

Pressrelease

October 2014

Candida Höfer, Closer

22 November, 2014 to 24 January, 2015

Opening on Friday, November 21, 6 to 8 pm, Löwenbräu Areal, Limmatstr. 270, 8005 Zürich

Galerie Eva Presenhuber is delighted to announce the solo show of the German artist Candida Höfer. The exhibition includes a selection of large-format photographs of imposing interiors and parts of buildings, as well as a series of new pictures, some focusing on singular objects, others exhibiting an increasing tendency toward abstraction.

From 1973 to 1982 Candida Höfer attended the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf. She first studied film under Ole John before transferring to the photography class of Bernd Becher in 1976 as one of his first students. In 1975 she had her first exhibition at gallery Konrad Fischer in Düsseldorf, where she presented a slide projection. Candida Höfer's entry into the art world is thus closely associated with the city of Düsseldorf and her contacts from that time.

Geographical references are an immanent part of Candida Höfer's extensive oeuvre. For more than forty years the artist has photographed the interiors of actual buildings, most accessible to the public, rarely private ones as well, that are readily identifiable. Among them are museums, libraries, foyers, concert halls, bank archives, exhibition halls, stages, and train station waiting rooms. The geographical range and thus the socio-cultural connotations of her chosen motifs extends mainly across Europe and North America, and reaches in single instances to South America and Asia. Each work is precisely and simply titled with the name of the place or the institution in which the photographed space is found. The actual existence of these spaces is what matters, although Candida Höfer's artistic interest is not in mere documentation. What does interest her is the differentiation of complex picture subjects, the issue of light, and how spaces and architecture influence people. Yet people are only rarely included in the photographs, generally categorically excluded. She explains: "Of course it interests me that these are spaces used by people, but I don't have to show this by picturing them. I want to capture how the spaces change over time, how they change because of what is placed in them, and how the things interact with each other." Candida Höfer's pictures are extremely thoughtful compositions of subjects filled with an almost infinite variety of architectural and decorative details. Their desolation and "uncanny beauty" (Benjamin H. D. Buchloh) is somewhat disorienting, unsettling, and humbling.

The exhibition presents a series of photographs of various interiors, two of which were made in Düsseldorf. These are "Schmela Haus Düsseldorf | 2011", the Nordrhein-Westfalen art collection, and the "New Stahlhof Düsseldorf | 2012", renovated in 2002. Here she has focused on a stairwell, showing its impressive architecture. A symphony in white, created simply by the receding line of the banister.

In contrast to her earlier works, most of which were meant to show inherent relations of images, the new works more often concentrate on single objects, often in isolation and carefully staged. They explore the ontology of objects, colors, and light. For example, a neon tube in the dark interior of a stairwell becomes a form-giving entity, and dictates the minimal composition on the picture surface. In another work a thin white line runs across a concrete floor, and the photographic composition is thereby fragmented into two abstract sections. These new works often have English titles, but as in those of her earlier photographs they indicate nothing more but what there is to see. For example, the work just mentioned is simply titled "Line on the Floor 2014".

In addition to the photographs, Candida Höfer is also presenting two new projections in the show, "Echoes" and "Roads". Since the beginning of her artistic career she has again and again quite deliberately employed projections, which mediate between stasis and movement, between the haptic and the immaterial image. She describes the projections, as opposed to photography, as "a counterbalance to the weight that static wall pictures can assume in an exhibition. A projection prescribes the sequence of images—but can never completely dictate the viewer's perception, for viewers can begin watching it or walk away from it at any point in the sequence. A book does the same. And there as well the author cannot control the sequence. That is up to the reader. In addition, a projection is comparable to the fleeting nature of our own seeing, but at the same time provides an opportunity to pause for a moment. And that too is a quality of everyday seeing. However the images, if they are large and hang

low, can only invite one to look. At least as a form of presentation they offer a way of looking that is not between merely a fleeting registration and pausing, but rather between a mere glance and close study, if the viewer's patience permits it."

Candida Höfer's sensitivity to the inherent laws of the picture medium, as well as her conscious emphasis on aesthetic aspects of presentational forms, are once again ably presented in this exhibition.

Candida Höfer's works have been shown in a number of gallery solo shows, including the Sonnabend Gallery in New York, the Galerie Johnen & Schöttle in Cologne, and the Johnen Galerie in Berlin. Her works have also been included in exhibitions in numerous museums, including the Kunsthalle Basel, the Kunsthalle Bern, the Museum für Neue Kunst in Freiburg, the Baltimore Museum of Art, the Portikus in Frankfurt am Main, the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Kunsthaus Bregenz, and the Museum Ludwig in Cologne. In 2013 the show "Düsseldorf" was presented in the Museum Kunstpalast in Düsseldorf, and it is currently on view in the Kunstmuseum Luzern. In 2002 Candida Höfer participated in documenta 11. In 2003 she represented Germany at the Venice Biennale (together with Martin Kippenberger).

For further information please contact Maria Florut (m.florut@presenhuber.com) at the gallery.

Opening hours: Tuesday to Friday, 10 am – 6 pm
Saturday, 11 am – 5 pm
Or by appointment

Parallel shows: Justin Matherly, Oscar Murillo,
David Ostrowski, Tobias Pils
22 November, 2014 to 24 January, 2015
Löwenbräu Areal, Limmatstr. 270, 8005 Zürich
1. Floor

Alex Hubbard, Urethane Paintings
22 November, 2014 to 24 January, 2015
Maag Areal, Zahnradstr. 21, 8005 Zurich