

Thomas Struth

Unbewusste Orte / Unconscious Places

Bleibtreustraße 45, 10623 Berlin

3 March – 14 April 2023

Opening: Friday, 3 March, 6 – 8pm

Galerie Max Hetzler is pleased to present the exhibition *Unbewusste Orte / Unconscious Places* by **Thomas Struth** in Bleibtreustraße 45, Berlin.

Thomas Struth's work is characterised by the careful and long-term pursuit of themes which, in different variations, revolve around the human relationship to the environment. Over the course of five decades, the artist has created seven large bodies of work, some of which are now completed, while others are still ongoing. Struth's artistic practice began in the 1970s, with quotidian photographs of mostly empty streets, that were presented for the first time in 1987 in a large solo exhibition at the Kunsthalle Bern, entitled 'Unbewusste Orte' (Unconscious Places).

The title, from which this first body of works takes its name, directs the focus of observation towards the unconscious psychosocial impact of urban spaces, defined by both the architects who built them and the inhabitants who use them. In addition to cities in Europe and North America, the photographs explore different sites around the world with an analytical, searching gaze. Over the course of time, Struth's method of working has shifted from the strict composition of the central perspective to a pictorial language which departs from this original scheme and adapts to the architectural set-up of the individual urban spaces.

Struth's 'Unconscious Places', alongside his 'Museum Photographs', are amongst his best-known works today. Aside from major retrospectives, however, there have been few opportunities to take a comprehensive look at the artist's streetscape photographs. The last time the works were shown alone as a group was in an exhibition at the Kunstmuseum Bonn in 1995. At the invitation of architect David Chipperfield, Struth also devised a survey presentation for the 13th Architecture Biennale in Venice, 2012.

Presenting more than 30 photographs, the exhibition at Galerie Max Hetzler offers a chance to revisit this historic group of works, mostly developed in analogue black and white. On display are works made between 1978 and 2005 in Rome, Tokyo, Berlin, and St. Petersburg, among other places. Returning to the beginnings of the 'Unconscious Places' in the final room of the exhibition, a comparative discussion is provoked through the placement of two recent photographs from Struth's 'Nature & Politics'. In 2022 the artist worked at the IBM Thomas J. Watson Research Center in Yorktown Heights, New York, which specialises in quantum research. His meticulously detailed



Thomas Struth, *Campo de' Fiori, Rom 1988*, 1988 © Thomas Struth

images of their technical facilities are presented beside a selection of New York streets that the artist took in 1978 at the age of 23. Here, as past meets present, we are invited to re-examine both groups of works. What parallels and continuities can be discerned in the artist's working methods and pictorial approach? We are left to wonder how much of Struth's 'Unconscious Places' can be found in the photographs of technology, whose sculptural motifs similarly reveal the manifest influence of the people absent in the images.

Thomas Struth (*1954, Geldern) lives and works in Berlin. Struth has exhibited his work at Galerie Max Hetzler on a regular basis since 1987. Most recently, major retrospectives of the artist's work were held at the Guggenheim Museum, Bilbao (2019) and the Haus der Kunst, Munich (2017). In 2016, his comprehensive solo exhibition *Nature & Politics* opened at the Museum Folkwang, Essen, before being presented at the Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin, the High Museum, Atlanta, the Moody Center for the Arts, Houston, and finally the Saint Louis Art Museum, Missouri. Other major solo exhibitions have taken place at international institutions including MAST Foundation, Bologna (2019); Aspen Art Museum (2018); Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York (2014 and 2003); Kunsthaus Zürich; Museu Serralves, Porto and K20, Düsseldorf (all 2011); Museo del Prado, Madrid (2007); Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago (2003); Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and Dallas Museum of Art (2002).

Thomas Struth's works are in the collections of the Museum of Modern Art and Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Guggenheim Museum, New York; Tate, London; Musée National d'Art Moderne, Centre Pompidou, Paris; Art Institute of Chicago; Walker Art Center, Minneapolis; Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; Kunsthaus Zürich; Los Angeles County Museum of Art; Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles; and the Dallas Museum of Art, among others.

Further exhibitions and events

Berlin:

3 March – 15 April 2023

André Butzer

Kirschmichel

Goethestraße 2/3, 10623

3 March – 15 April 2023

Jinn Bronwen Lee / André Butzer

Bleibtreustraße 15/16

17 March – 30 April 2023

Katharina Grosse

Spectrum without Traces

Potsdamer Straße 77-87, 10785

Paris:

4 March – 15 April 2023

William N. Copley

AUTOEROTICISM: Paintings from 1984 and related works
46 & 57 rue du Temple, 75004

London:

2 March – 15 April 2023

Rinus Van de Velde

41 Dover Street, W1S 4NS

Press Contact

Galerie Max Hetzler
Honor Westmacott
honor@maxhetzler.com
Berlin: +49 30 346 497 85-0

www.facebook.com/galeriemaxhetzler
www.instagram.com/galeriemaxhetzler

Sign up to our newsletter

