

L'ŒIL DE LA PHOTOGRAPHIE

Kicken Berlin : Helga Paris : Notizen

October 8, 2020

Kicken Berlin is starting the fall season with the exhibition **Helga Paris. Notizen** (Helga Paris. Notes), a cross section of vintage prints from the 1970s and 1980s, modern print images from Paris's ten-part Mappenwerk — her self-selected canon of works — and as-of-yet-unpublished working prints.

One of the most important autonomous voices in East German photography, Paris created portraits of people and places, both from the center of her life in Berlin and several stays in Halle and on her travels through Eastern Europe. With her empathetic, respectful observations of everyday life, Paris is one of the most “important photographers of our time” (Ulrich Domröse). Her works have been acquired by national and international museums and collections alike; the Berlin Academy of Arts dedicated a large retrospective to the artist in 2019.

Paris took up photography in the late 1960s first as an autodidact in her private surroundings. Her radius expanded in the following years to include her Berlin neighborhood, Prenzlauer Berg. Her unjudgemental, unspectacular observations of the everyday show people as part of a community and in social interactions and as individuals, such as in her series of Berlin pubs. Her travels in Eastern Europe also shaped her early works: in Transylvania and Georgia the photographer encountered new, self-conscious reactions to her camera and came to create new imagery of confident femininity.

Important series such as *Berliner Jugendliche* (Berlin Youth, 1981/82) and *Frauen im Bekleidungswerk VEB Treff-Modelle*” (Women in the Clothing Factory VEB Treff-Modelle, 1984) deepened her portraiture work. *Berliner Jugendliche* was Paris's first major portrait series, in which she captured the young people's ambivalence and openness. Some of them, such as Pauer, posed for multiple pictures. Paris also depicted the seamstresses at Treff-Modelle with attentive empathy, as individuals in a specific era with its particular social context. Bringing together unpublished working prints and Paris's hand-selected primary motifs from the series, the exhibition affords a more in-depth look at the photographer's artistic process.

Simultaneously, from 1981 through 1989, Paris also worked on a long-term self-portrait project. With detailed nuances of mood and expression, she reacted continually as though for a visual diary. These performances visually captured both a question and a response: the question of the self and the simultaneous reassurance of the self, the “positioning of the ‘I’ in relation to the tendencies of social subsummation” (Gabriele Muschter).

Helga Paris ; Notizen

Sep 10 – Dec 18, 2020

Kicken Berlin

Kaiserdamm 118

D-14057 Berlin

www.kicken-gallery.com



HELGA PARIS (*1938) Untitled, from the Series 'Women at Treff-Modelle Clothing Factory', 1984 © Helga Paris



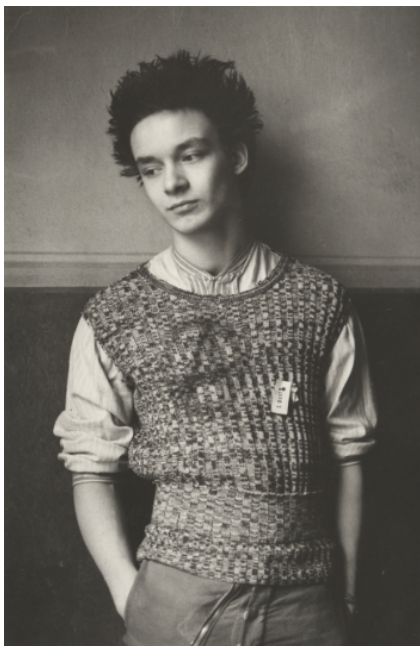
HELGA PARIS (*1938) Untitled, from the Series 'Women at Treff-Modelle Clothing Factory', 1984 © Helga Paris



HELGA PARIS (*1938) Ramona, Kollwitzplatz, Berlin, 1982 © Helga Paris



HELGA PARIS (*1938) Children with Masks, 1968 © Helga Paris



HELGA PARIS (*1938) Pauer, from the series 'Berlin Youths', 1981 © Helga Paris



HELGA PARIS (*1938) Self Portrait, 1971 © Helga Paris



HELGA PARIS (*1938) Untitled, from the Series 'Women at Treff-Modelle Clothing Factory', 1984 © Helga Paris



HELGA PARIS (*1938) Untitled, from the Series 'Women at Treff-Modelle Clothing Factory', 1984 © Helga Paris

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