

# ARSENAL WIEN

# FOTO

FOTO ARSENAL WIEN  
MQ, Museumsplatz 1, 1070 Wien

Aug 31, 2023

## Press Information

### **Gundula Schulze Eldowy: Shadow Winds: Berlin and the East, 1979–1990**

**Exhibition opening at MuseumsQuartier in Vienna on August 31, 2023**

Gundula Schulze Eldowy's photographs are characterized by their candor and tender affection. FOTO ARSENAL WIEN is the first Austrian institution to present a major solo exhibition of the work of this eminent proponent of German documentary photography. Running from September 1 to November 19, 2023, the show will open on August 31 at MQ Freiraum in Vienna.

#### **On the State of a Country and the State of the World**

Between the late 1970s and the collapse of the German Democratic Republic, Gundula Schulze Eldowy (b. 1954) analyzed the state of her country in disconcerting images: a gaunt sheep in a slaughterhouse, ballerinas in a dance school, workers in large industrial plants, a blood-covered delivery room. Working without an official commission, the young woman pushed the limits of taboos. Like a lost archaeological site, Berlin and the eastern half of Germany sometimes appear in surprisingly enchanting light. Schulze Eldowy's reportage documents the demise of an unknown world that was sealed off from the Western world. Her urban forays also allow viewers to enter the inner, foreign world of an artist who always focused on people on the fringes of society: decline, solitude, poverty, absurdities, and testimonies of everyday life in East Germany. Schulze Eldowy produced images that countered the official, idealized view of the GDR, often creating metaphors that go far beyond the condition of the country with a focus on the alienation of humanity in modern civilization. The pictures that Schulze Eldowy took predominantly in East Berlin, and later in Dresden and Leipzig, frequently test the limits of what is tolerable. Although they tell of affection, the images do not shy away from the truth.

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FOTO ARSENAL WIEN presents two major series by the artist for the first time in Austria. *Der große und der kleine Schritt* (The Big and the Little Step) consists of photographs that Schulze Eldowy took in industrial plants, ballet schools, delivery rooms, slaughterhouses, and in the streets of East German cities between 1982 and 1990 as one of the first photographers in the GDR to use color film—and the only woman. *Tamerlan*, a series of portraits taken in the early 1980s, documents the final years leading up to the death of a woman she befriended.

The exhibition includes around 120 works and one video piece.

**On the artist:** Gundula Schulze Eldowy (b. 1954 in Erfurt, Germany) left her hometown in 1972 and moved to East Berlin. She studied at the Academy of Fine Arts in Leipzig from 1979 to 1984. In 1985 Schulze Eldowy met the famous Swiss-American artist Robert Frank in East Berlin and became friends with him. Following an intense exchange of letters, Schulze Eldowy spent several formative years in New York. In 1996 she was awarded the twelfth Prize for Overseas Photographers at the Higashikawa Photo Festival. In 2000 Schulze Eldowy took her first trip to Bolivia and Peru; she married Javier A. Garcia Vásquez, the Indigenous Peruvian ceramic artist and shaman of the Moche. In 2010 she became a member of the Saxon Academy of Arts in Dresden, and in 2019 she became a member of the Academy of the Arts in Berlin. She lives in Peru and Berlin.

Gundula Schulze Eldowy's photographs are part of international collections including the Museum of Modern Art in New York, LACMA Los Angeles, Metropolitan Museum of Art and major German museums.

[gundula-schulze-eldowy.com](http://gundula-schulze-eldowy.com)

## Basic Information about the Exhibition

*Gundula Schulze Eldowy: Shadow Winds; Berlin and the East, 1979–1990*

September 1–November 19, 2023, daily except Monday, 11 a.m.–7 p.m.

MQ Freiraum, MuseumsQuartier Wien

The exhibition is curated by Felix Hoffmann (artistic director of FOTO ARSENAL WIEN).

Tickets available at the ticket counter and at the MQ Shop: 10 euros (regular), 5 euros (reduced)

**Opening:** August 31, 2023, 7 p.m., with Veronica Kaup-Hasler, City Councilor of Cultural Affairs and Science in Vienna

## Side events

(Participation with exhibition ticket, without registration, no additional costs for guided tour/talk)

Sep 1, 2023, 7:30 p.m., MQ Salon:

Artist Talk Gundula Schulze Eldowy

Sep 3, 2023, 12 a.m., MQ Salon:

Guided Tour Gundula Schulze Eldowy

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## **Funded by**

Stadt Wien Kultur

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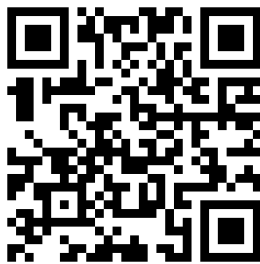
## **Media Partners, Cooperations**

Camera Austria; EIKON; FOTOGESCHICHTE; artmagazine.cc; ORF III; Volkstheater; Austrian Filmmuseum; Kunsthalle Wien; Hunger auf Kunst und Kultur

## **About FOTO ARSENAL WIEN**

FOTO ARSENAL WIEN is the new center of photography and lens-based media in Vienna, Austria. Initiated by the city of Vienna in autumn 2022, the institution presents contemporary photography in all forms and uses. The temporary venue at the MuseumsQuartier Wien will be replaced by an exhibition space of its own at the Arsenal in late 2024. FOTO ARSENAL is also the platform that organizes FOTO WIEN, Austria's largest biennial festival of photography, which is held within the framework of the European Month of Photography (EMOP). Felix Hoffmann is the artistic director of FOTO ARSENAL WIEN and FOTO WIEN.

Image material is available for downloading on [fotoarsenalwien.at](http://fotoarsenalwien.at) and on request to [presse@fotoarsenalwien.at](mailto:presse@fotoarsenalwien.at).



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