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OVERVIEW

Benjamin Breitkopf was born in 1986 in Donaueschingen, Germany. He is a filmmaker and media artist. After an apprenticeship at SWR in Baden Baden, he studied visual arts at the Karlsruhe University of Arts and Design. Alongside his artistic profession, Breitkopf works as a lecturer.

He documents everyday scenes from around the world and societal phenomena, which he then exhibits as sprawling in-stallations, projections onto cityscapes and photographs. Together with artist Trond Ansten, he won the 2017 Canon "New Cosmos of Photography Award" and travelled to Tokyo to receive the prize. Breitkopf lives in Karlsruhe and works all over the world.

"EVERYTHING CAN BE FOUND IN DAILY LIFE" ABOUT THE ARTIST BENJAMIN BREITKOPF

DETAIL

Benjamin Breitkopf is a collector. He doesn't collect concrete objects, but rather fleeting moments that would otherwise go unnoticed. As a filmmaker and media artist, his camera is his work tool and constant companion. In recent years, Breitkopf has captured thousands of scenes, both as analog photos and digitally as moving pictures. In the artist's own words: "Everything can be found in daily life". He predominantly depicts everyday scenes, such as a group of garbage collectors in Mexico. Such jobs are often viewed as menial from a Western European perspective. In his compositions, Breitkopf delicately and respectfully puts the pride of the workers and the beautiful surrounding scenery into the foreground, which in turn transforms the work.

Those only expecting human portraits from Breitkopf will be surprised. He is much more interested in analyzing different societies and the backdrop to which everyday life and human encounters take place. In his work *Television ausgesetzt*, the artist documents discarded TVs in front of their former homes. Observers automatically wonder, "What is a TV doing there?" This creates space for the intended dialog between the image and its recipient. The

symbol of the scrapped television clearly underlines Breitkopf's conflict with media, with him questioning the shelf life of technologies and pointing to the absurdity of our insatiable appetite for all-new visual media.

In his most recent work, Benjamin Breitkopf turned the city scenery into his own canvas, projecting collected video material onto house fronts, memorials and abandoned buildings. With this, he overlapped the different dimensions of time (the recorded moment and the moment of the projection) and space (the space of the recording and that of the projection).

The artist repeated this process multiple times, consciously avoiding a linear narrative to offer more room for interpretation. A Tokyo street scene was projected onto a communist memorial in Bratislava, which he then filmed again and projected onto another location in another city, and so on. Layer by layer, he composes poetic and humorous ruptures that often evoke hallucinations and question a supposed reality.

With his so-called "light graffiti", Breitkopf draws attention to places nobody would usually notice. His fascination with abandoned and undocumented locations create visual interventions that cast a new light on each space. Observers are made to reflect on their relation both to the image content and the cityscape and society they are a part of.

Text by Norina Quinte