

**MASI Lugano**

Museo d'arte  
della Svizzera italiana,  
Lugano

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## **Lucas Herzig and often means always**

### **Manor Art Prize Ticino 2022**

23 October 2022 – 19 February 2023  
Museo d'arte della Svizzera italiana, Lugano  
MASI | Palazzo Reali

Curated by Francesca Benini

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#### PRESS RELEASE

Lugano, 11 October 2022

MASI Lugano presents "and often means always", a solo show by the artist Lucas Herzig (Zurich, 1988), winner of the 2022 Manor Art Prize Ticino.

Herzig's show, hosted on the second floor of the Palazzo Reali venue, presents a selection of new works including installations, compositions of found objects, video, drawings, sculptures and bas-reliefs – all realised for the occasion. Each exhibition room has been staged in detail by the artist. Herzig's works play with our perception to encourage us to go beyond an immediate, surface reading, and reflect on the differences between appearance and reality, and the inevitably subjective nature of interpretation.

In the first room visitors are surrounded by a series of works composed of archaeological finds: the remains of wooden buildings from prehistoric pile-dwelling sites found in 2010 during the excavation work to build the car park for the Opernhaus in Zurich. For some years Herzig worked with archaeologists from a dendrochronology laboratory, encountering methods and materials that he then partly reused in his practice. In the video projected in that room, entitled *Schädlinge*, these finds are filmed under a microscope, revealing tiny organisms that are devouring the wood, and with it, all the historical information it holds. More generally, the artist is interested in natural and archaeological objects that can testify to a possible prior situation, which for him, however, is never certain or definitive. As the curator Francesca Benini explains: "The traces that Herzig collects and then uses in his works are not traces of past truths, but catalysts of possible truths. There are no certainties or definitive interpretations".

The operation of discovering and gathering objects is a fundamental part of the artist's practice, as can be seen clearly in the installation *e spesso intendo sempre* (and often means always) which is also the title of the exhibition. Attracted to things that possess narrative potential - and which might not always coincide with what one would expect to find in a museum – Lucas Herzig has composed a sort of

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disenchanted *Wunderkammer*, hanging hundreds of his found objects along the entire corridor of the second floor.

In the second room the works in the series *Vola bass e schiva i sass!* challenge our perception once again: Herzig often uses papier-mâché to imitate natural structures, like the stones visible in the room, which thus become light-weight elements, sometimes combined with found objects.

In the middle hall our attention is drawn to a series of drawings entitled *I Do Care About Personal Growth*: seductive-looking human knee shapes emerge from clouds of colour. The drawings, which feature different combinations of hues and signs imprinted on paper and framed in a thick metal frame, leave visitors uncertain about the technique used to make them.

The exhibition also sees the publication of the artist's book "Safari". As the title suggests, the book follows a journey, presenting a photographic account of the artist's travels around areas of Switzerland that are significant to him. It also contains an introductory text and a dialogue (It/Eng) between the artist and Francesca Benini who, together with the photographer Mattia Angelini, followed Lucas Herzig on his special tour, intent on observing and hunting objects rather than animals. The graphic design of the book is by Enea Toldo, in collaboration with and published by tria publishing.

## The artist

Lucas Herzig (Zurich, 1988) grew up in Ticino and now lives and works in Zurich. He holds a Bachelor's degree in Visual Arts from the Haute école d'art et de design (HEAD) in Geneva and a Master's degree in Contemporary Arts Practice from the Hochschule der Künste (HKB) in Bern. His works have been exhibited in numerous group and solo exhibitions in Switzerland and abroad. Solo shows include: *Soft core*, Die Diele, Zürich, 2020; *I can't help you*, Espace Libre, Bienne, 2019; *Andererseits*, Spazio Morel, Lugano, 2018; *La gran secca*, la rada - spazio per l'arte contemporanea, Locarno, 2012. As for group exhibitions: *The Sand Threshold*, MARS, Milan, 2020; *È un momento difficile, tesoro*, Sonnenstube, Lugano and Kunsthalle St. Gallen, 2019; *Che c'è di nuovo?*, MASI Lugano and Dienstgebäude, Zurich, 2016; *Plattform 16*, Kunstraum Walcheturm, Zurich, 2016; *Neue*, Centre PasquArt, Bienne, 2015.

## A commitment to the young Swiss art scene

The **Manor Art Prize**, which celebrates 40 years in 2022, is one of the most important prizes for the promotion of contemporary art in Switzerland. It was created in 1982 by Philippe Nordmann to provide a platform for young Swiss artists. It is awarded by a jury of experts annually and alternately in the cities of Aarau, Basel, Biel, Chur, Geneva, Lausanne, Lucerne, Lugano, Schaffhausen, Sion, St. Gallen and Winterthur. A glance at the list of prize winners shows that the Manor Art Prize has paved the way to an international breakthrough for a whole series of artists.

Manor sincerely congratulates the Manor Art Prize winners and wishes them every success in their artistic careers.

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## Press contacts

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## Exhibition venues

### MASI | LAC

Piazza Bernardino Luini 6

CH – 6900 Lugano

### MASI | Palazzo Reali

Via Canova 10

CH – 6900 Lugano

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## Press images

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