

## MONICA DE CARDENAS

### ***Musée Imaginaire***

**Uwe Wittwer  
Michael van Ofen  
Slawomir Elsner**

#### **Opening**

10 December 2022  
6 pm

#### **On View**

from 10.12.2022  
to 11.02.2023

#### **Gallery Hours**

Tuesday – Saturday  
3 - 7 pm

This Winter in Zuoz we will show three artists whose work deals with art history and existing images. Using various techniques aimed at deconstructing and analyzing an image, each artist questions iconographic subjects, mythological scenes, portraits, still lifes and landscapes chosen from our collective visual memory. In doing so, they create new images that question our perception, memory, and habits of looking at art.

**Uwe Wittwer** (\*Zurich, 1954) is one of the most important Swiss painters of his generation. Driven by a deep mistrust in the image as representation, his figurative work revolves around fundamental questions about the nature of images and their connection with memory. To do so, he usually draws on existing repertoire images, that he reinterprets according to his own ideas. The results are paintings, watercolors, and charcoal drawings in which the motifs seem to dissolve, as if they were an elusive and vague memory. His works seduce with a sensual and dramatic presence, appearing attractive and irritating at once in their ambiguity and mystery. His works have been exhibited in various museums including the Tate Britain, Kunsthaus Grenchen, Museum of Fine Arts in Bern and most recently the Musée Ariana in Geneva. His works are in the collections of several Swiss and German museums and since 2013 in the collection of the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York.

**Michael van Ofen** (\*Essen, 1956) lives and works in Düsseldorf. His works often seem to consist of only a handful of brushstrokes, and yet they activate entire experiential and visual memories. What is condensed to the limit of abstraction is therefore not yet one, but a playful bow to a century that the artist still considers underestimated, the 19th century. However, Van Ofen does not try to recreate a landscape or a historic painting, instead he analyses its composition and reduces it to the elements that are essential and interesting for him. His extremely concentrated paintings about painting, that represent portraits as well as landscapes, create a world that should not be mistaken for reality only because of the way it is depicted.

Michael van Ofen has shown in international galleries as well as museums and foundations such as the Fundaciòn AMMA in Mexico City, Kunsthalle Münster, Collezione Maramotti, and the Gyeonggi Museum of Modern Art in South Korea.

**Slawomir Elsner** (\*Wodzislaw, 1976) lives and works in Berlin. In his color drawings, he freely sets strokes one by one, crisscrossing the paper vertically and horizontally. Working from light to dark, he carefully approaches light and color relationships in the paintings of the artists of past ages. The result lives from both its precision and its lack of sharpness while depriving us of any specific means of recognizing the subject. The blurriness of Elsner's interwoven lines forces us to concentrate on the colors and light and on the dynamic interplay between the two, positioning Elsner in the great tradition of artistic self-reflection where the relationship between reality and image is questioned.

In 2020, Elsner won the Otto Ritschl Prize, awarded to distinguished artists whose work offers a unique perspective on color. In 2021 Museum Wiesbaden presented his first comprehensive museum show. His works are in several collections including the Rubell Family Collection in Miami, Roche Collection in Basel, Adrastus Collection in Mexico and Kunstmuseum Bonn.