

BEDS | Bedtime Stories in Photography

Opening: Friday, 4 March 2022, 5 – 8 pm

Duration of exhibition 4 March – 9 April 2022

Zurich Art March | 4 – 6 March 2022

Opening hours: Fri, 4 March, 11 am– 8 pm, Sat, 5 and Sun, 6 March, 11 am – 7 pm

Balthasar Burkhard
Imogen Cunningham
Jill Freedman
André Gelpke

Nan Goldin
René Groebli
Catherine Leutenegger
Kostas Maros

Tatjana Rügsegger
Annelies Štrba
Jerry Uelsmann
Christian Vogt

A place of retreat and sleep, a place of love, intimacy and lust, a land of dreams, a scene of birth, but also of illness and death - the bed has a multifaceted role in our lives and is thus one of the most frequently portrayed objects in art. It is an intimate place; a place where we feel at ease; a place where many things are experienced. The exhibition at Fabian & Claude Walter Galerie explores this place as a central motif in photography. However, the exhibition goes beyond the mere pictorial presentation of the bed and addresses the stories behind the individual works and photographed beds. The works represented in the exhibition range from photographs that observe the object of the bed in a distant manner through their documentary character to works that reveal an almost uncomfortable closeness to the beds of the protagonists. Equally diverse are the associated bed stories that reflect the background of the individual photographs.

The bed as a central theme was taken up by Henry Peach Robinson in his photographic work *Fading Away* as early as 1858. The historical photograph, which portrays a dying girl and her family, shocked viewers at the time with its directness. Although it is known that the photograph was posed, we are still struck by the discomfort of observing the situation at close range. We are in the immediate vicinity of the events, and while looking at the photographs, we cannot shake off the feeling that we are disturbing these familiar moments with our presence. Whether it is a sick-bed, a birthing bed, a marriage bed or even an empty bed rarely matters, because the bed of a person unknown to us always possesses an unusual intimacy. Since then, a variety of beds have shaped the history of photography. Douglas Kirkland's photographs of Marilyn Monroe rolling around in bed, the photographs of John Lennon and Yoko Ono in the bed of the Hilton Hotel in New York, and Peter Hujar's portrait of Candy Darling lying in her deathbed surrounded by bouquets of flowers are just a small selection of the large convoy of beds photographed.

The exhibition *BEDS | Bedtime Stories in Photography* attempts to provide a multifaceted insight into bed photographs and their meaning. In addition to classic photographs such as the unmade bed by Imogen Cunningham, the bedroom shot by Balthasar Burkhard, the impressions of the honeymoon by René Groebli, and the excessive documentations by Nan Goldin, the exhibition presents contemporary positions by Christian Vogt, Annelies Štrba, Kostas Maros, Catherine Leutenegger, and Tatjana Rügsegger.