

ROGER BALLEEN





CONTEMPORARY

 [m.contemporary.industry](https://www.instagram.com/m.contemporary.industry)  [mcontemporary](https://www.instagram.com/mcontemporary)  [MContemporary](https://www.facebook.com/MContemporary)  mcontemp.com

02 9328 0922 | 37 Ocean Street, Woollahra, Sydney, Australia, 2025

BIO

One of the most influential and important photographic artists of the 21st century, Roger Ballen's photographs span over forty years. His strange and extreme works confront the viewer and challenge them to come with him on a journey into their own minds as he explores the deeper recesses of his own.

Roger Ballen was born in New York in 1950 but for over 30 years he has lived and worked in South Africa. His work as a geologist took him out into the countryside and led him to take up his camera and explore the hidden world of small South African towns. At first he explored the empty streets in the glare of the midday sun but, once he had made the step of knocking on people's doors, he discovered a world inside these houses which was to have a profound effect on his work. These interiors with their distinctive collections of objects and the occupants within these closed worlds took his unique vision on a path from social critique to the creation of metaphors for the inner mind. After 1994 he no longer looked to the countryside for his subject matter finding it closer to home in Johannesburg.

Over the past thirty five years his distinctive style of photography has evolved using a simple square format in stark and beautiful black and white. In the earlier works in the exhibition his connection to the tradition of documentary photography is clear but through the 1990s he developed a style he describes as 'documentary fiction'. After 2000 the people he first discovered and documented living on the margins of South African society increasingly became a cast of actors working with Ballen in the series' *Outland* (2000, revised in 2015) and *Shadow Chamber* (2005) collaborating to create powerful psychodramas.

The line between fantasy and reality in his subsequent series' *Boarding House* (2009) and *Asylum of the Birds* (2014) became increasingly blurred and in these series he employed drawings, painting, collage and sculptural techniques to create elaborate sets. There was an absence of people altogether, replaced by photographs of individuals now used as props, by doll or dummy parts or where people did appear it was as disembodied hands, feet and mouths poking disturbingly through walls and pieces of rag. The often improvised scenarios were now completed by the unpredictable behaviour of animals whose ambiguous behaviour became crucial to the overall meaning of the photographs. In this phase Ballen invented a new hybrid aesthetic, but one still rooted firmly in black and white photography.

In his artistic practice Ballen has increasingly been won over by the possibilities of integrating photography and drawing. He has expanded his repertoire and extended his visual language. By integrating drawing into his photographic and video works, the artist has not only made a lasting contribution to the field of art, but equally has made a powerful commentary about the human condition and its creative potential.

His contribution has not been limited to stills photography and Ballen has been the creator of a number of acclaimed and exhibited short films that dovetail with his photographic series'. The collaborative film *I Fink You Freeky*, created for the cult band *Die Antwoord* in 2012, has garnered over 85-million hits on YouTube. He has taken his work into the realms of sculpture and installation, most recently at Paris' *Musée de la Chasse et de la Nature* (2017), Australia's *Sydney College of the Arts* (2016) and at the *Serlachius Museum* in Finland (2015) among others

His most recent project has been *The Theatre of Apparitions* (Thames & Hudson, 2016) and its related animated film, inspired by the sight of hand-drawn carvings on blacked-out windows in an abandoned women's prison. For this series Ballen started to experiment using different spray paints on glass and then 'drawing on' or removing the paint with a sharp object to let natural light through. The results have been likened prehistoric cave-paintings: the black, dimensionless spaces on the glass are canvases onto which Ballen has carved his thoughts and emotions.

In September 2017 Thames & Hudson will publish a large volume of the collected photography with extended commentary by Ballen titled *Ballenesque: A Retrospection*. In February 2017 the new Zeitz Museum of Contemporary Art Africa in Cape Town named its photographic facility the Roger Ballen Foundation Centre for Photography thereby ensuring that Ballen's contribution to photography in Africa, and beyond, will continue into the future.

.M

CONTEMPORARY



Roger Ballen
Bite, 2007
Silver gelatin print
Edition of 10
80 x 80 cm
POA

.M

CONTEMPORARY



Roger Ballen
Collision, 2005
Silver gelatin print
Edition of 10
50 x 50 cm
POA

.M

CONTEMPORARY



Roger Ballen
Vase and Skull, 2005
Silver gelatin print
Edition of 10
50 x 50 cm
POA

.M

CONTEMPORARY



Roger Ballen
Eye to Eye, 2011
Hahnemühle pigment print
Edition of 5
91 x 91 cm
POA

.M

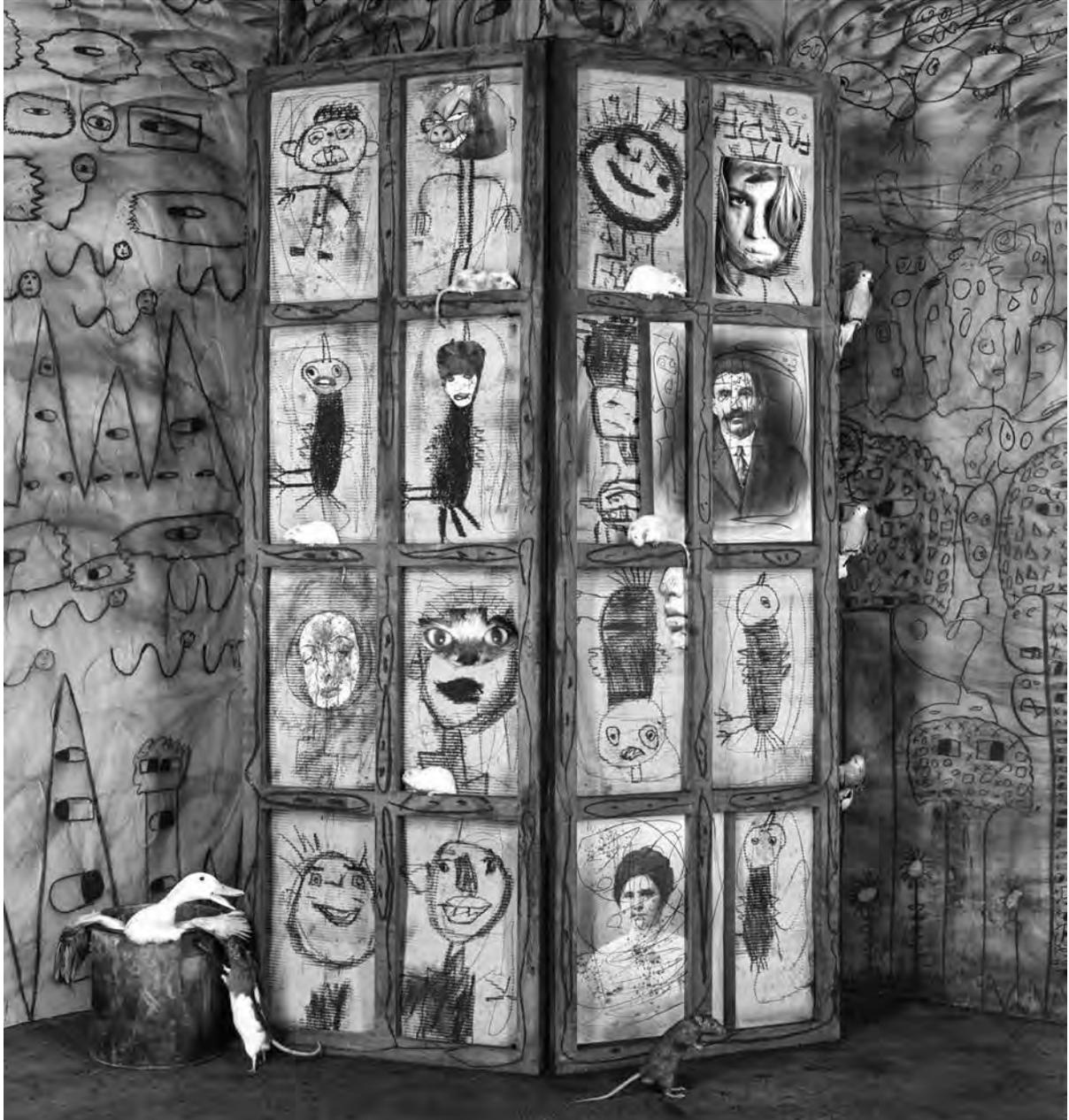
CONTEMPORARY



Roger Ballen
Headless, 2006
Hahnemühle pigment print
Edition of 20
91 x 91 cm
POA

.M

CONTEMPORARY



Roger Ballen
Onlookers, 2010
Hahnemühle pigment print
Edition of 10
91 x 91 cm
POA

.M

CONTEMPORARY



Roger Ballen
Child Under Chest of Drawers, 2000
Silver gelatin print
Edition of 35
40 x 40 cm
POA

.M

CONTEMPORARY



Roger Ballen
Horse Head on Drawers, 1998
Silver gelatin print
Edition of 10
40 x 40 cm
POA

.M

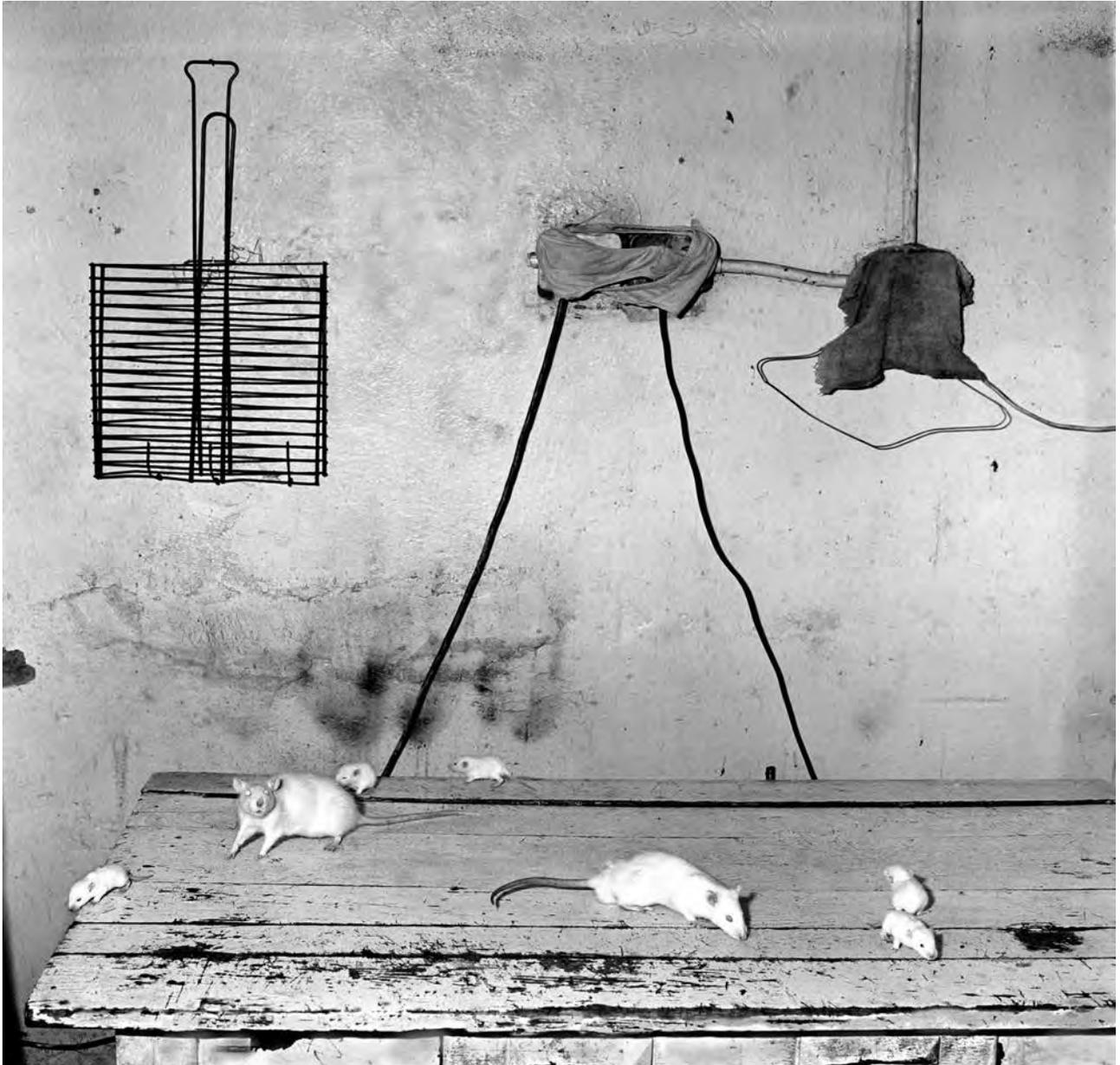
CONTEMPORARY



Roger Ballen
Portrait of Sleeping Girl, 2000
Silver gelatin print
Edition of 35
40 x 40 cm
POA

.M

CONTEMPORARY



Roger Ballen
Rats on Kitchen Table, 1999
Silver gelatin print
Edition of 35
40 x 40 cm
POA



CONTEMPORARY

MCONTEMP.COM

+61 (2) 9328 0922

GALLERY@MCONTEMP.COM

37 OCEAN ST

WOOLLAHRA

SYDNEY, NSW

ROGER BALLEEN | CV

EDUCATION

- 1982 PhD, Mineral Economics, University of Colorado
- 1982 MS, Geology, University of Colorado
- 1972 BA, Psychology, University of California. Berkeley

SOLO EXHIBITIONS

- 2018 The Jewish Museum, New York, United States – to be confirmed
- The Cleveland Museum, United States – to be confirmed
- M Contemporary, Sydney
- 2017 Yu Deyao, China
- The Centro Cultural Matucana 100, Santiago, Chile
- Les Rencontres de la Photographie, Arles
- Gamma Galeria, Guadalajara, Mexico
- Hamiltons Gallery – London, United Kingdom
- Daum Museum of Contemporary Art, Sedalia, United States
- La ERRE Cultural Soace, Guatemala
- Origins Centre Association, Johannesburg, South Africa
- Guandong Museum, China
- Akershus Kunstsenter, Lillestrom, Norway
- Te Uru Waitakere Contemporary Gallery, Auckland, New Zealand
- Tauranga Art Gallery, Tauranga, New Zealand
- Biennial Fotografica Bogota, Columbia
- John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art, Sarasota Florida, United States
- Stadtmuseum + Kunstsammlung Jena, Jena, Germany
- 2016 Gallery Momo, Johannesburg
- Gallery Momo, Cape Town
- Sydney College of the Arts, University of Sydney, Australia
- James Fuentes, New York City, United States
- Natalie and James Thompson Art Gallery, San Jose State University, San Jose, United States
- Carpentier Gallery, Berlin, Germany
- Galleria Massimo Minini, Brescia, Italy
- Centro Fotografico Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Mexico
- Von der Heydt-Kunsthalle, Wuppertal-Barmen, Germany
- Southeast Musuem of Photography, Daytona, United States
- Etherton Gallery, Tucson, United States
- Central Academy of Fine Art Museum, Beijing
- Anzenberger Gallery, Handmade Show, Austria
- SIPF Gillman Barracks, Singapore
- Photokina, Cologne, Germany
- Foto Museo de Cuatro Caminos, Mexico City
- Izzy Gallery, Toronto, Canada
- Hydra and Fotografia, Mexico
- SNAP! Gallery, Orlando, Florida, United States
- Wei-Ling Contemporary, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- City Gallery Palffy Palais – Bratislava
- Sunaparanta, Goa Centre for the Arts, India
- TEA Tenarife Space of Arts, Tenerife
- Barbado Gallery, Lisboa, Portugal



Zemack Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv-Yafo, Israel
 Aura Gallery, China
 2015 Bogotá Photo Festival, Bogotá, Colombia
 CAFAM, Beijing, China
 Chazen Museum of Art, Wisconsin, United States
 David Krut Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
 Frigoriferi Milanesi, Milan, Italy
 Fried Gallery, Pretoria, South Africa
 Galerie Karsten Greve, Köln, Germany
 Galerie Rudolphe Janssen, Masks, Brussels, Belgium
 Galerie Senda, Barcelona, Spain
 Kafka House, Prague, Czech Republic
 Kyotographie, Kyoto, Japan
 La Fabrica, Madrid, Spain
 Montserrat, Barcelona, Spain
 Museu de Arte Contemporânea, Universidade de São Paulo, Brazil
 Museum of Image, Braga, Portugal
 Photoink, New Delhi, India
 Pori Art Museum, Pori, Finland
 Serlachius Museum, Mänttä, Finland
 2014 Atlas Sztuki, Lodz, Poland
 Christophe Guye Galerie, Zurich, Switzerland
 Circa Gallery, Johannesburg
 Festival de la Luz, Buenos Aires
 Fotografiska, Stockholm, Sweden
 Galerie Karsten Greve, Paris, France
 Galerie Karsten Greve, One Man Show "Asylum of the Birds", Paris Photo, France
 Kulungwana, Maputo, Mozambique
 Kunst- und Kulturzentrum Monschau, Aachen, Deutschland
 Moscow Media Centre, Moscow Russia
 Musée Nicéphore Niépce, Chalon-sur-Saône, France
 Museo d'Arte Contemporanea di Roma, Rome, Italy
 Museu Oscar Niemeyer, Brazil
 Museum Dr. Guislain, Gent, Belgium
 Museum Villa Stuck, Munich, Germany
 Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein, South Africa
 Paris Photo, Grand Palais, Paris, France
 2013 Samara State Art Museum, Samara
 Tolyatti State Art Museum, Tolyatti
 Belfast Photo Festival, Belfast, Northern Island
 Galerie Clairefontaine, Luxembourg
 Johannesburg Art Fair, South Africa
 Maison De L'Image Documentaire, The CèTávoiR Association, Paris, France
 Museum of Old and New, Hobart Australia
 Nikolaj Copenhagen Contemporary Art Center, Denmark
 Photoink, New Delhi, India
 Pingao International Photography Festival, China
 Palm Springs Art Museum, California, USA
 Smithsonian National Museum of African Art, Washington DC, USA
 Westlicht, Schauplatz fur Fotografie, Vienna, Austria
 2012 Perm State Art Gallery, Perm
 ROBA Gallery, Omsk
 ROSPHOTO Museum Exhibition Centre, St. Petersburg, Russia
 Novosibirsk State Art Museum, Novosibirsk
 Metenkov House, Museum of photography, Ekaterinburg
 Erdmann Contemporary & the Photographers Gallery za, Cape Town, South Africa

Guate Festival, Guatemala de la Asunción, Guatemala
 Kleinschmidt Fine Photographs, Wiesbaden, Germany
 Kunstalle, Vienna, Austria
 Manchester Art Museum, England
 Marta Herford Museum, Herford, Germany
 Musee de l'Elysee, Lausanne Switzerland
 Museu de Arte Moderna, Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
 Northwest University Museum, Potchestroom, South Africa
 Novosibirsk Art Museum, Russia
 Rosphoto, St. Pieterburg, Russia
 Tel Aviv Museum of Art, Israel
 2011 Fahey/Klein Gallery, Los Angeles, California, USA
 Fondazione Terre Medicee, Seravezza, Italy
 Galerie Alex Daniels – Reflex Amsterdam, The Netherlands
 Galleri Tom Christoffersen, Copenhagen, Denmark
 Le Mois de la Photo à Montréal, Canada
 Mc Dermott Gallery, Siem Reap, Cambodia
 Museum Het Domein, Sittard, Netherlands
 Omsk Museum, Russia
 Sammlung Prinzhorn, Heidelberg, Germany
 2010 Bozar, Brussels
 Centro de Arte La Regenta, Las Palmas, Spain
 Comune di Arco/Galleria Civica, Italy
 Festival of Photography of Savignano, Italy
 Fondazione Terre Medicee, Italy
 Galeria Max Estrella, Spain
 Galeria Senda, Barcelona, Spain
 Galerie Kamel Mennour, Paris, France
 Galerie Sabine Knust, Munich, Germany
 Gallery Photographer RU, Moscow, Russia
 George Eastman House, Rochester, USA
 Iziko South African National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
 Jackson Fine Art, Atlanta, USA
 Lismore Regional Gallery, Australia
 Photonet Galerie, Wiesbaden, Germany
 Rooke Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa
 Sammlungsleiter Fotomuseum, Munich, Germany
 Stenersen Museum, Oslo
 Sydney Biennale, Australia
 Ubuntu, Berlin, Germany
 Ubuntu, Salzburg, Austria
 University of the Orange Free State, South Africa
 2009 Auckland University of Technology, New Zealand
 Aura Gallery, Shanghai
 City Museum of Ljubljana, Slovenia
 Gagosian Gallery, New York, USA
 Galerie Wolfsen, Denmark
 Galerija Fotografija, Ljubljana, Slovenia
 Hamiltons, London, United Kingdom
 Johnen Gallery, Berlin, Germany
 Massimo Minini, Brescia, Italy
 National Library of Australia, Canberra
 Ontario College of Art and Design, Toronto, Canada
 Triennale, Milan, Italy
 University of Johannesburg, South Africa
 University of Pretoria, South Africa

- 2008 AEREA / Christian Larsen, Stockholm, Sweden
 BWA Gallery, Katowice, Poland
 Galeria vanGuardia, Bilbao, Spain
 Hertzelia Artists Host Centre, Tel Aviv, Israel
 Omaggio a Federico Vender at Palazzo dei Panni of Arco Trento
 Su Palatu, Sardinia
- 2007 Aura Gallery, Hong Kong
 Art Gallery of Western Australia
 Clint Roenisch Gallery, Toronto, Canada
 Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, Germany
 Galerie Photonet, Wiesbaden, Germany
 Jackson Fine Art, Atlanta, USA
 Johannesburg Art Gallery, Johannesburg
 Robert Klein Gallery, Boston
 Trafo Gallery, Oslo, Norway
 YOURS Gallery, Warsaw, Poland
- 2006 Museum voor Fotografie, Antwerp, Belgium.
 Deichtorhallen, Hamburg, Germany.
 Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.
 The Consejería de Cultura y Deportes de la Comunidad de Madrid.
 Atlanta College of Arts, GA.
 Sheppard Fine Arts Gallery, Reno, NV.
 Sasol Art Museum, Stellenbosch, South Africa.
 Oliewenhuis Art Museum, Bloemfontein, South Africa.
 Berlin Biennial, Berlin
 Galerie Johnen + Schöttle, Cologne
 Galerie Kamel Mennour, Paris
 Guido Costa Projects, Torino
 Jackson Fine Art, Atlanta, USA
 Photographer's Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
 Sasol Art Museum, Stellenbosch, South Africa
- 2005 Aura Gallery, Shanghai
 Gagosian Gallery, New York
 Reflex Gallery, Amsterdam.
 Museum voor Fotografie, Antwerp, Belgium.
 Frans Hals Museum, Amsterdam.
 Durban Art Gallery, South Africa.
- 2004 State Museum of Russia, St. Petersburg.
 Roger Ballen Photographs, Berkeley Art Museum, University of California.
 Le Chateau d'eau à Toulouse, France.
 Dieci Comme Ltd., Tokyo.
- 2003 Galleria Carla Sozzani, Italy.
 Galerie Mennour, Paris.
- 2002 Galleria D'arte Moderna Bologna, Italy.
 Gagosian Gallery, Beverly Hills.
 Musée Nicephore Niepce, Chalon-sur-Saone, France.
 Museo Nazionale Italy, Brescia, Italy.
 Nuku Gallery, Oulu, Finland.
 Museet for Fotokunst, Odense, Denmark.
 Russian Museum, Museum Ludwig, St. Petersburg, Russia.
 Museum for Contemporary Art, San Diego, CA.
 Sala Rekalde, Bilbao, Spain.
 Centro Cultural de Maia, O'Porto, Spain.
 Gallery of Photography, Dublin, Ireland.
 OUTLAND, Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Bologna, Italy.
 OUTLAND, Gagosian Gallery, New York.

- 2001 Rupertinum, Salzburg, Austria.
 Goodman Gallery, Johannesburg, South Africa.
 Fotoforum, Frankfurt, Germany.
 Association for Visual Arts, Cape Town, South Africa.
 Württembergischer Kunstverein, Stuttgart, Germany.
 Künstlerhaus Bethanien, Berlin.
 Hasselbald Center, Goteborg, Sweden.
 International Photo Festival, Herten, Germany.
 PhotoEspana, Madrid.
 Kicken Gallery, Berlin.
 Michael Hoppen Gallery, London.
 Encontros da imagem, Braga, Portugal.
 Krefelder Kunstmuseen, Krefeld, Germany.
 Printemps de Septembre, Toulouse, France.
- 2000 Royal Theatre of Namur, Belgium.
 Month of Photography, Thessaloniki, Greece.
 Noordlicht, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
 Sani Festival, Greece.
 Museum of Photography, Athens, Greece.
- 1999 Fait & Cause, Paris.
 Melkweg, Amsterdam, The Netherlands.
 Month of Photography, Bratislava, Slovakia.
 Month of Photography, Cape Town, South Africa.
- 1998 Kunstal Museum, Rotterdam, The Netherlands.
 Lumo '98, Finland.
 Kunsthaus, Zürich.
- 1996 Eindhoven Photographic Festival, Holland.
 Tarranto Gallery, New York.
- 1995 Arles Photographic Festival, Arles, France.
 Royal Festival Hall/Hayward Gallery, London.

COLLECTIONS

Centro Fotografico Manuel Alvarez Bravo, Mexico
 Museum of Contemporary Art, Italy
 Central Academy of Fine Arts Museum, China
 Art Gallery of Western Australia, Perth, Australia
 The Jewish Museum, New York City, United States
 Pori Art Museum, Pori, Finland
 Serlachius Museum, Mänttä, Finland
 Berkeley Art Museum, California
 Biblioteque Nationale, Paris
 Birmingham Museum and Art Gallery, Alabama, USA
 Brooklyn Museum, New York, USA
 Centre Georges Pompidou, Paris, France
 Durban Art Gallery, Durban, South Africa
 Fotomuseum, Munchen, Germany
 George Eastman House, Rochester, New York, USA
 Haifa Museum of Art, Israel
 Hasselblad, Goteborg, Sweden
 High Museum of Art, Atlanta, USA
 Johannesburg Art Museum, South Africa
 Los Angeles County Museum of Art, USA
 Louisiana Museum, Denmark
 Maison Europeene de la Photographie, Paris
 Manchester Art Gallery, Manchester. United Kingdom



MONA Museum, Hobart, Tasmania
Musée de la Photographie á Charleroi, Belgium
Musée de l'Elysee , Lausanne, Switzerland
Museet for Fotokunst, Denmark
Museo nazionale Della Fotografia, Brescia, Italy
Museu de Arte Moderna do Rio de Janeiro, Brazil
Museum Folkwang, Essen, Germany
Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego, USA
Museum of Fine Arts, Houston, USA
Museum of Modern Art, New York, USA
National Gallery, Cape Town, South Africa
National Museum of Film and Photography, Bradford UK
Palm Springs Art Museum, California
Pushkin Museum, Moscow, Russia
Oliewenhuis, Bloemfontein, South Africa
Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Netherlands
Spencer Art Museum, Kansas, USA
State Museum of Russia, Moscow, Russia
Stedelijk Museum, Amsterdam
Tate Britain, London, UK
Tel Aviv Museum, Israel
Victoria and Albert Museum, London, UK
Virginia Museum of Fine Arts, Virginia, USA
Wadsworth Atheneum Museum of Art, Hartford, USA

AWARDS

The Asia Pacific Brands Foundation Legendary Award, 2017
Suddeutsche Zeitung Magazin, Artist of the year, 2014 (See Issue 46, November 14 2014)
Lucie Award, Finalist for Solo Exhibition of the year, George Eastman House, 2010
PhotoEspaña 2009, Madrid Spain, Honourable mention
Best Photographic Book of the Year for Boarding House
Art Directors Club Award Photography 2006
Top 10 Exhibition 2004, Matthew Higgs, Artforum, December 2004
Honorable Mention, UNICEF Photo of the Year 2004
Top 10 Exhibition 2002, Vince Aletti, Artforum, December 2002
Photographer of the Year 2002, Rencontres d'Arles, July 2002
Photo-eye, Best Documentary Title, Best Photography Books of 2001
Special mention : UNICEF Photo of the Year 2001
PhotoEspaña 2001, Madrid Spain, Best Photographic Book of the Year
Sani Festival, Thessaloniki Greece, Best Solo Exhibition, February 2000