

WHEN THERE IS HOPE

Triennial of Photography Hamburg 2015

19. Jun 2015 to
13. Sep 2015

HAMBURGER KUNSTHALLE



HAMBURG. For the Triennial of Photography Hamburg 2015 (19 June - 13 September), the Hamburger Kunsthalle is presenting in Galerie der Gegenwart (2nd Floor) some 100 works by internationally renowned artists in an exhibition titled *When there is Hope*. The photograph is today the prime medium for capturing dreams and fantasies, but also for expressing our search for identity and hope. As it reveals our yearnings and expectations, however, the photographic image also documents the cruel realities of social and political upheaval. The exhibition is devoted to these ambivalent and highly controversial aspects of the „principle of hope” in contemporary photography, announced hamburger-kunsthalle.de.

In these days of globalization and migration, hope has become a motivation for change and relocation, inspiring people to set off for new shores and try to get a fresh start. Hope - which Albert Camus (1913-1960) called „the highest form of desperation left behind” - is the driving force behind both collective and individual wishes and utopias. The exhibition thus centers on the theme of emigration as one of the most pressing issues of our time. A second section explores utopias and places of yearning as possible alternatives or escapes, in connection with the search for identity and the staging of the self.

The themes of losing one’s home and exile, along with the associated hopes, figure prominently in the work of many artists, in many cases based on their own biographies. Examples include Yto Barrada, who lives in Tangier and New York, and also the photographer and video artist Adrian Paci, who emigrated from Albania. Paci’s film *Centro di Permanenza temporanea* documents the moment of desolation and abandonment as a permanent state of limbo. Eva Leitolf’s series *Postcards from Europe*. Work from the ongoing archives, since 2006 subtly reflects on the sealing-off of Europe’s outer borders, while Clemens von Wedemeyer stages the

absurdity of European visa checks by relocating them to the bleak wooded outskirts of Berlin in his film *Otjesd*. Andre Lutzen shows his photo series *AuBenlinie Europa* border towns and their lodgings from the point of view of refugees.

Photography and film are by contrast used as mediums of illusion and as a means for escaping reality in the works of Zohra Bensemra, Cao Fei, Mohamed Camara and Roman Ondak. The multimedia works of the Chinese artist Cao Fei deal with the younger generation's abandoned dreams and fantasies and with their strategies for escaping the dreary reality of everyday life. For her film *Whose Utopia* (2006), Fei asked young factory workers in Foshan to present their visions of a different life, for example as a musician or ballet dancer. Mohamed Camara from Mali shows in his photo series *Chambre Malienne* (2006) the beauty of mundane moments as a sign of hope and optimism. The Indian photographer Dayanita Singh for her part demonstrates in the photo sequence *Dream Villa* (2008) how the nocturnal light can transform ordinary landscapes and cities into an unsettling world of mysterious dreams and stories.

Singh's nocturnal blue mysteries in the series *Blue Book* (2009) resemble in their melancholy aesthetic Rivane Neuenschwander's visions of indeterminate places in the photo series *A place not far from here* (2009). Almut Linde's photo *Dirty Minimal #52.2 - Landschaft/Feuerpause / Landscape/Cease-Fire* (2008) shows a soldier lost in reverie contemplating a barren landscape, thus alluding to the traditional motif of longing and hope evoked in the nature paintings of the Romantic artist Caspar David Friedrich (1774-1840). Nan Goldin makes use of the photograph as a means of self-dramatization for a no-holds-barred autobiographical slide show titled *All by myself* (1993-1996), while Annette Messager evokes in *Mes Voeux* (1988) a more general impression of lust and physicality in the style of photographic votive offerings.

Participating artists: Yto Barrada (b. 1971), Zohra Bensemra (b. 1968), Mohamed Camara (b. 1985), Cao Fei (b. 1978), Carlos Garaicoa (b. 1967), Nan Goldin (b. 1953), Shilpa Gupta (b. 1976), Roni Horn (b. 1955), Astrid Klein (b. 1951), Eva Leitolf (b. 1966), Almut Linde (b. 1965), Andre Lutzen (b. 1963), Annette Messager (b. 1943), Rivane Neuenschwander (b. 1967), Roman Ondak (b. 1966), Adrian Paci (b. 1969), Anri Sala (b. 1974), Dayanita Singh (b. 1961) and Clemens von Wedemeyer (b. 1974).

ARTICLE: artnovini.com

*IMAGE: Adrian Paci (*1969), Centro di Permanenza temporanea, 2007, C-Print auf Aluminium Dibond, 127,5 x 147 cm Sammlung Deutsche Bank
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