

MICHAEL WOLF
(1954-2019)

Born in Germany, then raised in Europe, Canada, and the United States, Wolf began his interest in photography when studying at UC Berkeley and the Folkwang School with Otto Steinert in Essen, Germany. Wolf later moved to Hong Kong in 1994 to begin his artistic career as a contract photographer for Stern Magazine. Since 2001, Wolf has been focusing on his own projects, drawing his focus to the tradition of socially concerned photography, while also engaging with the radical transformation of photography of recent years.

Wolf found his inspiration as an artist living in Hong Kong and China, where the ever-shifting cityscapes provided him with constant stimulation. Rather than creating images that describe the immensity of China's urban transformation, Wolf's work in this region is based on the power of the vernacular. By 'collecting' a series of these urban minutiae he has been able to paint a much larger picture, not only of the contemporary Chinese city, but rather of the more universal realities of urban life. The stunning 'blown-up' images of Chicago's modernist architecture in 'Transparent City' offer a point of contrast against the closed-up concrete towers from Hong Kong and China. These images oscillate between a microscopic and macroscopic view of the city, and seek to reveal what goes on inside the windows within each cityscape.

Education

- 1971-1972 North Toronto Collegiate Institute, Toronto, Canada
- 1972-1973 UC Berkeley, CA
- 1973-1976 Studied photography and visual communications at the University of Essen, Germany, with Otto Steinert; Degree in Visual Communication

Solo Exhibitions

- 2019 Life in Cities Retrospective, Urania, Berlin, Germany
- 2019 Bottrop-Ebel '76, Josef Albers Museum,
- 2018-2019 Life in Cities Retrospective, Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, Germany
- 2018 Bottrop-Ebel '76, Flowers Gallery, Kingsland Road, London, UK
- 2018 Life in Cities Retrospective, Stelline Foundation, Milan, Italy
- 2017-2018 Life in Cities Retrospective, The Hague Museum of Photography, Netherlands
- 2017 Life in Cities Retrospective, Les Rencontres de la Photographie, Arles, France
- 2017 City, Bau-Xi Photo, Toronto, ON
- 2016 Hong Kong, Informal Solutions, Centre Photographique - Pôle Image Haute - Normandie, France
- 2016 Bau-Xi Photo, Toronto, ON
- 2015 Paris Rooftops, Bau-Xi Photo, Toronto, ON
- 2015 Bau-Xi Photo, Toronto, ON
- 2015 Paris Rooftops, M97 Project Space, Shanghai
- 2015 Digital Conditions, Kunstverein Hannover, Hannover, Germany
- 2015 Blind Walls and Night Trees, Wouter Van Leeuwen Galerie, Amsterdam, NL
- 2015 Hong Kong Narratives, Michael Wolf's studio, Hong Kong
- 2015 Back Alley Deconstructed, Pop Up at wontonMeen, Hong Kong
- 2015 Words Matter, Robert Koch Gallery, San Francisco, CA
- 2015 Hong Kong Inside Out, Tin Shed Gallery, Sydney, Australia
- 2014 Paris Abstract, Robert Koch Gallery, San Francisco, CA

- 2014 My Favorite Thing, Wouter Van Leeuwen Galerie, Amsterdam, NL
- 2014 The Real Toy Story, K11 Art Foundation, Shanghai
- 2014 Architecture of Density, Flowers Gallery, London, England
- 2014 Icones, Musée des Beaux Arts de Liege, Liege, Belgium
- 2013 Architecture of Density, The Scout Shots & Small God, Big City, Galerie Wouter van Leeueen, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2013 Small God, Big City, 25 Books, Berlin, Germany
- 2013 Tokyo Compression, Recontres Gaspésie, Canada
- 2013 Architecture of Density – X Bienal de Arquitetura, Sao Paulo, Brazil
- 2013 Transparent City, Bau-Xi Photo, Toronto, Canada
- 2013 Industrial Architecture, M97 Gallery, Shanghai
- 2013 Small God, Big City, M97 Gallery, Shanghai
- 2012 Street View Portraits, Wouter van Leeuwen Galerie, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2012 Hong Kong and Shenzhen biennial of urbanism/architecture, Hong Kong
- 2012 Total City – Ivam Institut D’art Modern, Valencia, Spain
- 2012 Bamboo Theater Exhibition: Portraits of Cantonese Opera Singers – Museum M+, Hong Kong, China
- 2011 Untitled – Flowers, London, England
- 2011 Life in Cities – Christophe Guye Galerie, Zurich, Switzerland
- 2011 Real Fake Art / Tokyo Compression Revisited – 25 Books, Berlin, Germany
- 2011 Sh Contemporary, Shanghai, China
- 2011 Life In Cities – Gun Gallery, Stockholm, Sweden
- 2011 Metropolis – Robert Koch Gallery, San Francisco, USA
- 2011 I’m Watching You – Elipsis Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2011 Fear in the City – Monnaie de Paris, France
- 2011 Tokyo Compression – Forum Für Fotografie, Cologne, Germany
- 2010 Hong Kong Corner Houses – Upper Station Street Gallery, Hong Kong, China
- 2010 We Are Watching You – La Galerie Particulière, Paris, France
- 2010 Street View / Tokyo Compression – Gallery Fifty One Fine Art Photography, Antwerp, Belgium
- 2010 Tokyo Compression – 25 books, Berlin, Germany
- 2010 Street View & Tokyo Compression – Galerie Wouter van Leeuwen, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2010 ISEEYOU – Bruce Silverstein Gallery, Chelsea, New York, USA
- 2010 Life in Cities – M97 Gallery, Shanghai, China
- 2010 Architecture of Density – M97 Gallery at art HK 2010, Hong Kong, China
- 2010 Paris Street View – Curated by Foam, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2010 Paris Street View – Goethe Institute Hong Kong, Hong Kong, China
- 2009 Metropolis – La Galerie Particulière, Paris, France
- 2009 Transparent City – Wouter van Leeuwen Gallery at Art Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2009 Architecture of Density & Transparent City - Elipsis Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2009 Art Brussels, Brussels, Belgium
- 2009 Transparent City – Galerie Wouter van Leeuwen, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2009 AIPAD: The Photography Show – New York, USA
- 2009 Transparent City – Gallery Fifty One Fine Art Photography, Antwerp, Belgium
- 2009 Transparent City & Architecture of Density – Entropy Art, Naples, Italy
- 2009 The Armory Show – Modern, New York, USA
- 2008 Transparent City – Museum for Contemporary Photography, Chicago, USA
- 2008 Transparent City – Robert Koch Gallery, San Francisco, USA

- 2008 Butterfly Dream: Shanghai Moca Envisage II – Moca, Shanghai, China
- 2008 Translocalmotion: Shanghai Biennale – Shanghai Art Museum, Shanghai, China
- 2008 Hong Kong Back Door – Lumervisum Gallery, Hong Kong, China
- 2008 Art Chicago Photography Show, Chicago, USA
- 2008 Heritage: Hong Kong Corner Houses – Goethe Institute, Hong Kong, China
- 2008 Real Fake Pictures & Architecture of Density – Galerie Wouter van Leeuwen, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2007 Real Fake Art and 100 x 100 – Robert Koch Gallery, San Francisco, USA
- 2007 China Projects – Gallery M97, Shanghai, China
- 2007 Fake - Portraits of Chinese Copy Art – Goethe Institute, Hong Kong, China
- 2007 Hong Kong Industrial – Ursula Huber Gallery, Basel, Switzerland
- 2006 Architecture of Density / China Copy Artists – Gallery Fifty One Fine Art Photography, Antwerp, Belgium
- 2006 Hong Kong Front Door Back Door – German Museum for Architecture, Frankfurt, Germany
- 2006 Architecture of Density / Architecture of Work – Art Fair Zurich/ Gallery Huber, Switzerland
- 2006 Architecture of Density – Gallery Fifty One Fine Art Photography at Paris Photo, Paris, France
- 2006 100 x 100 – Gallery of the Goethe Institute, Hong Kong, China
- 2006 100 x 100 / Architecture of Density – Daegu Photo Biennale, Korea
- 2006 Architecture of Density – 798 Photo Gallery, Beijing, China
- 2006 Architecture of Density / 100 x 100 – Gallery Laif, Cologne Germany
- 2006 Architecture of Density – Janet Oh Gallery, Seoul, Korea
- 2006 New Work from Hong Kong – Robert Koch Gallery, San Francisco, USA
- 2006 Architecture of Density – Hasted-Hunt Gallery, New York, USA
- 2006 Architecture of Density – 1918 ArtSPACE, Shanghai, China
- 2006 Architecture of Density / 100 x 100 – Gallery Laif, Cologne, Germany
- 2006 Architecture of Density – Janet Oh Gallery, Seoul, Korea
- 2006 New Work from Hong Kong – Robert Koch Gallery, San Francisco, USA
- 2006 Architecture of Density – Hasted-Hunt Gallery, New York, USA
- 2006 Architecture of Density – 1918 ArtSPACE, Shanghai, China
- 2006 Hong Kong Architecture – AIPAD New York, Robert Koch Gallery
- 2006 Sitting in China – Kap Forum, Cologne, Germany
- 2005 Hong Kong: Front Door/Back Door – Gallery Colette, Paris, France
- 2005 Useful, Cute and Collected. The Photographed Animal – Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany
- 2005 Architecture of Density – Ping Yao Photography Festival, Ping Yao, China
- 2005 Architecture of Density – Art Basel / Robert Koch Gallery, Basel, Switzerland
- 2005 Architecture of Density – Robert Koch Gallery, San Francisco, USA
- 2004 The Real Toy Story – John Batten Gallery, Hong Kong, China
- 2004 Hong Kong the Back Door – Hong Kong Art Walk, Hong Kong, China
- 2004 Architecture of Density – Bryant Park during New York Fashion Week, New York, USA
- 2003 Portraits of Chinese People – John Batten Gallery, Hong Kong, China
- 2003 Sitting in China – Kestner Museum, Hannover, Germany
- 2003 Images Against War – Galerie Lichtblick, Cologne, Germany

Group Exhibitions

- 2012 Von Sinnen: Wahrnehmung in Der Zeitgenoessischen Kunst – Kunsthalle Zu Kiel, Kiel
Germany
- 2012 Public: Collective Identity | Occupied Spaces – The Museum of Contemporary Canadian
Art, Toronto, Canada
- 2012 Making History – Frankfurter Kunstverein, Frankfurt, Germany
- 2012 The Near and Elsewhere – PM Gallery, London, UK
- 2012 Davos Art Exhibition – Meeting of the World Economic, Davos, Switzerland
- 2011 Prix Pictet: Growth – Gallery of Photography, Dublin, Ireland
- 2011 Prix Pictet: Growth – Corcoran Gallery of Art, Washington DC, USA
- 2011 Fotodoks – Münchner Stadtmuseum, Munich, Germany
- 2011 Infinite Balance: Artists and the Environment – Museum Photographic Arts, San Diego, USA
- 2011 Cities: Visionary Places – Torrance Art Museum, Los Angeles, USA
- 2011 Metropolis. City Life in the Urban Age 2011 – Noorderlicht Photo Festival, Groningen,
Netherlands
- 2011 Prix Pictet: Growth – Arteversum, Dusseldorf, Germany
- 2011 Sifest #20 – Savignano Immagini, Savignana Sul Rubicone, Italy
- 2011 Hail Traveler! Rick Wester Fine Art, New York City, USA
- 2011 Summer in the City – Galerie Wouter van Leeuwen, Amsterdam, Netherlands
- 2011 NY Temporary: The City Through Photography, Film and Video – Muse Center of
Photography, New York, USA
- 2011 Prix Pictet: Growth – Galleria Carla Sozzani, Milano, Italy
- 2011 Prix Pictet – Christophe Guye Galerie, Zurich, Switzerland
- 2011 Prix Pictet: Growth – Thessaloniki Museum of Photography, Thessaloniki, Greece
- 2011 Street Photography Now – Uno Art Space, Stuttgart, Germany
- 2011 Prix Pictet – Passage de Retz, Paris, France
- 2011 10 years – Galerie Wouter van Leeuwen, Amsterdam Netherlands
- 2010 Street Photography Now, Contributed, Berlin Germany
- 2010 Renversements de Faits / Abstractions Photographiques – Le Château d’eau, Toulouse,
France
- 2010 Street Photography Now – Third Floor Gallery, Cardiff, UK
- 2010 Alles Wieder Anders – Ruhr Museum, Essen, Germany
- 2010 Bredaphoto 2010, Breda, Netherlands
- 2010 Meer – Voorkamer, Lier, Belgium
- 2010 City Flâneur: Social Documentary Photography – Hong Kong Heritage Museum, Hong
Kong, China
- 2010 From the Vanishing Point – Demolished Public Housing Estates in Hong Kong – 1a Space,
Hong Kong, China
- 2010 Untitled- Elipsis Gallery, Istanbul, Turkey
- 2010 The New York Photo Festival – New York, USA
- 2010 Index 1.0 – Gallery Fifty One Fine Art Photography, Antwerp, Belgium
- 2010 Homelesshome – Museum on the Seam, Jerusalem, Israel
- 2009 Cities - Places Visionaires – Auditorium Arte, Rome, Italy
- 2009 The Bare Necessity of Art – Etherton Gallery, Tucson, USA
- 2009 Parallax – M97 Gallery, Shanghai, China
- 2009 Landscape As Dream – Studio La Citta, Verona, Italy
- 2009 Dystopia – Robert Koch Gallery, San Francisco, USA
- 2009 Art Rotterdam, Rotterdam, Netherlands
- 2009 Transparent City – Stephen Daiter Gallery, Chicago, USA
- 2008 Summer in the City 08 – Galerie Wouter van Leeuwen, Amsterdam, Netherlands

- 2008 China Design Now – Victoria and Albert Museum, London, England
 2008 Eastern Standard, Western Artists in China – Mass. Moca, North Adams, USA
 2007 Two Photographers in a Dialog: Michael Wolf's Architecture of Density & Stephen Canham's Travelling Gypsies Homes – Hallische Gallerien, Dresden, Germany
 2007 New Urban Vistas – Arthur Roger Gallery, New Orleans, USA
 2007 Bac! – Centre de Cultura Contemporània de Barcelona, Barcelona, Spain
 2007 Facades – Krannert Art Museum, Champaign, USA
 2007 Contemporary Art from the Permanent Collection – San Jose Museum of Art, San Jose, USA
 2007 Ulisphotofest 2007 – Ulisphotofest, Istanbul, Turkey
 2006 Architecture of Density – Shanghai Biennale / ArtSPACE 1918, Shanghai, China
 2004 Truth! Photography's Promise of Reality – Ruhrland Museum, Essen, Germany
 2003 Post Chicago: April 2003–2004 – Gallery 400, University of Illinois, Chicago, USA
 2000 Peking Shanghai Shenzhen: Cities of the 21st Century – Bauhaus Museum, Dessau, Germany
 1990 Otto Steinert and Students – Folkwang Museum, Essen Germany
 1981 Wie Lebt Man im Ruhrgebiet – Folkwang Museum, Essen Germany
 1979 Eugene Richards / Michael Wolf: Neighborhoods – Folkwang Museum, Essen Germany
 1975 Portraits of Craftsmen in Essen Werden – Curated by Ute Eskildsen, Room 315 of the University of Essen, Germany

Museum Exhibitions

- 2012 Hong Kong and Shenzhen Biennial of Urbanism/Architecture, Hong Kong, China
 2010 100 x 100 & Architecture of Density – Venice Biennale of Architecture, Venice, Italy
 2009 Transparent City – Aperture Gallery, New York, USA
 2007 Pieces of China: A Retrospective of Michael Wolf's China Projects – Museum Center Vapriikki, Tampere, Finland
 2006 The Real Toy Story – Museum for Work, Hamburg, Germany
 2006 Made in China – Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago, USA

Permanent Collections

The Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam
 The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York
 The Brooklyn Museum, New York
 The San Jose Museum of Art, California
 The Museum of Contemporary Photography, Chicago
 Museum Folkwang, Essen
 The German Museum for Architecture, Frankfurt

Publications

- 2012 Tokyo Compression Three (Peperoni Press / Asia One)
 2012 Small Gods Big City (Hong Kong University Press)
 2012 Bottrop Ebel (Peperoni Books)
 2012 Architecture of Density (Peperoni Press / Asia One)

- 2011 Hong Kong Corner Houses (Hong Kong University Press)
- 2011 Portraits (Superlabo, Japan)
- 2011 Growth - Prix Pictet 2010 (Teneues Verlag)
- 2011 Tokyo Compression Revisited (Peperoni Press / Asia One)
- 2011 Real Fake Art (Peperoni Press / Asia One)
- 2011 FY (Peperoni Press)
- 2010 A Series of Unfortunate Events (Peperoni Press)
- 2010 Tokyo Compression (Peperoni / Asian One)
- 2009 Hong Kong Inside Outside (Peperoni / Asia One)
- 2008 The Transparent City (Aperture / mocp)
- 2007 Pieces of China (Tampere Museums)
- 2006 Hong Kong Front Door Back Door -German Edition (Steidl)
- 2005 Hong Kong Front Door Back Door (Thames & Hudson)
- 2003 Chinese Propaganda Posters (Taschen)
- 2002 Sitting in China (Steidl)
- 2001 China im Wandel (Frederking & Thaler)
- 1982 Maloche: Levin im Revier (Eichborn Verlag)

Recent Awards

- 2011 World Press Photo Award Competition – Honorable Mention
- 2010 Prix Pictet Photography Award
- 2010 World Press Photo Award Competition – First Place
- 2005 World Press Photo Award Competition – First Place