

PRESS RELEASE

ZKM Acquires Archive of Renowned Artist and Publisher Andreas Müller-Pohle

The ZKM | Center for Art and Media has received the archive of the artist and publisher Andreas Müller-Pohle as well as a comprehensive selection of his works. Müller-Pohle has had a decisive influence on the media art scene since the late 1970s – through his artistic and theoretical works, through the founding of the journal European Photography, and not least through his editorship of the writings of the philosopher Vilém Flusser. The archive is being donated to the ZKM, and a representative selection of his artworks has been acquired.

The central theme of the artistic work of Andreas Müller-Pohle (*1951, Braunschweig) is the apparatus-based image – from photography to the coded digital image to video. He is interested in the aesthetic, social, and material conditions of imaging technologies. Vilém Flusser described Müller-Pohle's special relationship to technical media using the example of his photographs as "confessions of freedom in the face of the automatic apparatus."

Müller-Pohle's artistic oeuvre comprises four major phases that deal with different aspects of the apparatus-based image: Visualism, deconstruction and image recycling, exploration of digital, genetic, and political codes, and long-term thematic studies on ecological, social, and political issues. His works have been shown in over 200 solo and group exhibitions worldwide and include photographs, computer-generated works, and videos, as well as objects and installations.

As an editor and author, Müller-Pohle has reflected and helped to shape the development of independent photography for decades. Since 1980, he has edited the journal *European Photography*, which, in addition to presenting current photographic positions, has contributed significantly to the theoretical and programmatic debate on the medium of photography. Müller-Pohle is also considered to be the discoverer of the philosopher Vilém Flusser in Europe. At his suggestion, Flusser wrote the seminal essay *Für eine Philosophie der Fotografie* in 1982 (*Towards a Philosophy of Photography* in 1984). In 1986, Müller-Pohle published Flusser's essay *Die Schrift. Hat Schreiben Zukunft?* on floppy disk, according to the publisher's description the "first real non-book," and is considered one of the first

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*Press contact
Felix Brenner
Phone: +49 (0) 721 8100 1821*

*E-mail: presse@zkm.de
www.zkm.de/en/about-the-zkm/press*

*ZKM | Center for Art and
Media Karlsruhe
Lorenzstraße 19
76135 Karlsruhe*

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e-books. It was published in English in 2011 under the title *Does Writing Have a Future?*. Since 1994, Müller-Pohle has been the editor of *Edition Flusser*, a ten-volume edition of Flusser's most important late works and selected writings from the philosopher's estate.

With its correspondence, manuscripts, project documents, and materials, the archive, which will be bequeathed to the ZKM as an estate, not only offers fascinating insights into Müller-Pohle's artistic work, but also into the over forty-year history of the journal *European Photography* and the long-standing publishing collaboration with Vilém Flusser. Together with Müller-Pohle's multimedia works, it enriches the holdings of the ZKM | Karlsruhe, an art institution that was founded to reflect on the possibilities of new technologies and their impact on the arts and society. By preserving and researching the history of the apparatus-based and electronic arts, the archives and collection of the ZKM open up a historical horizon that makes it possible to classify the most topical discussions and thus to differentiate perspectives and arguments.

Alistair Hudson, Scientific-Artistic CEO of the ZKM | Karlsruhe on the acquisition of this archive: "It is a great sign of confidence that Andreas Müller-Pohle has donated his archive to the ZKM. Such a high-quality and extensive legacy underlines the quality and importance of the ZKM archive and the reputation it enjoys among artists worldwide."

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