

PRESS RELEASE

CATHERINE BOLLE
Gesture & Imprint

March 4 – April 16 2026



Coudre la Nuit avec le Jour, 2014
Inks, Chinese paper, orange thread stitching, 19,5 x 26,8 cm

Fabienne Levy is pleased to present *Gesture & Imprint*, the gallery's second solo exhibition by Swiss artist Catherine Bolle (b. 1956).

Mapping the Visible and the Invisible

Catherine Bolle's work unfolds like a woven path: a practice in which different media intersect, relay one another, and transform over time. From drawing to engraving, from painting to sculpture, from artist's books to installation. This movement between techniques generates a distinctive visual language composed of lines, strata, transparencies, and materials, forming a rich universe in which no medium is isolated from another.

At the origin of her work lies nature as a field of experience. Water, stones, trees, branches, leaves, even the wind, nourish a sustained attention to natural forms and their transformations. Catherine Bolle does not represent nature in a descriptive sense; rather, she extracts rhythms, structures, and movements from it, translating them into traces, networks, and trajectories. These forms become indicators of a world in constant transformation, where images emerge from both attentive observation and the memory of gestures.

Engraving occupies a central place in her practice. The act of tracing, incising, and printing, often repeated, opens a field of infinite variations. Repeating a gesture, beginning again, slightly shifting the movement: from this repetition arises difference, modulation, and intensity. For Catherine Bolle, engraving is not merely a technique but a way of thinking through the trace, of organizing the visible in layers, allowing "cartographies" to emerge from signs.

This exploration extends in a particularly distinctive way through her works in engraved acrylic glass. Here the drawing leaves the plane and enters space. Lines are inscribed within a transparent material: plates, steles, or cylinders become active surfaces where the engraved marks appear suspended. Transparency and superimposition create real depth, and the image changes according to the viewer's position. As the observer moves, optical shifts occur. Lines double, overlap, appear, and disappear. The viewer no longer confronts a fixed image but experiences a dynamic spatial work which unfolds with time.

Within these installations, water frequently appears as a central motif. Not simply as a reference to nature, but as a metaphor for flow: movement, change, and renewal. Water becomes an image of time itself, of what passes yet persists, of perpetual transformation. The fluid lines liberated by transparency render this movement perceptible: the work is experienced through duration, through the viewer's movement and the shifting play of light.

This spatial dimension also explains the importance of her site-specific works, which engage directly with architecture. Some pieces are conceived to inhabit architectural spaces, where they act as subtle agents of transformation. Through transparency, layering, and engraved lines, they alter the perception of volume and depth, activating the surrounding environment. Whether installed in architectural contexts or more intimate settings, Catherine Bolle's works offer an immediate sensory experience: they can invite the mind to expand outward or, conversely, to return inward. Her interdisciplinary work engages with literature, cartography, and the natural sciences.

Many of her series take the form of maps: topographic maps, maps of the visible and the invisible, maps of imagined worlds. These are not objective surveys of territory but rather poetic cartographies, attempts to give form to what escapes measurement, to what moves between reality and imagination. Within this dynamic, titles play a crucial role. They do not simply designate the works; they participate in them. Sometimes they guide interpretation, while at other times they seem to accompany the very emergence of the image, as if language and form were generated together. The linguistic dimension becomes a poetic transformation: the title opens a world, or reminds us that there is never only one world, but a multiplicity of possible ones, like maps waiting to be unfolded, folded again, and reconfigured.

Through engraving, acrylic glass, paper, and installation, Catherine Bolle develops an art of passage: between opacity and transparency, trace and matter, the visible and the invisible. Her work can be approached as a journey. One that transforms the image into a space of exploration rather than a final destination.

Catherine Bolle (b. 1956, Switzerland) pursued a dual scientific and artistic education. She first trained as a physics laboratory technician at the *École polytechnique fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL)*, then as a chemical engineering technician at the *Technicum in Geneva*, before studying at the *École des beaux-arts of Sion (1976–1978)*.

In the early 1980s, Bolle became actively involved in photography and printmaking. From 1981 to 2000, she collaborated with Raymond Meyer's printmaking workshop in Pully and, in 1984, co-founded a photography studio with Matthias Thomann. That same year, she founded *Éditions Traces* and has since produced more than one hundred artist's books, a central aspect of her practice.

She has realized numerous commissions for public spaces, including at EPFL, the World Trade Organization, and the *Hôpital Suisse de Paris*, and has been widely exhibited in Switzerland, notably at the *Musée Jenisch Vevey*, the *Musée Historique de Lausanne*, and the *Musée cantonal des Beaux-Arts de Lausanne*. Catherine Bolle's works are held in numerous public collections, including the *Graphische Sammlung of ETH Zurich*, the *Swiss National Library in Bern*, the *Cantonal and University Library of Lausanne–Dorigny*, the *Bibliothèque de Genève*. Her work is also represented in public art collections of the Cantons of Vaud, Neuchâtel, and Geneva, as well as the cities of Lausanne, Pully, and Zurich. Additional collections include the *Cabinet des Estampes in Vevey*, the *Musée des arts décoratifs in Lausanne*, the *Kunsthhaus Glarus*, the *Cabinet des Estampes in Strasbourg*, the *Bibliothèque nationale de France*, the *Biennale of Kraków Foundation in Łódź*, and the *Kisgrafika collection in Hungary*.

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