

## Press release

# Museum Folkwang 100

## **The history of photography as an information technology: The exhibition *IMAGE CAPITAL* will be on view from 9 September at Museum Folkwang**

**Essen, 25.7.2022 – Museum Folkwang presents the photography exhibition *IMAGE CAPITAL*. Estelle Blaschke & Armin Linke (9 September – 12 December 2022). The exhibition is the result of joint research by photography historian Estelle Blaschke and photographer Armin Linke and tells the history of photography as an information technology in six chapters. In addition to photographic works, *IMAGE CAPITAL* also shows interviews, videos, archival images, publications and objects.**

Since its invention 200 years ago, photography has reached every sphere of society, influencing science, art, politics, the news and social media, as well as all kinds of trade and industry. It has become the basis for a visual relationship with the world. *IMAGE CAPITAL* looks back at the history of photography as an information technology. It developed at a time when management and administrative procedures were expanding and required optimization. Information needed to flow and be accessible. As a perfectly recording, endlessly reproducible and cost-effective medium, photography contributed to the development of global industries and government institutions.

Contemporary digital practices (e.g., in architecture and design, engineering, or industrial agriculture) encourage us to revisit the blind spots or forgotten chapters in the history of photography. When and under what circumstances did images become operational? What economic potential lies in the analysis of masses of images? What role do archives and organizational systems play not only in preserving photographic data but generating new information and insights? What imaginaries, ideologies and rhetoric determine visual practices in capitalist societies?

*IMAGE CAPITAL* explores these issues by telling a different story of photography in six thematic chapters. *Memory*: the ability of images to collect and store information. *Protection*: strategies for long-term preservation of image capital. *Access*: how images are indexed and made accessible. *Imaging*: photography as a visualization system and element of virtual spaces. *Mining*: the analysis of images and applications of automated image recognition. *Currency*: about different forms of monetary value of images and the rhetoric of capital.

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Based on joint research, texts by Estelle Blaschke, and the photographic works of Armin Linke, the exhibition gathers a wide selection of interviews, videos, archival images, publications and other original objects. The diverse materials are arranged without hierarchies or priorities, offering a narrative that is as immersive as it is multi-layered and which visitors can reshuffle in open-ended ways.

After its premiere at Museum Folkwang, *IMAGE CAPITAL* will be presented in different versions at Fondazione MAST/Bologna, the Centre Pompidou/Paris, and the Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation/Frankfurt am Main/Eschborn.



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Deutsche Börse Photography Foundation  
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## IMAGE CAPITAL

**Estelle Blaschke & Armin Linke**

9 September – 11 December 2022

**SAVE THE DATE: Press conference, 8 September 2022, 11 a.m.**

### Exhibition programme:

- |                     |   |
|---------------------|---|
| 10.9.2022, 3 p.m.,  | Estelle Blaschke and Armin Linke, Guided tour through the exhibition  |
| 7.10.2022, 6 p.m.,  | Reinhard Matz, Microfiche, Fotonetz, and Industrial Photography in the Ruhr Area in the 1980s. Talk in the exhibition (in German) |
| 3.11.2022, 6 p.m.,  | Simone C Niquille, Tomatoes Are Fruits and Other Tales from Category Land, Talk in the exhibition (in English)                    |
| 25.11.2022, 6 p.m., | Ben Burbridge, Extracorporeal Images, Talk in the exhibition (in English)   |
| 11.12.2022, 6 p.m., | Niki Rhyner, intercom Verlag (Zurich), Estelle Blaschke and Armin Linke, Open Access Publishing, Discussion in the exhibition     |