

# Biennale

## Press release

12 January 2023, Mannheim/Ludwigshafen/Heidelberg, Germany

**Photography, ecology and sustainability in the focus of the *Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie*: two events in January 2023 and a collaboration project at the German national garden show in Mannheim**

In its interim year 2023, the *Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie* will again focus on the themes of photography, ecology and sustainability. Two public events in January with local and international artists invite the public to exchange ideas about these topics.

In addition, the Biennale is collaborating with the German national garden show 2023 ("Bundesgartenschau"/short: "BUGA") in Mannheim and Kalamari Klub, and from April onwards will be exploring resource-saving photographic practices with the *Reallabor für erneuerbare Fotografie* and visitors to the Spinelli area.

**The next *Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie* will take place from 9 March to 19 May 2024.**

+++++ The *Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie* is supported by the three cities of Mannheim, Ludwigshafen and Heidelberg, BASF SE as premium sponsor and many other supporters. +++++

Since 2017, the *Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie* has been dealing with the most diverse aspects of sustainability. In 2022, this topic became the focus of the Biennale's educational programme: in collaboration with the Heinrich-Böll-Foundations Baden-Württemberg and Rhineland-Palatinate as well as the Institute for European Art History at the University of Heidelberg, among others, the eight-part event series *Photography and Sustainability* attracted much attention.

Now the complex relationship between photography, ecology and sustainability is again the focus of two events by the Biennale, initiated in collaboration with PORT25 – Raum für Gegenwartskunst and the Cultural Office of the City of Mannheim. In the age of the anthropocene, which is characterised by human intervention in nature and the environment, photography can not only depict these changes, but must also prompt us to reflect on our own actions. What strategies are there in photography to visually capture complex changes in ecosystems? How can photography perhaps even complement the scientific perspective? Can analogue and digital photography not only represent issues of sustainability, but also become sustainable themselves?

About the events:

19 January 2023, 6 pm

### Artist Talk

**Arja Hop & Peter Svenson: *Rhine Ecologies - Mannheim - a biochromatic research***

online (Zoom), free of charge with registration at <https://tinyurl.com/6ry7vrmt>

in English, moderated by Alexander Ramselaar

The Dutch-based artist duo Arja Hop & Peter Svenson will present their work *Rhine Ecologies - Mannheim - a biochromatic research*, which was created in Mannheim from 2021 to 2022 and

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deals with the local plant world. For this, the artists collected over 500 plants in Mannheim. They extracted the natural dyes from these plants and transformed them into photographic images. The result is a matrix of 504 different colour tones, most of which come from the surroundings of Mannheim's Rhine bank.

In addition, using the intimacy attainable with a middle format twin eyes camera the artist duo documented the plants from close by creating images from a plant point of view. With large format colour film they photographed the city from its important buildings using exposures of an hour or more to alter the time frame to that more associated with a tree than the human perspective. The aim of the artists is to draw attention to the natural environment and to advocate for biodiversity. The project was initiated and supported by ZEPHYR – Raum für Fotografie in den Reiss-Engelhorn-Museen.

In collaboration with the Cultural Office of the City of Mannheim

26 January 2023, 6.30 pm

## Talk

**NATÜRLICH?! – Ökologie und Nachhaltigkeit in der aktuellen Fotografie ("NATURAL?! – Ecology and sustainability in contemporary photography")**

with Jana Hartmann, Cordula Hilgert, Daniela Leykam and Claus Stolz

PORT25 – Raum für Gegenwartskunst, entrance free of charge

in German, moderated by Markus Weckesser

Three photographers from the region, Jana Hartmann, Cordula Hilgert and Claus Stolz, will talk about the status quo of ecology and sustainability in contemporary photography in this interdisciplinary roundtable with curator Daniela Leykam and moderator Markus Weckesser, chairman of OFF//FOTO.

Jana Hartmann's work *Die Tür ins Meer* examines the phenomenon of life-sized representations of nature in public space, their role and effect. It questions the human perception of nature and at the same time explores the elements that are necessary to fool our senses into believing that we are experiencing nature. With his work *Kammerspiel*, Claus Stolz questions artificiality and naturalness by bringing together real and artificial plants, plant parts, found objects and everyday objects. Cordula Hilgert deals with the production of natural dyes, which she incorporates into her works, referring to the origins and history of photography.

Daniela Leykam, curator and programme manager for art and culture at KfW Stiftung, Frankfurt, provides insights into the exhibition *Mutations*. The residency programme of the same name at the Akademie Schloss Solitude, Stuttgart, which aims to promote transdisciplinary and transcultural dialogue between art and science, and the exhibition are dedicated to the concept of "mutations" and their multi-layered effects on our social, political and natural environment.

In collaboration with PORT25 – Raum für Gegenwartskunst and the Cultural Office of the City of Mannheim

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**Biennale goes BUGA 23**  
**14 April to 8 October 2023**

Which materials and processes are suitable for acting in a resource-conserving and climate-friendly way in analogue photography? With the *Reallabor für erneuerbare Fotografie*, the *Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie* and Kalamari Klub invite visitors to the German national garden show 2023 (BUGA 23) in Mannheim to explore the relationship between photography and ecology. The starting point is the environmentally friendly cyanotype process. It only needs sunlight, water and iron salts to produce the typical deep blue photographic images. Under the title *Under the same Sun*, artists Carolin Lange and Dico Kruijsse will create a large-scale installation of cyanotypes on the façades of the former barracks buildings on the Spinelli grounds.

In workshops, visitors can also learn the basics of this technique and help shape the artistic work together with the artists. Short lectures and guided tours offer the opportunity to discover the relationship between photography and ecology from an artistic, photographic and scientific standpoint.

*Reallabor für erneuerbare Fotografie* is curated by Nicolas Reinhart and Christoph Wieland.

*Reallabor für erneuerbare Fotografie* is a collaboration project between the *Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie* and Kalamari Klub and is supported by the 'Innovationsfonds Kunst des Ministeriums für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst Baden-Württemberg'.

**Further information** (in German) on all events in our calendar at [www.biennalefotografie.de](http://www.biennalefotografie.de).

## **Press contact**

Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie  
Hendrik v. Boxberg / Press & Public Relations  
T.: +49 (0)177-7379207  
[presse@biennalefotografie.de](mailto:presse@biennalefotografie.de)

[www.biennalefotografie.de](http://www.biennalefotografie.de)

## **Events on 19 and 26 January 2023**

Collaboration partners

**STADTMANNHEIM**<sup>2</sup>  
Kulturamt

**PORT25**  
  
Raum für Gegenwartskunst

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## *Reallabor für erneuerbare Fotografie*

Collaboration partners

KALAMARI  
KLUB



Patron

INNOVATIONSFONDS  
KUNST  
  
BADEN-WÜRTTEMBERG

*Reallabor für erneuerbare Fotografie* is supported by the 'Innovationsfonds Kunst des Ministeriums für Wissenschaft, Forschung und Kunst Baden-Württemberg'.

## Partners of the *Biennale für aktuelle Fotografie*

Premiumsponsor



Förderer

STADTMANNHEIM

Ludwigshafen  
Stadt am Rhein

Heidelberg

# für aktuelle Fotografie