



**Kunsthistorisches
Institut
in
Florenz**

Max-Planck-Institut

Press information

Hilde Lotz-Bauer (1907-1999) in Florence

An online exhibition developed by the photo library at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz

96 photographs from the photo library's collection and the Franz Schlechter archive (Heidelberg)

25.06.2007 - 25.09.2007



Hilde Lotz-Bauer (1907 Munich - 1999 Munich), photographer and Doctor of Art History, lived in Italy from 1935 until 1943. The Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz possesses part of her artistic legacy in the form of approximately 750 photographs acquired through donations and purchases made in the 1970s and 1980s. A representative selection is now being displayed for the first time in an online exhibition to mark the occasion of her centenary.



Hilde Lotz-Bauer, around ???, Venice, copyright ???

Hilde Lotz-Bauer studied art history in Munich from 1926 onwards, gaining her doctorate under the tutelage of Wilhelm Pinder in 1931. She subsequently completed a two-year period of training to become a photographer at the Bavarian State Academy for the Photographic Arts (Bayerische Staatslehranstalt für Lichtbildwesen), where she was taught by Hans Spörl and Arthur Schlegel. In 1935, Hilde Lotz-Bauer travelled to Rome with her first husband, art historian Bernhard Degenhart

(+1999), where they both took up posts at the Bibliotheca Hertziana (Max Planck Institute of Art History). Lotz-Bauer's initial photographs of Italian Renaissance architecture, sculpture and sketches were taken to accompany contributions in the Bibliotheca Hertziana yearbook of 1937. The precise, close-up shots, with their varied perspectives, ensure that Lotz-Bauer's photographs satisfied the contemporary needs of art historical stylistic analysis, an element which was, inversely, also influenced by the conscious and thoroughly artistic arrangement of the various motives – a fundamental phenomenon of scientific work based on illustrations.

The photographer met art historian Wolfgang Lotz (1912-1981) at the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz in 1939, and married him in 1941 in what would be her second marriage. The then director of the Institute, Friedrich Kriegbaum, commissioned Lotz-Bauer to complete a range of photographic projects, which were, however, abandoned after his death during an air raid on Florence in 1943. That year, Hilde Lotz-Bauer relocated to Austria with her first child, proceeding to Munich, where her husband, who returned from war captivity in 1946, assumed the post of provisional director for the Central Institute of Art History, which had been founded in the same year.

After Wolfgang Lotz had earned a reputation for himself in the USA, first at Vassar College and subsequently at the New York Institute of Fine Arts, the family moved to America in 1953. Hilde Lotz-Bauer worked there as an art historian for almost a decade, and taught at several colleges. In 1962, the couple returned to the Bibliotheca Hertziana in Rome after Wolfgang Lotz was appointed its director.

Hilde Lotz-Bauer did not return to her home city of Munich until 1984, after she had been widowed, and remained there until her death in 1999.

To date, her photographic works have formed the subject of exhibitions in Florence (1977), London (1980), Bonn (1981) and Mannheim (1993).

The online exhibition focuses on photographs by Hilde Lotz-Bauer which were commissioned by Friedrich Kriegbaum, the then director of the Kunsthistorisches Institut in Florenz. Her close-ups of works by Michelangelo, Benvenuto Cellini and Giambologna trace the development and history of scientific photography and remain a significant legacy. Her penchant for unusual perspectives is illustrated by her panoramic and close-up views, taken with her plate camera directly on the rooftops, of the ancient part of Florence before it was destroyed during the air raids. A selection of these photographs was displayed in the Palazzo Strozzi in Florence in 1977 on the occasion of Lotz-Bauer's seventieth birthday, in an exhibition entitled "Chiese, palazzi e ponti fotografati con bravura". Lotz-Bauer's photographs of Roman squares and fountains were taken between 1935 and 1938 and have been kindly placed at the Institute's disposal by Franz Schlechter, who owns the majority of Hilde Lotz-Bauer's photographic inheritance, for the purposes of the online exhibition.

The online exhibition constitutes part of an initiative by the photographic library at the Kunsthistorisches Institut which is currently engaging in an in-depth study of its historical collections, which document over a century of scientific and photographic history.

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