinlechner

Exhibition

Flying High: Women Artists of Art Brut

Kunstforum Wien, Vienna, Austria

February 15 – June 23, 2019

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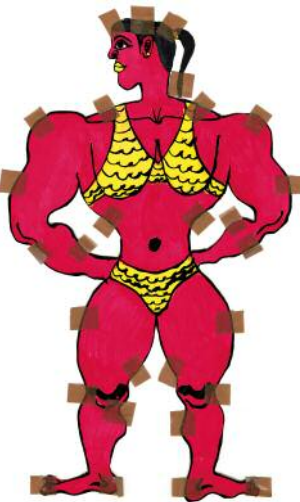
Press images



1 Aloïse Corbaz, *Brevario Grimani*, c. 1950 (Detail)
abcd / Bruno Decharme collection
Photo © César Decharme



2 Madame Favre, *Untitled*, 1860
Courtesy Henry Boxer Gallery



3 Misleidys Castillo Pedroso, *Untitled*, c. 2016
Collection Amr Shaker, Genève © Misleidys Castillo Pedroso



4 Mary T. Smith, *Untitled*, c. 1980
Collection Hannah Rieger, Photo © DETAILSINN Fotowerkstatt



5 Ida Maly, *Figur aus Zellen*, c. 1934
Private Collection, Photo © Alistair Fuller, Bank Austria Kunstforum
Wien



6 Judith Scott, *Untitled*, not dated
abcd / Bruno Decharme collection © Creative Growth Art Center
Photo © César Decharme



7 Hedwig Wilms, Tablett mit Krug und Gießkännchen, c. 1913–1915
Prinzhorn Collection, Universitätsklinikum Heidelberg (Inv. 90, 91, 92)



8 Julia Krause-Harder, *Nanotyrannus*, 2013
Courtesy Atelier Goldstein
Photo © Uwe Dettmar