

Artistic Context / About Me



My artistic work is deeply rooted in the urbanist theory of the Situationist International. As a Meisterschüler (master student) under [Ernst Althoff](#) and a student of [Attila Kotányi](#) at the [Kunstakademie Düsseldorf](#) (1983–1988), combined with my decades of experience as a practicing architect, I do not view the city as a mere backdrop, but as an ideological construct. Through Attila Kotányi, I was introduced to the concept of the *dérive*, and I have remained deeply committed to this practice of aimless drifting and urban exploration ever since. It is during these spatial explorations that I find my authentic, un-staged images.

Artistic CV

Personal Data

Ralf Hatzmann, born in 1955 in Ratingen, Germany

Residence & Studio | Cologne, Germany

Focus | Photography, Conceptual Art, *Dérive*

Artistic Education

1988 | Appointed *Meisterschüler* (Master Student), Class of Professor Ernst Josef Althoff

1983 – 1989 | Studies in Fine Arts, Kunstakademie Düsseldorf

Professors: Prof. Ernst Josef Althoff / Artist and Lecturer Attila Kotányi (Situationist International)

Prior | Studies in Architecture (Degree/Diploma)

Professional & Artistic Career

1989 – 2022 | Founder and Director of his own architectural practice

1990 – 2022 | Parallel continuation of his fine art practice alongside active operations as an architect

Since 2023 | Working exclusively as a freelance Visual Artist

Artistic Focus & Concept

Medium | Photography, serial arrangements (polyptychs)

Central Theme | The concept of the *dérive* (aimless drifting through urban spaces)

Content | Visual continuation of the situationist spatial theory from his studies under Kotányi

Focus | Documentation of architecture and humanity, urban psychogeographies, cityscapes, and fleeting encounters within the urban context

Projects & Exhibitions

1985 | Rundgang (Annual Exhibition), Kunstakademie Düsseldorf

1986: | Academy Group Exhibition, Künstlerverein Malkasten, Düsseldorf

1988 | Rundgang (Annual Exhibition), Kunstakademie Düsseldorf

Since 2015 | "Begegnungen in der Stadt" (Encounters in the City) – Ongoing polyptych series (multi-part photographic compositions)

2019 – 2024 | Development of the photographic body of work "Périphérique Paris" (An exploration of the Paris ring road as an urban border and transit space),