

Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle

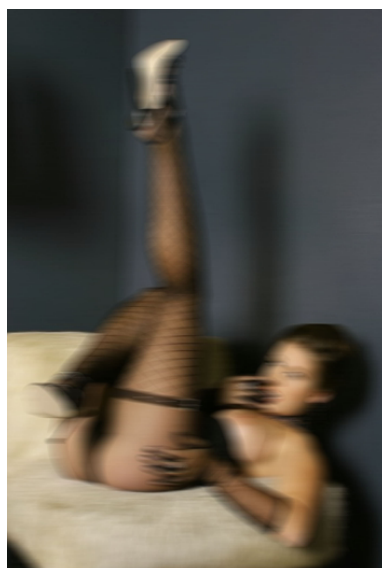
Thomas Ruff

Apr 17 – Jun 06, 2015

Opening: Thursday, Apr 16, 2015, 7 – 9 pm



negδnus_15, 2014, chromogenic print, 71 x 61 cm
© VG Bild-Kunst, Bonn 2015



nudes ck02, 2012, C-Print, 154 x 110 cm
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Thomas Ruff is one of the internationally most renowned photographers. One is immediately captivated by the original prints of his photographs, which have always been subject to technological advancements. Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle presents two series that reference one of the oldest genres of the arts: nudes. Propelled by his curiosity and his conceptual photography practice, the scholarly artist Thomas Ruff has always created something new in each of his series.

In his series of “nudes,” Thomas Ruff takes on the classical subject of the female nude for the first time in his career. Upon considering how a nude photograph might look in his own artistic mode of expression, Thomas Ruff conducted research in the then rather novel internet, eventually stumbling upon pornographic websites with low-resolution images. His first “nude” was inspired by his interest in the structure of these digital images and in processing the pixel structures. Today, his “nudes” are well-known all over the world – and Galerie Rüdiger Schöttle presents various examples and forms of his digital nude photography in this exhibition. Thomas Ruff is renowned for constantly developing original methods and expanding traditional concepts of photography. His most recent series, “Negatives,” is no different. In it, he references the beginnings of the medium using photographs from the nineteenth century. Consisting solely of shades of blue, the new set of works recalls the cyanotype – a technique for producing photographs made famous by the natural scientist Anna Atkins, who used it to make a precise record of various plants. Pictures of artists’ studios, portraits, and nudes were some of the key visuals on the historical nineteenth-century photographs Thomas Ruff acquired. He scanned these old photographs, digitally inverted the color scale, and created blue-tinted photographs in the size of the original negatives.

In contrast to his “nudes,” the nude images in “Negatives” are marked by a wonderful historical aesthetic. Thomas Ruff had the idea for “Negatives” while working on modified types of photograms. Using high-performance computers, he virtualized and developed historical photogram techniques, viewing the images alternately as positives and negatives. In the inversion process, the “Negatives” produce wholly new compositions with new light/dark values which achieve completely different depth effects, heighten the plasticity, and thus allow for a new visual experience. With the title “Negatives,” Thomas Ruff calls attention to the elimination of negatives in a digitalized world, whose younger generations rarely encounter negatives as a precursor to photography anymore.

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