

# Thomas Ruff



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All fields of contemporary Western life are captured by the lens of Thomas Ruff's large-format camera: petit bourgeois homes in the provinces and suburbs; modernist and current architectural structures; the startlingly alien faces of fellow human beings; the technologically sophisticated observation of outer space; studies of local neighborhoods by night; the news industry's non-stop invention of pictures; changing views on how we feel about our bodies; and modifications in perceptions through the pictorial explosion of the Internet. Since the early 80s, Thomas Ruff has created a substantial photographic oeuvre in which he draws our attention to all of these familiar

subjects, simultaneously marshalling a precise, fascinating rendition of our perceptual universe and a conceptually matter-of-fact presentation of untold layers of meaning and photographic premises. This catalogue gathers, for the first time, all of the work he has created since 1979, placing his most important and familiar works in the context of his entire oeuvre. Substantial reproductions are accompanied by scholarly essays, an annotated catalogue raisonné of works since 1979, and an illustrated biography. You cannot explain the whole world in one photograph. Photography pretends. You can see everything that's in front of the camera, but there's always something beside it.  
--Thomas Ruff Edited by Matthias Winzen.~Essays by Ute Eskildsen, Valeria Liebermann and Per Boym. Hardcover, 10 x 13 in./272 pgs / 304 color 120 BW0 duotone 0 ~ Item D20034

## 作者介绍:

Thomas Ruff (born 1958 in Zell am Harmersbach) is an internationally renowned German photographer who lives and works in Düsseldorf.

During his studies in Düsseldorf, Ruff developed his method of conceptual serial photography. His initial main topic was the interior of German living quarters, with typical features of the 1950s to 1970s (room portraits and design details). This was followed by similar views of buildings and portraits of friends and acquaintances. These are typically shown with emotionless expressions, in very large, passport-style portraits of great detail and high resolution. In a discussion with Philip Pocock (Journal for Contemporary Art, 1993), Ruff mentions a connection between these portraits and the police observation methods in Germany in the 1970s during the German Autumn.

Thomas Ruff's building portraits are likewise serial and reclusive, and have been edited digitally to remove obstructing details – a typifying method, which gives the images an exemplary character (Ruff: "This type of building represents more or less the ideology and economy in the West German republic in the past thirty years"). The photographic method was also standardised, regarding light, perspective and location.

These series were followed in 1989 by images of the night sky, which were not based on photographs by Ruff. In the years from 1992 to 1995, Ruff produced night images (of exteriors and buildings), with a night vision device, which apparently was deliberately used in analogy to military and espionage applications. In 1994 to 1996 these were followed by Stereoscopy images. A further series in the 1990s consists of "Newspaper Images"; here Ruff again utilised others' pictures in a similar fashion to his night sky images. He used newspaper clippings enlarged without their original subtitles.

In 2003 Thomas Ruff published a photographic collection of "Nudes" with a text by the French author Michel Houellebecq. Ruff's images here are based on Internet pornography, which was digitally processed and obscured. This series was received very ambivalently.

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评论

Thomas Ruff的照片始终围绕着对摄影媒介的讨论，有时这种讨论会采用其他专业的技术（如航空、机械生产）再结合摄影本身。他很大一部分的作品会参考现代主义，如fotogramm e系列，但是用3d和电脑技术表达。

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托马斯鲁夫为后者提供了一种文本，在其拍摄的过程中就是寻找摄影（客观）意义的一个过程，so experimental. “photography captures reality" is not really right. This 'reality' can be pre-arranged. Bring portrait back to zero and show the face with little expression. Print big.

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书评

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