

Candida Höfer



Neues Museum Berlin IX

2009

C-print

183 x 141 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery, Seoul

November 25 – December 25, 2011

Exhibition Information

Artist: Candida Höfer (German, 1944-)

Exhibition Title: Candida Höfer

Exhibition Dates: November 25 – December 25, 2011

Exhibition Space: Kukje Gallery, K2

Website: www.kukjegallery.com

About the Exhibition

Kukje Gallery is pleased to announce the exhibition of internationally acclaimed photographer Candida Höfer. This is the third showing of Höfer, following exhibitions in 2005 and 2008. The installation will include twelve large format photographs from her *Neues Museum Berlin* series of 2009, along with selected works from 2010. Listed by UNESCO as a World Heritage Site in 1999, the Neues Museum is a monumental building defined by its magnificent Prussian architectural style. The building was constructed between 1841 and 1859 according to plans by Friedrich August Stüler, and was severely damaged during World War II, after which it was left deserted for approximately 60 years. The Neues Museum was finally renovated in 1997 by English architect David Chipperfield who won a competition for its rebuilding. It was officially reopened in 2009. Chipperfield's restoration followed the building's initial architectural pedigree with deliberate efforts to preserve the scars from Germany's multiple wars and the ensuing separation of East and West Germany. Höfer's *Neues Museum Berlin* series presents photographs that allow the viewer to experience the building's spaces, each of which occupies various points in time. Her work reflects our changing culture through the remnants of the past merging with a contemporary interpretation of historical architecture.

About the Artist

Candida Höfer (b. 1944) lives and works in Cologne. Born in Eberswalde, in northeast Germany, she was the second daughter of German journalist Werner Höfer and Cologne Opera ballerina Elfriede Scheurer. Höfer spent her childhood in the aftermath of World War II when countless buildings that had been destroyed were being reconstructed, an experience that made her keenly aware of architecture. Höfer first gained professional experience as an assistant at a photography atelier in Cologne. She then studied at the Kölner Werkschule and worked as a professional photographer, producing images for portraits and advertisements. From 1970 to 1972, she studied photography at Werner Bokelberg studio in Hamburg, and in 1973, enrolled in Kunstakademie Düsseldorf, a cultural center of the time where artists actively experimented and exchanged ideas. For three years the artist studied film under Denmark born film producer Ole John before switching her focus to the study of photography under Bernd Becher in his first year as a professor. Höfer was among the first generation of the Becher circle, along with influential contemporary photographers Andreas Gursky, Thomas Struth and Thomas Ruff. From 1997 to 2000, Höfer worked as a professor at Hochschule für Gestaltung, Karlsruhe.

Exhibition History & Collections

Beginning with a solo exhibition at the Konrad Fischer Gallery in Düsseldorf, Candida Höfer has consistently shown her works internationally. Some of her most notable exhibitions include the *Louvre* series at the Musée du Louvre, her first solo exhibition in North America,

Architecture of Absence at the Norton Museum of Art, the Kunsthalle Basel, the Hamburg Kunsthalle, the Power Plant in Toronto, and most recently at the Baltimore Museum of Art and the Carnegie Museum of Art. Over more than forty years she has shown her work in over 100 exhibitions. In a major recent traveling exhibition titled *Projects: Done*, she showed a selection of work completed over her 40-year career — exhibited in collaboration with the architectural studio Kuehn Malvezzi. From 2004 to 2007, Höfer traveled to different parts of the world to photograph conceptual artist On Kawara's *Date Paintings* included in private collections. In 2003, she represented Germany at the Venice Biennale together with Martin Kippenberger, and in 2002 she participated in Documenta 11, organized by Okwui Enwezor. In another major body of work, Höfer was commissioned by the Musée des Beaux-Arts to photograph different casts of Rodin's *The Burghers of Calais* held in museums and private collections.

Candida Höfer's work is represented in permanent museum collections worldwide, including the Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York; the Getty Museum, Los Angeles; the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Harvard University Art Museum, Cambridge; the Andalusian Contemporary Art Center, Seville, Spain; the Paris National Library; the Centre George Pompidou, Paris; the Staatliche Museen zu Berlin; the Hamburger Bahnhof, Berlin; the Kunsthalle Nürnberg; and the Tate Modern, London.

About the Works

I want to capture how rooms change in time, how rooms change by what is put into them and how these things are related to one another.

- Candida Höfer, 2000¹

Candida Höfer has taken on diverse subjects in her pursuit of image making, photographing shared public spaces such as bookstores, cafeterias, museums, offices, zoos, and libraries. Interested in public spaces and architecture, Höfer produces each image as a figurative representation, resulting in an image with intense visual lucidity. This objective approach is similarly reflected in how she titles her work; her captions concisely indicate the subject space or building, location, and the date when photographed, allowing audiences to see clearly the artist's documentary approach to photography. It is a continuous visual study of space and representation, rather than technical concerns, that lies at the root of Höfer's practice. The artificially depicted objects and built environments in Höfer's photographs do not simply represent particular arrangements of objects or locations. They transcend these physical

¹ Wendermann, Gerda. "Candida Höfer. Rooms of Light." *Candida Hofer: Weimar*. Passavia, Passau: Shirmer/Mosel, 2007, p.9

constructs, recording the subtle effects and transformations that occur with the accumulation of time.

The twelve works from the *Neues Museum* series in the exhibition present eight different parts of the recently renovated Neues Museum. For Höfer, a museum is a site that symbolizes a temporal space wherein a society's habits are always changing and the display of artworks is transformative. The Neues Museum reveals the wounds that remain from extensive bombing during WWII. In the renovation, the traditional architectural elements were restored, framing their historical collections including Ancient Egyptian, prehistoric and the medieval artifacts. The following representative works in the exhibition – *Neues Museum Berlin XII*, *Neues Museum Berlin VII*, and *Neues Museum Berlin IX* – portray the North Dome Hall, an octagonal hall located in the northwest corner of the building. On display in the center of the hall is a portrait bust of Queen Nefertiti, while the semi-circular areas on the wall show images of Greek heroes such as Hercules and Andromeda. The coffering in the dome portrays stories from Genesis that depicts gods and sacred animals. Also included are *Neues Museum Berlin VI* and *Neues Museum Berlin XII*, which portray the chapel-like Medieval Hall and its ceiling frescos. Before the restoration, the dome was filled with red and gold stars decorated with velarium from ancient Roman times.

In order to express the spatial nature of the museum, the artist focuses on the history of its interiors and reveals typological aspects found in the building's innate functions rather than those based on its aesthetics. All of the works in Höfer's exhibition are related, showcasing the artist's continued investigation in "human absence" and the "creation of space." The exhibition at Kukje Gallery provides an invaluable opportunity to glimpse the artist's approach to framing the different locales that embody and represent contemporary culture.

Exhibition Images & Captions

Use of images must clearly credit the artist and other relevant parties.



Neues Museum Berlin VI

2009

C-print

163 x 118 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery, Seoul



Neues Museum Berlin XI

2009

C-print

183 x 141 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery, Seoul

KUKJE GALLERY

PRESS RELEASE

Exhibition Images & Captions

Use of images must clearly credit the artist and other relevant parties.



Neues Museum Berlin XVI

2009

C-print

163 x 225 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery, Seoul



Neues Museum Berlin VIII

2009

C-print

184 x 222 cm

Courtesy of the artist and Kukje Gallery, Seoul