

ARSENAL WIEN

FOTO

FOTO ARSENAL WIEN

Arsenal Objekt 19A, 1030 Wien

GRAND OPENING of the FOTO ARSENAL VIENNA on March 21, 2025 Exhibition on the "Magnum" archive and Simon Lehner

Where trucks used to set off for the opera, Vienna is getting a new exhibition venue. The FOTO ARSENAL WIEN in the area of the same name in the south-east of the city will become a center for photography and lens-based media. This closes a major thematic gap in the spectrum of Viennese cultural life. In just 18 months of extensive conversion work on a workshop building, a future-oriented modern museum building has been created, which will be officially opened on March 21, 2025 in Object 19A in the Arsenal, 1030 Vienna.

Mayor Michael Ludwig: "With the FOTO ARSENAL WIEN, our cultural metropolis has once again become a great deal richer, more diverse and more liveable. This new art gallery for contemporary photography will not only be an attraction for the Viennese and photography enthusiasts from all over the world, but will also form a cultural meeting point in the growing city of Vienna that will radiate far into the neighborhood. Together with others, with the Film Museum Lab, rehearsal stages of the Burgtheater and State Opera, the ART for ART workshops and the Museum of Military History, the Arsenal can develop its unique potential as a new cultural center."

City Councillor for Culture Veronica Kaup-Hasler: "Behind former garage doors, a hall for photography is now opening up. This new, Vienna-enriching and luminous focal point FOTO ARSENAL WIEN shows how culture can open up spaces in so many ways: as places of presentation, expertise, mediation and encounters with others. Especially in a time that is characterized by the power of photographic and filmic images, we urgently need this place for a critical examination of the medium in all its diversity."

With up to 10 exhibitions per year, the FOTO ARSENAL WIEN shows the entire spectrum of the medium - a combination of young talents, undiscovered positions and internationally renowned artists.

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The new FOTO ARSENAL WIEN is located on the first floor of a three-storey historic brick building with around 1,000 square meters of modern exhibition space. A museum store and a catering area are located next to it. The upper floors house the museum's own education department, which has workshop rooms and its own darkroom, as well as offices. The opening of the FOTO ARSENAL WIEN marks the creation of a new cultural cluster with the Austrian Film Museum LAB in the same building, the Museum of Military History, the rehearsal stages of the Burgtheater and the State Opera.

The conversion was planned by Malek Herbst Architekten (Vienna), Meyer Voggenreiter Projekte with Wolfgang Zeh (Cologne) and implemented in collaboration with the owner ART for ART. The one-off investment costs amount to a total of three million euros.

FOTO ARSENAL WIEN is dedicated to photographic archives in the two opening exhibitions.

Magnum. A World of Photography (March 22 to June 1, 2025)

When do certain photographs become icons and burn themselves into the collective memory? Why are they published and how do they later end up in the archive? The opening exhibition "Magnum. A World of Photography" at the FOTO ARSENAL WIEN provides insights into the undiscovered and secret working structures of the legendary photo agency Magnum Photos.

"Probably almost everyone in the world knows at least one photo from Magnum. In our exhibition, we explain how this is possible. Treasures from the archive will also come to light that have never been seen in public before and will never be seen in this form again," says Felix Hoffmann, curator of the exhibition and artistic director of the FOTO ARSENAL WIEN.

The group exhibition "Magnum. A World of Photography" focuses on the working processes of the famous photo agency and addresses the social significance of photography as a broad cultural technique. Parts of the Magnum archive will be made accessible for the first time. In the past, such insights into the raw material and the creation of a "finished" photograph

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were unimaginable - the selection of the photographs, the work with contact sheets and the production of the prints remained largely hidden from the public.

The exhibition traces these previously invisible processes for the first time. Visitors can experience the creation of a photograph at first hand and look over the shoulders of Magnum photographers at work - from Robert Capa to Inge Morath and Eli Reed.

The exhibition shows over 300 photographs and objects from seven decades of agency and world history in chronological order. These include reportages from the Second World War, icons such as Che Guevara, Muhammad Ali and Malcolm X, mourners on the railroad tracks after the death of Robert F. Kennedy, life in the New York subway and portraits of the British royal family.

The final chapter of the exhibition shows that contemporary photography practices are still closely linked to analog film material, the strategies of narration and traditional reportage photography. Three photographers from the younger and most recent Magnum generations - Susan Meiselas, Bieke Depoorter and Rafał Milach - engage tangibly with historical approaches and rethink them from a current socio-political perspective.

Simon Lehner. Clean Thoughts. Clean Images. (March 22 to June 1, 2025)

With "Clean Thoughts. Clean Images", FOTO ARSENAL WIEN presents the first comprehensive institutional solo exhibition by Simon Lehner (* 1996) in Austria.

Based on an archive of around 45,000 image files from the artist's childhood and youth, Lehner's paintings, installations and video works deal with power structures, toxic masculinity and their effects on society and the human psyche.

On the foundation of his archive, Lehner uses the photographic-technical parameters of image creation as a basis and plays with both analog and digital traces: negative edges, markings or moiré effects, i.e. screen errors during the scanning process and image printing, remain visible. In a further

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step, the images are milled into wooden panels. These transferred landscapes grow three-dimensionally into the space or exceed the edge of their frame. With the help of a robot, the painting background is completely detached from the two-dimensionality of the photograph: they are physically transferred to this relief structure in a painting process in which the machine and artist alternate during the production process.

About FOTO ARSENAL WIEN

FOTO ARSENAL WIEN is Austria's new center for photographic images and lens-based media. Initiated by the city of Vienna in fall 2022, the institution presents and explains contemporary photography in all its forms and uses. FOTO ARSENAL WIEN also organizes the platform FOTO WIEN—Austria's largest, biennial festival of photography—and, in a collaboration with the Kunsthalle Wien, the annual festival Vienna Digital Cultures.

www.fotoarsenalwien.at
www.fotowien.at

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