

# Starting Block

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"Go to START" has become a major reference point, thanks to the game of Monopoly: a source of revenue when Lady Luck shoves you ahead to where the money is, or a source of impoverishment when she keeps dragging you backwards. It all hinges on the departure point – a theme taken up in 3 essays by different authors as they define the different phases of starting or starting over on an artistic career.

"STARTING BLOCK", the first essay, focusses on the beginnings of 2 young artists who have just finished their training and have leaped head-first into their profession: Marie Sacconi of Geneva, and Valentin Carron of Fully.

### **Joël Chervaz: Starting Block**

For eight years now, Marie Sacconi (b.1963), who teaches in Sierre, has resorted to contemporary art as a means of "bearing witness." And for the last two years, Valentin Carron (b.1977) has been surfing the art wave to make a name for himself. To speak in terms of beginnings with these two would be to verge on the pleonastic. After covering the few youthful recollections of any significance with respect to their choice of a career, the conversation became – and remained – anchored in the present. Any mention of the future ran into the "conflict of generations"

### **Viviane van Singer: Arts Stops**

As for myself, I am an artist but also an art school teacher, someone whose artistic activity runs parallel to giving art theory classes at an art school ... The seemingly strange topic I was asked to tack – how certain artists take a complete break from their artistic activity and then start over at it, sometimes even from scratch – first left me stymied. Upon reflection, however, a few names and examples did come to mind.

The second essay, "ARRETS D'ART" (Art Stops), takes up the subject of intentional or unintentional interruptions in an artistic activity, and of picking up the thread at some later time.

The third essay "(R)EVOLUTIONS," explains how two artists changed their sights: Jean Nazelle, who began engraving late in his career, and Pierre-Yves Gabioud who, after many years of experience on the Vienna art scene, veered off into the direction of traditional painting.

phenomenon, whether touching upon the new economic order reigning in the field or the question of how art and artists fit in with present-day society. So much for being future-driven. Further along in the interview, the extent to which the artistic activity of both is based on their roots in a specific culture and on each artist's personal history became apparent. It is this basis that constitutes the substance of their work, that provides the material their work both translates and contradicts, in line with the publicity-conscious culture of their time.

If we consider women artists, for example, we could imagine that bringing a baby into the world might well turn their existence topsy turvy and, more especially, transform their relation to it. A whole new and different organization of their time and desires must be drawn up. This is something many artists, both men and women, are somewhat loath to envision. The fact is that childbirth is a deeply emotional experience for both parents, and may very well imply a temporary suspension of artistic activity.