

Press release

Museum Folkwang

Reportages and documentaries about a world in crisis: Museum Folkwang honours Deffarge & Troeller with a major retrospective

Essen, 14.11.2024 – From 15 November 2024 to 23 February 2025, the Museum Folkwang is to present *Deffarge & Troeller. No Pictures to Dream of*, the *Stern* features and documentaries by Marie-Claude Deffarge (1924-1984) and Gordian Troeller (1917-2003) will be presented for the first time in a major museum exhibition. Since the 1950s, the two journalists have reported on riots, wars and social grievances from more than 55 countries. The estate is being presented to the public for the first time on the occasion of Marie-Claude Deffarge's 100th anniversary.

No Pictures to Dream of brings together over 300 works, including photographs, documentary films, personal documents and written material, and offers a comprehensive insight into Deffarge and Troeller's half-century of reporting. Since the 1950s, the two reportage journalists have been documenting social injustice, conflicts and political crises all over the world - from Japan to Yemen and Peru. The exhibition not only presents photographic and film reportages, but also criticises capitalist perspectives and the lack of feminist perceptions, working methods and the division of labour. At a time when objective reporting was in the foreground, Deffarge and Troeller pursue a sometimes subjective, perceptive and often controversial documentary style.

Initially, Deffarge and Troeller concentrated on West Asia. They published newspaper reports and a first book project: *Persia without a Mask*. From 1959 to 1969, they reported on social grievances, unrest and wars for *Stern* magazine, but were particularly successful with *The Women of the World*. From the mid-1960s, the team produced their first documentary films alongside the *Stern* features. From 1973 onwards, they became known in German-speaking countries for their films, particularly through their collaboration with Radio Bremen. The documentary series *In the Name of Progress*, *Women of the World* and *Children of the World* were broadcast during prime time until 1999 and reached a large audience. Among other things, they address the devastating consequences of European colonial rule and the patriarchal structures responsible for oppression and exploitation worldwide. The photo and film reportages are an important source of information for understanding the roots and causes of the global consequences of climate change, environmental destruction, economic crises, migration flows and political influence in our time.

In the year of Marie-Claude Deffarge's 100th birthday, the Museum Folkwang is dedicating the first comprehensive museum retrospective to the work of the journalist team. It is based on the photographic estate of Deffarge and Troeller, which was transferred to the Museum Folkwang and

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the film holdings at the Centre national de l'audiovisuel (CNA) in Luxembourg in 2017. The exhibition highlights not only the reportages and films, but also the working methods and team structures that contributed significantly to their success. A special role is played by Ingrid Becker-Ross, who accompanied many of the trips as a sound recordist and is now also involved in the exhibition and the accompanying catalogue. The exhibition also offers perspectives from people from the countries covered in the reports. Raika Khorshidian and Heidar Zahedi, for example, have edited the extensive material on Iran and summarised their views in two film documentaries.

A 296-page exhibition catalogue will be published by Scheidegger & Spiess (price € 48).

The exhibition is a co-operation between the Museum Folkwang and the CNA, Luxembourg. It is supported by the Ministry of Culture and Science of the State of North Rhine-Westphalia (Ministerium für Kultur und Wissenschaft des Landes Nordrhein-Westfalen) and the Gouvernement Du Grand-Duché de Luxembourg, Ministère de la Culture.

The exhibition will be shown at the Centre national de l'audiovisuel (CNA), Luxembourg, from 2 May to 14 September 2026.

Information

DEFFARGE & TROELLER

No Pictures to Dream of
Stern-Features and Documentaries
15. November 2024 bis 23. Februar 2025

Admission: 8 Euro / cincession 5 Euro



**Marie-Claude Deffarge
& Gordian Troeller**
Caracas, Venezuela, 1961
From the *Stern*-report: *Kennedy against Castro*
© Ingrid Becker-Ross Troeller



Anonymous
Marie-Claude Deffarge and Gordian Troeller, around 1965
Silver gelatine print, 13,5 x 13,8 cm
© Ingrid Becker-Ross Troeller