



**ARAKI TELLER TELLER ARAKI**

04.04. – 25.05.2014



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Press conference: Thursday, 03.04.2014, 10.30 am

Opening of the exhibition: Thursday, 03.04.2014, 7 pm

Juergen Teller will be present.

At the initiative of OstLicht Gallery and Peter Coeln in Vienna, the exhibition by Nobuyoshi Araki and Juergen Teller brings together two of the most important photographers of our times, showing new works conceived for this joint exhibition and entering into an artistic dialogue.

The exhibition **ARAKI TELLER TELLER ARAKI** thus showcases the encounter between two attitudes of extraordinary photographers, who are united in their radical artistic attitude and their almost insatiable hunger for images as reflections of their personal experience of the world. The elementary interest at the core of their work is the spiritual and physical ambivalence of human existence.

**Nobuyoshi Araki** shows works from the project he has been pursuing since 2012: *Last by Leica*. This is a kind of visual diary in which he draws his photographic impressions and ideas together into a touching commentary on his life, artistic work and working method. Young women, proliferating Japanese urban landscapes, rifts in cloud configurations – these all point to his life themes.

The meaning of the title *Last by Leica* is twofold: Araki uses the last analogous camera produced by Leica, a Leica M7, for this project. Thus, he understands this series as homage to silver halide photography. On the other hand, Araki's *Last by Leica* forms the final installment in a series he began in the 1980s with *Life by Leica* and continued in 2000 with *Love by Leica*, a collection of female portraits and nude photographs. After suffering a stroke and losing sight in his right eye, *Last by Leica* also contains a self-portrait taken at the hospital and images of an electrocardiogram. These are juxtaposed with images from his current series *Paradise*, depicting dolls and flowers in front of a black backdrop. Here, Araki tries to revive paradise, trying to leave behind the darkness, the sorrow and the shadows of death accompanying his life. Finally, selections from his life's project of several decades, *Someone's Wife*, complete the selection.

With the works selected for the book, **Juergen Teller** also proves himself a storyteller. Whether he portraying actors of Berlin's Schaubühne, rendering a woman who is not afraid to show her age for Vivienne Westwood's spring campaign, presenting the his own nude upper body and those of his colleagues under the title *Betriebsausflug*, offering us irritatingly beautiful pictures of his private trip to India or showing his idol Araki in an ironic pose – Juergen Teller allows us to participate in his life through his works. In the exhibition, he will juxtapose a new complex of works entitled *Woo!* with Araki's *Last of Leica* series. *Woo!* was also the title of his show at ICA (London 2013), where he covered the walls of the gallery with his photographs resulting in a huge photo collage on site. Initially planned with proof pages relating to his commercial photography Teller included some more pictures from his twenty-year spanning career. The collage formed hitherto unforeseen relationships across time, which Teller then photographically reassessed as a form of self-reflection and deconstruction. Many of these images will now be shown in Vienna as prints for the first time. Not only in formal contrast is the series *Irene im Wald* (2012), which leads into a thicket near his home town in Franconia, accompanied by personal anecdotes and childhood memories. It is an intimate portrait of the forest and the Teller family, a love letter to his mother Irene.



**Accompanying publication:** Nobuyoshi Araki and Juergen Teller are known for their outstanding publications. For this exhibition, the first artist's book conceived and designed jointly by Araki and Teller will be published. The volume will be published by the independent publishing house *eyesencia*, founded by Araki and Hisako Motoo in 1998, which has already published other books by Araki and other photographers, for example Daido Moriyama. The artist's book assembles more than 300 photographs, including those works shown as part of the exhibition which were previously unpublished, on about 400 pages. In addition, Araki and Teller will each dedicate a text to the other. The exhibition is curated by Gerald Matt in cooperation with Hisako Motoo (*eyesencia*) and Juergen Teller.

The book *Araki Teller, Teller Araki* was published by *eyesencia* publishing, price: € 85.

The exhibition is curated by Gerald Matt in cooperation with Hisako Motoo (*eyesencia*) and Juergen Teller.

## Biographies

**Nobuyoshi Araki** was born in Minowa, Tokyo, in 1940. He launched his artistic career in 1964 with photographs of children in the city; afterwards Araki photographed his own honeymoon. These photographs were published in the volume *Sentimental Journey*, which has acquired legend status today. During the 1970s, Araki gradually left behind press and journalistic photography and started to explore the existential questions and abysses of human life instead, turning increasingly towards erotic themes.

In his photographs, he developed a unique visual handwriting, creating a poetic portrayal of human passion which points beyond Japanese culture. During this time, he also began to publish his photographs in *Garo*, the avant-garde manga magazine and *Shashin Jidai*. Araki invented the concept of the "photographic ego", signifying the intriguing interplay between fiction, fact and desire. Araki, an obsessive photographer, perceives life through and in his pictures and is never seen without a camera. In Japan his photographs were partially censored due to "obscenity". Sky, flowers, street and family - Araki's subjects are manifold, as well as his ways of challenging photography, for example through scratching positive film and Arakinema (Araki + cinema).

**Juergen Teller** is one of the stars of contemporary photography. Born in Franconia in 1964, he made a name for himself as the photographer of the grunge movement in London early on, producing pictures of musicians like Kurt Cobain and magazine covers. During the 1990s he revolutionized art and fashion photography with distinctive images dealing with the fragmentary identities and surfaces of the fashion world and models. With his new and unique approach to photography, he enjoyed success in magazines such as *Vogue*, *The Face* and *ID*. Breaking the codes of beauty and fashion, his images of models like Kate Moss and Kristen McMenamy became icons. His works question our society's cult of beauty; consciously showing physical flaws, his visual idiom satirizes the need of our times for perfection. Works like his *Naked on the Football Field* or his video *World Cup Final* are sensitive declarations in favor of intimacy and everyday life. Like Araki, Teller has long explored existential issues of physical existence and sexuality, testing how close photography can get to reality – indeed, how painfully close it can get to truth.



## **ito wokashi**

In classical Japanese saying, we have very good words: ito wokashi (Sympathetic affinities). I find such feeling of West which was different from the one of East, in a good sense, in Juergen's photographs. Our methods of getting others into the mood to take pictures are similar enough. My photographs have sentimentality and Juergen's have his own sentimentality.

You can see it in the photos of his mother. Feelings come through vividly. My favorite is also the photo of Björk and her son in the sea: it's impregnated with real love. He also does fashion work, but that's not all there is to it. Maybe he feels shy to appear his sentimental part.

Photos must face life, as indeed his do. Whereas inevitably death gets into my photos. I think Juergen is in the period of the active volcano. He continues erupting. I am Mt. Fuji (the dormant volcano) but something is burning always inside of me to erupt.

Photography is all-inclusive. We can shoot anything, whatever interests us. I feel this book may be something special. The composition shall be able to realize that one photographer's work makes the other's photography look much more intelligible and fascinating. The moments of the present spill over from this book. These are here-and-now photos.

This is now. This is photography.

Nobuyoshi Araki

From the book „Araki Teller, Teller Araki“, eyesencia publishing, 2014



## **Fucky Fucky**

The first time I came across Araki's work was 1991 in Tokyo. I had a show in a department store, which was quite common in Japan at that time. Still a very odd, conservative and strange concept, but I was excited to be in Tokyo. A Japanese girlfriend, who I knew through work, asked me to come along to a show of a Japanese photographer named Araki. Little did I realise what was going to hit me. The exhibition was in an outdoor space, like a no-mans-land, fenced off, with buildings around it, and different sand hills inside. Araki just stuck his work into the sand, nailed it onto the fence, and there were flowers everywhere. It blew my mind, never have I seen such a radical, exciting exhibition in my life. He, in the middle of it all, was an energy bundle, shooting pictures like a maniac... gesturing, shouting, excited. I just stood there in sheer amazement.

My friend Satoko and I got invited for drinks afterwards. Araki zoomed right into me, gesturing, talking at me in Japanese, pointing his finger at her and me... "you and you, fucky fucky, me pictures" and kept on repeating the same "fucky fucky, me take pictures". I was still so green behind the ears, and totally embarrassed: this whole thing blew my imagination. The encounter left me shell shocked for six months after, telling people at home about that crazy guy. Back in 1991 he was literally unknown outside of Japan.

I find Araki's work deeply honest, beautiful. I'm drawn to the romanticism, the sadness, to the mix of life and energy. He takes complete control of his life, has a ferocious appetite for photographing life. You feel his pure pleasure in the act of photographing, of being the master and director, even dictator, of it all. I don't quite understand the tying up thing. I love his hundreds and hundreds of books. I love his fearlessness and excitement.

Recently, I came across a newish book of naked women in indoor locations. So far, so good, but the title for me was the most important thing: Someone's Wife. I thought, Jesus Christ, this is out there (or maybe just Japanese.) Deep down, I slightly regret not having done the fucky fucky thing. All I'm saying is, I would have liked to see those pictures.

Juergen Teller

From the book „Araki Teller, Teller Araki“, eyesencia publishing, 2014



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### **Accompanying publication:**

#### **Araki Teller, Teller Araki**

by Nobuyoshi Araki and Juergen Teller  
eyesencia publishing, 408 pages

Price: € 85

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### **New Opening hours:**

Gallery: Wed–Sun 12–6 pm, public holidays: 12–6 pm and by appointment

Library: Wed–Fr 12–6 pm, closed on public holidays Galerie Mi–So 12–18 h

**Directions:** OstLicht Gallery can be reached by public transport: take the U1 to Reumannplatz or the U3 to Enkplatz or the tram line 6 to the stop Absberggasse.

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