

## Introduction to Jürg Egli 'Über Leben' Conference

Vemo Hang:

**Jürg Egli**, born 1956 in Zürich, has been a pioneering artist throughout his career in electronic media arts and one who works with the commercial. During the early 80s, Egli attended the photo class at the predecessor school of **ZHdK**, after completing an apprenticeship as a draughtsman at the world-renowned **Atelier 5** architectural office in Bern (1973–78). His education in photography brought him later to New York where he exchanged the static image with the moving images. In 1984, he was one of the 11 young filmmakers who each contributed a 10-mins film to the experimental-film Project **ANNA**, which is about storytelling not following a script, but one that develops organically and open to sporadic changes - just like how life often is.

Esther Schena:

Jürg Egli was in the turbulent 80s a rising-star in the video scene, who, according to the Zeit magazine, 'ein wilder Hund' (a wild dog) of the Solothurner Filmfestival. In New York he realized the short-film **Jumps**, in which he filmed himself jumping high at sites like in the public toilets or the financial districts, as a way to towart the verticality of the city-rhythm. Zürich, his birth-city, and Biel, where he grew up, have supported him six times with substantial grants between 1982 and 1986. Over the decade, he also won more than five video and film awards and his works were widely collected. Today, in the art historical discourse on the beginning of video-art scene in Switzerland in the 1970s and 1980s, it is still a under-represented topic, that alongside works by personals like Urs Lüthi or Pipilotti Rist, there's also those by Jürg Egli.

On the commercial side, most of the people in Switzerland have seen at least one work of Jürg Egli: The opener and on air-design of **SRF Wochenschau/Rundschau**, a weekly Swiss TV news show since 2006. Jürg Egli is the desired concept designer and executor of broadcast-designs, and has made for Swiss Radio and TV many different documen-taries and filmed episodes of **Die Schweiz bauen**, a architectural series, which also won prize.

Vemo Hang:

His career was not uninterrupted, however. After the early 90s, he decided to stop doing art for several years. According his own words, '**Ich entschied mich für meine Familie und gegen die Kunst**', translated in English: '**I decided to stay with my family against the Art**'. Maybe he could later tell us about this decisions of his and its consequences and also about his return to the art world 26 years later.

One of the latest work from Egli is a Documentary Art Film, **Zwischen Kalkül und Zufall / Between Calculus and Random**. It is a collaboration together with artist Beat Zoderer and composer/musician Nik Bärtsch. A work where art, music and film fused to an energetic 90 mins piece. This year, the film has just won award at the **FIFA - Festival International du Film sur l'Art** in Montreal, and will has its first swiss-wide premiere soon in this summer.