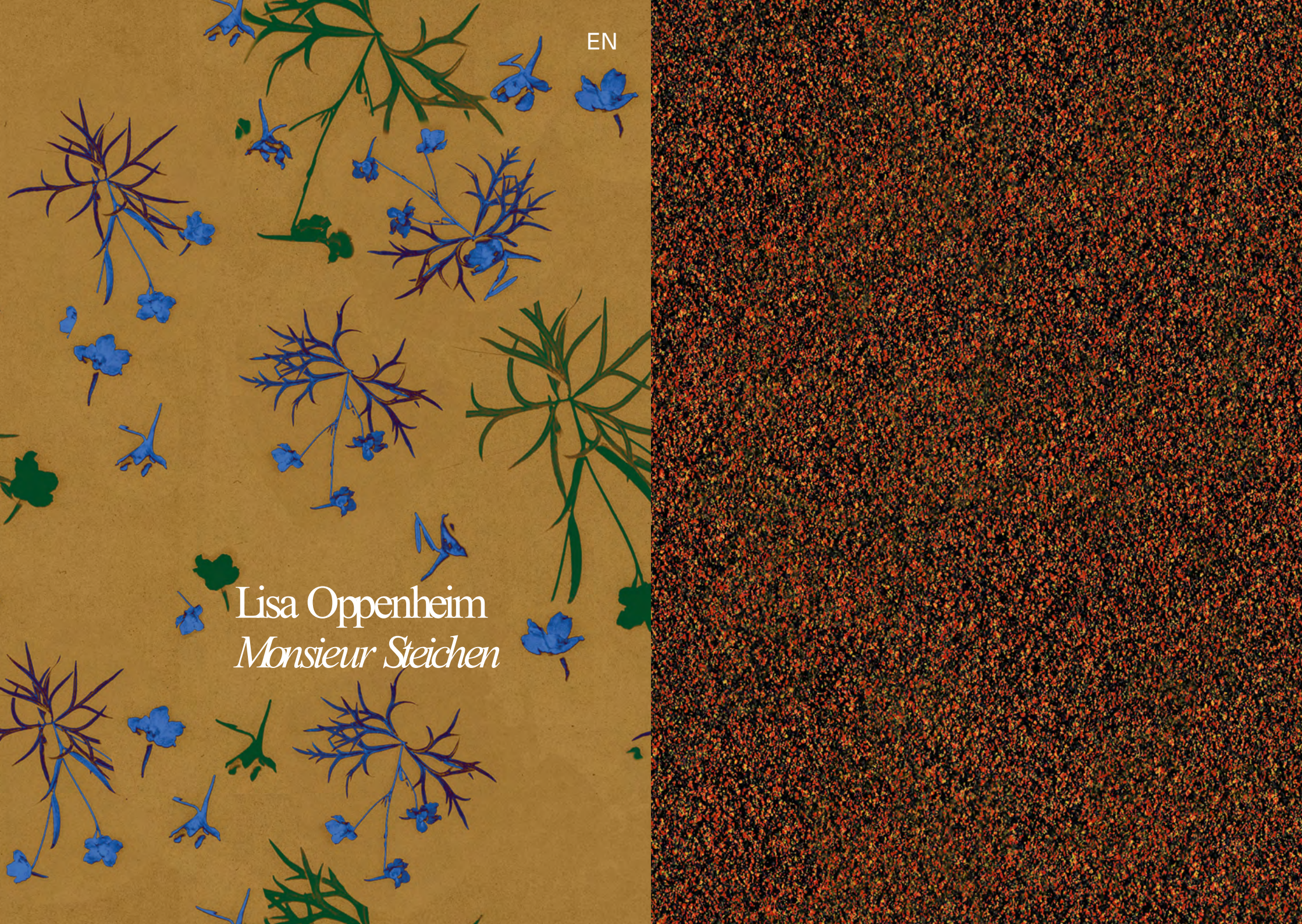


The background of the entire page is a repeating pattern of stylized flowers and foliage. The flowers are a vibrant blue color, while the leaves and stems are a deep green. The pattern is scattered across the entire surface, creating a textured, wallpaper-like effect. The overall color palette is earthy and naturalistic.

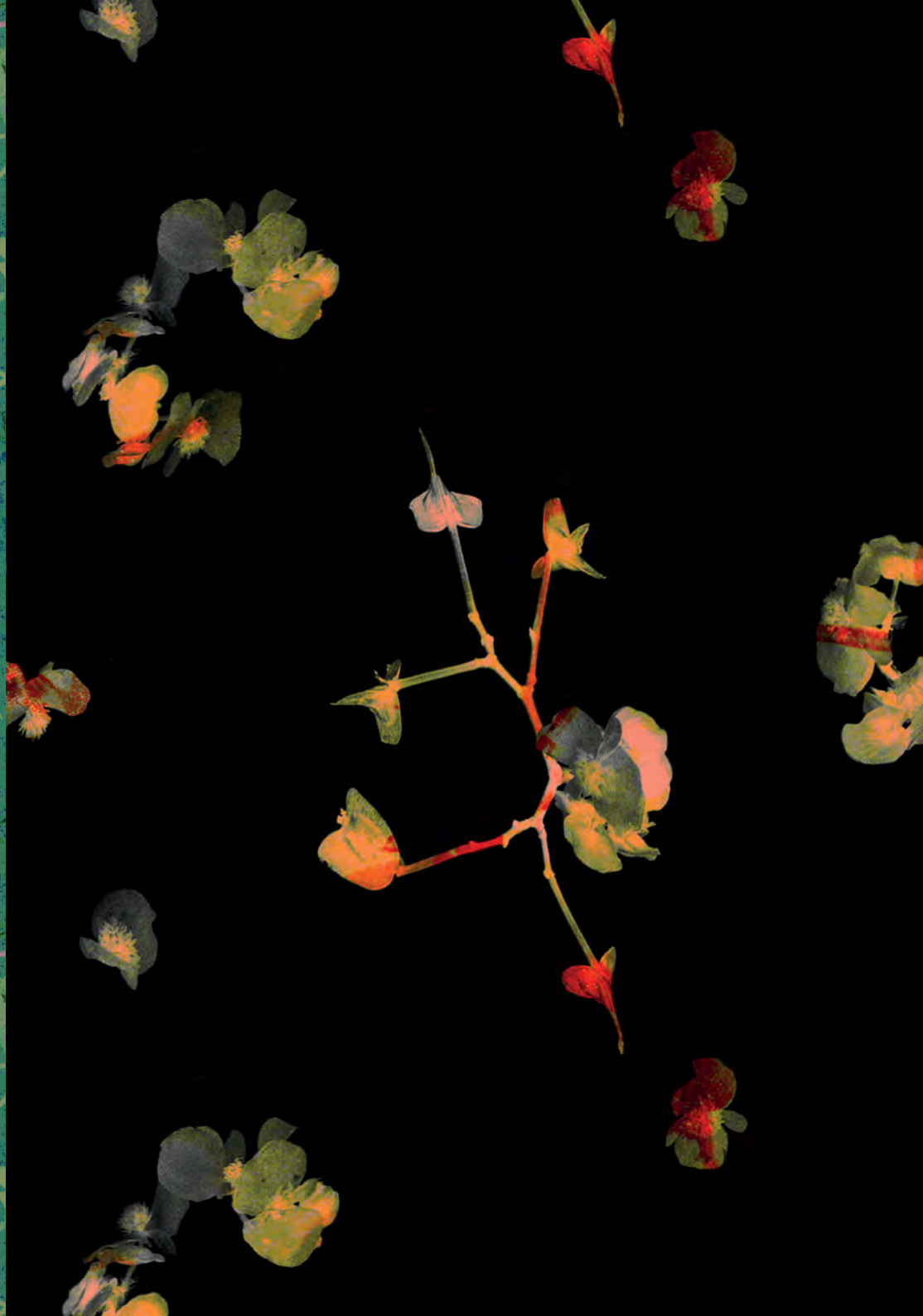
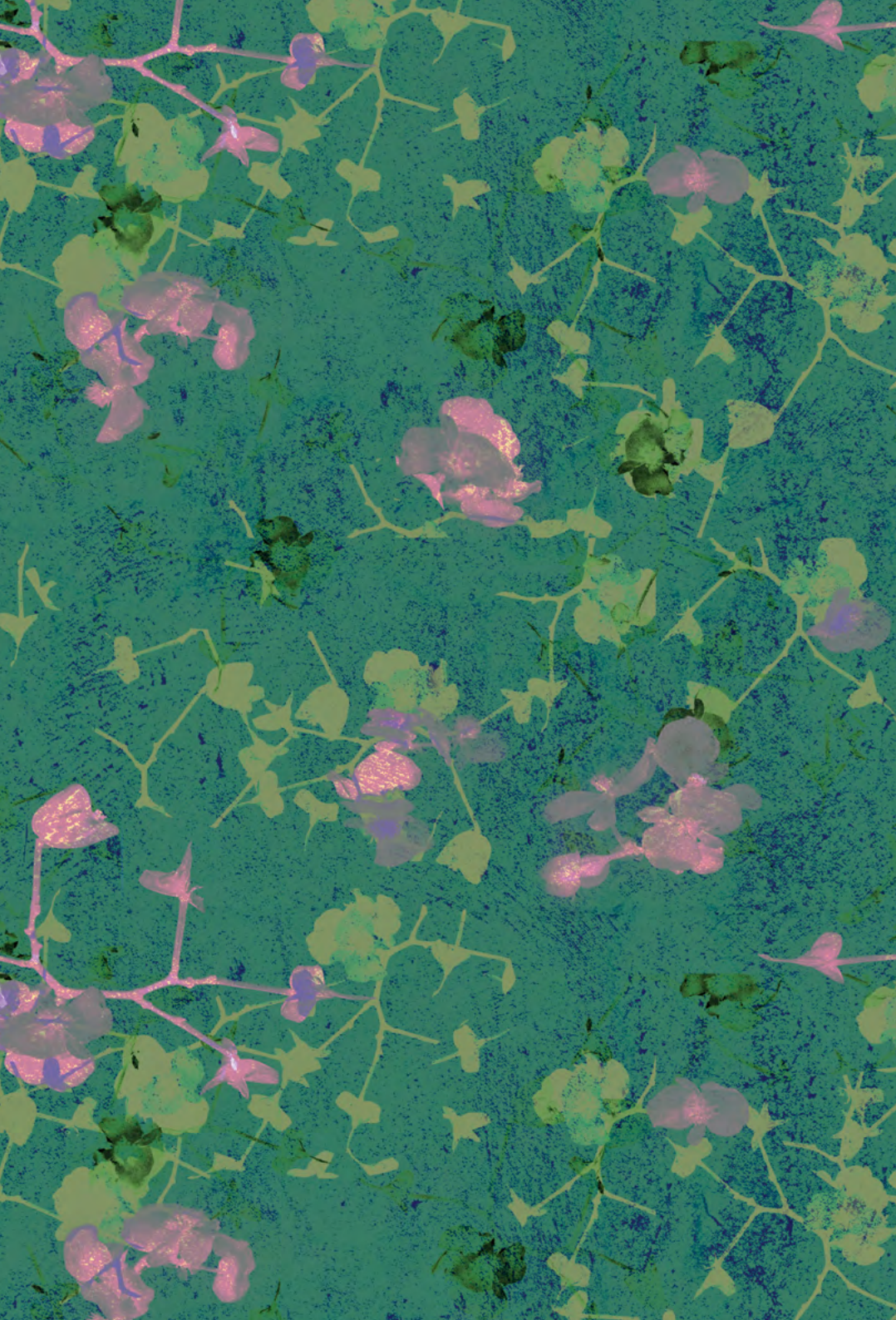
EN

Lisa Oppenheim
Monsieur Steichen



EN

Lisa Oppenheim
Monsieur Steichen

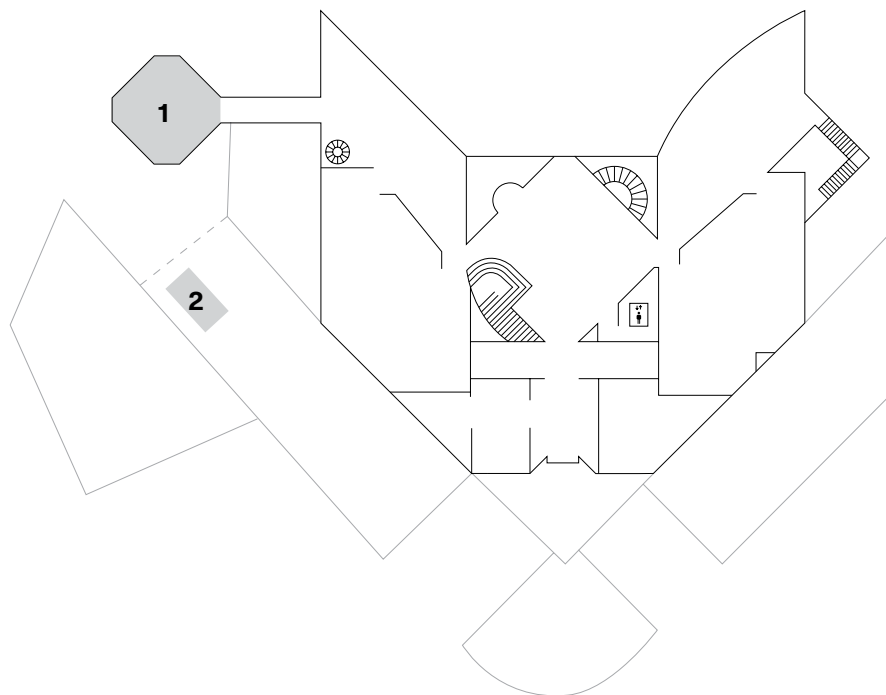


MUDAM

The Contemporary Art Museum of Luxembourg

mudam.com

MUDAM



1 Levels 0 & -1
Henry J. and Erna D. Leir Pavilion

2 Outdoor area
Eduard's Garden is accessible from the park in front of the Mudam.

Lisa Oppenheim

Monsieur Steichen

14.02 — 24.08.2025

Curators
Christophe Gallois, assisted by Nathalie Lesure

Production
David Celli, Clara Kremer, Irfann Montanavelli,
Boris Reiland, Lourindo Soares

‘In this exhibition, I would like to inhabit the practice of Steichen rather than examine any particular project.

I plan to do with the work of Steichen what he did throughout his own long life: inhabit his tendency to ingest and reconstitute a wide range of practices and ideas and in that way hopefully expand an understanding of what it is to be a cultural producer.’

Lisa Oppenheim

The exhibition



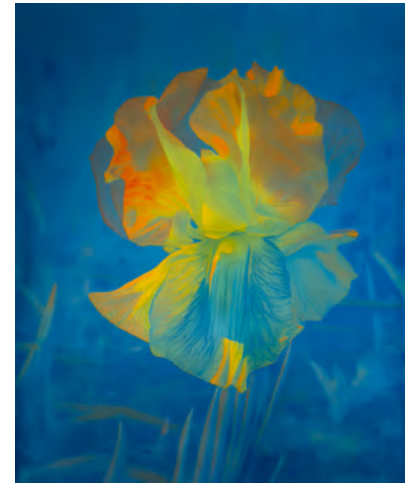
For this exhibition, American artist Lisa Oppenheim (1975, New York) has been invited to create a new body of work in response to the multifaceted work of one of the most renowned yet enigmatic figures in twentieth-century photography: the Luxembourg-born, American photographer and curator Edward Steichen (1879–1973). Through photographic, textile and floral works, Oppenheim unveils an unexpected portrait of 'Monsieur Steichen'.

For two decades, Lisa Oppenheim has been exploring photography's history and its latent possibilities. In *Monsieur Steichen*, she focuses on little-known aspects of Steichen's practice, including his lifelong passion for flowers, his textile designs and his experimentations in the field of colour photography. The works produced for the exhibition build upon what the artist describes as Steichen's 'lost threads' and 'discarded ideas', which are reimagined through her own artistic approach.

'In this exhibition, I would like to inhabit the practice of Steichen rather than examine any particular project', Oppenheim explains. 'I plan to do with the work of Steichen what he did throughout his own long life: inhabit his tendency to ingest and reconstitute a wide range of practices and ideas and in that way hopefully expand an understanding of what it is to be a cultural producer.'

The exhibition opens with a series of photographic prints in which Oppenheim revives a now-extinct variety of iris named 'Monsieur Steichen'. This flower was created by the French amateur botanist Fernand Denis in 1910 as a tribute to Steichen, who at the time lived in Voulangis, near Paris. Oppenheim's prints bring this long-lost iris back to life using two photographic techniques from different epochs: dye transfer, used by Steichen in his 1930s-1940s colour experiments, and artificial intelligence, a transformative technology in contemporary image-making.

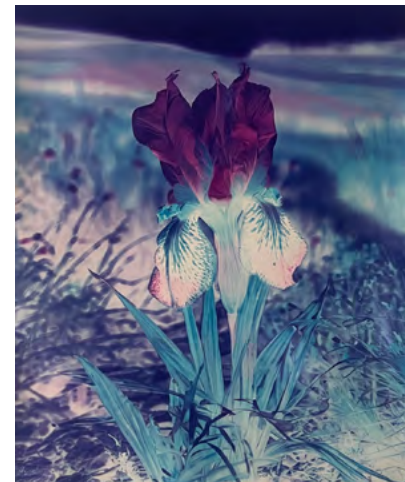
Making use of artificial intelligence, Oppenheim created images of 'hypothetical hybrids' by merging images of the two varieties of iris that had been combined to create the Monsieur Steichen a century earlier: the Chameiris Alba iris and the Iberica iris. Using these images as a starting point, Oppenheim has created a series of variations that exploit the full range of colour possibilities offered by the dye transfer printing technique, which employs a successive imbibition of cyan, magenta and yellow dyes. 'I have produced analogue prints of the AI-generated images with my own "incorrect" colour combinations, creating a huge range of possible "Monsieur Steichens" that explode the concepts of both genetic and photographic verisimilitude,' specified the artist.



2



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4



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Another series of work revisits Steichen's 1926–27 textile designs for the fabric manufacturer Stehli Silks's 'Americana Prints' collection, which were based on black and white photographs he took of everyday objects, such as matchboxes, sugar cubes, sewing thread and buttons. In collaboration with fashion designer Zoe Latta, Oppenheim developed a collection of new fabrics based on motifs Steichen ultimately did not use for his final works: several floral patterns and a nearly abstract photograph of gravel. The resulting eight fabrics created by Oppenheim and Latta bring Steichen's patterns into the present. They evoke contemporary motifs like static electricity, electronic interference and microscopic views of organic life. Some of the designs will be included in the 2025 fall collection of Eckhaus Latta – Mike Eckhaus and Zoe Latta's fashion brand.



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On the back of four folding screens displaying her textiles, Oppenheim hangs a selection of Steichen's photographs of his three wives (Clara, Dana and Joanna), as well as his mother, Marie Kemp Steichen. These images were selected by Oppenheim from the collection of the Musée national d'archéologie, d'histoire et d'art Luxembourg. Each folding screen is named after the woman whose image hangs on it.



9



10

Additional works complete the exhibition, including a series of 'studies' (*Steichen Studies*, 2024) that offer a glimpse into Oppenheim's creative process. They combine photographs Oppenheim took in Steichen's archives and photographic experiments she conducted in her dark room. These works engage in a dialogue with a floral composition *Bouquet of Flowers (a photographic score) 1940/2025* (2025), that will evolve throughout the exhibition, reflecting the colour variations found in Steichen's own experiments in a series of dye-transfer prints from 1940.

Outside of Mudam, in the museum's moat, Oppenheim will create *Eduard's Garden* (2025), a living installation of delphiniums that echoes Steichen's passion for these flowers and the groundbreaking exhibition of delphiniums he organised at MoMA in 1936. *Eduard's Garden* will grow during the course of the exhibition and will blossom in June and July.

With *Monsieur Steichen*, Lisa Oppenheim presents a subjective and abstract portrait of a pivotal twentieth-century figure, seen in the light of the present. Through her explorations of hybridisation – between techniques, disciplines, as well as between her own work and that of Steichen –, she invites us to reimagine the infinite transformative potential of the image.

The artist



11

Since the mid-2000s, American artist Lisa Oppenheim (1975, New York) has been developing a body of work that is rooted in the field of photography while also constantly exploring its margins. She often focuses on the unexplored potential of the medium's artistic, technical and

vernacular histories. Oppenheim's work draws in-depth enquiry that often takes on a life of its own – leading her down 'a meandering path' through which a combination of material and more scholarly research enables her projects to come into being. The artist transforms, or 'reprocesses,' as she describes it, images from the recent or more distant past by employing various creative mechanisms, both in the darkroom and through other media such as textile, and most recently, sculpture.

Lisa Oppenheim has had solo exhibitions at Huis Marseille, Amsterdam (2024); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Denver (2018); the Museum of Contemporary Art, Cleveland (2017); the FRAC Champagne-Ardenne, Reims (2015); the Kunstverein in Hamburg (2014) and the Grazer Kunstverein (2014). Her work has been shown in important group exhibitions at the Los Angeles County Museum of Art and the National Gallery of Art, Washington D.C (2024); the J. Paul Getty Museum, Los Angeles (2024 and 2015); the Guggenheim Museum, New York (2021); the Jewish Museum, New York (2021); the Whitechapel Gallery, London (2018) and the Museum of Modern Art, New York (2013). Her work is held in various institutional collections including the Getty Center, Los Angeles; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; SFMOMA, San Francisco; the Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Milwaukee Art Museum; the Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam and the Victoria and Albert Museum, London, among others.

Lisa Oppenheim lives and works in New York.

Edward Steichen

Edward Steichen (1879, Bivange, Luxembourg – 1973, West Redding, Connecticut) was one of the most important and prolific photographer of the twentieth century. Throughout his career, he constantly opened up his photographic practice to new genres and disciplines, often blurring the boundaries between the realm of art and the commercial uses of the medium. In the early 1900s, alongside Alfred Stieglitz, he was an important figure of the American pictorialism, a movement that sought to highlight the pictorial qualities of photography and bring it fully into fine arts. After the First World War, his practice moved towards a radically different style, marked by his work on light, clear lines and composition. In 1923, the Condé Nast publishing house recruited him as chief photographer for the magazines *Vanity Fair* and *Vogue*. In the 1920s and 1930s, he produced an impressive number of portraits of celebrities and public figures, as well as photographs for advertising and fashion. From 1947 to 1962, putting his photographic career on the side, he was the director of the Department of Photography at MoMA, New York, where he curated a large number of exhibitions. The most ambitious and best-known of these, *The Family of Man* (1955), toured the world during eight years and was presented in thirty-seven countries on six continents.

Steichen's

delphiniums



12

Alongside his activities in the field of photography, Steichen nurtured a lifelong passion for the cultivation of flowers, and delphiniums in particular. 'The breeding of flowers is to me a creative art, [...] using living materials that have been developing for thousands of years to make poetry', he observed. His interest in flower hybridisation began when he moved to Voulangis, near Paris, in 1908. In 1913, he won a gold medal from the French Horticultural Society for one of his delphiniums. Back in the United States, he bought a farm in Connecticut in 1928, where he could once again devote himself to his passion. In 1936, he presented a groundbreaking, week-long exhibition of his own delphiniums at MoMA in New York. It was the first time flowers were exhibited as works of art in a museum. The press release announcing the exhibition read: 'It will be a "personal appearance" of the flowers themselves.'

Steichen's

textile

designs

In 1926, Edward Steichen was approached by the artistic director of the Stehli Silks Corporation, Ruzzie Green, to create patterns that could be turned into textiles as part of a new collection called 'Americana Prints'. With this revolutionary collection, the company aimed to abandon traditional elements inspired by European tradition in favour of motifs adapted to the modern American society and culture. To create his textile designs, Steichen photographed compositions made of everyday objects such as sugar cubes, mothballs, tacks, sewing thread, clothing buttons, matches and eyeglasses. He arranged them into different grid-like patterns on seamless surfaces, often using dramatic light to transform them into semi-abstract motifs. Printed by Stehli Silks in a number of colour combinations, these patterns were sold by the yard for dressmaking and other domestic applications.



Steichen

and

Luxembourg

‘I’ve undertaken breeding delphiniums
very much as I went about the study of
photography years ago... Systematically,
I violated every rule.’

Edward Steichen

Born in 1879 in Bivange, Luxembourg, Edward Steichen was just eighteen months old when his parents emigrated to the United States, attracted by the prospect of a better life. Although Steichen maintained a strong link with Europe throughout his life, acting as a cultural bridge between the two continents, it wasn't until the 1950s that he began to renew his ties with his native country. In the 1960s, two exhibitions he had curated for MoMA, *The Family of Man* (1955) and *The Bitter Years* (1962), were donated to the Luxembourg State. These two exhibitions are now part of the collections of the Centre national de l'audiovisuel, and *The Family of Man*, which was included in UNESCO's Memory of the World Register in 2003, is on permanent display at Clervaux Castle. Other Luxembourg collections complete this rich heritage: notably those of the Musée national d'archéologie, d'histoire et d'art, the Photothèque de la Ville de Luxembourg and the Spuerkeess. Steichen's legacy and the cultural connections he established between Luxembourg and the United States also endure through the Edward Steichen Award, a prize awarded every two years since 2005 to two artists – one from the Greater Region and one from Luxembourg – who are offered the opportunity to take part in an artist residency in New York.

Public Programme

Artist Tour
With Lisa Oppenheim
15.02.2025 | 14:00 – 15:00 | EN

Mudamini Workshop
Disappearing flowers

18.02.2025 | 14:30 – 16:30
6 – 12 years

Mudam Akademie
Image and temporality: photography
as a medium to resurrect the past

19.02.2025 | 18:00 – 19:00 | LU
19.02.2025 | 19:30 – 20:30 | FR

Curator's Tour
With Christophe Gallois

19.03.2025 | 18:00 – 19:00 | FR

Artist Talk
With Lisa Oppenheim

29.03.2025 | 14:30 – 16:00 | EN

Youth Workshop
Lumen Impressions – Capturing
the fleeting beauty of flowers

29.03.2025 | 14:00 – 17:00
13+ years

Youth Workshop
Light and Shadow – Make
your very own textile design!

30.03.2025 | 14:00 – 17:00
13+ years

Mudam Talk
Gardens, flowers, art and creation.
From Edward Steichen to
contemporary botanical art practices

30.03.2025 | 14:30 – 16:30 | EN

Lunchtime at Mudam

04.04.2025 | 12:30 – 13:30
06.06.2025 | 12:30 – 13:30

Images

Cover
Lisa Oppenheim, textile designs in collaboration with Zoe Latta, 2024
Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles

- Images**
- | | |
|----|--|
| 1 | Installation view of the exhibition <i>Edward Steichen's Delphiniums</i> , 24.06 – 01.07.1936, The Museum of Modern Art, New York
Photo: Edward Steichen Courtesy of the Museum of Modern Art, New York
© 2025 Scala/Dig. Image MoMA, New York |
| 2 | Lisa Oppenheim, <i>Mme Steichen (Version V)</i> , 2024
Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles |
| 3 | Lisa Oppenheim, <i>Mons Steichen (Version II)</i> , 2024
Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles |
| 4 | Lisa Oppenheim, <i>Mlle Steichen (Version XI)</i> , 2024
Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles |
| 5 | Lisa Oppenheim, <i>Mme Steichen (Version I)</i> , 2024
Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles |
| 6 | Edward Steichen, <i>Mary Steichen with the 'Edward Steichen' Iris</i> , c. 1912
Courtesy of the George Eastman Museum © 2025 The Estate of Edward Steichen / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York |
| 7 | Edward Steichen, <i>Dana and the Apple (Eve)</i> , 1922
Collection Musée national d'archéologie, d'histoire et d'art Luxembourg (MNAHA)
© 2025 The Estate of Edward Steichen / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York |
| 8 | Lisa Oppenheim, <i>Steichen Studies</i> , 2024 (detail)
Courtesy of the artist and Tanya Bonakdar Gallery, New York/Los Angeles |
| 9 | Edward Steichen, <i>Bouquet of Flowers</i> , 1940
Courtesy of the George Eastman Museum © 2025 The Estate of Edward Steichen / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York |
| 10 | Edward Steichen, <i>Bouquet of Flowers</i> , 1940
Courtesy of the George Eastman Museum © 2025 The Estate of Edward Steichen / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York |
| 11 | Photo: Lia Lowenthal |
| 12 | Edward Steichen, <i>Delphiniums</i> , 1940
Courtesy of the George Eastman Museum © 2025 The Estate of Edward Steichen / Artists Rights Society (ARS), New York |
| 13 | 'Americana Prints: Buttons and Thread' Textile, 1927 (Series III, released spring 1928)
Designer: Edward Steichen
Manufacturer: Stehli Silks Corporation
© 2025 Metropolitan Museum/Art Resource/Scala |

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Partners

The exhibition is generously supported by Clearstream.



The exhibition *Lisa Oppenheim: Monsieur Steichen* is presented on the occasion of the 10th edition of the European Month of Photography Luxembourg.

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