

Zurich, 10 March 2025

Press Release

**NEOGEO – Décalages féminins. Claudia Comte, Athene Galiciadis, Andrea Heller**  
**2 April – 6 July 2025**

Opening: Tuesday, 1 April 2025, 6 p.m.

**Grids, rules, repeats – in Western art in the mid-1980s there was renewed interest in basic, often monochrome geometric forms. In 1986 the renowned Swiss art historian Markus Bröderlin wrote an essay for the magazine *Kunstforum International* in which he dubbed this trend ‘New Geometry’ – thereby coining a new art-historical term. In West Switzerland this movement made an impact that is still felt today. This is illustrated in prints by three contemporary women artists, who all have connections to that region. All three are already represented in the Graphische Sammlung ETH Zürich and have together created a room-sized installation of filigree works on paper made specifically for this exhibition.**

In Switzerland the punchy NEOGEO label is primarily associated with names like John M. Armleder, Francis Baudevin, Stéphane Dafflon, Philippe Decrauzat and Olivier Mosset. Mosset's return to geometric forms in 1985 soon saw him become one of the leading exponents of New Geometry. Shortened to ‘Néo-Géo’ in French-speaking Switzerland, it combined trash with references to classical modernism – thereby giving expression to a view of life that echoed the pioneering spirit of the 1960s and 70s and ultimately founded a still vibrant tradition in that region.

But now the time has come for a younger, exclusively female take on NEOGEO. The present exhibition, devised in consultation with the three participating artists, highlights formal affinities and the overarching influence of this movement in the work of **Claudia Comte, Athene Galiciadis and Andrea Heller**. All three have meaningful ties to West Switzerland: Comte and Galiciadis studied together at the École cantonale d'art de Lausanne (ECAL), and although Heller trained elsewhere, her artistic activities and exhibitions are anchored in that region. The different approaches of these three artists reveal intriguing shifts – *décalages* – in the ongoing adaptation of a geometric pictorial language, its role and manifestations.

Basic forms, repeated and sequenced, predominate in the work of all three. Accordingly their individual positions are not demarcated in the present exhibition: instead they ‘interlock’ as it were, with the grid as such coming into its own as a curatorial concept. Works by the three artists that have already found a home in the Graphische Sammlung are shown alongside existing works from their own collections. Drawings and prints made specifically for this exhibition are also on display.

In addition, in close collaboration with **Edition VFO (Verein für Originalgraphik)**, each of the artists has produced a set of prints in connection with the present exhibition – in techniques of their own choosing. These editions will be unveiled on **15 May 2025** at the next VFO opening, which will also feature new editions by Isabelle Cornaro, Anaïs Defago and Sylvie Fleury. All these new prints will be presented and contextualised in a specially devised, bespoke publication.

**Claudia Comte** (\*1983), born in the canton of Vaud, studied in Lausanne and is now based in Basel. Her work comprises site-specific installations as well as painting and sculpture and is always informed by her longstanding interest in the history and memory of biomorphic forms. At the core of Comte's installations are monumental wall paintings and serial sculptures inspired by an organic morphology. These are playfully arranged in patterns – as waves, cacti, rock strata – creating environments in which individual works relate to each other through methodical, visual rhythms. Comte's dynamic, shape-shifting objects reflect her meticulous observation of the relationship between the human hand and certain technologies.

**Athene Galiciadis** (\*1978), who commenced her studies in Zurich and graduated in Lausanne, lives and works in Zurich. Her practice ranges from sculpture, painting and works on paper to installations that always enter into dialogue with the space around them. Galiciadis's works are notable for their distinctive colour schemes and repertoire of forms, many of which are geometric or organic in appearance, reminiscent of Concrete Art and its Constructivist precursors. She assembles her compositions from a variety of materials, developing a unique formal language that calls to mind tradition, crafts and design. Patterns, models, theories, science and spirituality all provide themes that Galiciadis uses as tools in her artistic work.

**Andrea Heller** (\*1975) studied in Hamburg and Zurich. After graduating she spent a number of years in Paris. She now lives and works in Biel (canton of Bern). Heller uses various techniques, with ink drawings and watercolours forming the basis of her creative work. Her compositions typically deploy some recognisable pictorial structures: certain gestures recur and larger forms are made up of smaller forms or obey a set of rules defined by the artist. The motifs seen in her completed works only emerge during the work process. It seems that there is always a narrative meta-level embedded in these works' organic forms and geometric structures. The evolution of these works is thus both organic and architectural, creating an underlying tension between intentional construction and natural growth.

## Useful Information

Curator	Alexandra Barcal, Keeper of 20th- and 21st-century Art, Graphische Sammlung ETH Zürich
Publication	The launch for the publication – devised by the renowned Zurich-based graphic designer Megi Zumstein – is on <b>13 June 2025</b> during Zurich Art Weekend.
Events	A wide-ranging programme of accompanying events will run during the exhibition. For more information see <a href="https://gs.ethz.ch/agenda/">https://gs.ethz.ch/agenda/</a>
Opening times	Daily, 10 a.m.–5 p.m. Closed: 18–21.4.2025 (Easter); after midday on 28.4.2025 (Sechseläuten); 1.5.2025 (Labour Day); 29.5.2025 (Ascension Day); 7–9.6.2025 (Whitsuntide)
Admission	Free
Press and Publicity	Julia Burckhardt, Graphische Sammlung ETH Zürich, Tel +41 44 632 40 46; <a href="mailto:presse@gs.ethz.ch">presse@gs.ethz.ch</a>
Website	<a href="http://www.gs.ethz.ch">www.gs.ethz.ch</a>