

MGKSiegen

Museum für Gegenwartskunst Siegen
Unteres Schloss 1
57072 Siegen

THU. 2.3.23
Press release

Laurenz Berges Maintaining and Disappearing 17.3. – 6.8.23

Special places and changing living environments are the starting point of Laurenz Berges' photographic works, which always follow a development process lasting several years. Since the 1990s, his documentary and at the same time poetic series of works have shed a remarkable light on abandoned or deserted areas around Etzweiler, Duisburg and parts of eastern Germany.

Mudersbach, the place not far from Siegen that was Bernd Becher's second home in his youth, has long interested Laurenz Berges. Becher maintained a link with his grandparents' house throughout his life. He loved the atmosphere in the small village. Following his interest in biographical stories, for the past four years, Berges has been photographing the half-timbered house in which nothing has been allowed to change.

The project is the starting point of an exhibition at the Museum für Gegenwartskunst Siegen, which juxtaposes photographs of two Becher houses directly related to Hilla and Bernd Becher's origins and living and working places in Siegen and Düsseldorf for the first time. More than could be achieved by a portrait, these photos show the circumstances of the famous artist couple's work and life. They are supplemented by a selection of Becher typologies, previously unseen collages by Bernd Becher and personal collectibles from the Bechers' house. Thus, the specific inner life of the half-timbered houses in the Siegerland that became famous with the Bechers also becomes exemplary of recent history in Germany.

Laurenz Berges (born 1966 in Cloppenburg) lives and works in Düsseldorf. He studied communication design at the University of Essen (1986-1993) and artistic photography in Bernd Becher's class at the Düsseldorf Art Academy (1992-1996). He also spent a year assisting the German-American photographer Evelyn Hofer in New York (1988-89). Berges has participated in numerous national and international group exhibitions, for example at the Museum of Modern Art in New York, Musée de l'Art Moderne de la ville de Paris, Museum Kunst Palast Düsseldorf, Haus der Kunst Munich, Huis Marseille Museum for Photography Amsterdam, Palais des Beaux Arts Brussels, Pinakothek der Moderne Munich or SK Stiftung Kultur, Cologne. The artist's most recent solo exhibitions include the Museum für Photographie in Braunschweig (2019) and most recently the Josef Albers Museum Quadrat Bottrop (2020).

Curator: Thomas Thiel
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The exhibition is accompanied by a comprehensive program of events and mediation consisting of talks, readings, events, guided tours and workshops. An exhibition brochure with an artist interview will also be published. A photo book of the same name has been published by Verlag Schirmer/Mosel to accompany the new and first presented series of works "Das Becherhaus in Mudersbach" with an introductory essay by Hanns-Josef Ortheil.

Funded by

Kunststiftung
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Accompanying the exhibition "Laurenz Berges. Halten und Schwinden", the MGKSiegen is showing photographic works from its own collection under the title "Fotonotizen. Works from the Contemporary Art Collection" (17.3.-6.8.2023). Works by Bernd and Hilla Becher, Claus Bury, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Bernhard Fuchs, Andreas Gursky, Candida Höfer, Jochen Lempert, Armin Linke, Simone Nieweg, Peter Piller, Andrea Robbins/Max Becher, August Sander, Thomas Struth or Stephen Willats are on display.

Press conference

THU. 16.3. 12 am
Laurenz Berges
Maintaining and Disappearing
With the artist and curator Thomas Thiel

Opening

FRI. 17.3. 7 pm
Laurenz Berges
Maintaining and Disappearing
Speeches by Hans-Heinrich Grosse-Brockhoff, Supervisory Board of MGKSiegen and Thomas Thiel, Director, MGKSiegen.
Finale from 9 pm with DJ set by Altuu
Admission free

Talk

SAT. 18.3. 2 pm
Artist talk
With Laurenz Berges and director Thomas Thiel
In German
Ticket included in admission price

Reading

THU. 20.04. 7 pm
Das Becherhaus in Mudersbach
Reading and talk with author Hanns-Josef Ortheil, Wissen/Sieg – Köln – Stuttgart
In German
Ticket included in admission price

Lecture

THU. 22.6. 7 pm

Volle Leere

Die Poesie des Abwesenden im Werk von Laurenz Berges

Lecture by Franziska Kunze, Head of Collection Photography and Time-Based Media, Pinakothek der Moderne, Munich

In German

Ticket included in admission price

Event

THU. 15.6. 9 pm

Fach Werk Music

Students of architecture and music at the University of Siegen under the direction of Ulrich Exner and Martin Herchenröder.

Performance of architecture, light, video and music

Venue: Unterer Schlossplatz

Guided Tours

THU. 20.7. 6 pm

Laurenz Berges

Maintaining and Disappearing

Exhibition tour with curator Lea März

Ticket included in admission price

THU. 6.8. 4 pm

Laurenz Berges

Maintaining and Disappearing

Exhibition tour with curator and director Thomas Thiel

In German

Ticket included in admission price

Public exhibition tours every Thursday at 12.30 pm and every Sunday at 4 pm.

Individual special tours for groups and individuals can be booked by phone (T +49 271 4057710) or email (info@mgksiegen.de).

You can find more public tours and events for kids, teens and adults accompanying the exhibition at <https://www.mgksiegen.de/en/kalender/>.

Press images

The press photos are available for download in the press section of the museum website

<https://www.mgksiegen.de/en/presse/>.