

## Annelies Štrba & Bernhard Schobinger *Photographs and jewels*

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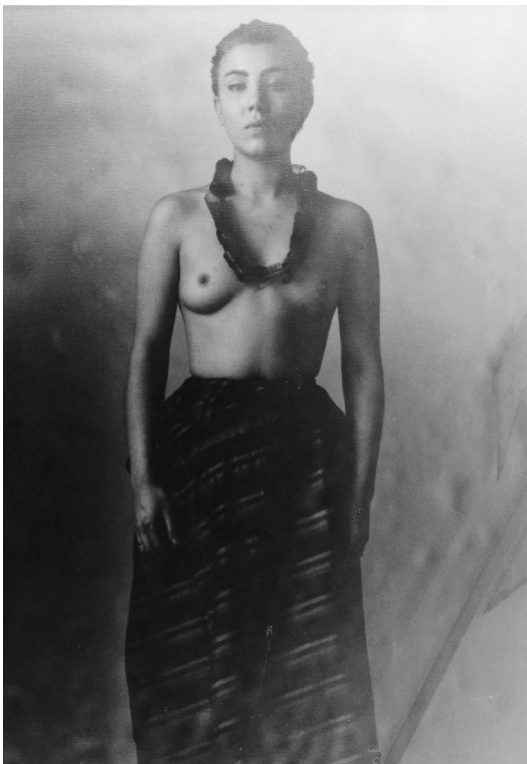
Joint opening AVV - May 20, 4pm - 9pm

Opening doors May 22, 11am - 5pm

Gowen Contemporary is thrilled to announce the first exhibition of legendary artist couple Annelies Štrba and Bernhard Schobinger. In the late 1970s, the couple collaborated on a joint project to present Bernhard Schobinger's jewelry on the body through the use of powerful photographs. In the 1980s, Štrba created a series of photographs of their daughters Sonja and Linda wearing Schobinger's jewelry. In a misty, intimate and languid atmosphere, these young women wear these jewels with grandeur. A book reproducing these photographs will appear in 1988 (Devon Karbon Perm, Grassi Museum), an important step for the couple of artists. Although the portraits were created by Štrba, they cannot be separated from Schobinger's work.

This exhibition brings together a few dozen pieces by the two artists. Starting from their first collaboration, the show follows the various stages of the individual work of Štrba and Schobinger, offering a brief overview of their respective long and rich careers as artists. The magic of Annelies Štrba's photographs and Bernhard Schobinger's jewelry transforms found images and materials into emblematic symbols and objects, thus linking everyday life to eternity.

### Annelies Štrba



*Sonja mit Flaschenhalskette*, 1988-1996  
Pigment print on canvas  
ca 148 x 109 cm

Photographer since the age of 15, Annelies Štrba finds the material with which she will build her visual language in the domestic universe. Her three children, Sonja, Linda and Samuel, photographed in their sleep or in moments of everyday life, become the protagonists of a universe with a frozen and suspended atmosphere, between real subjects and archetypes.

Starting in the 1980s Annelies Štrba began experimenting with analog photography on canvas, with her later photographic works visually coming closer and closer to painting. In the 2000s, she regularly prints her photos on canvas. She said at the time: *if I knew how to paint, this is how I would do it*. Most recently Štrba has also started to paint some of her photos on canvas.

The subjects of Štrba's works include landscapes, sometimes animated by women with long hair or children in perfect harmony with nature, Madonnas, flowers. She still uses members of her family, including her grandchildren, as models for her characters. Akin to lyrical or esoteric visions, her vibrant, unstable, timeless and mysterious images, in saturated or overexposed colors, offer magical views where the outer and inner world converge.

Annelies Štrba (Zug, 1947) was awarded with the prestigious Willy Reber Kunstpreis award in 2020. Štrba's work has been exhibited and is part of the permanent collection of many major Swiss and international museums such as Tate Liverpool; Kunsthalle, Hamburg; Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris; Kunstmuseum, Berne; Fotomuseum, Winterthur, Musée de l'Élysée, Lausanne. Gowen Contemporary has shown Štrba's work in 2020.

## Bernhard Schobinger

Anti-conformist, Schobinger's work defies aesthetic standards and rules, constantly in search of a new form of expression that pushes the limits of jewelry. The artist's creations combine and experiment with the most diverse techniques and materials, while his reflection is inspired as much by popular subculture, craftsmanship or everyday life, as well as by philosophy or history of art.

In 1968, Schobinger opened his own jewelry workshop and contemporary art gallery in Richterswil, near Zurich.

Concrete art and constructivism inspired his first jewels while over the years his formal and conceptual explorations navigate between the tradition of Dada, Fluxus, the Punk or Japanese culture, among others. Since the beginnings, a radical way of thinking, provocative and anti-authoritarian, characterized his work and experimentation will never stop to accompany his work. Whether through the use of readymades and working irrationally, or the creation of jewelry based on conceptual theories, Schobinger was able to develop a coherent aesthetic. Sometimes he combines the brutality of rust, debris, shards, fragments, nails, staples and other sharp and aggressive shapes, with the nobility of silver, gold, gemstones and platinum. The beauty and mystery of religious objects can coexist with the cruelty of fragments of common objects, leaving room for humor and irony. In 1978 he experimented casting with cobalt, magnetic metals and metals with different melting points, centrifuged in the same mold. From 2009, he made jewelry from forged meteorite and swamp iron ore and worked with tamahagane, a high-quality steel used in Japan for making knives and swords.



*Balance Ring, 2018*  
Agat, malachit and gold-plated silver ball



*Rotierendes Quadrat, 2020*  
Brass with azurite pigment

Bernhard Schobinger (Zurich, 1946) was awarded the Françoise van der Bosch Prize (1998). His work has been the subject of numerous publications and is represented in major public collections, including the V&A Museum of London; Museum of Fine Arts of Boston; Museum of Fine Arts of Houston; LACM of Los Angeles; Philadelphia Museum of Art de Philadelphie; Rotasa Collection Trust of California; National Museum of Australia of Canberra and the National Gallery of Victoria of Melbourne; Stedelijk Museum - Amsterdam; Musée des Arts Décoratifs; Palais du Louvre - Paris; MUDAC - Lausanne ; Museum Bellerive - Zurich ; Kunsthaus Zug ; Schweizerisches National Museum - Zurich ; Museum of Applied Arts, Köln.