



Léa Katharina Meier (born 1989 in Switzerland) is a performance and visual artist. By employing clowning as performative practice, her research focuses on the notions of ridiculousness, abjection, and jubilation in order to create a visual and sensory universe that embraces the audience. Out of her intimate failures, she wishes to develop a filthy, dyke sense of humour. On stage, she strives to embody negative emotions and feelings as a source of pleasure. Storytelling, the body as archive, grotesque femininity, shame, and a childlike universe are recurrent motifs in her practice.

Léa Katharina Meier has shown her work in numerous art spaces and theatres in Switzerland, Italy and Brazil (Arsenic, Tunnel Tunnel, MCBA, TU-Théâtre de l'Usine, Lateral Roma, Istituto Svizzero, Pivô arte e pesquisa). In 2021, she received the audience and jury prizes at the Swiss Performance Art Awards for "Tous les sexes tombent du ciel". In 2023, she took part in the Swiss Art Awards exhibition in Basel. In 23-24, she is a resident of the Swiss Institute in Rome and received an award of the Irène Reymond Fondation in Lausanne.





How does one develop jubilating stories and hilarious archives out of the experience of shame? Which kind of knowledge lies in the closet? What is a collective practice of shame?

Léa-The-Book-Of-Shame and Mayara-The-Book-Of-Justice invite you to their Great-Wet-Soaked-Lubricated-Shameful-Library and to a very playful and grotesque performance in which they will share stories hidden away in their closet, in order to come up with a few possible answers to these questions. Together, we may laugh till we cry, pee our pants, and feel deeply embarrassed.

This work is part of a visual and performative research project focusing on books, libraries and archives as intimate landscapes. The dyke tales created for the project simultaneously constitute, contaminate and disorganize the archive the performance invites the audience into. Between the reenactment of traumatic experiences and a fantastical, childish universe, the performance seeks to transform shame into pleasure through embodiment and laughter.

- Watch some excerpts
- Listen to the audio piece

Concept, costumes, scenography and performance: Léa Katharina Meier
Artistic collaboration and performance: Mayara Yamada









Since 2018, Léa Katharina Meier has been carrying out a research in Switzerland and Brazil into constructed notions of cleanliness specific to Swiss identity, creating links with its colonial past and whiteness. Through interviews with descendants of Swiss settlers, she investigates a territory symbolic of Swiss colonisation in Brazil: Nova Friburgo. Drawing on this research, she has created an absurd, humorous and caricatural tale to depict the delusion of colonialism and whiteness.

Once upon a time in Nova Friburgo, Brazil, a Cheese wanted to know who had brought the Matterhorn there. In his quest, he comes face to face with the living statue of William Tell. Will he find the answer to his question? Only the Miasma, who is telling you this story, holds the key.

→ Watch the video



Artistic and research collaborator: Luana Fonseca Damasio

Camera and editing: Lucas Canavarro, Lina Kaplan

Production assistant: Natalia Araujo

Sound design: Luisa Lemgruber, Caio Zan

Costumes assistant: Liza Machado

Artistic collaboration: Icaro Ferrez Vidal

Coaching diction: Mayara Yamada

With the support of: Pro Helvetia Amérique du Sud, Fonds culturel OFC, Fondation Burgauer, Canton de Vaud

Coproduction : Arsenic - Centre d'art scénique contemporain, Lausanne



By merging together text, drawing and textiles, Léa Katharina Meier creates atmospheres that are both scary and reassuring, tender and monstrous, in which shame and pleasure occupy an empowering place. Through a performative installation reminiscent of some of the artist's scenographies, the exhibition "Nuit nommée Fantôme" transforms the spaces of Tunnel Tunnel into a room, a body or a city, serenaded by the light of street lamps and fabulous stories.

- See the online documentation of the show
- Listen to audio piece n°1
- Listen to audio piece n°2

Artistic and technical collaboration: Guits, Vicky Althaus
Writing advisor: Nayansaku Mufwankolo
Music and sound atmosphere: Serge Teuscher
Text on Léa Katharina Meier's practice: Valentina D'Avenia
With the support of: Pro Helvetia, Fondation Leenaards, Affaires culturelles du Canton de Vaud, La Ville de Lausanne, Fonds Respect





LÉA KATHARINA MEIER ■ PORTFOLIO 2024
10/15

NUIT NOMMÉE FANTÔME
SOLO SHOW, TUNNEL TUNNEL, LAUSANNE, 2022





Bad womxn, Ogers, Giants, Monsters, Clowns, Fire-breathers, Scissorors. Garbage trucks, Big drinking parties, Magic tricks, Garbage trucks, Spring cleaning, Laughter, Sexualities, Garbage trucks, Collapses, Selected Archives, Overflow, Broken Hearts, Collective Pee, Fires, Tears that flow freely, Garbage trucks, Explosion of red wine bottles.

Invited by Tunnel Tunnel, Léa Katharina Meier presents her first book in collaboration with graphic designer Gaëlle Renaudin. "Jour de fête" consists of a series of drawings and a tale about the story of The Ghost Temperance-Vin-Ouverte [Temperance-Open-Wine] and Lae Grandex-Aspirateureusex-Des-Sentiments [The Great-Feelings-Swallow] in La Ville-Nommée-Désire [The City-Named-Desire].

→ Look at the publication «Jour de Fête» online



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LÉA KATHARINA MEIER ■ PORTFOLIO 2024
13/15

TOUS LES SEXES TOMBENT DU CIEL
PERFORMANCE, 80:00, ARSENIC, LAUSANNE, 2021

In her filthy, pink and silky house, a character dances, performs magic tricks and sings a desolate song while the voyeuristic gaze of the audience invites itself into the intimacy, behind closed-doors. By putting herself in these foolish and awkward situations, Léa Katharina Meier uses a clownish prism to adopt a type of laughter and humor that runs counter to the heteronormative gaze. She cultivates ambivalence and crossovers between monstrosity, abjectness and the cutest of things. Pathetic and tender, this little being's stubbornness in their search of joy and a touch of the marvelous contaminates with their dignified vulnerability and empowering naiveté.

How does shame create a context for exhilarating experiences? In this childlike and cruel universe, this tale of dirtiness, with its ogresses and giantesses, invites us to live in dirty houses, laugh at the absurd and look upon the papier-mâché scenery of damaged hearts.

- Watch the teaser
- Watch some excerpts
- Watch the video of the short version

Artistic collaboration : Tatiana Baumgartner. Dramaturgy : Adina Secretan. Lights : Vicky Altaus. Music : Serge Teuscher. External eyes : Jonas Van, Charlotte Nagel. Coaching ballet : Claire Dessimoz. Writing advisor: Nayansaku Mufwankolo. Construction: Guits. Coproduction : TU - Théâtre de l'Usine, Arsenic.





LÉA KATHARINA MEIER ■ PORTFOLIO 2024
15/15

TOUS LES SEXES TOMBENT DU CIEL
PERFORMANCE, 80:00, ARSENIC, LAUSANNE, 2021



Curriculum Vitae
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➔FORMATION

- 2015 Master of Arts, hes-so in fine Arts
Work.Master, Pratiques artistiques contemporaines
Head-Haute Ecole d'Art et de Design, Genève (CH)
- 2012 Bachelor of Arts, hesb in Fine Arts
HKB-Hochschule der Künste Bern (CH)

➔GRANTS AND AWARDS

- 2024 PERFORM!, Performance grant from Pro Helvetia
2024 Award of Fondation Irène Reymond, Lausanne (CH)
2022 Visual art grant, Pro Helvetia
2022 Research grant, Canton de Vaud (CH)
2021 Jury and public award, Swiss Performance Art Award, (CH)
2021 Visual art research grant, Fonds Culturel, Bern (CH)
2021 Research grant, Canton de Vaud (CH)
2020 Demi Finalist, PREMIO - Prix d'encouragement aux arts de la scène, (CH)

➔RESIDENCIES

- 23-24 Roma Calling, Institut suisse de Rome (IT)
2022 Research trip in Brazil, Pro Helvetia Amérique du Sud, Rio de Janeiro (BR)
2019 Pivô arte pesquisa, São Paulo (BR)
2018 FAAP Residência artística, São Paulo (BR)
2017 Research residency, Arsenic, Lausanne (CH)
Arc Artist Residency, Romainmôtier (CH)
Watch and talk, Festival Programme Commun, Lausanne (CH)
2016 Watch and talk, Far°, Nyon (CH)
How we do, Aua wir leben Theater festival, Berne (CH)

➔NEXT

- 03.25 Terminale Hysteria, Performance, TU-Théâtre de l'Usine, Genève (CH)
07.25 Tous les sexes tombent du ciel, Performance, TBA, (FR)

➔PERFORMANCES, SHOWS & PROJECTS

- 2024 Terminale Hysteria, Performance, Arsenic, Lausanne (CH)
La Grande-Biblioteca-Bagnata, Performance, Istituto Svizzero, Short Theater Festival, Roma (IT)
The Great Story of Cleanliness, Performativ Reading, ADA project, Roma (IT)
Tous les sexes tombent du ciel, Performance, Programme Commun, Lausanne, Tojo Theater (2023), Bern, BIG (2023), Genève, Le Pommier (2022), Neuchâtel, Arsenic (2021), Lausanne, TU-Théâtre de l'Usine (2021), Genève, Lokremise (2021), Saint-Gall, (CH)
L'Effet de Serre, Group show, Abbatiale de Bellelay (CH)
Speaking nearby, Group show, Institut suisse, Rome (IT)
Forbici nell'Armadio della Biblioteca, Solo show, Festival Bande de Femmes, Tuba, Rome (IT)
- 2023 Com'è bello fare l'amore, Duo Show, Lateral, Roma (IT)
Miasma Ficção, Screening, Cinéma Arsenic, Festival de la Cité, Lausanne (CH)
Swiss Art Awards, Group show, Messe, Bâle (CH)
Jour de Fête, Publication, Tunnel Tunnel, Lancement aux Médusales, Lausanne (CH)
Jardin d'Hiver, Group show, MCBA, Lausanne (CH)
Love Stories, Group show, Espace 3353, Genève (CH)
Mythologiyi, Group show, Kasko, Bâle (CH)
Gravity-inertia-impulsion, Performativ project with Anne Sylvie Henchoz, Flux Laboratory, Genève (CH)
Magique Abjection Dream, Performance, MCBA, Lausanne (CH), Flight of Fancy (2022), HIT, Genève (CH)
- 2022 La Grande Histoire de Propreté, Performativ reading, Festival de la Cité, Lausanne (CH)
Textes à lire à voix haute, Collectiv translation, Publication, Brook, Paris (FR)
The Fridge Show, Group show, Palazzina, Bâle (CH)
Nuit nommée Fantôme, Solo Show, Tunnel Tunnel, Lausanne (CH)
- 2021 STITCHES, Group show, Le Commun, Genève (CH)
- 2021 Le bronze ne fond qu'avec le feu, Collectiv research project, Festival Belluard, Fribourg (CH)
- 2020 Swiss Neutral, Group show, eeeeh!, Nyon (CH)
Tear my heart out and plunge it into the soil, Group show, FdS, Lausanne (CH)
Crachons sur Hegel et bye bye, Group show, Forde, Genève (CH)
Ma Maison est une Maison sale, Performance, Festival Schamlos, Tojo Theater, Berne (CH), Ausstellungsraum Klingenthal (2019), Bâle (CH), Arsenic, Lausanne (CH), Riverside (2018), Berne (CH),
- 2019 Corpo Aberto - Um arquivo de sentimentos, Curatoriat, Emergency, Vevey (CH)
Quem chega cedo beba água limpa, Screening, BDQI, eeeeh!, Nyon (CH)
GUERISON BABY GIRL, Performance, Festival Antigél, La Ferme de la Chapelle, Genève (CH)
- 2018 O Buraco da Gloria, Performance, BDQI, eeeh!, Nyon (CH), Festival Corpo a terra, Ourense (ES)
Je conduis mon propre camion poubelle, Solo Show, Riverside, Bern (CH)