



Berlin, 21 May 2021

**PRESS RELEASE**

**Museum für Fotografie**

Jebensstr. 2, 10623 Berlin

Tue, Wed, Fri, Sat + Sun 11 am – 7 pm, Thu 11 am – 8 pm

**SEEN BY #15: Nothing ever happened [yet]**

21 May – 25 July, 2021

A special exhibition of the Kunstbibliothek – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin,  
in cooperation with the Universität der Künste Berlin

**SEEN BY #15 is part of the exhibition cooperation between Kunstbibliothek – Staatliche Museen zu Berlin and Universität der Künste at the Museum für Fotografie, Berlin. Its aim is to rethink curatorial and artistic strategies in dealing with contemporary photography.**

„Considering the current global conflict situations, one would like to reject the phrase *nothing ever happened* intuitively”, says Maren Lübbke-Tidow, curator of the exhibition. “Massive upheavals in political party landscapes, nationalistic tendencies, hate campaigns by conspiracy theorists, violence from the right, authoritarian regimes, the increasing isolation of Europe at its external borders, and much more, describe only a small portion of dangerous political developments. As a reaction to this, one would like to counter these developments with one’s own voice—and with images. And yet the question arises: What can actually be said and known with images?”

The contributions to the exhibition stand for political involvement—but at the same time, they distrust the evidentiary character of the photographic image. Rather, they play provocatively with the potentiality of meaning assignments, causing rash assertions to become brittle. Thus, the exhibition **Nothing ever happened (yet)** is an expression of a search movement beyond supposed certainties, which, by invoking the medium of photography, is still—especially today, in the digital now—playing itself forward. What strategies can we as artists develop to (re)conceive photography as an approach that enables social reality to become describable?

While trying to answer this question, one quickly becomes immersed in a conflict that is situated somewhere between the rejection of a traditional documentary use of the photographic medium, on the one hand, and the realization of a meanwhile uninhibited use of social media formats, with their own mechanisms of generating meaning, on the other. **Nothing ever happened (yet)** is the attempt to stand up for a presence or for permanence in terms of the increasingly transitory properties of photography, by using pictorial means. Or, in other words, it is an attempt to become as precise as possible using pictorial means—even if this implies, in consequence, allowing an openness of references.

Such a questioning approach, however, seems more appropriate to us than permanently reproducing (supposed) “truths” by incessantly picking up, repeating, and confirming globally circulating image patterns and lan-

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guages, which (also visually) wear out all too quickly. We do not deny the emancipative potential of digital image cultures. However, it seems necessary to use the space of the exhibition unreservedly, not only to work with the concrete materiality and the spatial dimension of photography beyond the narrow formatting scope of the common social media formats, but also to emphasize the precarious status of the medium—which at the same time justifies its resistance—with our own artistic means. Only a critical-reflexive approach can succeed in asking more questions than providing answers. And what else can it be about if we want to understand our artistic practice as a political practice?”

With works by Om Bori, Samet Durgun, Max Fallmeier, Friederike Goebbels, Miji Ih, Johannes Jakobi, Jeanna Kolesova, Sina Link, Finja Sander, and Maximilian Schröder.

Staff and students of the Universität der Künste Berlin receive free admission to the exhibition.

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the exhibition dates are subject of change. Please visit our website for current information:

[www.smb.museum](http://www.smb.museum)

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