



## Recycled extractions: From bin to pin

Over two billion tonnes of waste are produced worldwide every year and the number is constantly growing. The disposal of packaging, containers and organic waste is part of everyday life in many Western households, even though the sustainable use of resources and, above all, a reduction in our own waste production is a difficult endeavour for private individuals and companies. Although recycling has been practised since ancient times, it was only with the advent of the environmental movement in the 1970s that voluntary waste separation became established in our part of the world, initially mainly for waste paper and waste glass. In the meantime, entire industries and technology companies are involved in disposing of our society's waste and recycling it correctly.

In order to convert waste into valuable materials, the company Mr. Green, with its headquarters at Predigerplatz in the centre of Zurich's old town, makes an important contribution to the circular economy with the help of a clever recycling service. For over 10 years, Mr Green has been committed to the collection of recyclable materials and their recycling in various Swiss cities. The Zurich-based art education and curatorial trio Three Janes, founded at the end of 2023 and consisting of Valentina Frutig, Frédérique Hutter and Bettina Meier-Bickel, was invited by Mr Green to curate an exhibition on the reuse of materials at their premises.

In everyday life, waste has negative connotations, as it refers to materials and objects that are dirty, used up or superfluous, that stink over time and no longer fulfil an immediate purpose. It is not only since art historian Monika Wagner's detailed encyclopaedia on the materials of modern art "von Abfall bis Zinn" or the ideas of "upcycling" that a movement has established itself within art that transforms waste or disused objects into valuable materials and thus creates something new. Waste and art are only two extremes at first glance, as the curator Paolo Bianchi put it in terms of the "sublime" and the "disgusting". The classical materials of art such as bronze, silver, gold and marble as guarantors of immortality were rejected in 20th century art, at the latest since Arte Povera and the work of Joseph Beuys. The social circumstances of artists also meant that used, "cheap" materials found their way into the studios, not least because art as an investigation of process and context thus experienced an important expansion and greater social relevance. The boundaries between art and non-art, "low" and "high", were shifted and explored anew. The appeal of flawed, wasted or used material continues to fascinate artists to this day.

The exhibition at Mr. Green brings together artists who deal with a wide range of recyclable materials in various media, whether in formal terms as work material or as a conceptual starting point for questions about the environment, the circular economy or the generation of values through contextualisation. Works already produced and located in Switzerland are intended to integrate the sustainability aspect into the exhibition on a further content-related level.

The artists, mainly from Switzerland, will be presented on four floors and in the outdoor space in Mr Green's inner courtyard. Various events on the subject of waste and recycling are planned for the duration of the exhibition. This exhibition is the first presentation by the art education and curatorial collective Three Janes and marks the beginning of an ongoing collaboration between the trio.

With Michael Bodenmann, Florian Bühler, Gina Fischli, Patrick Graf, Fabienne Hess, Nici Jost, Lutz & Guggisberg, David Renggli, Niklaus Rüegg, DS Son and Martina von Meyenburg.

Opening Friday 17 May, 6 pm to 9 pm.

Exhibition: 17 May to 27 June 2024, Thursdays & Fridays from 2 to 7 pm and Saturdays from 11 am to 5 pm.

