

PRESS RELEASE

THE SKY LOOKS AMAZING FROM HERE

Exhibition: 12 June – 17 July 2022

Opening (public): 12 June 2022, 6 pm

Press / Professional Preview: 12 June 2022, 2 pm

Kunsthau L6, Freiburg

Artists: Angela Bulloch (CAN, 1966), Sharon Harper (US, 1966), Taiyo Onorato & Nico Krebs (CH, 1979), Felix Schöppner (D,1990)

The group exhibition **THE SKY LOOKS AMAZING FROM HERE** opens on June 12 at Kunsthau L6, Freiburg as part of the **5th Biennale de la Photographie de Mulhouse**. The exhibition presents works from contemporary photographers who deal with the theme 'Celestial Bodies' ('Corps Célestes'), the title and leitmotif of this year's biennale. The show includes photographs by US-artist Sharon Harper, the Swiss artist collective Taiyo Onorato & Nico Krebs, and German photographer Felix Schöppner. The photographic presentation is accompanied by the installation works of Canadian multimedia artist Angela Bulloch.

The sight of the sky accompanies all humans from childhood. Stars, cloud formations, and vivid hues captivate us, elicit euphoria, inspire amazement and dreams. At the same time, the sky is an encounter with the incomprehensible and inaccessible, which in turn invites imagination. But how can celestial bodies be observed, explained, and captured in photographic images? Since time immemorial, the stars, sun, and moon have been relevant motifs in the arts. They stand not only for the observation of natural phenomena that have always existed, but also for the great existential questions of mankind: Who are we, where do we come from, and where are we going?

In **Sharon Harper's** (*1966) photographs from her series *Moon Studies* and *Star Scratches*, that the artist took between 2003 and 2007, the sky appears with its phenomena such as the sun, moon, and stars. Over a period of several months, she photographs the night sky from the same position, with an exposure time of up to ten hours. In other photographs, the artist uses a telescope as the central instrument of scientific investigation of the sky. In the process, she creates tableaux of moving

celestial bodies and star trails that cut through the sky like sharp lines. We are offered an allegedly objective view of what is actually present in the sky, through the artist's camera. However, it soon becomes clear that the images cannot keep this promise of realistic reproduction. On Earth, we perceive celestial bodies at a particular moment of their existence; we see the light of stars that may have long since extinguished. Harper's photographs are made over a long period. Harper gives us a glimpse of infinity, which here appears wild, dissolving the earthly laws of time and space.

The photographic images of the artist duo **Taiyo Onorato & Nico Krebs** (*1979) oscillate between the optimism of their childhoods and a dystopian present. In their series *Future Memories* (2021), the duo explores and attempts to find a new visual language for how our gaze into the sky and associated conception of the future has changed over time. From a combination of analog large-format photographs from the artist's own archive and various digitally controlled laser technologies, images emerge that evoke associations with science fiction worlds. At the same time, the works offer a material confrontation with the fact that every imagination and illustration of the future is a collage of images from the past.

The overarching motif of the images are so-called "orbs", spheres whose circular shape is reminiscent of a solar eclipse or distant planets. The artist duo plays with the size of these simple forms, whereby something unusual, strange, sometimes even threatening emanates from them. The pictures of the series are part of the publication series *Future*, which is published continuously by Edition Patrick Frey (Zurich).

Felix Schöppner's (*1990) interest in the phenomena of the universe is fed by an almost childlike enthusiasm. The photographer tries to fathom the theories and laws of the universe by building models out of everyday objects. The carefully staged arrangements of his series *Cognition* are based on knowledge that Schöppner acquires through visits to observatories and exchanges with scientists. In his studio, billiard balls are stacked to form planetary constellations. A fishnet stocking clamped to a tripod is filled with Styrofoam balls and declared to be a black hole. Schöppner's approach is conceptual, and the resulting images follow a smoothly polished studio aesthetic that is free of emotion. His fundamental childlike enthusiasm for the subject, however, penetrates through his playful use of materials from craft stores and the impulse to construct his models.

The installation works of the Canadian multimedia artist **Angela Bulloch** (*1966), on the other hand, point to a future that defies human description. Bulloch's works from the *Night Sky* series (2008–) are based on computer algorithms, which the artist uses to create views of the universe from various terrestrial and extraterrestrial perspectives. The illumination and constellation of the stars is controlled with the help of the space simulation software "Celestia", which is used in most planetariums today. Bulloch's large-format night skies feature pulsating LEDs on pitch-black velvet fabric, which light up in varying intensities to depict selected areas of the real sky – often from a perspective far beyond that of the Earth itself. The works thus reflect the impossibility of perceiving the order of the universe from a single point and points to a future that defies human description.

The exhibition is curated by the collective **CUCO – curatorial concepts berlin**, founded in 2016 by art historians Hanna Dölle, Katherina Perlongo and Annika Turkowski. It realizes exhibitions focusing on contemporary photography and video art. The emphasis of the work is on the relationship between people and their natural and built environment. Close cooperation with emerging and established artists is of particular importance, as is the collaboration with different institutions.

The **Biennale de la Photographie de Mulhouse** will take place from June 10 to July 17, 2022 in three locations: Mulhouse (FR), Fribourg (DE) and Hombourg (FR). Every two years, the photo festival attracts an international audience to the region. In addition to the Kunsthaus L6, the Centre Culturel Français in Freiburg presents the exhibition "Bas Monde" with works by artist Marie Quéau. Other biennial exhibitions open at Le musée des Beaux-Arts de Mulhouse, les bibliothèques-médiathèques de Mulhouse, Mulhouse Art Contemporain, La Filature - scène nationale, Le Séchoir and the Médiathèque de Thann. For more information, visit www.biennale-photo-mulhouse.com/2022.

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