

## Candida Höfer's "Spaces of Enlightenment" at Kukje Gallery, Seoul

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"Teatro Cervantes Buenos Aires I," 2006, by Candida Höfer (1944, Eberswalde), C-print, 184 x 244 cm, Image provided by Kukje Gallery, Kukje Gallery K2 (Courtesy: Artist and Kukje Gallery)

At its Seoul venue, Kukje Gallery is presenting "Spaces of Enlightenment," a solo exhibition of the internationally celebrated artist Candida Hofer, on view through August 26. Installed in Kukje Gallery's K2 space, the exhibition marks Hofer's fourth show at the gallery and includes works reflecting her ongoing interest in people and spaces.

The selected works in the show, ranging from the late 1990s to the present, focus on unique architectural interiors located in major private and public institutions around the world including theaters, opera houses, libraries, and museums.

The gallery says that the interiors featured in her photographs include a diverse range of periods and geographies, but each share a common historical function as places designed to assist in "enlightenment." Primarily known as an intellectual and philosophical movement in Europe during the 18th century, the "Enlightenment" was defined by its focus on learning, scientific observation and the pursuit of reason.

“The first floor of the K2 space showcases works that capture the interior spaces of theaters and opera houses in Germany, Italy, Portugal, and Argentina. Beginning with the iconic Dusseldorfer Schauspielhaus, Hofer’s images allow the audience to read into the specific architectural characteristics, along with their historical context,” the gallery says.

“The second floor of the K2 space introduces the interior spaces found in libraries and museums, places focused on the pursuit of learning and aesthetics. Hofer pays particular attention to the Baroque libraries housed in monasteries from the Middle Ages, the National Library of France (Bibliothèque nationale de France), a small bookshelf situated in the hallway of the Kunstakademie Dusseldorf, Villa Borghese, the State Hermitage Museum, and the Julia Stoschek Collection; all of these spaces embody each of their evolving function over time,” the gallery adds.

Candida Hofer was born in 1944 in Eberswalde, Germany, a town located northeast of Berlin. Having expressed interest in photography during childhood, Hofer first began her career at the age of 19 as an apprentice at a photography atelier that dealt with advertisements, architecture, and fashion. She entered the Kolner Werkschulen (Cologne Academy of Fine and Applied Arts) in 1964 and studied art and photography, and worked as a freelance photographer on graduation. She later attended the Kunstakademie Dusseldorf, one of the most influential European educational institutions at the time in 1973, where she initially studied film under Ole John.

In 1976, she was accepted into Bernd Becher’s first photography class, studying alongside contemporaries Axel Hutte (1976-1981), Thomas Struth (1976-1980), Thomas Ruff (1978-1985), Tata Ronkholz (1978-1985), Petra Wunderlich (1985-1988), and Andreas Gursky (1981-1987) — later collectively referred to as the first generation of the “Becher class.”

Having already been the subject of gallery exhibitions in the late 1970s, Candida Hofer has spent decades expanding and redefining the boundaries of her practice.

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