MEDIA INFORMATION
March 7, 2019

Camera and Canvas

The special exhibition at the Staatliche Kunsthalle Karlsruhe traces the eventful history of the relationship between painting and photography in the 19th century. It was developed in collaboration with the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg

Photography: a phenomenon based on a chemical and physical process which had a major impact on art in the 19th century. It was met with hope, scepticism and apprehension. It instilled a sense of pride in artists, but also existential fears. It also begged the key question as to who is an artist. Only painters, who work with brushes and canvas? Or also photographers, who are able to capture a subject realistically with supposedly less effort? The special exhibition Camera and Canvas at the Kunsthalle Karlsruhe traces the eventful history of the relationship between painting and photography in the 19th century. It was developed in collaboration with the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg and is open from 9 March to 2 June, with free admission on the opening day. Guides provide information on the works featured and answer any questions on the relationship between both art forms.

The story begins in Paris in 1839, when the first daguerreotypes were presented to the public. The exhibition covers the period from the beginning of this media revolution until around 1900. It presents examples of the diverse techniques, ranging from single-copy daguerreotypes all the way to reproducible gum prints. In ten chapters, it explores the various genres of early photography (nudes, portraits, architecture, landscapes, journeys, cloud studies and scientific photographs) in dialogue with painting, combining works by leading painters (Gustave Courbet, Johann Wilhelm Schirmer, Hans Makart, Anselm Feuerbach, Hans Thoma, James Tissot, Camille Pissarro, Lovis Corinth) with pictures by pioneers of photography (Hermann Biow, Charles Nègre, Francis Frith, Julia Margaret Cameron, Adolphe Braun, Louis Darget, Josef Eder, Heinrich Kühn, Edward Steichen). The roughly 200 works on display underscore the different potential of both media in their eventful relationship that wavers between attraction and rejection.

Professor Pia Müller-Tamm, Director of the Kunsthalle Karlsruhe stated: "The exhibition approaches the dialogue between painting and photography from both an historical and a contemporary perspective, examining how the media are used and intertwined in the early 21st century. My special thanks go to the curator, Dr Leonie Beiersdorf, and our cooperative partner and principle lender, the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg."

As for Professor G. Ulrich Grossmann, Director General of the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg, he stressed: "I'm delighted to discover our works in a new, exciting context here at the Kunsthalle Karlsruhe. I would like to thank all those involved for their kind cooperation and I'm sure that the special

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exhibition will be a resounding success."

Photographs have become an integral part of everyday life. Smartphones are used more often to take pictures than make phone calls. Self-portraits have reached a new peak in the form of selfies. It all began in the 19th century. The "photo studio of 1850" presented at the *Camera and Canvas* exhibition recreates the conditions of the time by taking photographs using a plate camera. Visitors have to sit still for fifteen seconds if they want to have a sharp picture of themselves. Just like in the past, they need a healthy dose of patience before they can see the result. Moreover, they can experience the exciting allure of a technique that was still in its infancy at the time, and experiment with the possibilities offered by blurring.

The exhibition at the Kunsthalle also boasts a sound and picture installation entitled *Tomorrow's History*. This work by the Japanese artist Takashi Arai (born in 1978) revisits the daguerreotype, a technique that delivers only one single copy. The impressive portraits of young people that Arai has been taking since 2016 are characterised by extreme sharpness and subtle variations in grey tones. During the sittings, the photographer asks his models about their expectations for the future. A selection of twenty-seven such daguerreotypes is exhibited together with excerpts from the corresponding interviews. Arai is one of only a handful of photographers to revive the painstaking daguerreotype technique. Exhibited for the first time outside Japan, the installation Tomorrow's History is on display exclusively at the Kunsthalle.

The Karlsruhe exhibition is a new version of *Camera and Canvas. Painting and Photography from the 19th century*, an exhibition held at the Germanisches Nationalmuseum in Nuremberg in the summer of 2018. The adaptation to the particularities of the new venue includes the display of thirty 19th-century paintings from the Karlsruhe collection and the swapping of half of the original light-sensitive photographs from the original exhibition for works from international lenders. Dr Leonie Beiersdorf, curator of the new exhibition, was supported by trainee Ines Rödl in Nuremberg and Sebastian Borkhardt in Karlsruhe.

Address
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Opening times
Tuesdays to Sundays, 10:00 am to 6:00 pm

Admission
€8 / €6 (normal / concession)

Audio guide
Available in German, English and French
€4 / €2 (normal / concession)

Complete information on the exhibition and the fringe programme is available at kunsthalle-karlsruhe.de

Press photographs available at https://www.kunsthalle-karlsruhe.de/en/newsroom.html

#lichtundleinwand
The Kunsthalle invites all visitors to share their impressions of the exhibition on Instagram, Twitter and Facebook using #lichtundleinwand.