

Mutanti, photo exhibition by Daniel Pittet

Brissago Islands 2025 - 2026

English

Dear visitors, we welcome you to the **Mutanti** photo exhibition on the Island of Brissago from 27th of April 2025 to 8th of November 2026.

The 21 works located inside Villa Emden are on the lower floor (-1), the ground floor (including the two verandas), and along the stairs leading to the upper floor (+1). Another 9 works are located in the garden, particularly in the area of the Roman Bath and the Moroccan Square.

The works by the photographer Daniel Pittet were created from images taken on the island: the **Mutanti**, revealed to the public through photographer's lens and creativity, are therefore all imaginary organisms, born on this island.

The Latin names in the captions are the names of the plant species that gave birth to the mutant organism in front of you. Next to the Latin name you will also find a QR code. By framing it with your phone's camera, you will be able to see where on the island the original photograph was taken, before the game of symmetry transformed it into a new, amazing organism. This way, you may be able to find the original plant; however, the vegetation changes with the seasons and may no longer have the same morphological characteristics as when the photo was taken.

The catalogue, on sale from summer 2025 at Armando Dadò Editore (www.editore.ch), at the kiosk on the island and in bookshops, presents, in addition to the images exhibited on the island, further photographs, accompanied by the reflections of the phytosociologist Guido Maspoli.

Daniel Pittet (1967) divides his time between photography and humanitarian and international cooperation missions. His favourite themes in photography are territory, nature and human habitats. Originally from the canton of Fribourg, he lives in Ticino since 2002. The **Mutanti** project follows the line drawn by the series *Esprits de la montagne*, exhibited in 2023/25 at the *Musée gruérien* in Bulle (FR), at the Fuji-Film X-Space gallery in Shanghai (China) and published by *Slatkine Editions* in Geneva, and by *AS Verlag* in Zurich under the title *Berggeister*. With **Mutanti**, the photographer explores the theme of symmetry in nature and its expressive power through a contemporary photographic language, exploring a new creative dimension that is more topical than ever.

Photographs can be purchased in various formats, for information

www.danielpittet.photography/vente



The prints are made by Colorlito, Lamone. The indoor pictures are printed on *Ilford cotton 300 g/m2 Fine Art* paper, while the outdoor pictures are printed directly on *3 mm Dibond*.

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Symmetry composes, describes, orders, regulates, reassures, reflects, establishes. Its apparent rigour does not exclude asymmetrical responses. Archimedes understood that all that is needed to lift the world is a point of support and two asymmetrical lever arms. The mirror reflects but is deviously unfaithful. The mysterious DNA is only apparent symmetry: the double helix appears to be symmetrical, yet the pegs that join it are not equal and it is on the selective affinity of the nucleobases that the source code of life is built. Yet, living things are symmetrical: rayed, when the parts of the body, or of an organ, are arranged around a central axis like the rays of the sun and all planes of symmetry pass through the centre (this is the case with the anemone, the daisy, the iris and the pupil); or bilateral, when the parts of the body, or of an organ, are arranged on a plane of symmetry (this is the case with the corolla of the bean, the rosemary or the snapdragon). Some organisms are both radiate and bilateral, depending on how you look at them: this is the fascinating case of certain single-celled siliceous algae. There is often an inside and an outside. Seen from the outside, the human being is bilaterally symmetrical, but inside is asymmetrical: the heart is on the left, the gall bladder on the right; the left brain (thought to be 'male') handles rationality, the right brain the emotions (and therefore 'female'), which is why, perhaps, some are left-handed, others are right-handed, some are cold and calculators, others radiate empathy and feel emotions, they grasp that the Italian words “ella fra farfalle” is a perfect symmetry and that Daniel Pittet's visions are a kaleidoscope.

Guido Maspoli, phytosociologist

Movement, becoming, transformation - these are key words that can enable us to approach the process implemented by Daniel Pittet. What happens in his photographs? The starting point are distinct organisms, although rare or exotic. Organisms with evocative names - *Euphorbia pulcherrima*, *Phlomis fruticosa*, ... - but still scientifically described, catalogued, named. Then, the objective gaze loses its footing and gives way to the photographer's eye; which captures the complexity and, at the same time, the singularity. The absolute and alienating beauty of the detail. Detail that is then extracted from its context and isolated (or, one might say, exalted) on a black field, and that in this process acquires its own autonomy and its own life. And each organism grows, changes, reveals itself; it becomes a precious tissue, a feather, a chalice. Mutant. And the spectator, moving from room to room, from photograph to photograph, has the privilege of witnessing this becoming and of contemplating, sometimes with a small thrill, the fascinating and mysterious result.

Veronica Provenzale, art historian

Mutation generates diversity. Modest organisms give birth to fantastic beings through an unprecedented metamorphosis, life adapts, seeks new forms of balance. Species that first appear in the lens and later undergo a transformation, generating new life, do not suffer from any complex. They are wildly eccentric, free, confident, pure, beautiful. They are mutants. They adapt to environmental changes to survive and do so elegantly, beyond imagination. But where is the line between reality and fantasy, revealed through symmetry? Are we in the presence of portraits of the future? Will we also be called upon to seek new axes of balance, to better experience the changes taking place? Would we then be more eccentric, free, confident, pure, beautiful? The transformation of plants through a play of mirrors and the change of dimension disrupts their original nature, projecting them into an unsuspected dimension, full of unknowns, but also harbours new possibilities. Through patient observation work, guided by intuition, small defenceless buds become giant insects. Although using computer tools, the image processing that generates the mutation remains a very simple and artisanal gesture. There is no recourse to artificial intelligence; everything you see is real. It is only a different point of view and the way reality is processed that transports us to a new, surprising dimension

Daniel Pittet, photographer