



BLOCH

2011 - 2020

BLOCH

Bloch is a multidisciplinary art project created and initiated by Swiss artist duo, Com&Com (Marcus Gossolt / Johannes M. Hedinger). The project combines contemporary art with traditional popular culture and fosters dialogue between people, by sharing traditions and customs from different cultures.

A *Bloch* is the lowest, branch-less, piece of a large tree trunk. According to an Appenzell carnival custom bearing the same name, the stump of the last spruce to have been felled in winter is drawn back and forth between the two villages, Urnäsch and Herisau, by 20 men. At the end of this day-long procession, the *Bloch* is then auctioned off to the highest bidder in Urnäsch village square. As a rule, someone from the region will acquire the Bloch and use it to produce a special piece of furniture or tiles and shingles.

In 2011, Swiss art duo Com&Com (Johannes M. Hedinger/Marcus Gossolt) were the first Non-locals to purchase the *Bloch* tree trunk at a historic peak price of CHF 3000.—. They explained that they did not wish to use it as construction material but wanted it to travel around the world, making at least one stop on every continent.

The *Bloch* has been on its journey since 2012: After first stations in Europe (amongst others in Bern, Basel, Berlin, Karlsruhe, St. Gallen and Zurich), Asia (Shanghai, Hong Kong, Taipei and Singapore) and North America (North Dakota, Minnesota, Ohio and New York). Bloch is currently on its way to Africa. Over the course of the next four years, it will travel to further destinations on the South American and Australian continents, the Middle East and maybe even to Antarctica, before returning to Switzerland in 2020.

The Bloch and the tradition behind it will thus be exported globally, its story spun further. Obviously, the goal is not to spread a custom or a production across the globe as a form of cultural imperialism. The *Bloch* and its story to date are an experiment a lab, an invitation to work together, to take up an active dialogue, to participate, partake and foster cultural exchange.

Bloch is a production with several different chapters and an open ending. What actually happens on the journey and during the encounters between people and cultures will only be revealed during the journey and in the actual moment. The sole aim, other than this journey across six continents, is the Bloch's final return to its place of origin, where artists, musicians and project partners from all stops will come together to celebrate within the scope of a final festival. This will be accompanied by a documentary film, an exhibition, a symposium and a publication.

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GESAMTKUNSTWERK

Bloch has no linear story, has many protagonists and hundreds of collaborators, who contribute to the synthesis of the Gesamtkunstwerk Bloch in the most different media and channels. From several perspectives, the story of an Appenzell spruce is told (and its underlying customs) on its journey around the world, its experiences with other cultures and its encounters with those people.

The tree works with it as own medium and core of crystallization, asks questions and enables communication and collaboration. At each place, new actions, works and productions are developed in cooperation with local artists based on their traditions and customs. Up to know, these partnerships took on very different forms : Partly they were of physical nature (works of arts as printings, woodcarving, installations and attachments), partly productively installed (Bloch as exhibition or filmset), partly performatively (Bloch as stage for concerts, theatre, opera, performance and fashion show) or discursively (Bloch as setting for conferences, talks and publications).

The tree is accompanied on its journey by the Swiss artist-duo Com&Com, who purchased the tree by auction 2011 as part of the local custom in Urnäsch. Partly, they use Bloch as a tool for producing works of art, but first of all they figure as ambassadors, mediators and curators of the several actions and cultural productions that are initiated around Bloch on its world-tour through six continents. The collaborators originate from very different fields/backgrounds : visual artists, musicians, performers, philosophers, sociologists, historians, educators, et al.

A further companion on the journey is a documentary and reportage team, who records the incidents and who regularly publishes videos, pictures and texts on the project-website and on social media channels. In this way, also not present but interested people can experience where Bloch is being at the moment and what it is experiencing right there. Furthermore, with it the particular places is linked to each other and an additional exchange is enabled (networks). All pictures, videos, texts, works flow in a media archive, that will also be accessible online in the second half of the project and will be the basis for the closing documentary film, the closing exhibition and final publication.

At the end, the project BLOCH will last ten years. But, the way will always be part of the final product and therefore aim. For, the experience of an event with Bloch and the with it linked encounter of people and cultures are currently taking place.



BLOCH COSMOS



BLOCH TOUR

EUROPA

Urnäsch / Switzerland (March 2011)

Zurich / Switzerland (TEDxZurich, October 2011)

Geneva / Switzerland (Fonderie Kugler, November 2011)

St. Gallen / Switzerland (Kunstgiesserei, March 2012)

Bern / Switzerland (PROGR, April 2012)

Basel / Switzerland (Swiss Art Awards, June 2012)

Berlin / Germany (Denkerei, June 2012)

Karlsruhe / Germany (ZKM, July 2012)

Zürich / Switzerland (Helmhaus, July – September 2012)

St. Gallen / Switzerland (Lagerhaus, August – September 2012)

Teufen / Switzerland (Zeughaus, June 2013 – May 2014)

Bern / Switzerland (Bern Biennale, Schwarzmarkt, September 2012)

Teufen / Switzerland (Zeughaus, June 2013 – April 2014)

Fribourg / Switzerland (Kunsthalle Fri-Art, BAK, October 2014)

Heidelberg / Germany (Heidelberger Kunstverein,
Nov 2014 – Feb 2015)

Zagreb / Croatia (SIEF Congress, University of Zagreb, May 2015)

Urnäsch / Switzerland (Appenzeller Brauchtummuseum,
April 2016 – Jan 2017)

Basel / Switzerland (3. Schweizerischer Kongress für Kunstgeschichte,
Universität Basel, June 2016)

Gliwice / Poland (Stacji Artystycznej Rynek, Sept – Oct 2016)

ASIEN

Taipei / Taiwan (Juming Museum, Oct 2012 – Feb 2013)

Shanghai / China (9. Shanghai Biennale / Power Station of Art,
Oct 2012 – March 2013)

Singapore / Singapore (DAW / Japan Creative Centre, May 2013)

Hong Kong / China (Art Basel Hong Kong, Salon Talk, March 2015)

BLOCH ARCHIVE

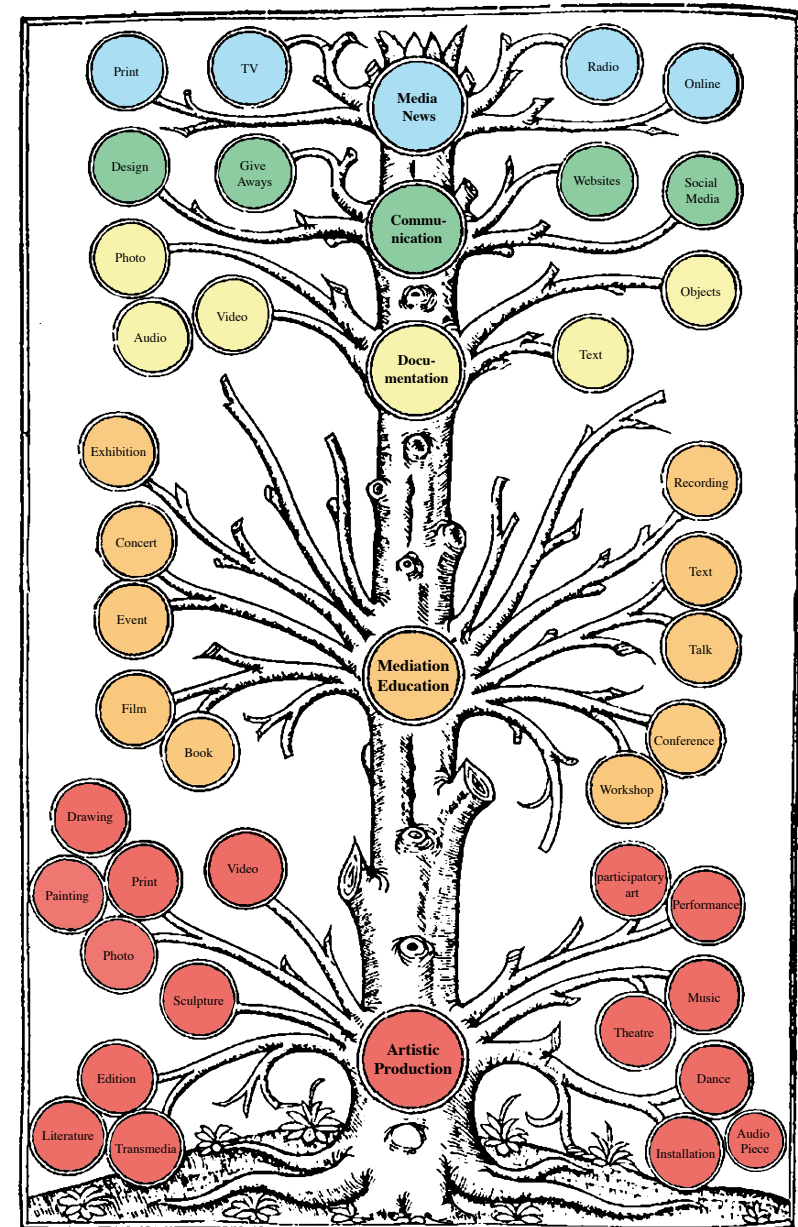
NORTH AMERICA

North Dakota / USA (Downtown Fargo Street Fair, Fargo, Napoleon, Nokota Horse Conservancy, Linton, Taylor Horsefest, Taylor, Fort Totten Days, Spirit Lake Indian Reservation, Geographical center of North America in Rugby, Turtle Mountain Indian Reservation and Bloch Party at Hjemkomst Center, Fargo/Moorhead, July 17 – Aug 3 2014)

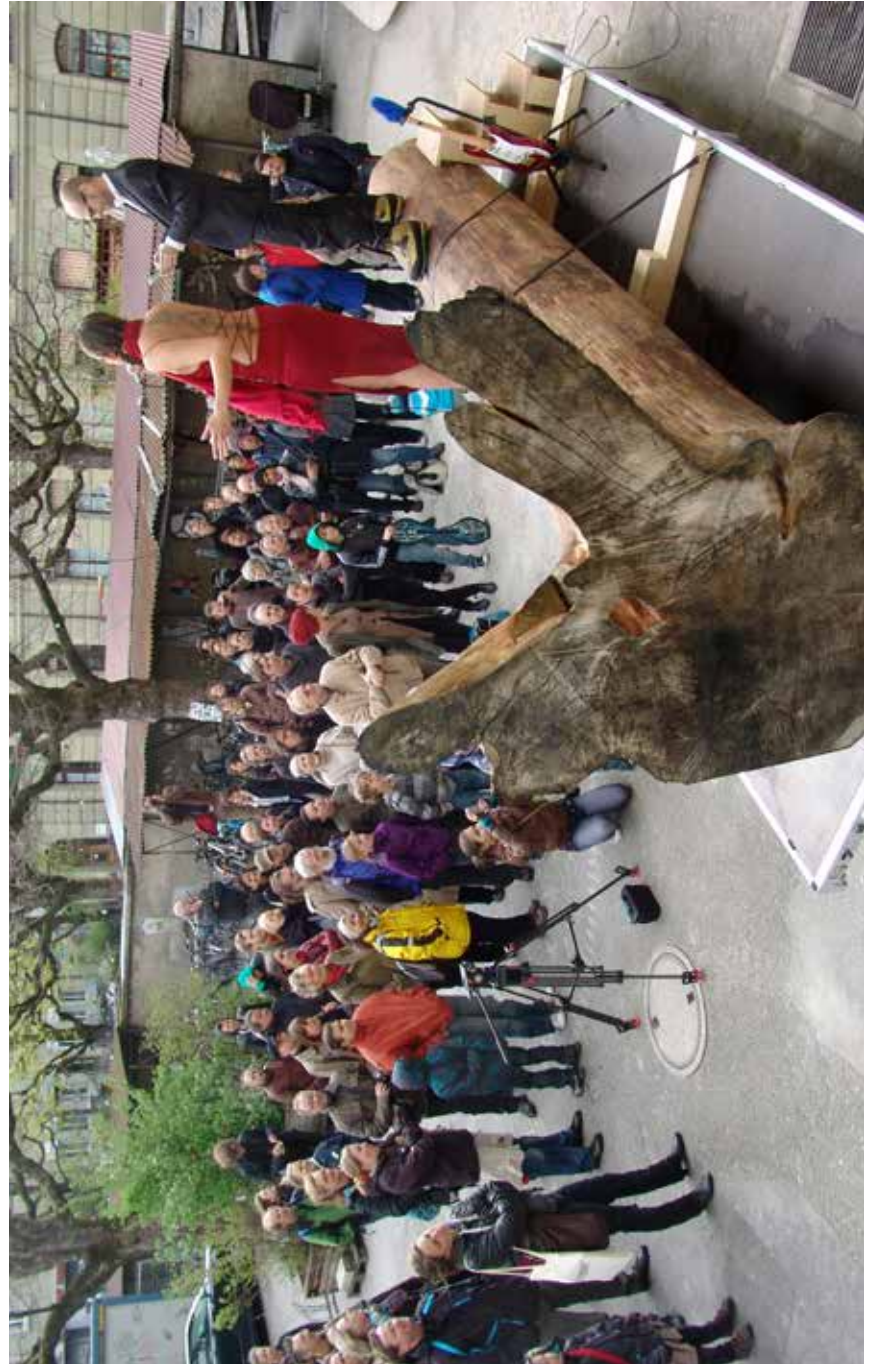
Moorhead (MN) / USA (Hjemkomst Center/Historical and Cultural Society, Jan – March 2015)

Cincinnati (OH) / USA (Carl Solway Gallery, September 2015)

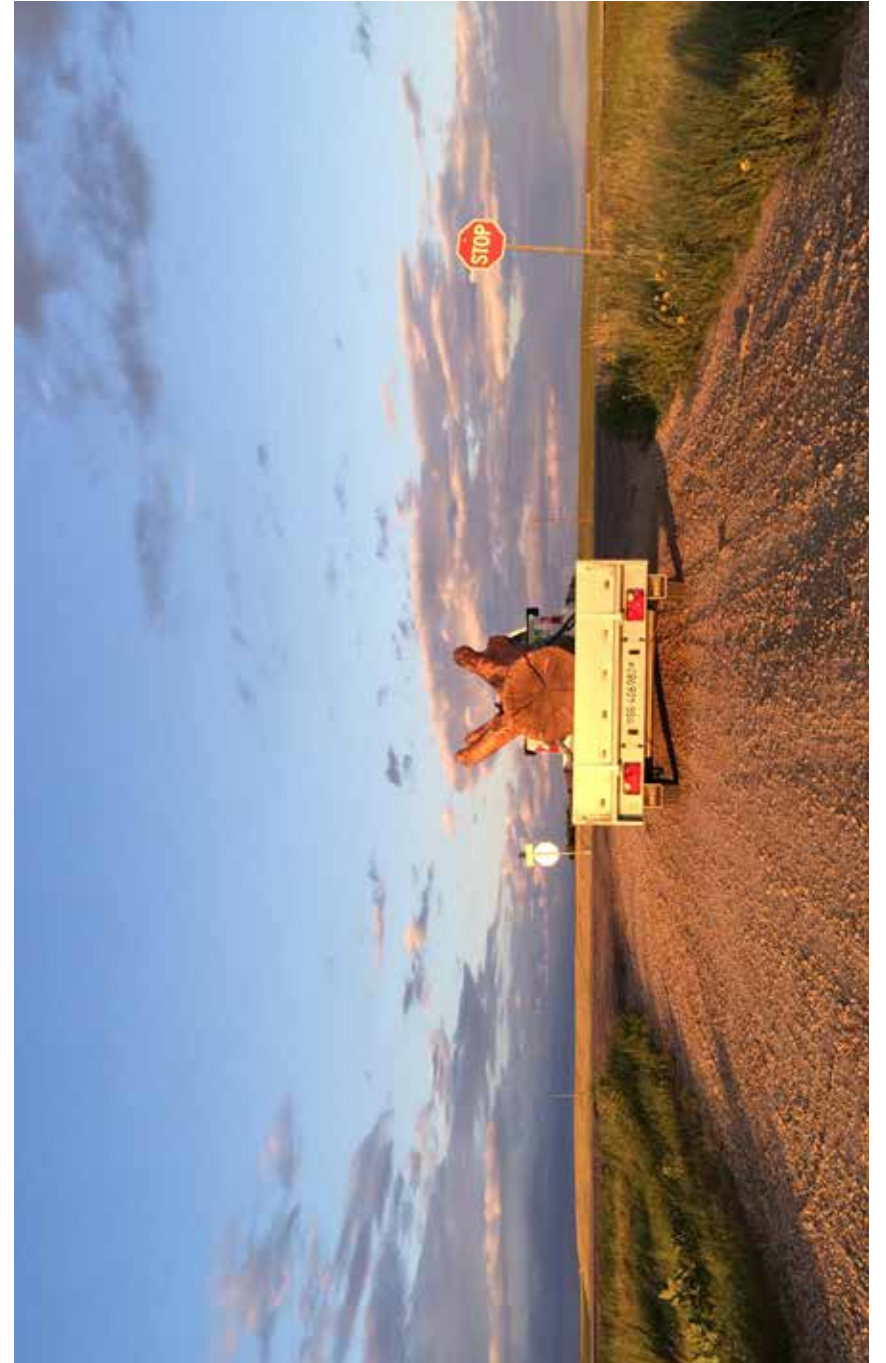
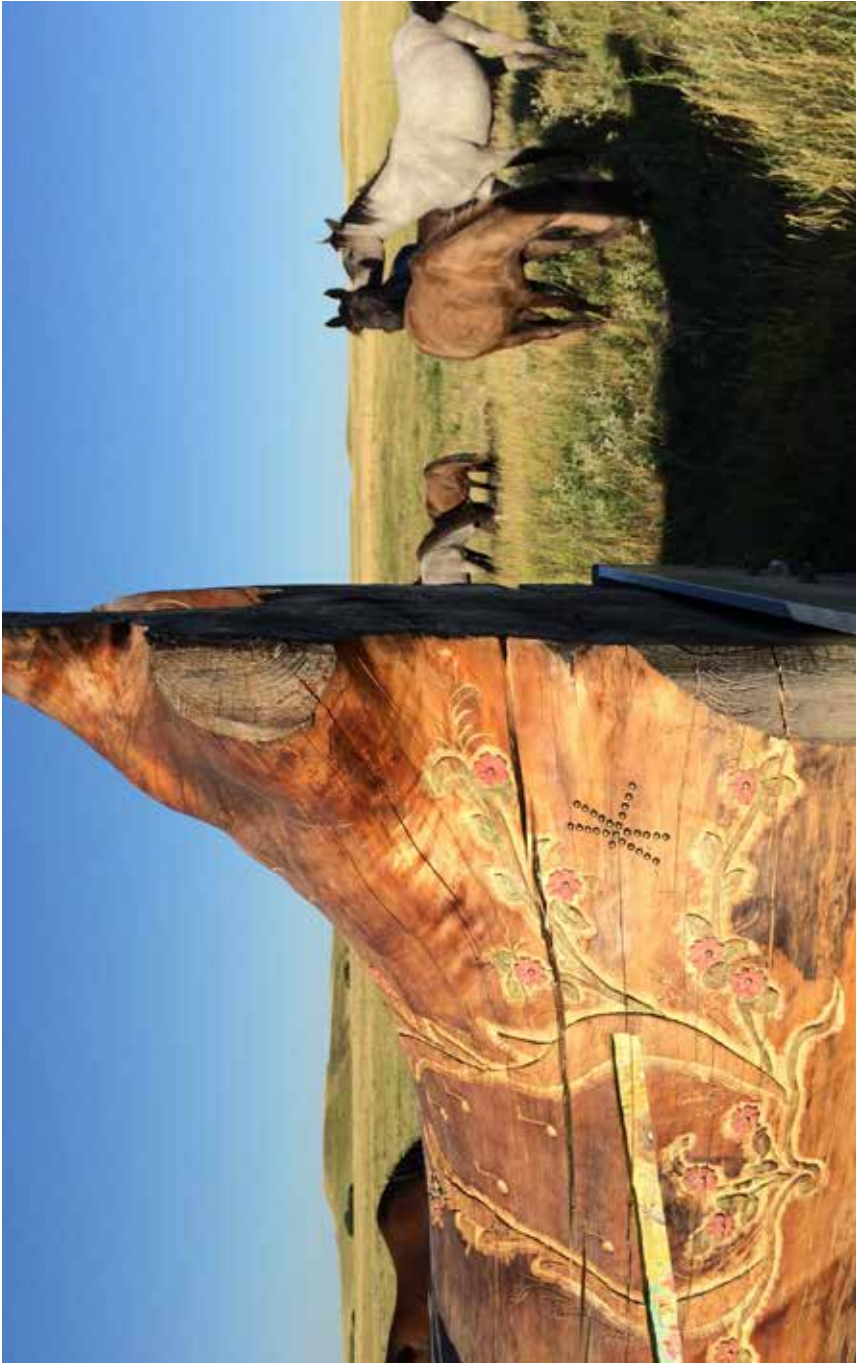
New York (NY) / USA (Silent Barn, Brooklyn; Onderdonk House, Queens; Knockdown Center, Queens, September 2015 – January 2016)

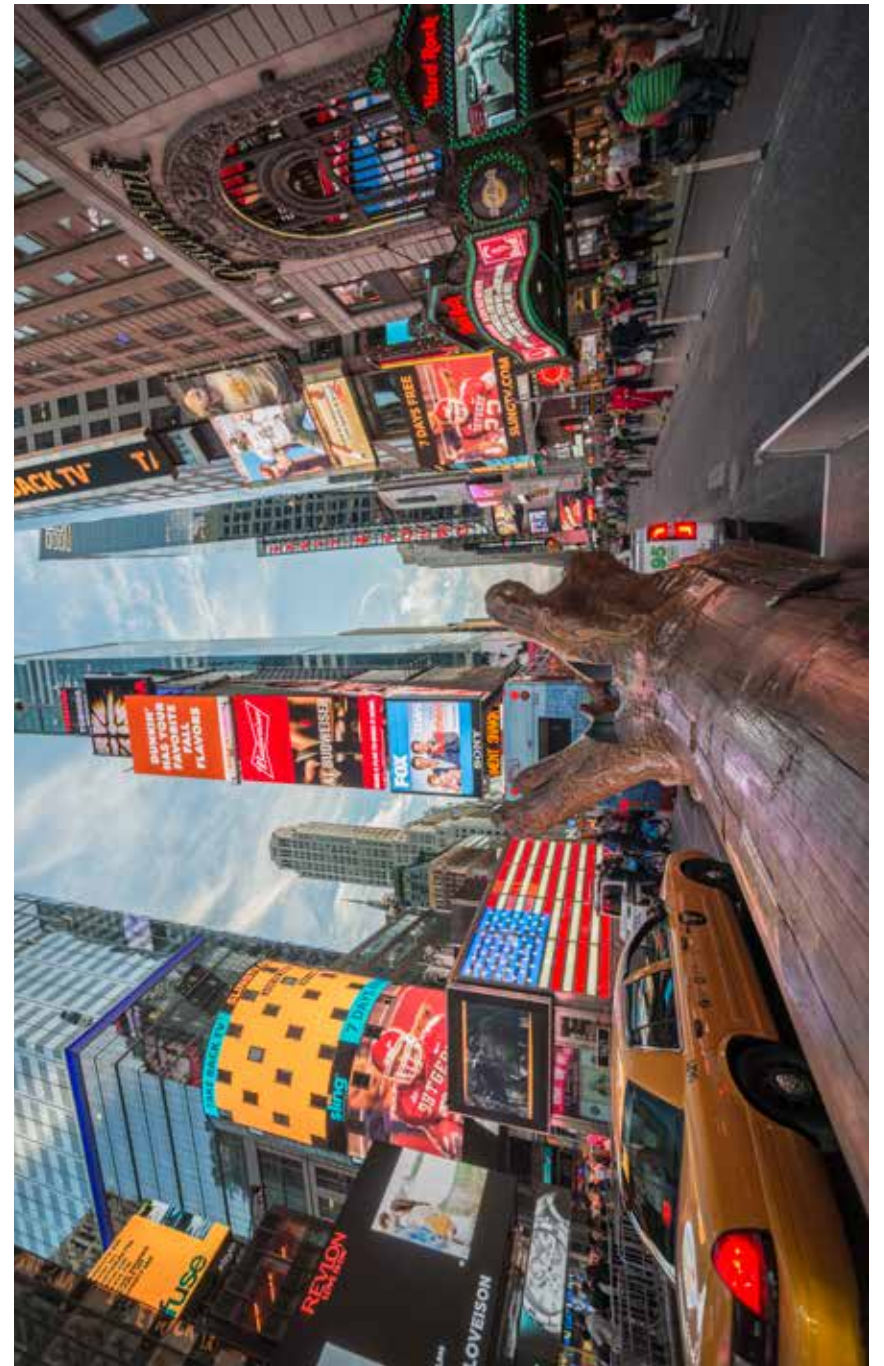


















BLOCH TOUR 2011 - 2020

EUROPE

- Basel, CH
- Bern, CH
- Geneva, CH
- St.Gallen, CH
- Teufen, CH
- Urnäsch, CH
- Zürich, CH
- Berlin, DE
- Karlsruhe, DE
- Heidelberg, DE
- Gliwice, PL
- Zagreb, HR

ASIA

- Hong Kong, HK
- Taipei, TW
- Shanghai, CN
- Singapore, SG

NORTH AMERICA

- Cincinnati (OH), US
- Fargo (ND), US
- Moorhead (MI), US
- New York (NY), US
- Lena, CA

AFRICA

- Cape Town, ZA
- Johannesburg, ZA

MIDDLE EAST

- Ramallah, PS
- East Jerusalem, PS
- Tel Aviv, IL

SOUTH AMERICA

- Medellin, CO
- Mompox, CO

AUSTRALIA

- Tasmania, AU

ANTARTICA



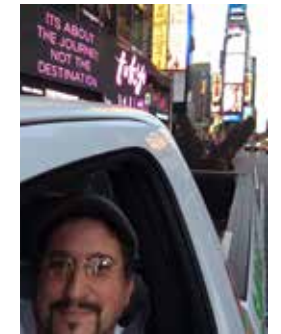


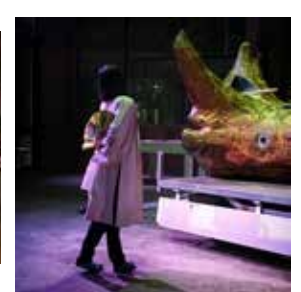
















Folk Art Painting, Berlin (2014)



Folk Art Painting, Shanghai (2014)



THE ARTISTS



Com&Com

The Swiss artist duo was launched by Marcus Gossolt (*1969) and Johannes M. Hedinger (*1971) in 1997. They live and work in Zurich, St. Gallen and London. Participation in eight biennial arts festivals (Venedig, Shanghai, Moscow, Singapore, Sharjah et al.) and solo exhibitions in Kunsthaus Zurich, Kunst-Werke Berlin and Knockdown Center New York; totally over 190 exhibitions and 25 short films. From Com&Com coins also the "Mocmoc" (2003-08), Gugusdada (since 2004) and the project "Point de Suisse" (2014/15). Currently, they travel around the world with the Appenzell trunk "Bloch" (since 2011).

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