

# KUNSTMUSEUM THUN



## PRESS RELEASE

Sophie Calle - *Regard incertain*

Kunstmuseum Thun, 6 September – 1 December 2019

Press Preview

5 September, 11am

Opening

5 September, 6.30pm

### **Her first comprehensive solo exhibition in Switzerland**

She photographs and observes, films and writes, investigates and invents. One of the most important contemporary French artists, Sophie Calle deals with reality and fiction, the boundaries between presence and absence, and the parameters of self perception and how one is perceived by others. She was born in Paris in 1953, and lives and works in Malakoff, near Paris. Calle's work has been displayed in solo and group exhibitions in renowned museums and galleries both in France and internationally, and is represented in the collections of many leading museums. In a joint exhibition, the Kunstmuseum Thun and the Fotomuseum Winterthur will exhibit Sophie Calle's extensive oeuvre for the first time in Switzerland, with each venue having a different emphasis.

### **How do we see the moment?**

The exhibition in Thun consists of eight large groups of works. The title *Regard incertain* reflects Sophie Calle's intention to question how unique a moment can be, how individual a glance, and how obvious a reality. In her creations, photography and film are just as important as the text. In minutely documented quests, she considers the parameters of artistic self-awareness and self-portrayal, her finger on the pulse of our times. The works exhibited in *Sophie Calle – Regard incertain* are a prime example of this approach, and provide an insight into various aspects of the work of this French artist. Well-known works from the past ten years such as the video work *Voir la mer* (2011) are on display alongside early, groundbreaking works such as *Suite vénitienne* with which Calle had her international breakthrough in 1980.

### ***Voir la mer* – looking at the sea for the first time**

In her video work *Voir la mer* (2011), Calle conveys the moment when people see the sea for the first time. She chose people who live in Istanbul, a city surrounded by the sea. For whatever the reason these people had never seen the sea, Sophie Calle invites them to do so. With their eyes covered, these people - men and women, young and old - are led down to the beach and filmed as they see the sea for the first time. What do they feel? We can only imagine, perhaps with the help of our own memories of seeing the sea for the first time, but with an inkling that this quiet moment may well change how they see the world.

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## And how long can I remember a moment?

In the groups *Que voyez-vous?* (2013), *Les tableaux dérobés* (1994-2013) and *Last seen* (1991), all of which refer to one of the world's most spectacular art thefts (1990, Isabella Stewart Gardner Museum, Boston), Calle asks curators and supervisory staff about their memories of the stolen pictures. How do they deal with the void left behind after the theft? Here, as with the other groups of works, the relationship between text and image plays an important role. The texts accompanying Calle's pictures, therefore, are never to be regarded as a supplement, but as a constituent part of the work.

*La dernière image* (2010) does not just demonstrate Sophie Calle's questioning of memory and absence as evoked through text and picture, but also her reflections on the nature of photography. She asks people who suddenly lost their sight about the last thing they saw. What evolves is a triangular relationship between the portrait of the person, the description of their memory of the last thing they saw, and a photograph which seems to represent that memory. But does the photograph really show what this person remembers? And how do we spectators perceive this link with the text?

Lastly, *Suite vénitienne* (1980) is one of Calle's earliest key works. In it she secretly follows a man (Henry B.) she barely knows around Venice; she uses the numerous photographs she took, accompanied with diary-like texts, to describe not just the methods of her surveillance but also her own feelings. It demonstrates the fusion of investigative methods, fictional constructs and scenes from real life, as well as the construction of the ego, that is so characteristic of her work.

Courtesy: **PERROTIN** and Production: **A R T E R**

Further information about the exhibition is available on our website: [kunstmuseumthun.ch](http://kunstmuseumthun.ch).

## Press

If you require other images in addition to those sent, have any questions or would like to arrange a visit, please don't hesitate to contact us at any time:

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