



ARCADES DES ARTS

Press Release

21 January, 2020

Singular Talents **An exhibition of outstanding craftsmanship** **30 January – 25 March, 2020**

Jointly organised by the Michelangelo Foundation for Creativity and Craftsmanship and the Fondation de la Haute Horlogerie, Singular Talents presents 15 of the finest European craftsmen and women, each of whom holds a unique place in the world of artisanal excellence. It is also the inaugural exhibition of the Arcades des Arts, the newly opened gallery space at Pont de la Machine in Geneva.

What do the words "singular" and "talents" mean in our industrial society? A technique on the verge of extinction? An art mastered by many but used to produce one-of-a-kind objects? An individual engaged in an age-old, almost forgotten craft?

We can imagine, behind the word "talent", the years of learning and apprenticeship, of constant improvement and growing confidence through which an individual rises to the very top of their art. We seldom encounter these "singular talents" – people who have dedicated their life to their passion and who strive for perfection whatever their field of excellence.

The Industrial Revolution enabled mass production of identical objects, yet more than ever the concept of singularity has its place in modern life.

But who can claim this title of "singular talent"?

A Swiss master watchmaker who crafts both his timepieces and his tools from A to Z in his workshop?

An English artisan who, with his team, handmakes globes in an age of Google Maps?

A Swiss enamel artist who perpetuates the centuries-old tradition of Grand Feu enamel, with watch dials as her canvas?

A French plumassier who transforms feathers, that most delicate and fragile material, into accessories and works of art?

Visitors will step inside the world of 15 European artisans, each of whom practices a rare or endangered craft, through a series of 15 filmed portraits and an immersive scenography.

Swiss filmmaker Thibault Valloton has followed these artisans into their workshops and studios. He has filmed the places that inspire them, their meticulous gestures, the tools and materials they use to create each piece. He has drawn attention to the techniques they implement, but also the heart and the passion that guide the hand. He takes us behind the scenes of the wonderful, the unexpected, the singular to reveal the hidden beauty of "making".

The artisans featured in Singular Talents may not be the only ones to work in their particular field, but their expertise, their personalities and their creations are unique. Some use techniques or materials that are inherently associated with a particular territory. Others are the last guardians of a tradition that was once widespread throughout their region. Others still are young talents breathing new life into a profession which, with no-one to take up the mantle, almost disappeared.

This series of films has been selected for the 12th International Film Festival for Fine Crafts (FIFMA) and will be screened as part of the 30 films in competition, 24-26 April, 2020, in Montreuil, France.

Visitors to the exhibition can also discover a selection of objects created by these same craftsmen and women.

This inaugural exhibition already confirms the Arcades des Arts in its ambition to become a focal point for craftsmanship and watchmaking culture in Geneva.

The fifteen unique stories that make up Singular Talents are:

Peter Bellerby, Bellerby & Co, globemaker, United Kingdom
Eric Charles-Donatien, plumassier, France
Bastien Chevalier, cabinetmaker, Switzerland
Philippe Dufour, master watchmaker, Switzerland
François Junod, automaton-maker, Switzerland
Izabela Kovalevskaja, stained glass artist, Lithuania
Daniel López-Obrero, leather engraver, Spain
Richard Maier, art engraver, Germany
Annie MacDonald, Carloway Mill, weaver, United Kingdom
Johanna Nestor, ceramic stove-maker, Sweden
Anita Porchet, watch dial enameller, Switzerland
Isabelle Villa, miniature painter, Switzerland
Leonardo Scarpelli, hard-stone mosaic artist, Italy
Ingunn Undrum & Sarah Sjøgreen, ropemakers, Norway
Konstantinos Vogiatzakis, saddlemaker, Greece

Information and photos at www.arcadesdesarts.com

Singular Talents

Arcades des Arts, Pont de la Machine, Geneva.

30 January - 25 March, 2020

Tuesday - Saturday, 11am - 7pm

Free admission

Arcades des Arts

1, Pont de la Machine
1204 - Geneva- Switzerland

Press Enquiries

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Note to editors: In 2019 the **Fondation de la Haute Horlogerie** and the **Michelangelo Foundation** created, in the centre of Geneva, an international showcase for watchmaking and the métiers d'art: **Arcades des Arts**. Open to the public, this exhibition space presents the techniques and expertise of watchmaking and the métiers d'art to perpetuate these skills and bring them to the attention of new generations. The exhibition calendar is published at www.arcadesdesarts.com

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FOR CREATIVITY
AND CRAFTSMANSHIP