

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS

Bernd Becher (1931-2007) and Hilla Becher (b. 1934)

Bernd and Hilla Becher, the artist-couple known for their systematic and compulsive documentation of industrial architecture displayed in rigorous yet meditative sequences, can perhaps be considered the parents of modern photography. They have impacted generations of photographers, many of whom are included in this show, and have had a profound influence upon Minimalist and Conceptual art of the 1960s, 1970s and beyond.

Bernd and Hilla Becher met as students at the Düsseldorf Academy in 1957 and two years later embarked on a collaboration photographing industrial buildings around Germany that were slowly being abandoned or destroyed, in an effort to document a history of industry and its unique architecture that was becoming obsolete. The Bechers would spend five decades together tirelessly documenting industrial architecture—barns, water towers, grain elevators, coal bunkers, gas tanks, warehouses, steel plants, oil refineries, blast furnaces, storage silos—first in Germany and then throughout Europe and the United States. The Bechers were fascinated by the similarities in the design of these various industrial structures, the attention to detail and robustness of the architecture, the stark visual impact they created and their symbolic significance as remains of a particular time and place in history. The Bechers photographed their subjects in an objective, clinical manner, always on overcast days to avoid deviations in light or shadow, in essentially three different formats: first the structure in its entirety, then detailed shots of key functional elements, and lastly the subjects presented in the larger context of their environment. By the mid-1960s they began exhibiting their works in grids—dubbed “typologies”—to allow comparisons of the functions, construction materials, regional idiosyncrasies and general appearances of their subjects.

They also presented large-scale singular photographs of the sublimely glorious structures. Their works not only preserve a history of industrial achievement and design that might otherwise have been overlooked, they are visual and conceptual meditations that have an important place in the canon of art history.

The Bechers elevated photography to a serious and autonomous art in the 1960s and 1970s. Bernd Becher was the first professor to offer courses in photography at the Düsseldorf Art Academy, where he served on the faculty from 1976 to 1996. The Bechers counted Andreas Gursky, Candida Höfer, Axel Hütte, Thomas Ruff, Thomas Struth and Elger Esser among their students and their impact and influence can be traced in all their works.



Wassertürme, 1978

Four silver gelatin prints on Baryt paper
30 x 24.3 cm; (11 3/4 x 9 5/8 in.) each

Fachwerkhäuser des Siegener Industriegebietes, 1965

Photo collage
29.5 x 47 cm. (11 5/8 x 18 1/2 in.); 8.2 x 21.2 cm. (3 1/4 x 8 3/8 in.) each

Hochofen Duisburg Bruckhausen, 1991

Silver gelatin print on Baryt paper
59.7 x 45.7 cm; (23 1/2 x 18 in.)

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Thomas Demand (b. 1964)

Originally trained as a sculptor at the Düsseldorf Art Academy, Thomas Demand began his career creating elaborate models and environments from paper and cardboard. Limited by storage space, in the early 1990s Demand started photographing his paper structures and then destroying them, the photographs becoming the only substantiation of his sculptures, and eventually considered the actual works of art. Demand's subjects typically have political or socio-cultural references, often culled from images in the media, such as his *Presidency* series or works based upon soldiers' snapshots from Iraq.

There is an uncanny and prickly feel to Demand's photographs. They initially strike the viewer as representative images of seemingly banal subjects or environments, yet soon register as artificial and synthetic. Words are eliminated from scattered papers, people are omitted, surfaces lack detail or definition, perspective is slightly askew. Demand is interested in highlighting this uneasy and tenuous relationship between reality and fiction, nature and artifice, truth and perception, organic and manmade, media presentation and reception. *Hydrokultur* initially appears to be a photograph of a corner in a dreary office building or public space crammed with a few potted plants in an attempt to bring some oxygen and suggestion of nature into a clinical environment, yet quickly the evidence of paper and flat construction betray the reality of the scene, directing the viewer to contemplate questions of perception, reality and artifice. Although Demand considers himself a conceptual artist before a photographer, his photographs stimulate, provoke and often confound viewers, both visually and conceptually.



Hydrokultur, 2010
C-print with Diasec
168 x 138 cm; (66 1/8 x 54 3/8 in.)

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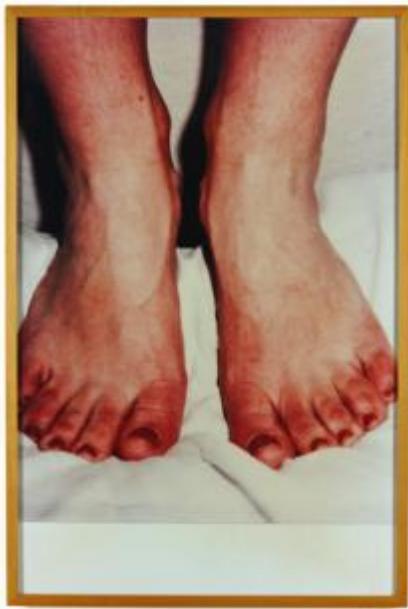
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Günther Förg (b. 1952)

Günther Förg, who studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Munich where he now serves as a professor, produces painting, sculpture, photographs and assemblages in abstract, minimalist and conceptual manners. Förg began working in photography in the 1980s, taking pictures of famous Bauhaus buildings. His work included in the exhibition is an arresting, monumental photograph of two human feet—clearly a very humorous and personal image revealing the imperfections and individuality of someone's body parts. The magnification of only the subject's feet is at once extremely private yet also completely anonymous, a limited window into the artist's life and work.



Photo, 1984
C-print
185 x 125 cm; (72 7/8 x 49 1/4 in.)

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Andreas Gursky (b. 1955)

Andreas Gursky is largely considered the most prominent living contemporary photographer, both from an art historical and market perspective. Gursky has had retrospectives at institutions including the Museum of Modern Art, New York; Centre Pompidou, Paris; the Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago; and Kunstmuseum Basel and achieved the world record price for a photograph sold at auction (\$4.3 million USD) in November 2011. Gursky is lauded for his highly saturated, meticulously detailed, majestically composed, panoramic, large-scale photographs that often depict scenes emblematic of globalization and commerce. His work has been compared to 19th century landscape painting, as the rich detail and sublime beauty he achieves in his photographic compositions create a sense of overwhelming awe in the viewer. His iconic imagery includes stock exchanges, store interiors, concert arenas, hotel lobbies, and specific landscapes. His methodical approach to making carefully composed, objective photography clearly was influenced by his teachers, Bernd and Hilla Becher.

Love Parade is a stunning panoramic of an outdoor music festival in Berlin. From a distance the curvature of the sea of people and the density of trees behind create a beautifully symmetrical composition that suggests a view of the earth from outer space. Upon closer inspection, diminutive details of thousands of people enjoying the revelry can be seen—from outlandish outfits to bodies moving in dance—resulting in a technical masterpiece. *Düsseldorf Flughafen II* is a more serene, poignant image taken at the Düsseldorf airport. Here Gursky has transformed a seemingly banal scene into a pensive composition perhaps reminiscent of a Rothko painting. The cold, grey foreground of the airstrip is punctuated by a lone figure in silhouette seemingly contemplating which direction to go, the complex diagonal painted lines of the runways pointing him in all directions. A strip of chartreuse grass becomes the horizon line and grounding center of the image, contrasting with the diffused, hazy sky in the upper half of this monumental photograph.



Love Parade, 2001
C-print with Diasec
122 x 264 cm; (48 1/8 x 104 in.)

Düsseldorf Flughafen II, 1994
C-print
185.8 x 232.8 cm; (73 1/8 x 91 5/8 in.)

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Candida Höfer (b. 1944)

Candida Höfer is celebrated for her technical precision and unflagging dedication to documenting grand, historically significant public spaces. Höfer has travelled the world finding inspiration in libraries, churches, museums, theatres, universities and palaces, where she composes her iconic and awe-inspiring photographs that celebrate the architecture, design, workmanship and cultural richness of each of her subjects. Her works are notably devoid of people, focusing instead on the elaborate details of these majestic spaces, yet they all undeniably suggest a richness and flurry of human activity as either contemporary or historic centers of cultural activity. The photographs are always composed in either a fully frontal, symmetrical fashion or at a deliberate angle, typically flooded with light and dazzling color. It is this objective, disengaged manner of tireless documentation that was clearly informed by Bernd and Hilla Becher. Höfer trained under Bernd Becher at the Düsseldorf Art Academy in the 1970s and along with Thomas Ruff was the first of their students to show photographs in color.

Teatro La Fenice di Venezia II is a depiction of the famous 18th century opera house in Venice, Italy, which has been destroyed twice by fire and was most recently reconstructed in 2001 in an elaborate 19th century style. Shot in her typical frontal format, Höfer has exploited the design of the theatre to create a dramatic composition: the red velvet chairs, the gilded balconies, and the decorative ceiling fresco all recede toward the central focal point, the stage, which glows in a bath of white light. Höfer somehow defies the two dimensionality of photography, as all of her works provide an incredible illusion of depth and space and timelessness. In 2005, Höfer embarked upon a project at the Musée du Louvre, documenting its various galleries, examining not only the sacred art they exhibit but also their individual design, arches, tiles and embellishments, with spectators and tourists entirely absent. *Musée du Louvre, Paris XIII* is a view of the 17th century Galerie de la Melpomène. The gallery's rounded arches and modern lighting tracks create a diminishing perspective toward the end of the hall while fragmented Greek, Etruscan and Roman figures rhythmically twist and contort, becoming the only true inhabitants there. Höfer's signature symmetry, lighting, framing and technical ingenuity—not to mention a meditation on the rich history of this legendary cultural institution—are brilliantly achieved in this photograph.



Teatro La Fenice Di Venezia II 2011

Inkjet

120 x 150.1 cm; (47 1/4 x 59 in.)

Musée du Louvre Paris XIII 2005

C-print

247 x 200 cm; (97 1/4 x 78 3/4 in.)

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Axel Hütte (b. 1951)

Axel Hütte, who trained at the Düsseldorf Art Academy under Bernd Becher, and later shared a studio space with Andreas Gursky and Thomas Ruff, is recognized for his sublime photographs of natural landscapes, among other subject matter. Parallels can be drawn in his photography to the Germanic tradition of romantic landscape painting, in particular the work of Caspar David Friedrich. Hütte's images of vast and extreme landscapes taken around the world evoke feelings of solitude and awe, becoming reflections on the fortitude and sovereignty of nature.

The three works included in this exhibition come from Hütte's *Towards the Wood* series in which he has photographed reflections in water where ripples, currents, falling leaves and tree branches create vibrations and push the image to near abstraction, belied only by the presence of human figures in the foreground. Hütte came upon this series when looking through a plate camera—which shows everything upside down—at the reflection of a figure in the surface of water, thus rendering the image 'right side up.' This simple optical illusion, which calls for no digital manipulation, puzzles viewers who see it as a violation of optical laws. The inclusion of people in this series marks a departure for Hütte, whose works are typically devoid of human presence. The hazy, shimmering reflections of single figures or groupings adds an ethereal, mythological—the story of Narcissus comes to mind—quality to the work; the floral skirt, the diaphanous gown, the sinewy nude in these three photographs become painterly devices for this masterful photographer.



Portrait #22, 2005
C-print
157 x 237 cm; (61 3/4 x 93 1/4 in.)

Portrait #4, 2001
C-print
135 x 165 cm; (53 1/8 x 65 in.)

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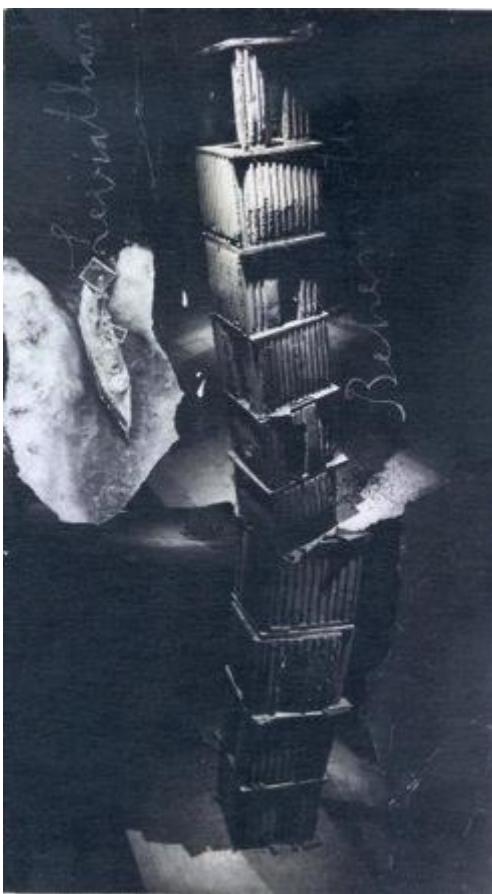
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Anselm Kiefer (b. 1945)

Anselm Kiefer, who studied informally under Joseph Beuys at the Düsseldorf Art Academy in the 1970s, is a painter, sculptor and mixed media artist whose monumental works critically examine controversial German history, in particular the country's role in World War II. In addition to addressing issues of post-war identity, Kiefer takes inspiration from ancient mythology, the Kabala, mysticism and astrology. Incorporating organic and often ephemeral materials such as straw, ash, clay, lead and shellac into his work Kiefer creates both provocative intellectual examinations and aesthetically arresting works.

In 2002, Kiefer was commissioned to create an installation at the vast Pirelli warehouses in Milan, where he eventually erected *The Seven Heavenly Palaces*, seven haphazard towers made of lead, concrete and glass. *Leviathan-Behemoth* is a unique photo-collage included in this exhibition that directly relates to this metaphysical installation.



Leviathan-Behemoth, 2003
Photo collage and gouache
125 x 72 cm; (49 1/4 x 28 3/8 in.)

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Jürgen Klauke (b. 1943)

Jürgen Klauke, one of the first and most legendary performance artists of the 1970s, examines issues of gender identity, social norms, human behavioral patterns, sexuality and vanity in his work. Klauke documented his performances and self-manipulations with photography, the photographs thus becoming the record and manifestation of his work. A fearless and audacious performer, Klauke often assumed fictional identities to examine the topics that motivated him.

Rot is an early work by the artist in which he playfully and provocatively addresses sexual identity and mythology, transforming himself into an autonomously erotic being. This sequence of absurdly subversive works shot in the 1970s certainly establishes him as one of the pioneers of avant-garde performance and body art. The two large-scale photographs entitled *Ästhetische Paranoia* are surreal depictions of people enveloped by impenetrable curtains of impossibly long hair. These curtains of slick black hair obscure and overtake the identity of the sitters, contemplations perhaps on the paranoid self-perceptions of society and people's fear of examining themselves beyond the surface. Formally, the diagonal lines created by the dark bands of hair bisect the stark white mattresses like a Minimalist painting, and the rich dark and bright white tones of the photograph exhibit Klauke's technical acumen in the medium.



Ästhetische Paranoia, 2006
C-print
180 x 240 cm; (70 7/8 x 94 1/2 in.)

Ästhetische Paranoia, 2006
C-print
180 x 240 cm; (70 7/8 x 94 1/2 in.)

Rot, 1974
Seven C-prints
40 x 30 cm; (15 3/4 x 11 3/4 in.) each

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Astrid Klein (b. 1951)

Since the 1970s, Astrid Klein has been incorporating text and appropriated imagery into her works. Often the fragments of text—derived from literary, philosophical, scientific and mythological writings—are crossed out, show corrections, are hand-written or distinctly typographical in appearance. The texts and imagery in Klein's work typically appear incongruous, yet often coincide to create an entirely new narrative or reveal subconscious associations, and always result in a visually compelling image.

Klein is interested in the portrayal of women in cultural media and has always been fascinated by the powerful allure and sexualized portrayal of women in the films of John Cassavetes, Jean-Luc Godard and R.W. Fassbinder. The two works in this exhibition are from her *Broken Heart* series, in which she intersperses textual excerpts from Arno Schmidt's *Zettel's Dream* with stills of women from cinema and photonovels from the 1960s and 1970s. Klein has chosen voyeuristic, fetishized images of young sex symbols to create dynamic collages that address the perception and particular stereotypes of women in mass culture. The collaging of notes, disparate fonts and horizontal bands of blacked out text with stylized and seductive images of beautiful women result in visually bold images that immediately stimulate the viewer.



Ce n'est pas une image juste ... From the series: 'Broken Heart', 1980
Collage
196 x 140 cm; (77 1/8 x 55 1/8 in.)

Wenn Mir's in die Theorie passt... From the series: 'Broken Heart', 1980
Collage
196 x 140 cm; (77 1/8 x 55 1/8 in.)

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Imi Knoebel (b. 1940)

Imi Knoebel studied at the Düsseldorf Art Academy under Joseph Beuys from 1964-1971, where he was one of the first students to use photography as an independent artistic medium. Adhering to a Minimalist and Conceptual approach to art making, with a strong affinity for Suprematist artist Kazimir Malevich, Knoebel became known for his obsessive line paintings and drawings. In 1968, he extended this practice to photography, creating his *Projections* series, two of which are included in this exhibition.

Knoebel's *Projection* series entailed using an empty slide projector to shine squares of light onto walls in a darkened room and evolved to his placing slides covered in copy ink with precisely carved vertical and horizontal lines into the projector and then cast throughout the room. Projecting these lines at various angles throughout a darkened space, at windows, corners, wall fittings and architectural irregularities, offered limitless possibilities for the artist. Knoebel documented these light projections with his camera and displayed the variations in large grids, often with as many as 80 photographs comprising a single work, such as one of the works included in this show. Knoebel's light projection photographs represent a pioneering and novel time not only in photography but also in the history of Conceptual art.



Projektionen, 1973
Eighty photos
24 x 32 cm; (9 1/2 x 12 5/8 in.) each

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Sigmar Polke (1941-2010)

Sigmar Polke's *oeuvre* is marked by a fascination with experimentation and manipulation of artistic media. Polke studied at the Düsseldorf Art Academy from 1961-1967 where he was deeply influenced by his professor Joseph Beuys. Obsessively curious about the world around him, Polke used a 35 mm Leica camera to record everything he encountered, traveling extensively through Europe, Brazil, the United States, Afghanistan and Pakistan. Polke printed his photographs with intentional haphazardness, underexposing, overexposing, combining negatives and positives, repeating images, creasing the wet photo paper, using chemical solvents to create stains, hand coloring blemishes made from a scratched negative. He was not concerned with adhering to the rules of the darkroom or ensuring a photograph was properly washed, fixed or dried. In the 1980s Polke continued this experimentation in his paintings, combining pigments, solvents, resins and fabrics to produce extreme chemical reactions and question the rules of conventional art making. His interest in chance and spontaneity tied him to the Dadaists and Surrealists, while the effect of movement and simultaneity in his work references Cubism and Futurism.

Each unique photograph in the show chronicles Polke's interactions with friends, banal objects of interest, and foreign cities and people, yet their most striking characteristic is the manner in which they were produced. The spills, tears, discolorations and imperfections are testament to his experimental and avant-garde methods and often create eerie, disorienting or humorous effects. A rare Pakistan work is included in the show, as well as two *Nuggets* works, from a period in the 1980s when he investigated inorganic compounds such as gold and crystal at a microscopic level.



Ohne Titel ("Nachtwache" im Petit Palais, Paris), 1971
Silver gelatin print on Baryt paper
21 x 29.7 cm; (8 1/4 x 11 3/4 in.)

Ohne Titel (Willich), 1972
Silver gelatin print on Baryt paper
21 x 29.7 cm; (8 1/4 x 11 3/4 in.)

Ohne Titel (Willich), 1972
Silver gelatin print on Baryt paper
29.7 x 21 cm; (11 3/4 x 8 1/4 in.)

Ohne Titel (Mariette im Dreiviertelprofil), 1969-70
Silver gelatin print on Baryt paper
21.1 x 29 cm; (8 1/4 x 11 3/8 in.)

Ohne Titel (Pakistan, Jeep), 1974
Silver gelatin print on Baryt paper
87 x 84 cm; (34 1/4 x 33 1/8 in.)

Ohne Titel (Nugget), 1986
Silver gelatin print
50 x 60 cm; (19 3/4 x 23 5/8 in.)

Ohne Titel (Nugget), 1986
Silver gelatin print
50 x 60 cm; (19 3/4 x 23 5/8 in.)

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Gerhard Richter (b.1932)

While Gerhard Richter is perhaps most well known for his monumental figurative and abstract paintings, the significance of photography in his prolific career cannot be underestimated. There are at least four roles photography has played in Richter's *oeuvre*: photos used as direct studies projected onto canvas for his blurred "photo paintings", overpainted photographs, photographs of his paintings modified to become new works of art, and autonomous photographs produced without any reference to his paintings. The latter three types of photographic works are included in this exhibition.

Uran (Uranium), executed in 1989, is a vertical photograph showing the left half of a horizontal black and white abstract painting called *Uran 2*. By cropping, resizing, slightly lightening the colors, and shifting the image of a thickly impastoed painting into a flat photograph it becomes not only a meditation on the brilliant painting technique of the artist but a wholly new work itself. *Ophelia* alludes to Richter's painting in a more disconnected way—it is a magnification of a mixture of oil paint, water and lacquer from his studio. The playful title of the photograph, which refers to Shakespeare's *Hamlet*, the irregular diamond shape of the photograph, and the supernatural effect created by the magnified paint imbue this work with both conceptual and visual resonance. *Six Fotos* is an extremely rare work for the artist as it is a sequence of action self portraits (Richter is not known to make self portraits) taken with a delayed shutter release. *Onkel Rudi (Uncle Rudi)* is a photograph derived from a painting derived from a photograph from Richter's private family photo album, showing his uncle, Rudolf Schönfelder, in the uniform of the Wehrmacht. This photograph is not simply a reproduction of the painting but rather a new incarnation of it, as it differs slightly in size, color, contrast and cropping with the painting upon which it is based. Lastly, a small gem of an overpainted print is included in this exhibition to complete the overview of Richter's fascinating and noteworthy work in photography.



Onkel Rudi, 2000
C-print mounted on Dibond plate
87 x 50 cm; (34 1/4 x 19 3/4 in.)

Ophelia, 1998
C-print mounted between Plexiglas and Alucobond plates
102 x 116.4 cm; (40 1/8 x 45 7/8 in.)

Six Fotos. 2.5.89 - 7.5.89, 1991
Six black-and-white photographs on resin-coated paper
35 x 50.8 cm; (13 3/4 x 20 in.) each

Uran, 1989
Black-and-white photograph, silver gelatin print
99.8 x 69.9 cm; (39 1/4 x 27 1/2 in.)

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Thomas Ruff (b. 1958)

Thomas Ruff is a conceptual photographer who creates visually striking works that have become icons of contemporary photography. Trained under Bernd Becher at the Düsseldorf Art Academy, Ruff would go on to replace his mentor and teach at the school from 2000 to 2005. His career is marked by many distinctive and important series including his portraits of the 1980s and 1990s, *Sterne* (night skies), *L.M.V.D.R* (architectural series), nudes, jpegs and *Substrat* works.

In the late 1980s, fresh out of art school, Ruff began a project taking portraits of his friends and acquaintances from the Düsseldorf art and music scene. They are objective, emotionless, cold images reminiscent of passport photos, though monumental in scale. While at once impersonal, these works are also starkly revealing in that the viewer is confronted with a massive, unadulterated image of a stranger, able to read whatever psychology he or she wants into the person. *Porträt (T. Bernstein)* is one such work from this early series, depicting an artist friend of Ruff's. Another portrait in the exhibition is from the *Anderes Porträt* series, in which Ruff amalgamated facial features from various photographic portraits in his archives using a 1970s machine that was formerly used by police to find suspects based on witness descriptions. The resultant portraits, which often combine features of men and women, are Ruff's reflections upon genetic engineering and notions of procreation and simply an experiment with an interesting analog system. The nude included in this show comes from a series of pornographic images that Ruff appropriated from the Internet, digitally altering and obscuring the faces and backgrounds and over-pixelating the entire image to create uncanny, almost painterly, provocative imagery. *h.t.b. 02* comes from a commission Ruff embarked upon in 1999, photographing historic Ludwig Mies van der Rohe buildings, in this example the Haus Tugendhat in Brno, Czech Republic. Ruff's preoccupation in this project was to present the buildings in a way that did not feel simply documentarian, but rather was his personal, signature, inventive take on the subject matter. Ruff achieved this by creating stereoscopic photographs and often digitally manipulating them by adding hyper-real colors, blurring them, substituting and creating landscapes and skies, and using archival materials.



Porträt (T. Bernstein), 1988
C-print
210 x 165 cm; (82 5/8 x 65 in.)

Anderes Porträt 62G/38, 1994/95
C-print
200 x 150 cm; (78 3/4 x 59 in.)

h.t.b. 02, 1999
Chromogenic colour print mounted in Diasec Face in artist's wooden frame
187 x 236.2 cm; (73 5/8 x 93 in.)

W.h.s.05, 2001
C-print
18 x 25.2 cm; (7 x 9 7/8 in.)

Nudes qfj 06, 2001
Chromogenic color print mounted with Diasec Face
155 x 112 cm; (61 x 44 1/8 in.)

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BEN BROWN FINE ARTS

Thomas Struth (b. 1954)

Thomas Struth, trained at the Düsseldorf Art Academy under Bernd Becher, has achieved great success in his career with a variety of celebrated series. Recognized for his street scenes, portraiture, images of sightseers at museums and places of worship, jungle scenes, and explorations of developing nations and techno-industrial spaces, Struth maintains an objective, observational stance in his photography, while inviting the viewer to find his or her own interpretations and associations.

Todai-ji, Nara comes from a body of work exploring the idea of mass pilgrimages and tourism to sacred places, in this case a Buddhist temple in Japan. A stark contrast is created between the tourists in the foreground, with their backpacks and mundane appearances, and the epic golden Buddha surrounded by the imposing and ornate columns of the temple. Struth draws attention to peoples' reactions to such sacred places and their notions of expected behavior when surrounded by such beauty and history. For *Buksoe Dong, Pyongyang*, Struth traveled to the North Korean capital (accompanied by a nervous guide eager to censor his work) to document the essence of such a depressing and devastated city, which reminded him in many ways of East Germany. Still, Struth has crafted a visually powerful, astutely composed image, seemingly informed by his mentors the Bechers, showing his take on this cold and inhospitable city. Lastly, *Curved Wave Tank, The University of Edinburgh* comes from a recent series examining the structural dynamics and intricacies of scientific research spaces such as physics institutes, pharmaceutical plants, space stations and nuclear facilities. This photograph, depicting a directional wave tank used for testing energy devices, becomes a haunting, evocative and nearly abstract image, with the vibratory reflections in the hazy, acidic green waters shot at a disorienting angle.



Todai-ji, Interior, Nara, 1999
Chromogenic print
170 x 231 cm; (66 3/4 x 91 1/8 in.)

Buksoe Dong, Pyöngyang, 2007
Chromogenic print
150.5 x 200.6 cm; (59 1/4 x 79 in.)

Curved Wave Tank, The University of Edinburgh, 2010
Chromogenic print
201.1 x 146 cm; (79 1/8 x 57 1/2 in.)

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BEN BROWN FINE ARTS

Wolfgang Tillmans (b. 1968)

Considered the documentarian of his generation, Wolfgang Tillmans's informal and candid photographs earned him the Turner Prize in 2000. He was the first non-British born, youngest and only photographer to have won the prize at that time. Tillmans first visited London in 1983 as an exchange student and became infatuated with British youth culture; he then moved there on a more permanent basis in 1995, documenting his contemporaries in the London street and club scenes. Tillmans has also been interested in the mechanical processes of photography, experimenting with chemicals, laser copy printers and light sensitive paper. Tillmans installs his works in very haphazard ways, with unframed photographs hung salon style by clips and tapes, alongside media clippings and ephemera, banishing any hierarchy within his exhibitions.

Eclipse Grid, a set of which was included in his Turner Prize installation and is now in the permanent collection of the Tate, documents the spectacle of a solar eclipse. Each of the 21 photographs in the grid was taken during the eclipse of his immediate surroundings in a tropical locale, with varying degrees of light and detail. Hung together, this serial documentation is an elaborate and poetic look at nature and a reflection of an artist who fervently photographs everything around him and his universe.



Eclipse Grid, 1998
Twenty one C-prints
28 x 18.9 cm; (11 x 7 1/2 in.) each

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