

## Barbara & Michael Leisgen

### socio-politics in poetry, a collaborative œuvre

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Barbara (born in 1940) and Michael Leisgen (born in 1944) live in Germany. Both former students of the Karlsruhe Fine Arts School, they devoted themselves as early as 1969 to photography, a discipline conducive to a two-artist approach.

Their work is represented by major European institutions and museums.

#### The 70s: *Mimesis*

In their very first photographic works, they developed an œuvre on nature forming part of the generation of artists who show a tendency to use landscapes (Richard Long and Hamish Fulton in Great Britain, or Walter de Maria in the USA).

In the *Mimesis* series, Barbara insinuates herself into a rolling landscape through the movement of her arms in a photographic interpretation of Friedrich's work: *Morgenlicht*.

#### The 80s: *Sun Alphabets*

In the series of *Sun Alphabets*, the artists capture the signs made by the sun when they photograph it while moving the camera. They thus obtain abstract signs which are close to calligraphy, or even make up an alphabet as such. The alphabet is replaced by the word, translating a political claim, during the period of the racist wave which burst out in Germany at the end of the eighties, or more recently, during the nuclear tests on Mururoa («Apocalypse», Ludwig collection, Aachen).

#### The 90s: *Corridas*

In this series of photographs on canvas, the artists capture some corridas scenes in Nîmes (France). The action is seen through the shadows.

#### 1998-99: *Tribute to Walter Benjamin*

In the *Tribute to Walter Benjamin* series, a conductor's hands on a black background hold a sharp-pointed baton. Through photo prints of extreme rigour, the Leisgens are working in a metaphorical mode. They evoke the tragic destiny of the German writer Walter Benjamin.

#### 2000-2004 : *Art Is Luck*

Later on, their work would take a new direction, more closely involved in the political reality of the time, then becoming more intimate. Throughout the different series, the Symbolic and the Poetical always provide the leitmotif of their work.