



HERESIES: PEDRO MEYER'S RESTROSPECTIVE



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3 October to 9 November 2008

CDAN. Centro de Arte y Naturaleza. Fundación Beulas

OPENING HOURS

Mornings: 11 am to 2 pm; afternoons 5 pm to 9 pm

Sundays and public holidays: 10 am to 2 pm; afternoons 5 pm to 9 pm

Mondays (except public holidays): closed

Free guided tours

Saturdays at 12 noon and 6pm

Sundays at 12 noon

Free admission

Group visits by arrangement

www.pedromeyer.com

CDAN | Centro de Arte y Naturaleza. | Doctor Artero, s/n | Huesca 22004. | Tel. 974 23 98 93 | Fax. 974 22 37 62 | www.cdan.es | info@cdan.es

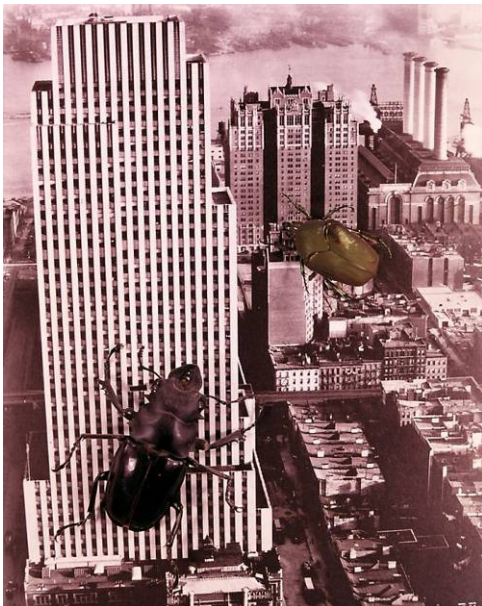
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Pedro Meyer's *Heresies* project is a retrospective that covers four decades of groundbreaking work by one of the world's most innovative photographers. The *Heresies* exhibit – opening simultaneously in 100 museums worldwide in October 2008 – will also create a new paradigm for exhibiting photographs in museums.

Mexican photographer **Pedro Meyer** is as renowned for his powerful and provocative photographs as he is for his pioneering work with digital imaging. Meyer's photographs consistently test the limits of truth, fiction and reality. With the advent of digital photography in the early 1990s, Meyer evolved from a documentary photographer who created so-called 'straight photographs' into a digital-documentarian who often combines elements from different photographs to arrive at a different or higher truth.

Meyer famously said that all photographs – digitally manipulated or not – are equally 'true' and 'untrue'. As a result he has been labelled 'heretical' in the orthodox documentary photography community. This is the origin of the title for the retrospective: ***Heresies***. Meyer's personal innovations in the field of digital photography include creating the first CD-ROM to combine sound and images, creating the first digital prints ever made and, in 1994, creating the online photography forum *zonezero.com* – one of the most-visited digital photography content sites on the web.

In addition to these contributions, Pedro Meyer has also been a spokesman and organiser for Latin American photographers, effectively putting Latin American photography on the map of international art. With ***Heresies***, Meyer applies his extraordinary visionary capacity to the task of redefining the concept of museum-based photography exhibits, raising vital questions: what is a photography exhibit now? What will they be like in the future? In an era of financial constraint when the role of museums as authoritative institutions is being redefined, Meyer's new and heretical paradigm for photography exhibits facilitates: collaborative creativity between curators and artists; a worldwide network of 100 museums participating in the *Heresies* project; increased research and collection-building capacity for museums; and compelling educational programmes that capture the attention of the iPod generation.



Pedro Meyer. *Distrito federal*. México. 1977



Pedro Meyer. *Michoacán*. México. 1972

PEDRO MEYER AT THE CDAN

The images in this exhibition are a constant coming and going; they cannot be appreciated from a single perspective; they must be understood as a discourse that is open and has the capacity to be analysed. There are three fundamental aspects when viewing this exhibition: the individual, society and the representation.

Pedro Meyer's home is Mexico and he has taken more photographs here than in any other part of the world: more than 80,000 images; a vision of a country that must be contemplated rather than understood. His photographs us show the character of lives far removed from the norm, from the established; some marked by the demands of economic and cultural survival. The historic character of this collective is undeniable, and is as evident in Meyer's shots of Mexico City as in his photos of the different regions of Mexico, from his early experiments during the mid-fifties to his most recent work, and from his black and white images to those in colour or digital format. For example, his work of the Mixtec (Oaxaca, Mexico) vibrates and seduces because it is a landscape of everyday existence – earth and water, spirituality, work and pursuit – but in a different latitude.

He has also documented disturbing times in the country's history, such as the earthquakes of 1957. "We document catastrophe to prove that even though we are fragile and vulnerable, we are still here." The photographer's duty: to record events in order to analyse and integrate them into history, which continues on its course. In several of these photographs the aesthetic and the event are interwoven, which can both surprise and disconcert the viewer. This may be because, when faced with catastrophe, Meyer is resolute, sincere and perceptive. The strength of his images appears equal to the magnitude of the earthquake and the devastation it leaves behind. The city is demolished, but life still goes on.

Another key to understanding Meyer's work is travel and photography. These two actions have gone hand in hand since the 19th Century when photographers carried heavy equipment and portable darkrooms. Since then photography has been a way of capturing the world and preserving it. Meyer is an avid traveller around his own country, discovering photographic themes. He is an expert in all areas of the genre and its techniques. His pursuit is not of a homogeneous panorama; rather Meyer documents, in an almost ethnographic way, diverse everyday conditions, revealing desert paths and *entry points* to California, Arizona, Texas and New York. He shows the vicissitudes of the migrants: a multicultural diversity circulating in everyday spaces and leaving its trace.

Pedro Meyer challenged the iconicity of all official views of the country; he constructed a discourse averse to facile or demagogic enthusiasm. His vision of cities of metal and landscapes of lands and skies is both incisive and creative; with images that are frugal and elegant.

It is in the most banal, the collective yet intimate, where the defiant nature of Pedro Meyer's work resides. His is a consummate ability to visualise the intensity and incalculable diversity of human life, which otherwise would be hidden.



Pedro Meyer. *La mixteca*. Oaxaca. México. 1991



Pedro Meyer. *USA. Winslow*. Arizona. 1990

BIOGRAPHY

Pedro Meyer is one of the pioneers and most recognized representatives of contemporary photography. He was the founder and president of the Consejo Mexicano de Fotografía (*Mexican Council of Photography*) and organizer of the first three Latin American Photography Colloquiums. Besides his artistic photographic work, Pedro Meyer has been a teacher in various prestigious institutions, as well as the curator, editor, founder and director of the renowned photography website ZoneZero, which hosts the work of over a thousand photographers from all over the world, and is visited by more than 500,000 people each month. More than 5.5 million people visited ZoneZero in one year making it one of most visited sites for content on the web.

In 1991 he published the very first CD ROM in the world that combined images and sound titled "I Photograph to Remember. He is also the author of the books "Tiempos de América" (*American Times*), "Espejo de Espinas" (*Mirror of Thorns*), "Los Cohetes duraron todo el día" (*The Fireworks Lasted All Day*). His book "Truths and Fictions: A journey of documentary photography to digital" edited by Aperture, was also made later into a CD ROM by Voyager in 1995. His latest book titled "The Real and the True" published by Peach Pitt Press came out in 2005.

Pedro Meyer has imparted more than a hundred lectures on the subject of photography and new technologies in important festivals, museums and academic institutions in Mexico, The United States, England, Germany, Argentina, Spain, Ecuador and Sweden amongst others. He has been a guest artist in the University of Colorado in Boulder, Centro de Estudios Fotográficos in Vigo, Spain and The Arizona Western Collage in Yuma, Arizona.

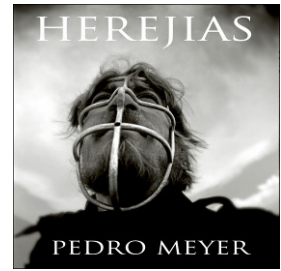
His work has been presented in more than 200 exhibitions in museums and galleries all over the world and is part of very important permanent collections that include: The San Francisco Museum of Modern Art, The Victoria and Albert Museum in London, The Musée National D'art Moderne Centre Georges Pompidou in Paris, The International Center of Photography also in New York, George Eastman House in Rochester, New York, The California Museum of Photography, in Riverside, The Center for Creative Photography in Tucson, Arizona, Casa de Las Américas, Havana, Cuba, Centro Studie e Archivio della Comunicazione dell' Università of Parma, Italy, and Comuna di Anghiari, Palazzo Pretorio, Italy amongst others.

He was awarded the prestigious Guggenheim grant in 1987, the Internazionale di Cultura Citta di Anghiari in 1985, in 1993 he received the National Endowment for the Arts in conjunction with Jonathan Green and the California Museum of Photography in Riverside. He has also received numerous awards in Mexican Photography Biennales and the very first grant destined to a Web project, awarded by the Rockefeller Foundation

MUSEUMS

BRASIL Espaço Cultural Contemporâneo | Museu de Arte Contemporânea da Universidade de São Paulo **CHILE** Centro Cultural Palacio La Moneda | Museo Arqueológico de La Serena | Museo de Historia Natural de Concepción | Museo Regional de la Araucanía | Museo Regional de Magallanes Palacio Braun Menéndez | Museo Regional de Rancagua **COLOMBIA** Museo de Arte Moderno de Medellín **CUBA** Casa de las Américas **ECUADOR** Centro Cultural Metropolitano **MEXICO** Ayuntamiento de Cuernavaca | Casa Escorza Espacio para la Imagen | Centro Cultural Jardín Borda Instituto de Cultura de Morelos | Centro Cultural Muros | Centro de la Imagen | Centro Educativo y Cultural del Estado de Querétaro Manuel Gómez Morín | Centro Fotográfico Manuel Álvarez Bravo | Centro Integral de Fotografía | Dirección de Difusión Cultural de la Universidad Autónoma del Estado de Morelos | Escuela Activa de Fotografía | Escuela Activa de Fotografía | Fábrica de Imágenes | Fototeca de Nuevo León Centro de las Artes CONARTE | Fototeca de Veracruz Juan Malpica Mimendi | La Caja, Museo de Arte Contemporáneo Museo de Arte Carrillo Gil | Museo Archivo de la Fotografía | Museo de Arte Contemporáneo de Tamaulipas | Museo de Arte de Mazatlán | Museo de Arte de Tlaxcala | Museo de Arte de Zapopan | Museo de la Ciudad de Querétaro | Sistema Nacional de Fototecas Fototeca Nacional Del INAH **URUGUAY** Centro Municipal de Fotografía, CMF | **USA** Akron Art Museum | Art Museum of the Americas | California Museum of Photography | El Museo del Barrio | George Eastman House | Lehigh University Art Galleries | Scottsdale Museum of Contemporary Art | Southeast Museum of Photography | National Museum of Mexican Art | Queens Museum of Art **BANGLADESH** Drik Gallery II **CHINA** Guangdong Museum of Art | National Art Museum of China **INDIA** Tasveer Galleries **PAKISTAN** PeaceNiche at T2F **SINGAPORE** National Museum of Singapore **CROATIA** Museum of Modern & Contemporary Art **ITALIA** Centro Italiano della Fotografia d'Autore | Foto & Photo | Complesso Museale di San Francesco **SLOVAKIA** Central European House of Photography **ESPAÑA** Centro de Arte y Naturaleza | Centro de Documentación de la Imagen de Santander (CDIS) Ayuntamiento de Santander Sala Ángel de la Hoz | Galería Fernando Pradilla | Museu d'Art Contemporani d'Elx **AUSTRALIA** Australian Centre for Photography | The Perth Centre for Photography

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