



## A Curatorial Experiment

How to think about and make a group exhibition

This is one of the questions that arose when Baithazar Lavay was invited in fail 2011 to conceive of an exhibition for the Manoir de Mortigny, a 17th-century building located in a little town at the foot of the Swiss Alps.

Hopax series—"hapax" meaning a word or a form that occurs only once in the recovers only once in the recorded corpus of a given language—is the literary extension of the exhibition Adventures, Arthections, and Ambushes, which was somehow also a hopax. Because Baithazer Lovay decided to create an exhibition in the form of a mental universe in which left and right cerebral cortexes could at last communicate with each other, this show is both highly personal and eminently universal. Each visitor and each reader can thus appropriate the works and the artifacts gethered here with their own feelings toward and apprehension of art, aesthetics, and images. The exhibition was conceived in a transversal and

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## Stroll

Program Hapax Series

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## Mental landscape

How can one think about and make a group exhibition today? This is one of the questions this publication could answer based on the experience of Balthazar Lovay, a Swiss artist and a co-founder of the independent art space Hard Hat in Geneva. Invited to organize an exhibition at Le Manoir de Martigny in the Swiss Alps, he responded by creating a kind of mental universe in which left and right cerebral cortexes could at last talk to each other. To achieve this, he brought together, in a transversal and non-authoritarian manner, 60 international and local artists, photographers, and press cartoonists, and juxtaposed contemporary artworks with medieval devotional relics and so-called "art brut." For example, Max Ernst's "Histoire naturelle" converses with carnival masks; New-York-based artists Guyton/Walker are hung next to a 14th-century polychrome Christ. As the curator writes: "The result creates confrontations or, more precisely, situations. These are not directive, but open and suggestive. Hence, on the surface, there is an exhibition that could be the image of my personal museum and, in an underlying way, a more general questioning about art. Most important for me was to make a non-hierarchal proposal, by taking the risk of flirting with this big load of nonsense."

As a literary extension of the exhibition "Adventure, Reflection, and Ambush," this book offers a photo-report of the successive sections ("Fantastic Paraphrenia," "Mental Landscape (Before Dying)," etc.) and a conversation between Balthazar Lovay and Swiss art critic and curator Daniel Baumann, co-curator of the Carnegie International 2013. The reader can drift through the book as the visitor drifted through the exhibition

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