

BEN BROWN FINE ARTS



Candida Höfer, *Hermitage St. Petersburg VIII* 2014, C-print, edition of 6, 180 x 226 cm.

CANDIDA HÖFER: MEMORY

SELECTED WORKS FROM THE STATE HERMITAGE MUSEUM EXHIBITION

13 OCTOBER – 27 NOVEMBER 2015
PRIVATE VIEW MONDAY 12 OCTOBER, 6-8PM

After receiving critical acclaim at the State Hermitage Museum this summer, Candida Höfer's latest series, *Memory* (2014) - capturing the splendour of St Petersburg and its magnificent buildings - will travel to Ben Brown Fine Arts in October. The exhibition will focus on ten carefully selected works, never before seen in the UK.

The Hermitage Museum, Pushkin Palace, Catherine Palace Pushkin, Mariinsky Theatre, as well as the palaces of Pavlovsk and Yusupov theatre provide the glorious setting for this new series produced in the summer of 2014, closely following Höfer's previous work in Central and Southern Italy. The empty interiors of palaces, opera houses, libraries and theatres, are part of the artist's meticulous and skilful documentation of public spaces which have brought her widespread recognition. Through her lens, Höfer captures mankind's greatness - extraordinary buildings and architecture associated with cultural memory and people - yet her spaces are consistently devoid of human presence. For her, 'an absent guest is often the subject of

a conversation'. Here the architecture takes centre stage, losing its attribute of public space, a space created for man, to become an idealised image that could not exist in the public sphere, a world where man has no place.

As curator Nadezda Sinyutina from the State Hermitage Museum puts it, 'by drawing us into the inaccessible, strange and private life of public spaces and breaking through our inherent difficulties in the perception of architecture, Höfer's photographs return to public spaces the aura of unique works of art'.

Candida Höfer produces these large-format photographs without digital enhancement or alteration, using long exposure and working solely with the existing light source. The effect is a rare combination of intimacy and scale, in which intricate architectural detail is captured without sacrificing the sense of space and civilised order.

Höfer is a member of the Düsseldorf School (*Kunstakademie Düsseldorf*) and was a noted pupil of the Bechers, who were heavily influenced by the 1920s German art tradition of *Neue Sachlichkeit* and pioneered a type of detached objectivity. The Bechers' black and white photographs of industrial landscapes and architecture embodied a clinical, documentary style, which Höfer has retained in her work through the same neutral and methodical process. Yet Höfer's large-scale colour prints differ in their more sympathetic approach to the building's culture and history.

NOTES TO THE EDITOR

Born in 1944 in Eberswalde, Candida Höfer lives and works in Cologne. After completing her training at the Schmölz-Huth Studio, she began studying with the influential photography duo Bernd and Hilla Becher in 1976, the teachers of other noted Düsseldorf School photographers such as Andreas Gursky, Thomas Struth, Axel Hütte and Thomas Ruff. Höfer's internationally recognised work has been shown at the Kunsthalle Basel, the Kunsthalle Berne, the Louvre in Paris, the Irish Museum of Modern Art in Dublin, and the State Hermitage Museum in St Petersburg. Höfer has represented Germany at the 2003 Venice Biennale and participated in documenta 11 in 2002, and her photographs are part of major museum and private collections across the globe.

Ben Brown Fine Arts has shown Höfer's work since 2004, with the gallery's first show entitled *Libraries*. Other solo exhibitions featured at the gallery include: *Palaces, Theatres, Churches and a Casino* (2007), *In Italy Part I: Florence* (2009), and *In Italy Part II: Naples* (2009), *A Return to Italy* (2013), *Villa Borghese* (2014). *Memory* is the sixth solo show devoted to the artist in London.

Founded in 2004, Ben Brown Fine Arts is located on Brook's Mews in the heart of Mayfair. The gallery has prominently positioned itself on the contemporary art scene with the sole UK representation of artists such as Ron Arad, Tony Bevan, Ori Gersht, François-Xavier and Claude Lallanne, Nabil Nahas, Gavin Turk, Not Vital and Heinz Mack. Also renowned for its strong expertise in 20th Century Italian Art, the gallery has been exhibiting the work of Lucio Fontana, Alighiero Boetti and Mimmo Rotella, amongst others, since its inception. In 2009 Ben Brown Fine Arts took their first step in an international expansion with the opening of an exhibition space in Hong Kong.

For further press information and enquires please contact:

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Monday to Friday: 11am - 6pm

Saturdays: 10.30am - 2:30pm