

## THE OKTOPUS & THE APE

Materials: Cement, Silicate paint

Installation: June 2025 - June 2026

Over the last 23 years, the artist has crossed this bridge many times on his way to swim at his favorite nearby beach; where the modest Jonenbach joins the mighty Reuss on its way to the sea. Slowly, the idea of a sculpture incorporating the bridge into a work of art emerged.

Having grown up near New York City and lived near for many years, bridges, the sea and rivers figure strongly in his imagination. A potent symbol, bridges stand for transition, escape, freedom, compromise, tolerance and the joining of opposite sides. Rivers and streams stand for the element of constant change. - This bridge was built in 1948, at a time when Europe was in the process of immense change and healing.

Micros describes the sense of freedom he often experienced after a hard day's work, when crossing over the cantonal border, and then the bridge. After a good swim and washing the dust off, he enjoyed views of unspoiled nature across the river to the west, and wondered if in prehistoric times, apes and octopus populated the forest and river; or if the river had even existed.

Animals are used to symbolize aspects of human nature in art; and these specifically the dueling aspects of human nature. The ape of the forest can signify an industrious and stubborn nature. Contrastingly, the octopus of water, a flexible and creative one. By placing these symbolic animal-sculptures across from one another, an intellectual comparison and a space for reflection is set up.

At first glance, the appearance of the sculptures of animals that are not native to the area is surprising. The work may be experienced merely by observing the sculptures and taking them at face value. By crossing the bridge in a kind of processional movement, the act of walking between the figures at both ends, can create an emotional bridge between the opposing forces they represent.

The figures were first modeled in plaster, cast in cement and then painted. The cement blocks under each figure were also created by the artist. After creating the figures in 2022, the artist approached the Gemeinde about creating the temporary installation.

**The artist would like to thank Gemeinde Jonen for support of this project.**

**Casts of each figure are available for sale in a limited edition. Please contact the artist for further details, or with any other questions about the work.**