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THE  
WALTHER COLLECTION

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Structures of Identity  
Photography from The Walther Collection

Curated by Simon Njami  
In collaboration with FOTOMÉXICO 2017

Museo Amparo, Puebla, Mexico  
October 21, 2017 – February 5, 2018

Museo MARCO, Monterrey, Mexico  
February 23 – June 3, 2018

## Structures of Identity Photography from The Walther Collection

*Structures of Identity* examines how photographers, across a range of cultures and historical periods, have used their images to affirm or challenge social stereotypes, particularly those constructed around notions of race, gender, class, and nationality. Emphasizing the work of artists—and sitters—who use the medium to subvert visual expectations, and challenge markers of identification, *Structures of Identity* questions notions of a stable, authentic self. In particular, it focuses on how photographers have used serial imagery—related sequences of photographs, rather than individual images—to explore the political and cultural factors that shape individual and collective subjectivities.

This exhibition includes series and sequences made by artists from Europe, the United States, Asia, and several countries in Africa, as well as earlier documentary and vernacular photography. In many cases, these investigations have focused on portraiture, with particularly evocative self-representations used to question the social construction of identity. Other photographers have examined landscapes, the built environment and public space, exposing the social and physical underpinnings that inform both collective and individual identities. All of these efforts reflect the ways in which visual forms and archival structures construct and reinforce social attitudes.

*Structures of Identity* highlights the different ways that subjectivity and social identity are shaped and regarded within the history of the photographic medium, and illustrates the constant efforts of The Walther Collection to discuss and consider the history of photography beyond conventional cultural, geographic, and temporal boundaries.

### **Artists featured in the exhibition**

Vito Acconci, Dieter Appelt, Nobuyoshi Araki, Richard Avedon, Sammy Baloji, Oladélé Ajiboyé Bamgboyé, Bernd and Hilla Becher, Jodi Bieber, Karl Blossfeldt, Bernhard and Anna Blume, Candice Breitz, Rotimi Fani-Kayode, Samuel Fosso, Manuel García Fernández, David Goldblatt, Lars C. Henrichsen, Pieter Hugo, Seydou Keïta, Errol H. Kemper, Hiroh Kikai, Shohachi Kimura and Yoshikazu Suzuki, Jürgen Klauke, Sabelo Mlangeni, Duane Michals, Santu Mofokeng, Daido Moriyama, Zanele Muholi, Eadweard Muybridge, Grace Ndiritu, Andrew Putter, J.D. 'Okhai Ojeikere, Jo Ractliffe, Thomas Ruff, Ed Ruscha, August Sander, Berni Searle, Accra Shepp, Stephen Shore, Malick Sidibé, Thomas Struth, Mikhael Subotzky & Patrick Waterhouse, Yoshikazu Suzuki & Shohachi Kimura, Guy Tillim, Sue Williamson, Kohei Yoshiyuki, Yang Fudong, and Zhang Huan, as well as selections of late-nineteenth and early-twentieth-century portraits, albums, ethnographic and scientific studies, and vernacular photography.

### **About The Walther Collection**

The Walther Collection is an art foundation dedicated to the critical understanding of historical and contemporary photography and related media. Through a program of international exhibitions, in-depth collecting, original research, and scholarly publications, The Walther Collection aims to highlight the social uses of photography and to expand the history of the medium worldwide. At its three-building campus in Neu-Ulm, Germany, its Project Space in New York City, and with traveling installations worldwide, The Walther Collection presents thematic and monographic exhibitions drawn from its expansive range of photography and media art from the collection's African, Chinese, Japanese, and European holdings of modern and contemporary works, nineteenth-century photography from Europe and Africa, and vernacular lens-based imagery from across the globe. The collection's educational program is complemented by public lectures and screenings, international scholarly symposia, and a critically acclaimed series of catalogues and monographs co-published by Steidl.













































