

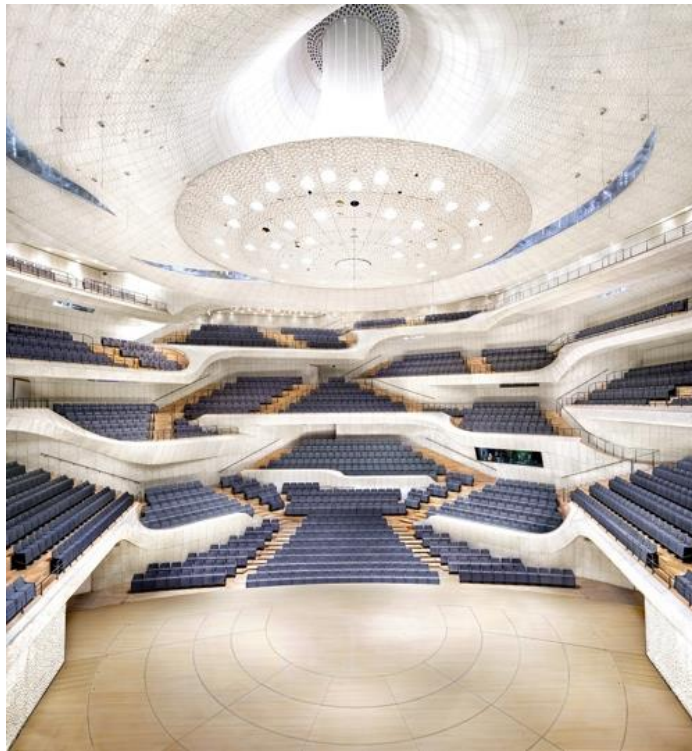
## Photographer Hofer brings personal portraits of historic spaces to Seoul

July 26, 2018 | Woo Jae-yeon

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German photographer Candida Hofer has, for five decades, investigated the relations between space and humans. Her understanding so far is quite paradoxical: A space becomes richer when there is no human presence.

In her latest solo exhibition in Seoul, her fourth in the city, she displays her large-scale photos of "spaces of enlightenment," such as libraries, opera houses, theaters and museums. The organizer Kukje Gallery in Seoul, one of the country's leading galleries, defined the places in her works as "places that facilitate human reasoning and intellectual advancement."



The image provided by Candida Hofer and Kukje Gallery shows "Elbphilharmonie Hamburg Herzog & de Meuron Hamburg II 2016."

"She reinterprets interactions between humans and spaces from a modern viewpoint," said Yoon Hei-jeong, editorial director at the gallery, during a press conference held at the gallery Thursday.

By carefully observing the interiors and architectural layouts of culturally and historically important spaces in Europe, the photographer also highlights social evolutions that affect how people consume culture.

Changes in interior designs at private and public art venues, she noted, demonstrate expanded spectatorship of performance art like opera, musical or ballet. With the shift in class structure, art became more widely consumed by the middle class.

Asked why she shoots empty spaces during the conference, the 74-year-old artist said: "First of all, I didn't want to interrupt people. Secondly, I could sense the space more acutely and fully when there is no human in it."

"Even if there is no human presence, public spaces already connote human existence," the director Yoon elaborated.



German photographer Candida Hofer poses for photos during a press conference at Kukje Gallery in Seoul on July 26, 2018.



The image provided by Candida Hofer and Kukje Gallery shows "Teatro Cervantes Buenos Aires I 2006."

The artist uses only the natural light to capture empty interiors and actionless rooms, which, despite being devoid of human presence, are imbued with culture, time and human history.

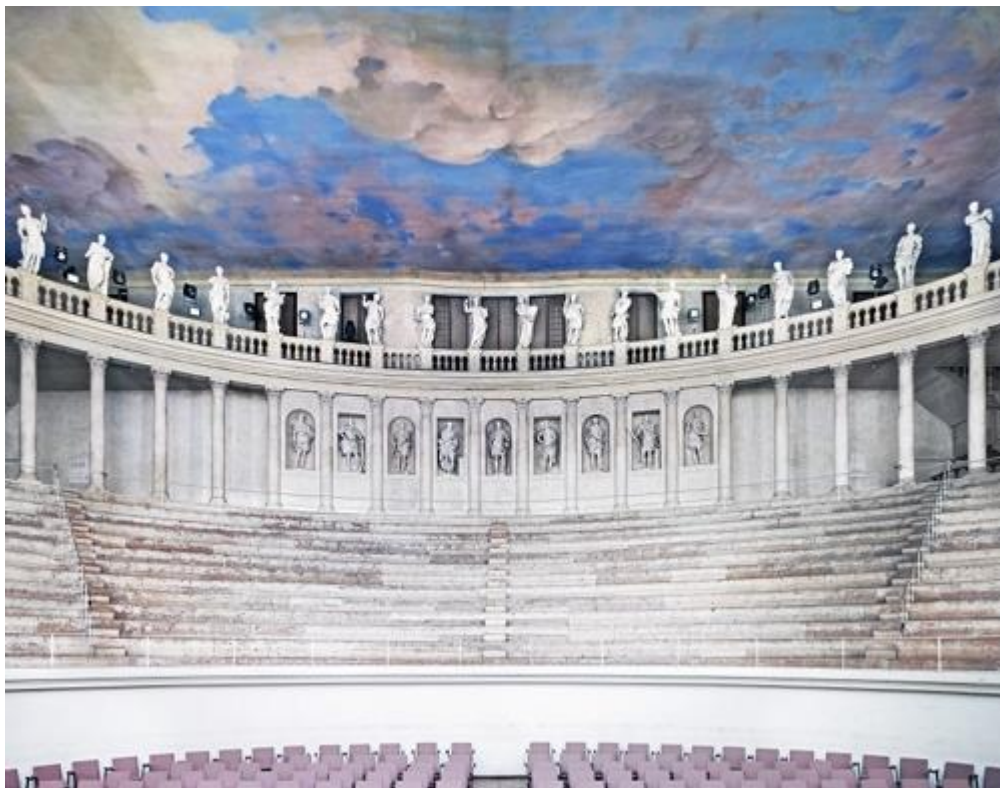
She said she waits in front of the viewfinder for the right moment when something about the space moves her heart. After shooting, she goes through a rigorous editing and selecting process to produce the final piece of work.

Born in 1994 in Eberswalde, northeast of Berlin, she studied art and photography at Cologne Academy of Fine and Applied Arts, and later film at the Kunstakademie Dusseldorf.

Her early works, including "Turks in Germany" in the late 1970s, more directly portrayed people, but she slowly moved toward architecture and interiors that are filled with the vestiges of human activities.

Her works, which have been exhibited since the 1970s around the world, are in major collections of the Museum of Modern Art in New York, the Centre Pompidou in Paris, the Moderna Museet in Stockholm, and the National Museum of Modern and Contemporary Art in Seoul. She co-presented Germany at the national pavilion of the Venice Biennale in 2003.

The exhibition, "Spaces of Enlightenment," which opens Thursday, runs through Aug. 26.



The image provided by Candida Hofer and Kukje Gallery shows "Teatro Olimpico Vicenza I 2010."

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