



künstlerhaus bethanien gmbh : press release

Berlin, 5th September 2009

Dear Colleagues,

Künstlerhaus Bethanien presents:

STEPHAN KALUZA

Das Mauerprojekt – complexe 16

18th September – 11th October 2009

Mi – So, 14 – 19 Uhr, Studio 1

OPENING: Thursday, 17th September 2009, from 7 pm

Künstlerhaus Bethanien and Galerie Michael Schultz are delighted to present the photographic work of the Düsseldorf artist Stephan Kaluza in two parallel exhibitions.

Künstlerhaus Bethanien is showing *The Berlin Wall project – complexe 16*: since the fall of the Wall in 1989, it has been dismantled systematically, apart from a few negligible remains.

An international symbol of division, the 'Wall' as such has disappeared – today it exists only in people's memories. Stephan Kaluza walked the full 50 km of this more or less immaterial site of remembrance, along the former border, and took a photo of the (invisible) Wall at regular intervals of one metre. In order to counter forgetfulness and take hold of a history that continues to make an impact even today, he assembled one single image from approximately 30,000 separate photos. The past and the visible present come together in this 'absolute long shot' to form a timeless kaleidoscope of world history and its changes. Kaluza's "illusion of instantaneous exposure" succeeds in elucidating the incomprehensible phenomenon of the 'Wall' or "reminiscences" of what it was like.

The choice of Künstlerhaus Bethanien as the setting for this exhibition was quite conscious, for it is situated close to the blockades constructed by the former GDR. In addition, the Künstlerhaus had already established numerous contacts to East Berlin and Eastern Europe before 1989. Artists extradited from the GDR as well as from Poland, Hungary and the Soviet Union

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were among the guests of the International Studio Programme, even 30 years ago. The fall of the Wall and Dr. Michael Haerdter's personal commitment also made it possible to invite Christoph Tannert, now CEO of the Künstlerhaus Bethanien GmbH, to join the staff of the Künstlerhaus as one of our first colleagues from the East. All in all – a special reason for celebration.

The publication *Stephan Kaluza – Die (unsichtbare) Mauer* (352 pages with 157 double-page colour illustrations) will be appearing for the exhibition in Dumont Buchverlag.

The Gallery Michael Schultz Berlin is showing *bildstücke* by Stephan Kaluza: on different theatre stages – stage-cages –, we are confronted by the individual fates of various protagonists. Their innermost souls are turned outwards, inexorably exposed to our view. In *Cages* we see the tense conflict between personal actions and social duty; in a nightmarishly abstract way, *Rheinfahrt* lends space and form to the endless repetition of a father's thoughts after he has lost his daughter in an accident. Highly critical of contemporary life, *Comedy* presents an excessive orgy, in which the personified topoi Ethics, Religion, Lust, Beauty, War, Common Sense, Innocence and Pragmatism appear and celebrate their own passing in a state of hedonist ecstasy. (3rd September – 10th October 2009, Gallery Michael Schultz, Mommsenstr. 34, 10629 Berlin).

The press office of Künstlerhaus Bethanien is always happy to provide further information and picture material.

Best Regards

Künstlerhaus Bethanien GmbH