

Press contact:

Sonja Hempel
Tel. +49 221 221 23491
sonja.hempel@museum-ludwig.de

MUSEUM LUDWIG

PRESS RELEASE

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IN SITU: Photo Stories on Migration

This exhibition features personal photographs and interviews with Yücel Aşçıoğlu, Tayfun Demir, Chrysaugi Diederich, Onur Dülger, Antonella Giurano, Antonios Gogos, Zeynep Gürsoy, Alpin Harrenkamp, Ali Kanatlı, Bengü Kocatürk-Schuster, Angela L., the Özdağ family, Mitat Özdemir, Asimina Paradissa, Rosa Spitaleri, Fikret Üçgüler, and Sofia and Ioanna Zacharaki. Additional personal photographs come from Alibaba G., Salih G., Marie Claire Ippolito, Romolo di Sabatino, and others who remain unnamed, which were provided by the Documentation Center and Museum of Migration in Germany (DOMiD).

The personal photographs are combined with photographs of urban life by Jörg Boström, Chargesheimer, Christel Fomm, GAG Immobilien AG (Cologne), Heinz Held, Candida Höfer, Kurt Holl, Gernot Huber, Rheinisches Bildarchiv Köln, Ulrich Tillmann, Schulz, Dieter Storp, students at the Ruhr-Universität Bochum, Guenay Ulutuncok, Manfred Vollmer, Ludwig Wegmann, Eusebius Wirdeier, a film by Edith Schmidt-Marcello and David Wittenberg, and a video project by Ulf Aminde.

Photographs of Cologne and other cities in the Rhineland from the period between 1955 and 1989 visualize the constant changes brought about by the residents. Yet the stories of migrant workers in photography are barely present in the public visual memory of these cities. For the first time, this exhibition at the Museum Ludwig will focus on personal photographs. An important starting point is documents of stories of migration from DOMiD. In interviews, the lenders of the works in the exhibition talk about their diverse histories. They offer an account of life in the city and how it was enlivened by their immigration. Their personal photographs show how streets, buildings, shops, bars, social clubs, and parks become places of remembrance and part of the city's history. The exhibition deals with the role of photography in this context. It combines these new and surprising cityscapes with photographs of urban life by Chargesheimer, Candida Höfer, and Ulrich Tillmann from the collection of the Museum Ludwig as well as photographs by Christel Fomm, Gernot Huber, and Guenay Ulutuncok, among others. Beyond the fleeting experiences of life in the city, these photographic stories of migration show the various ways in which people can find their place in a new city.

The idea for the exhibition comes from the architectural historian and guest curator Ela Kaçel. In various publications by the city of Cologne and the housing developer GAG she discovered photographs of residential complexes from the 1950s and '60s that are prominent landmarks of the "New Cologne." These high-rise buildings were intended for workers who had come to Cologne as part of the so-called labor recruitment agreements between West Germany and mainly Italy, Spain, Portugal, Greece, and Turkey. In the widely published images of the new neighborhoods of the city, the striking apartment blocks appear as defining architectural phenomena. These iconic photographs have become part of the city's history.

As a counterpart to the deserted shots of the "guest worker towers," Ela Kaçel discovered personal photographs taken by the residents in front of and inside the buildings. This led her and the curator Barbara Engelbach to the question of how labor migration in cities is represented in public photographs between 1955 and 1989 and how migrants photographed themselves as residents of the city. How does their photographic practice locate them and thus help contribute to the memory of specific cities and places? The generous loans from the city residents and their interviews present these diverse personal photographs and stories about arrival, integration, and mobility, finding one's place and political engagement, participation and self-reflection. They make it possible to recognize the collective memory of a post-migration society and to preserve their stories of urban life.

Yilmaz Dziewior, director of the Museum Ludwig: "The focus on personal photographs also changes our perspective on the museum's collection. This allows us to present very different stories about arriving in a new city in the Rhineland."

The exhibition is a joint project with the Documentation Center and Museum of Migration in Germany (DOMiD). Manuel Gogos and Aurora Rodonò served as curatorial advisors.

Curators: Ela Kaçel (architectural historian and guest curator) and Barbara Engelbach (curator)

The exhibition is supported by the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia, the Landschaftsverband Rheinland, and GAG Immobilien AG.

A catalogue will be published on the occasion of the exhibition:

In Situ: Photo Stories on Migration, edited by Ela Kaçel and Barbara Engelbach, with texts by Yilmaz Dziewior, Ela Kaçel, and Barbara Engelbach, as well as numerous extracts from interviews, German/English, 21 × 21 cm, 304 pages, 230 illustrations, Verlag der Buchhandlung Walther und Franz König, ISBN 978-3-7533-0038-2, €25

Website and Social Media

The Museum Ludwig will be posting about the exhibition on its social media channels with the hashtag #VorOrt.

Facebook/Instagram/Twitter/Vimeo: @MuseumLudwig

www.museum-ludwig.de