

Biennale

Press release

January 9, 2020, Mannheim/Ludwigshafen/Heidelberg

Anton Corbijn and Robin Curtis come together for the launch of the new dialogue series *Photography & Science* on 16.1.2020 at 6 p.m. in the New Auditorium of Heidelberg University. On eight dates in advance of and accompanying the *Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie 2020*, prominent photographic artists and scientists from various disciplines will examine the potential of photography as an interdisciplinary medium.

+++++ The dialogue series *Photography & Science* is a cooperation between the Institut für Europäische Kunstgeschichte (IEK) at Heidelberg University, the Deutsch-Amerikanisches Institut Heidelberg (DAI) and the *Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie*. It is supported by the Alfried Krupp von Bohlen und Halbach-Stiftung, the Friedrich Stiftung and the City of Heidelberg. +++++

For the opening of the series on January 16, 2020, Dutch photographer and director Anton Corbijn will speak with the director of the Center for Popular Culture and Music in Freiburg, Prof. Dr. Robin Curtis. The discussion will focus on the interaction between pop culture and art, how the two areas inspire each other and how they blur together in the medium of photography. Corbijn's photographic and filmic work, such as his portraits of world-famous pop icons, has been renowned for merging these fields for over 40 years.

In the following weeks, *Photography & Science* will bring together Herlinde Koelbl and Prof. Bernhard Pörksen, Timm Rautert and Prof. Horst Bredekamp, Simon Starling and Prof. Joachim Wambsganß and Andrea Diefenbach and Dr. Hans Jäger, amongst others. The diverse intersections of artistic photography and science will be examined in greater detail and discussed controversially at eight events with different focus areas such as medicine, astronomy, business or law.

What is the current relationship between photography and science? How can we answer issues of authenticity vs. staging, objectivity vs. subjectivity in photographic images today? The photograph as an everyday medium as well as a form of artistic expression possesses the extraordinary potential to blur the lines between the disciplines. Not infrequently, images in a scientific context have an artistic aesthetic. Artistic photography, for its part, often straddles the dividing line to the sciences. The goal of the dialogue series is to create a (discursive) space for interaction between photography and science and to encourage debate in order to allow a closer look at the many areas of overlap between them. The works of the photographers will not only form the launchpad for an exploration of the medium in light of the history of science, cultural studies and photo theories, but also reflect the topicality of the question.

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Schedule for the dialogue series *Photography & Science*

Venue: Heidelberg University, Institute of Psychology, Lecture Hall II

Opening event on January 16, 2020: New Auditorium, Heidelberg University

Start: 6 p.m. (except for the talk on 05.03.2020, which begins at 5.30 p.m.)

Entrance free of charge (events in German and English)

16.01.2020 **Pop Theory** „*Sound and Vision*” English
Anton Corbijn + Robin Curtis

Far from being opposites, pop culture and art overlap and inspire each other in various ways. With his photographic and filmic work, such as his portraits of world-famous pop icons, Dutch artist Anton Corbijn bears witness to this intersection unlike anyone else. In conversation with Prof. Dr. Robin Curtis, Director of the Center for Popular Culture and Music in Freiburg, the interaction between these two areas will be the focus of attention.

23.01.2020 **Media** „*Traces of Power*” German
Herlinde Koelbl + Bernhard Pörksen

Photographer Herlinde Koelbl became known for her long-term documentation of German politicians such as Angela Merkel, Joschka Fischer and Gerhard Schröder. Over several years she created expressive documentary portraits with an analytical gaze. Together with media theorist Prof. Dr. Bernhard Pörksen from Tübingen she will focus on the questions: How does the appearance of people in powerful positions change? In what way does the medium of photography serve as an instrument for staging oneself?

04.02.2020 **Visual Studies** „*Seeing Photography*” German
Timm Rautert + Horst Bredekamp

With his impressive cycle "Bildanalytische Photographie" from the 1960s and 70s, Timm Rautert demonstrates the conditions of photographic work: the process from the exposure to the creation of the image under the enlarger in the laboratory to the possibilities of manipulation. His work creates a reflection on photography as a technical visual medium. Art historian and visual culture theorist Prof. Dr. Horst Bredekamp talks to Rautert about these very conditions and prerequisites of photography.

20.02.2020 **Business** „*The Gleam of the Stock Market Crash*” German
Benjamin Samuel + Achim Wambach

Only the title "Deutscher Aktienindex 30+1" refers to the fact that Benjamin Samuel's abstract series of images is an examination of the stock market crash of 2008. Using computer-based algorithms, Samuel creates a visual representation of this event. Together with Prof. Achim

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Wambach, Ph.D., President of the ZEW – Leibniz Centre for European Economic Research in Mannheim, Samuel will discuss how stock market phenomena can be transformed into a flickering play of colours.

05.03.2020 **Astronomy** „*Astronomy and Photography: How Black Drops lead to Innovations*“ English
Simon Starling + Joachim Wambsganß

The transit of Venus, which takes place only four times in 250 years, was first captured in 1874 with a so-called "photographic revolver", which was able to make photographs of moving objects. In 2012, Starling documented this natural spectacle on film, which he combined with historical recordings in his work "Black Drop". In a discussion with Prof. Dr. Joachim Wambsganß, Director of the Astronomical Calculation Institute at the Centre for Astronomy at Heidelberg University, the relationship between historical and contemporary artistic photography and knowledge production will be examined.

Please note: The event begins at 5.30 p.m. with the screening of the film „Black Drop“ by Simon Starling (28 min.).

19.03.2020 **Medicine** „*The camera as silent companion*“ German
Andrea Diefenbach + Hans Jäger

In 2006, photographer Andrea Diefenbach travelled from Wiesbaden to the Ukrainian port city Odessa where she photographed people carrying HIV. Apart from Russia, Ukraine had one of the highest rates of new HIV infections in Europe and Central Asia at that time. Her sensitive yet expressive photographs show lives between courage, confidence and fear. A conversation with Dr. Hans Jäger, who treated the first HIV patients in New York in the 1980s, will explore the influence of photographic images in relation to the historical medical as well as social role of the disease.

31.03.2020 **Law** „*Cruel Exposures*“ English
Broomberg & Chanarin + Grischka Petri

From the very beginning, photography has been an important part of the representation of war and propaganda. Bertolt Brecht's "War Primer" – a visual and textual examination of violence and terror during World War II – inspired the London-based artist duo Broomberg & Chanarin to engage with this topic. In their work "Warprimer 2", the duo not only appropriates Brecht's work, but also his method of montage and re-contextualization of the visual material by replacing his images with contemporary photographs of global conflicts and wars. Jurist and art historian PD Dr. Grischka Petri speaks with the artists about the complexity of (contemporary) uses and dissemination of conflict images, among other things.

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02.04.2020 **Computational Science „Image Capital“** German
Armin Linke & Estelle Blaschke + Sabine Süsstrunk

Every day, billions of digital photographs are produced and archived worldwide. These images, consisting of metadata and pixels, are regarded as the raw material of the future. They can be evaluated, filtered, programmed and controlled. They even serve the development of artificial intelligence. The analysis of this flood of image data is the subject of „Image Capital“, a project by artist Armin Linke and photography theorist Prof. Dr. Estelle Blaschke. Together with Prof. Dr. Sabine Süsstrunk, head of the Images and Visual Representation Lab at the Ecole Polytechnique Fédérale de Lausanne (EPFL) and expert in computer-assisted photography, they will examine the role of photography not within the art world, but within social, economic and cultural practices.

Further information for all events is available (in German) at www.fotografieundwissenschaft.de

Further information and current image material for the Biennale can be downloaded from the press section at www.biennalefotografie.de

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