

Visitor information

Reto Boller – here

27th October to 10th December 2023

Reto Boller (*1966 in Zurich, lives there) is one of the most inventive Swiss artists. He probes the boundaries between painting, architecture and object and goes beyond traditional expectations. His work has attracted international attention for many years. Immediately before the renovation of the Langmatt (2024–25), Reto Boller is showing three installation-based, site-specific interventions in historical spaces as part of a solo exhibition.

In the 18^{ième} room, all the pictures, furniture and objects have disappeared, the parquet flooring is covered with fleece and the curtains lie piled up on the floor. A huge cross made of red tape towers over the display case and the panelling, and instead of the historic chandelier, only a single light bulb is mounted. It gives the impression that the forthcoming renovation has already begun. The title of the work, «here», directs the focus to the place: not only does the temporary, artistic intervention take place here, the place also carries all the changes over time, retrospectively and in the future. The powerful gesture and the fulminant presence of the X challenge the architecture and interior design of the pretty, French 18th century style room with pink silk wallpaper and set a weighty counterpoint. The former boudoir-like atmosphere has vanished. The small fireplace is revealed to be a "fake", and the room appears much larger, higher and more sparse.

In the Green Salon, the chandelier set on the floor changes the lighting conditions. Suddenly, the golden picture frames begin to sparkle astonishingly, and the chandelier becomes surprisingly approachable. The title «Funzel», a colloquial term from early High German for a lamp that does not give much light, takes up the changed radiance in a humorous way. At the same time, the candelabra is present as never before: in a provisional transport frame on light blue hard foam, it is transformed into an accessible object and bathes the room in a fairytale light. Both the cross in the 18^{ème} Room and the transport frame in the Green Salon are aligned with the symmetry axes of Karl Moser's architecture and thus fit organically into the proportions of the rooms.

In the small corridor in front of the library, a picturesque setting refers to a former exit that has long since disappeared and is being restored as an emergency exit as part of the renovation. Here, too, pictures and furniture have already disappeared, and the small

chandelier has been replaced by a light bulb. The word «EXIT» appears in the cloudy, anthracite-coloured surface and labels the planned emergency exit. Except for the height, the dimensions and location of the painting correspond exactly to the new emergency exit. However, the permeable, airy surface opposes the current side and upper panelling. In terms of content, EXIT has a double bottom, especially in combination with the cloudy, misty surface, and refers to death.

Reto Boller's three multifaceted spatial and material explorations show very different artistic approaches in dealing with historical, listed building stock. Even if it does not appear so at first glance, all interventions are closely coordinated with the Cantonal Preservation of Historical Monuments. Despite all the restrictions, Reto Boller succeeds in creating surprising transformations that on the one hand completely change the character of the rooms, and on the other hand open up their sculptural and painterly potential. The artist will continue to follow the conversion process during the closure period and will be on site again and again to collect impressions and images. Another part of the artistic interventions will be on display in a cabinet exhibition for the reopening of the Langmatt in spring 2026. Thus the circle closes: in retrospect, not only the interventions are shown in context, but also the manifold changes of the Langmatt.

As part of the overall renovation of Langmatt, Reto Boller – alongside the artist duo Bigler/Weibel and Silvan Wegmann – was invited to participate in one of three process-based long-term art projects. The different perspectives, generations and artistic media accompany and document the structural changes during the two-year overall renovation. During this time, snapshots will repeatedly be visible on the website and in the museum's newsletters as well as on social media. The projects will culminate in three cabinet exhibitions for the reopening of the Langmatt in spring/summer 2026.

Markus Stegmann

LANGMATT

Museum Langmatt
Stiftung Langmatt Sidney und Jenny Brown
Römerstrasse 30
CH-5401 Baden
info@langmatt.ch
+41 (0)56 200 86 70
www.langmatt.ch