

## Thomas Ruff

### Galleria Lia Rumma Naples

**Opening: Thursday, 22 March 2018, 6.30 p.m.**

**Gallery opening hours: Tuesday-Saturday 11 a.m.-1.30 p.m. / 2.30-7 p.m**

Galleria Lia Rumma is pleased to announce a solo exhibition of works by Thomas Ruff, which will open at the gallery in Naples on 22 March 2018.

Thomas Ruff studied at the Kunstakademie Düsseldorf under the guidance of Bernd Becher, and he belongs to a generation of German artists who have transformed the very essence of the artistic lexicon by investigating the potential and the “grammar” of photography as a medium. Ruff views photography both as an area for technical experimentation and as a place for questioning and interrogation. It has been said that his is “a sort of sceptical and critical meta-comment on the role of the photographic image in our contemporary culture”, and this can be seen in his almost forty years of artistic research in countless, and by now extremely well-known series. These range from portraits to press photography, through to pictures of stars and night scenes, architectural photography and home interiors, nudes and the pure abstraction of his *Substrat*. He has been working with Lia Rumma since 1991, and the exhibition presents a broad selection of his most recent works. The show highlights the originality and scope of his investigations, which draw on highly diverse sources that range in time from avant-garde experimentation to the latest digital processing technologies. The visitor is welcomed by works from the *w.g.l.* series, devoted to “installation shots”, in which the artist has worked on historical documents of Jackson Pollock’s exhibition at the Whitechapel Gallery in London in 1958. *Press++*, on the other hand, clearly picks out and shows the manipulations, retouching and instructions that normally accompanied the distribution and circulation of images before the advent of the Internet. The exhibition ends with works from the *negative* series, in which the “negative” is not simply a means for obtaining the final image, but becomes an object in its own right, to be observed. Lastly, there is *photograms*, a 3-D evolution of experimental techniques used in the early twentieth century by Man Ray and László Moholy-Nagy.

**Thomas Ruff** (Zell am Harmersbach, Germany, 1958) studied photography from 1977 to 1985 at the Staatlichen Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf, where he currently lives and works. Solo exhibitions of his works have included those at the Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam; Museum Folkwang, Essen; Museet for Samtidskunst, Oslo 2002; Tate Liverpool, 2003; Fondazione Bevilacqua La Masa 2006; Sprengel Museum, Hanover 2007; Moderna Museet, Stockholm 2007; Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna 2009; Castello di Rivoli, Turin 2009; Centro de Arte Contemporáneo de Málaga, Malaga 2011; Haus der Kunst, Munich 2012; Sala Alcalá 31, Madrid 2013; National Museum of Modern Art, Tokyo and the 21st Century Museum of Contemporary Art, Kanazawa in 2016; a sweeping retrospective at the Whitechapel Art Gallery in London has just come to an end. His works are now in the permanent collections of many museums, including the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; The Art Institute of Chicago; Dallas Museum of Art; Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C.; The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York; Moderna Museet, Stockholm; National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne; Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; Museum of Modern Art, New York. In Italy, the works of Thomas Ruff are to be found in the collections of MAXXI in Rome, Castello di Rivoli and Mart in Rovereto. In 2002, upon invitation by Lia Rumma, Ruff worked on the *m.d.p.n.* series devoted to the “late manifesto” of rationalist architecture in Naples – the fish-market building designed by Luigi Cosenza between 1929 and 1934, with which Ruff continued his works on architecture after the series commissioned in 1994 by Herzog & De Meuron and *l.m.v.d.r* 1999-2001. In 2006 he received the Infinity Award from the International Center of Photography in New York. He was a finalist for the Prix Pictet photography award in 2017.

