

# JAROMÍR FUNKE

## AVANT-GARDE PHOTOGRAPHER

Exhibition Duration: **January 27 – April 29, 2018**

Opening: **Friday, January 26, 2018, 7 pm**

Press preview: **Friday, January 26, 2018, 10 am**

**Overlooked until recently, now on show in Frankfurt/Main: The Czech artist Jaromír Funke radically pushed the boundaries of photography. For the first time in Germany, the FFF presents the Avant-garde works of this visionary. During the same time, the FFF presents a second exhibition featuring emerging talents from the Czech Republic.**

Frankfurt/Main, January 26, 2018 – Experiments with light and shadow, reflections and transparencies: Jaromír Funke (1896–1945) counts as one of the most important representatives of Czech and international Avant-garde photography. Often ahead of his time, he sourced impulses from Cubism, New Objectivity, Abstract Art and Surrealism. For the first time in Germany the Fotografie Forum Frankfurt presents the work of this visionary. On display are more than 70 photographs from the period between the 1920s and 1930s – a phase in which Funke radically pushed the boundaries of photography.

Jaromír Funke started photographing at the age of twelve when his father gave him his first camera. After receiving his high school diploma in 1915 he studied medicine, law and philosophy before turning entirely to photography after World War I. Next to his early landscape images adhering to the style of romantic pictorialism, he started creating modern works from 1923: minimalistic compositions with plates, vacuum cleaner tubes and glass bottles, still lifes with glass objects, light bulbs and star fish. The shadows of objects, not the objects themselves, start to take centre-stage in his work.

Funke was inspired by the pioneers of abstract photography Alvin Langdon Coburn, Francis Bruguière or Jaroslav Rössler while he quickly developed his own unique signature style. His goal was to “highlight two objects, contrast two realities, combine different elements in a single photo”, he writes in 1935. At the same time, Funke scrutinised and explored the possibilities of photography as the author and publisher of magazines and books, as a relentless organiser and as teacher of photography at institutions such as the National Academy of Art in Prague.

Jaromír Funke’s works are part of many collections, including the Museum of Modern Art (New York), J. Paul Getty Museum (Los Angeles), Photographic Art Museum Tokyo and Centre Pompidou (Paris). However, his relevance in the field of Avant-garde photography was only discovered in recent years. The exhibition **JAROMÍR FUNKE. AVANT-GARDE PHOTOGRAPHER** in Frankfurt was curated by Vladimír Birgus, art historian, photography specialist and Funke biographer. It is a collaboration with Funke’s daughter Miloslava Rupešová, Leica Gallery Prague and the Institute of Creative Photography of the Silesian University Opava, Czech Republic. The exhibition is accompanied by a new publication.

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### Second exhibition shows contemporary tendencies from the Czech Republic

Next to the exhibition of Jaromír Funke the FFF presents the second exhibition **OPAVA SCHOOL CLOSE-UP** taking place at the same time to feature contemporary tendencies from the Czech Republic. On display are images of the photographers at the renowned Institute of Creative Photography at the Silesian University Opava, Czech Republic. The photographs focus on existential moments: privacy, relationships, inner reflection. The topics of the young generation are highly personal and show a high regard for experimentation. Forty percent of the students come from abroad and quickly find international recognition.

The exhibition **OPAVA SCHOOL Close-up** is part of the FFF events »Photography Players«. The format focuses on current international projects and ideas about the medium as well as different, young and fresh talents. In dialogue with each other, the two exhibitions show affinities between visionaries of the Avant-garde. The exhibition **OPAVA SCHOOL Close-up** was curated by Vladimír Birgus, who is lecturer at the Institute of creative Photography, and Celina Lunsford, Artistic Director of the Fotografie Forum Frankfurt.

Fotografie Forum Frankfurt is supported by the City of Frankfurt, Olympus Deutschland GmbH, and Sparda Bank Hessen eG.

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### FOTOGRAFIE FORUM FRANKFURT

The Fotografie Forum Frankfurt (FFF) is one of the leading centres of photography in Europe. As an exhibition space, institution and event forum the FFF deals with all aspects of photography. Since its founding in 1984 it has presented more than 250 exhibitions with historic and contemporary artists. Additionally, the program of the FFF comprises of regular workshops, talks and discussions with internationally renowned photographers, artists and experts. Further information available at [www.fff Frankfurt.org](http://www.fff Frankfurt.org)