

# From Wasteland to Jungle

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## Marie Aymon: (R)evolution

Changing one's course, making a fresh start, beginning over again ... here are two accounts dealing with a particular moment of life: the end of one cycle and the start of another. In other terms, the need to relinquish one familiar facet of oneself in order to bring out another facet in the process of developing. Time lags, doubts, aspirations and frailties ... the process is fraught with difficulties. Nonetheless, driven by some innermost necessity, the two artists providing these accounts share a truly authentic approach and an underlying awareness that every exercise of an activity, artistic or other, is but a means...

Jean Nazelle (1929), an engraver, devoted himself to the professional practice of this art but only late in life, following upon a full scientific career.

Were I anything like the person you're trying to make me sound like, which I am not, some fantastic fellow, I would have come to a decision at the age of 55 and would have said H. it's all over, medicine is all over, and H. would have become

Nazelle! That would have been revolutionary, but that's not how things happened. Taking the consequences of his acts, H. carried through to the end, and, at the age of 65, he said bye-bye, and the others said bye-bye to him, and that is when he threw his books into the fire and began engraving.

Pierre-Yves Gabioud (1953), a painter, has returned to his mountain village after spending several vitally significant years living in an artistic community based on a model conceptualized by Otto Muehi, an artist who belonged to the Viennese Action Painting movement as of the '60s.

There were several attempts at making a fresh start. But there was one attempt in particular during which he left the group and decided to really learn painting.

One phase essential to any start: having the courage to paint as badly as one paints.

## Edith Krebs: From Wasteland to Jungle

Despite the ever present "white cube" ideology, art and culture – even when taking place within closed-off spaces – can have a thoroughly political impact. This reality-transforming aspect of art comes across particularly blatantly in urban development. That is to say, artists are attracted to those city parts that have gone downhill and where, for this very reason, rents are lower.

But once such a part of town becomes known as the "artists quarter," the rents soar back up, attracting a community of tenants who are well-to-do. Hard put to meet the new rental levels, the artists move on to another neighborhood, and the same process – also termed gentrification – can start all over again. Zurich-West represents just such a case in point.

## Hans Danuser: Erosion\Sedimentation

"amanfang" (in the beginning) was the title Hans Danuser of Chur (b.1953) chose to give the show he set up at the Zurich Helmhaus in 1998. Moreover, beginning and end – or Life and Death – are also the existential themes with which the artist tends to deal repeatedly in his own photographic work. In his most recent photo series, under the titles "Erosion" and

"Sedimentation" – Nature's most basic processes – Danuser presents the earth's surface as it may have appeared originally, that is before the emergence of any life. The photos could just as well be taken to represent the earth on the far side of all life, for instance in the aftermath of an atomic cataclysm.