



Man Ray (Emmanuel Radnitzky), *Noire et blanche*, 1926 (1980), photograph, new print. Private Collection Gio' Marconi, Milan.

Press release 11 April 2024

MASKS. Multiple Identities from Antiquity to Contemporary Art

Serlachius | 11 May–15 September 2024

The exhibition *MASKS. Multiple Identities from Antiquity to Contemporary Art* explores the meanings of mask wearing as part of human history. The exhibition, curated by the Italian art historian Lorella Scacco, opens at Serlachius on 11 May 2024.

Since prehistoric times, humans have felt the need to hide their identity temporarily, or to change it completely. The mask is both a part of the person and of the social environment, it is an interface that simultaneously distances and connects our relationship with others.

The cultural-historical meanings of masquerade have varied over time in different parts of the world, but it is still popular today, as one's own identity is constantly being shaped on digital platforms, for example. The corona virus pandemic, on the other hand, reminded people that masks are also used for protection.

Masks can evoke fear and safety, joy and tragedy, independence and subordination, and the ambivalent dialogue between me and the other in our human existence. The exhibition investigates the role of the mask in meaning-making, but for the many extensions of such a pursuit, it focuses on three main aspects: identity, disguise, and protection.

SERLACHIUS



Sulaw monkey mask used in rituals associated with male initiation societies, Bamana People, Mali, 20th century, wood. Bassani Collection, Museum of Cultures, Milan.

Bark mask, Mansi people Siberia, Russia, before 1906, birch bark, birch, reindeer fur. Antell Collection, National Museum of Finland.

Delphine Diallo, *Mask*, 2022, Fuji Crystal Archive mat sur aluminium / dibond. Courtesy of the Artist & Fisheye Gallery.

The exhibition examines the subject of masks from antiquity to contemporary art. It includes great names in art history, established and mid-career international artists, a selection of masks from various geographical areas, and artifacts from the Greco-Roman world. The exhibition has borrowed works not only from art museums but also from cultural history collections.

The artists participating at the MASKS exhibition

Elina Brotherus, Claude Cahun, Birger Carlstedt, Delphine Diallo, Albert Edelfelt, Saara Ekström, Daniel Frasnay, Paul Gauguin, Akseli Gallen-Kallela, Giovanni Gastel, George Hoyningen-Huene, Laika, Wifredo Lam, Marita Liulia, Sami Lukkarinen, Luigi Ontani, Pablo Picasso, Pierre-Louis Pierson, Tuulikki Pietilä, Man Ray, Gino Severini, Cindy Sherman, Ellen Thesleff, Patrick Tosani, Filippos Tsitsopoulos, Phil van Duynen, Gillian Wearing, Ai Weiwei and Agata Wieczorek.

The exhibition features two world première artworks: *Hypnos* by Saara Ekström and *The Player* by Marita Liulia.

The exhibition includes masks from Africa, Asia, Oceania, and South America borrowed from the MUDEC – Museum of the Cultures in Milan; Greco-Roman relics and sculptures from the Museo Nazionale Romano in Rome; Nordic masks from the Finnish National Museum in Helsinki.

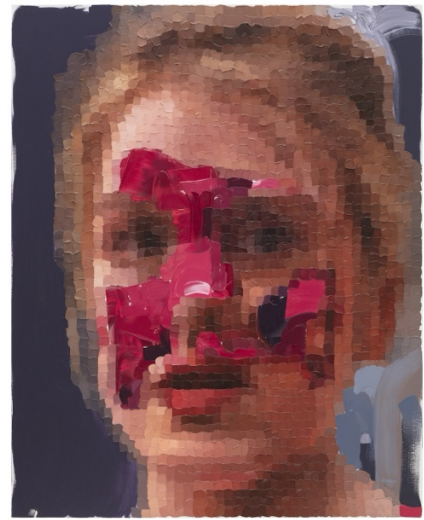
This exhibition would not have been possible without the collaboration of other museums and private art collections that have lent their artworks, such as Ateneum – The Finnish National Gallery in Helsinki; the Galleria d'Arte Moderna of Milan; Museo MA*GA of Gallarate (VA); Fondazione Marconi, Milan; Collezione Ettore Molinaro, Milan; Archivio Severini Franchina, Rome. The exhibition has been supported by the Italian Cultural Institute of Helsinki.

Catalogue and the additional program

To accompany the exhibition, a catalogue in two languages (English, Finnish) has been published by Parvs Publishing Ltd., Helsinki. It collects articles by the scholars Tomi Moisio, Carolina Orsini and Lorella Scacco.

The performance related to the exhibition by Filippos Tsitsopoulos, titled *In Search of a Miracle*, will be performed at Serlachius on July 13 at 3 pm.

SERLACHIUS



Akseli Gallen-Kallela, *In a Café in Paris*, 1886, oil on wood. Gösta Serlachius Fine Arts Foundation. Photo: Hannu Miettinen.
Pier-Louis Pierson, *Scherzo di Follia* (Countess of Castiglione), 1863 (1930), gelatin silver print. Collezione Ettore Molinaro, Milan.
Sami Lukkarinen, *Artificial XII*, 2020, oil on aluminium. Courtesy of the Artist.

The curator of the exhibition

Lorella Scacco, Ph.D., is an art historian, curator, and journalist. She is Professor of Phenomenology of Contemporary Arts at the Brera Academy of Fine Arts in Milan. Since 1999 she has been collaborating with Italian and Nordic institutions, museums, and artists.

Her writings have been published extensively in exhibition catalogues, peer reviewed journals and edited volumes. She has authored three monographs on the intertwining of visual art and philosophy. Since 1999 she has curated exhibitions of contemporary art in museums and private art spaces. As journalist, she contributes to specialized art magazines.

For further information and image requests, please contact:

Susanna Yläjärvi, Information Officer, tel. +358 50 560 0156, susanna.ylajarvi@serlachius.fi

Serlachius is open:

in the winter season, 1 September–31 May, from Tuesday to Sunday, 11 am–6 pm
in the summer season, 1 June–31 August, every day 10 am–6 pm

Visiting addresses:

Serlachius Manor, Joenniementie 47, Mänttä, Finland
Serlachius Headquartes, R. Erik Serlachiuksen katu 2, Mänttä, Finland

Serlachius in the social media: [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#)