

Gundula Schulze Eldowy, born in 1954 in Erfurt, is an artist of international standing with an extensive, multi-layered oeuvre. At the age of fifteen, under the impression of the Prague Spring, she travelled to Prague and Pilsen. From 1972 to 1982 she travelled extensively through Eastern Europe. From 1979 to 1984, she studied photography at the Leipzig Academy of Visual Arts with Horst Thorau.

Her work from the 1970s and 1980s are considered some of the most important visual testimonies to East German daily life. Many of her photographs capture the private lives of others with a direct and unsparing gaze, including the living conditions of those living on the margins of society. By documenting counterculture as well as elderly and disabled members of the community, she called to attention those that had been disregarded by official media, which for the most part was with idealized images of socialist society.

From 1977 to 1990, Gundula Schulze Eldowy worked on various photo series with which she caused a sensation and occasionally incurred the disapproval of the authorities. Until 1990 she produced the black-and-white cycles *Berlin in einer Hundenacht*, *Arbeit*, *Aktporträts*, *Tamerlan*, *Straßenbild*, *Der Wind füllt sich mit Wasser*, *Die Frau am Kreuz* (film), *Im Herbstlaub des Vergessens* (film) sowie die beiden Farbzyklen *Der große und der kleine Schritt*, and *Die letzten beißen die Hunde*.

In 1985 she met the American photographer Robert Frank, who invited her to New York, where she lived from 1990 to 1993. In the 1990s, a phase began in which she increasingly turned to poetry. For her, poetry is a language of the spirit. From 1990 to 1993, she created the New York series *In einem Wind aus Sternenstaub*, *Spinning on my Heels*, *Halt die Ohren steif*, and *Flügel Schlag des Herzens*.

From then on, her works were represented in international exhibitions, for example in 1990 at the Jo Tarrt Gallery in Washington D.C., in 1991 with the series *Waldo's Schatten* at the Neue Nationalgalerie Berlin, in 1992 in the exhibition *White* at the Laurence Miller Gallery in New York and in the show *Photography 8* at the Museum of Modern Art New York (MoMa). In the same year, Klaus Biesenbach showed works by Gundula Schulze Eldowy and Nan Goldin in the exhibition *Getrennte Welten* (Separated Worlds) at KUNST-WERKE Berlin. In 1993, the director of the MoMA, Kirk Varnedoe, included a painting from the series *Waldo's Schatten* in the permanent exhibition.

From 1993 to 2000, Eldowy travelled to Egypt. Between 1995 and 1999, she discovered the location of the ancient library "Hall of Records" in Giza and an unknown shaft in the west wall of the Queen's Chamber of the Pyramid of Khufu. The series *Ägyptische Tagebücher* (Egyptian Diaries) and *Die Mumien der Pharaonen* (The Mummies of the Pharaohs) were created.

Self-published, Gundula Schulze Eldowy brought out four CDs of her chants in the Cheops Pyramid: *Aus dem Schweigen fällt der Sinn* (Out of Silence Falls Meaning), *Leg die Stille auf den Mund* (Lay Silence on Your Mouth), *Im Haus der Fäden* (In the House of Threads) and *Das Blatt verliert den Baum* (The Leaf Loses the Tree).

In 1996 she travelled to Japan and won the 12th Prize for Overseas Photographers of Higashikawa Photo Fiesta '96. In 1997 she travelled to Moscow and Turkey. Since 2001, she has regularly travelled to Peru and Bolivia.

Gundula Schulze Eldowy's works are represented in international collections and have been shown in numerous exhibitions worldwide, including 2009 *Art of Two Germanys/Cold War Cultures*, LACMA, Los Angeles, 2011/12 *Die frühen Jahre* at C/O Berlin and *Verwandlungen* at

Kunstraum des Deutschen Bundestages Berlin, 2012 *Gold* and 2015 *Schlaflos*, Unteres Belvedere und Orangerie Vienna, 2018 *RESIST! The 1960 protests, photography and visual legacy*, BOZAR – Palais des Beaux-Arts Brussels, 2018 *Das letzte Bild – Photographie und Tod*, C/O Berlin, *The Medea Insurrection: Radical Women Artists Behind the Iron Curtain*, 2018 Albertinum Dresden and 2019 The Wende Museum Los Angeles, *Halt die Ohren steif!! Robert Frank und Gundula Schulze Eldowy in New York*, 2018 Kunsthalle Erfurt and 2019 Photo Bastei Zürich, 2019 *Corps impatientes / Restless Bodies. East-German Photography 1980–89*, Les Rencontres d'Arles, 2020 *Berlin, 1945–2000: A Photographic Subject*, Reinbeckhallen Berlin.

In addition to her photographic and film work, she has written stories, poems, essays, sound collages and songs. In 2016, she published *Tänzerflügel* (Dancer's wings), her second collection of stories after *Am fortgewehten Ort* (In the Place Blown Away, 2011). Gundula Schulze Eldowy lives in Berlin and Peru and has been a member of the Akademie der Künste Berlin since 2019.

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