

Sleeping Beauties

Friederike von Rauch

Nocturne: Dec 2nd 2012 from 6pm

Show: Dec 7th 2012 untill January 26th 2013



Fifty One Fine Art Photography proudly presents 'Sleeping Beauties', the latest series of Friederike von Rauch.

Alone in the museum. Friederike von Rauch (Germany, 1967) explores European museums after the regular opening times, in complete calm and solitude. The masterpieces on the walls vanish into the darkness while the sparse light entering through the open doors creates an abstract centreline on the parquet floor.

Exceptional places are von Rauchs favoured working area. In previous series, such as 'Sites' and 'Transept', she focussed on extraordinary locations, for example Art Deco-buildings in Brussels and the industrial landscapes of Rotterdam. In 2009 the book 'Neues Museum' was published, in which she displays fragments of the restoration process of the Neues Museum in Berlin by architect David Chipperfield. The building or the architecture are not the main subject, but the spaces itself are. Although most people would just walk past it, her composing gaze makes the places unique.

Since the beginning of 2011, after receiving exclusive invitations, she has photographed in the Royal Museum of Fine Arts Antwerp, the Old Masters Picture Gallery in Dresden and the New Palace at Sanssouci Park in Potsdam. Her next stop was Venice, where she had been invited to accompany the restoration of a Titian painting and she worked in several other museums. Always outside the regular opening times and during maintenance periods.

Von Rauch is able to transcend the spaces without intervening in the existing order of things. The unique photographic result explores the strong atmospheric impact of the selected locations. Eventually the place itself becomes irrelevant and is reduced to a new entity.

Details dominate von Rauchs photographs. Signs of wear and tear and other traces left by human interventions and the passing of time are magnified. Although all the photographs were taken in magnificent museum spaces, they often seem abstract. Their reserved range of colours and precise arrangement reduce the setting to a conceptual unity. Days and weeks elapse during the process of making one photograph. This concentrated working approach is perceptible in the pictures, but despite this precision they retain a dreamlike, mysterious and poetic quality. They are an emphatic attempt to capture a beauty that goes beyond the reproduced opulence. It almost seems as though Friederike von Rauch has suddenly caught the rooms and paintings sleeping, recovering from the daily hustle and bustle and the thousands of glances directed at them.

'Sleeping Beauties' is a work in progress. We are looking forward to welcoming you at the exhibition of the temporary end result at Fifty One Fine Art Photography.