

Press Release
11 March 2021

From Becher to Blume – Photographs from the Garnatz Collection and Die Photographische Sammlung/SK Stiftung Kultur in Dialogue

Featuring works by Bernd and Hilla Becher, Boris Becker, Anna and Bernhard Blume, Chargesheimer, Jim Dine, Frank Dömer, Gina Lee Felber, Candida Höfer, Benjamin Katz, Jürgen Klauke, Astrid Klein, Werner Mantz, Augustina von Nagel, Floris Neusüss, Sigmar Polke, Arnulf Rainer, Albert Renger-Patzsch, Tata Ronkholz, Thomas Ruff, Hugo Schmölg, Wilhelm Schürmann, and Thomas Struth

On view: 12 March until 8 August 2021

We are pleased that we may present our top-class exhibition as of 12 March during the usual opening times. The exhibition, which should have opened at the end of November 2020, has not yet been shown to the public due to the lockdown. We will be happy to invite you, as a press representative, to individually agreed one-on-one meetings with immediate effect.

The exhibition “From Becher to Blume” provides in-depth insights in particular into the influential photography of the 1980s and 90s, a period that produced a number of innovative bodies of work and concepts. A central role is played by the Rhineland, home to numerous artists, museums, and galleries. The collector couple Ute and Eberhard Garnatz were part of this extremely lively scene, and began as early as the 1970s to pursue their collecting activities with great dedication. In addition to amassing a large number of paintings, sculptures, and prints, they also built a distinctive and remarkably diverse collection of photographs, some of them dating back to the 1950s but for the most part produced during the 1980s to the 2000s. During that decade, photography was more and more becoming part of the fine arts cosmos. The medium resolutely carved out a place for itself with and alongside the traditional genres. And the collectors followed this development with an alert eye. Keeping pace with the times, they began to focus on artists who used the photographic image as basis for their work and for whom the camera was hence a matter-of-fact technical tool in their artistic practice. Some of these artists chose the documentary image as their springboard, while others were far less interested in the medium’s ability to faithfully reproduce reality and instead ventured into experimental realms. There were also those who attempted to confound the world of objects in their photos, or who staged or made use of the chemical nature of the photographic process to arrive at pictorial works in a more painterly idiom.

Showcasing the Garnatz Collection offers Die Photographische Sammlung/SK Stiftung Kultur the opportunity to arrange photographs from both collections in a productive dialogue. A common denominator can be found in particular in the works of Bernd and Hilla Becher, while photographers including Boris Becker, Candida Höfer, Thomas Ruff, and Thomas

Struth are likewise represented in both collections. The exhibition furthermore places rare staged and experimental works in context. These are juxtaposed with other works that straddle the genres of photography and painting. As much as the medium of photography claims to reproduce reality, the range of possibilities it offers equally inspires artists to create works verging on the abstract or lyrical.

“From Becher to Blume” thus unfurls a broad and extremely varied spectrum of photographic approaches, which come together here in a refreshingly informal way to reveal their many contrasts and contradictions. On display are over 150 exhibits, including extensive serial works, by a total of 22 artists who have been instrumental in shaping recent German photography through their innovative contributions and continue to exert a major influence on the artistic medium.

A catalogue has been published by Snoeck Verlag to accompany the exhibition (Price: 36 €).

The exhibition is funded by the Kunststiftung NRW and the Sparkasse KölnBonn.

“Rebecca Unz – Head Studies” 2020 August Sander Prize winner

12 March until 8 August 2021

The August Sander Prize 2020 went to the young Austrian artist Rebecca Unz (born 2000) for her portrait series *Sensibelchen*, 2018–2019. The color photographs show the faces of young women and men from the Hip Hop and Rap scenes. These are head studies, modulated by special lighting that assigns each portrait its own place in the series. The sequence thus develops frame by frame on a scale from warm to cold tones, intensifying the range of variations in the moments captured by Rebecca Unz. The series is being shown in the cabinet exhibition

For Rebecca Unz, the genre of portraiture offers a multitude of possibilities for engaging artistically with each subject as a complex individual. The person in question may serve here as a projection surface for different facets of formal design approaches. Unz makes use not only of photography but also drawing – traditionally in pencil or digitally – as tools whose representational potential she handles with confidence and skill. Whether creating a naturalistic image or one that flirts with abstraction, she deliberately blurs the boundaries of recognizability of both medium and object, and thus challenges the viewer to look more closely.

Rebecca Unz attended the course in Photography & Multimedia Art at the HTBLVA Ortweinschule in Graz. The current cabinet exhibition “Head Studies” features exemplary works from her final thesis, “Wer ist Eloquent” (Who is Eloquent?). Her series *Sensibelchen* (Sensitive Ones), which was awarded the August Sander Prize, is on view along with selected related photographs and drawings.

For press enquiries, please call 0221 888 95 105.

Press photos for the exhibition can be downloaded via the direct link: <https://bit.ly/36JJpKT>

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The exhibitions can only be visited with advance registration, ensuring traceability. Online tickets can be purchased on the website <https://www.sk-kultur.de/en/online-ticketing-from-becher-to-blume-en>. We kindly ask the visitors to adhere to the hygiene protection measures, in particular to wear a medical mask and compliance with the minimum clearances. **Since 22. March 2021, the submission of a daily negative corona test is required.**

Admission: € 5.50 (reduced € 3), entry: € 5.50 (reduced € 3), plus online sales fee, free entry on the first Monday of the month!

Opening times: every day except Wednesday from 2 p.m. to 7 p.m.

Closed on Good Friday, 2 April, open on Easter Sunday, 4 April and Easter Monday, 5 April.

There are currently no public tours.