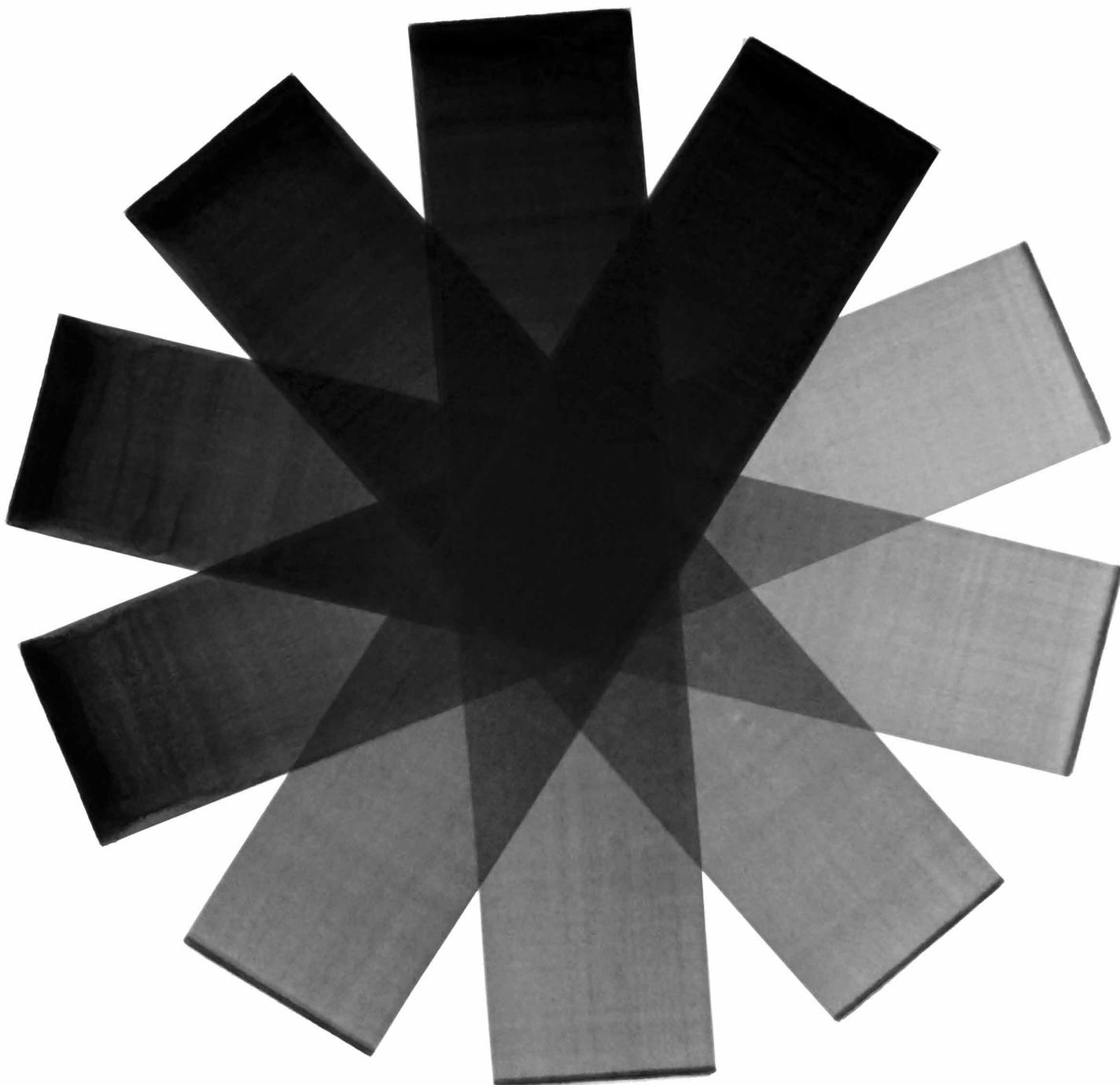


**PRESS RELEASE**

Geneva, 14 January 2021



**PRIX DE LA SOCIÉTÉ DES ARTS DE GENÈVE**  
2021 / Visual Arts

**SOCIÉTÉ DES ARTS**  
 **DE GENÈVE**

## The Prix de la Société des Arts de Genève / Visual Arts / 7th edition 2021 has been awarded to Fabrice Gygi.

Assembled last November, the jury for the Prix de la Société des Arts de Genève is happy to announce that it has awarded the 2021 prize to the Geneva artist Fabrice Gygi.



Fabrice Gygi, *Untitled* [self-portrait], 2015  
Marble sculpture  
90 x 132 x 70 cm  
Collection of the Fonds d'art contemporain de la Ville Genève (FMAC)



# Fabrice Gygi

Fabrice Gygi is a major figure among Swiss artists of his generation. Throughout the course of his nomadic artistic journey, his experiments with different media have led to a constant renewal of his approach. For more than thirty years, he has been exploring the ambivalence of the artefacts he produces, which are neither entirely functional objects nor exclusively artworks. This orchestrated ambiguity has allowed him to emancipate himself from the clutches of a normative society dutifully compliant with the logics of power.

Trained at the Centre genevois de gravure contemporaine (today, the Centre d'édition contemporaine), the Geneva School of Decorative Arts and the Geneva Fine Arts School, Fabrice Gygi first became known in the late 1980s for his prints and the performances in which he explored the limits of his own body. Initially concerned with the sphere of the personal, gradually his horizons extended to embrace society as a whole. He seeks to expose the authoritarian mechanisms – both trivial and perverse – embedded in our daily environment. Interrogating the real order of things, since the 1990s, he began producing structural sculptures made of tarpaulin, steel, wood and tubes whose subtext speaks of violence, repression and menace. His minimalist formal vocabulary draws on urban infrastructures and nomadic everyday objects only to subvert their original functions and create a contentious ambivalence, encouraging us to think about civil obedience and question the Western ideal of freedom.

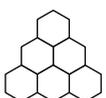
Since 2010, Fabrice Gygi has focused on pure, abstract lines. He has made jewellery, microarchitectures whose simple geometric shapes are transformed into sculptures and low reliefs, often made of Corten steel. Pursuing this exploration of geometric abstraction, in 2018 he began making large-format watercolours using a restricted chromatic palette. Once again, we note the tense relationship between his medium and his vigorous and controlled handling of it, and the use of serial motifs.

Fabrice Gygi was born in Geneva in 1965; he lives and works in Geneva and Martigny. Since 2004, he has been teaching at the Geneva School of Art and Design (HEAD); he also taught at the Lausanne School of Art and Design (ECAL) from 1997 to 2005. He is a founding member of Forde (1994-), the contemporary art space of the Usine in Geneva, and Darse (2008-).

Fabrice Gygi has represented Switzerland at several biennials: Cairo (1996), São Paulo (2002) and Venice (2009). He has exhibited at the Magasin in Grenoble (2000), the Geneva MAMCO (2004), the Kunstmuseum St. Gallen (2005), the Orange County Museum of Art in Newport Beach (2005), the Istituto Svizzero di Roma (2010) and the Centre culturel suisse in Paris (2013).

His work has also been on view in major international group shows at the Kunsthalle Bern (1996), the Kunsthau Bregenz (2000), the 25th Ljubljana Biennial (2003), the Reina Sofía Museum (2003), the Ludwig Museum (2005), the Musée d'art contemporain de Lyon (2007), the Palais de Tokyo (2011), the Swiss Institute in New York (2015), the Kunsthau Zurich (2015), the Migros Museum (2016), the Musée d'Art Moderne de la Ville de Paris (2017), the Museum Tinguely (2017), the Kunstmuseum Olten (2018) and the Fondation CAB in Brussels (2019).

This artist has won numerous awards, among them the Bourse Lissignol-Chevalier, Geneva (1995); the Cairo Biennial second prize (1996); the Swiss Art Award, Bern (in 1996, 1997 and 1998); the Société suisse de gravure prize, Zurich (2001); the Ville du Locle first prize (2004); and the 2007 quARTier des Bains prize, Geneva.



# The Prix de la Société des Arts de Genève

Since 2009, the Prix de la Société des Arts de Genève – Visual Arts has been awarded every two years to a recognized artist who is either Swiss or has lived in Switzerland for the last five years and whose work has won acclaim nationally and internationally. An integral part of the history of the activities of the Classe des beaux-arts de la Société des Arts de Genève, this award bestows recognition at a key moment in an artist's career, offering encouragement, visibility and financial support to pursue their art-making. It is one of Switzerland's chief art prizes, comprising 50,000 CHF, a solo show at the Salle Crosnier and a publication.

To date, the prize has been awarded to Francis Baudevin (2009), Christoph Büchel (2011), Gianni Motti (2013), Sylvie Fleury (2015), !Mediengruppe Bitnik (2017) and Renée Levi (2019).

The Prix de la Société des Arts is awarded by a jury whose membership changes every two years. The art historian and curator Eveline Notter chose and presided over the jury for the 2021 prize. It comprised Sarah Burkhalter (director of the Antenne romande de l'Institut suisse pour l'étude de l'art – SIK-ISEA), Séverine Fromaigeat (curator at the Museum Tinguely, Basel and representative of the Société des Arts de Genève exhibition commission), Véronique Pittori (project head and assistant for artists' books at art&fiction, Lausanne), Una Szeemann (artist) and Philip Ursprung (professor of the history of art and architecture at the ETH, Zurich).

## Contacts

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7<sup>th</sup> edition 2021

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Société des Arts de Genève

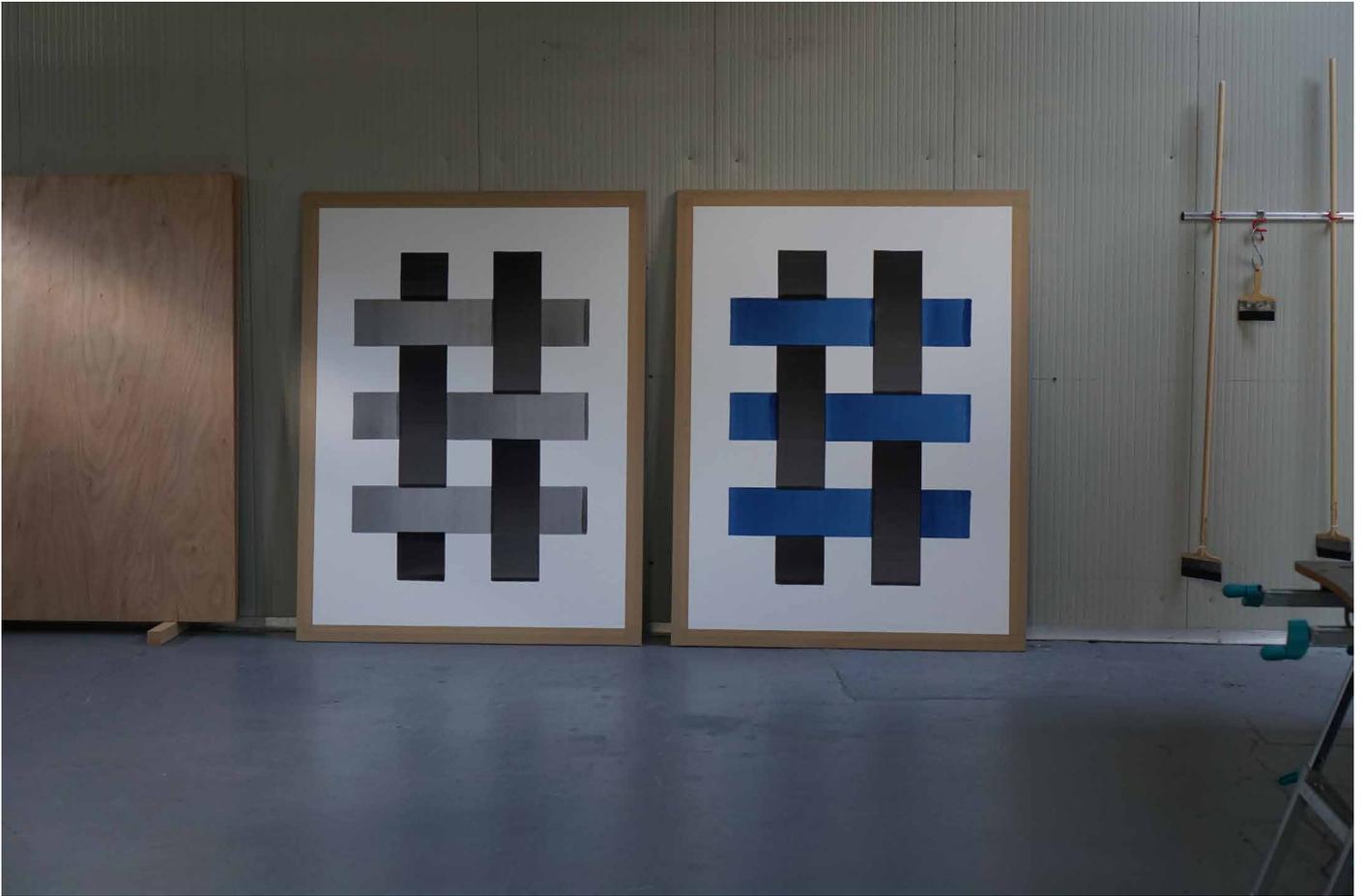
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[www.societedesarts.ch](http://www.societedesarts.ch)





Fabrice Gygi, *Untitled*, 2019  
Watercolours on paper  
175 x 130 cm (each)





Fabrice Gygi, *Untitled*, 2019  
Watercolours on paper  
130 x 130 cm (each)

