

NEW RELEASE KEHRER VERLAG

Inside the Carlton Hotel Johannesburg

Leif Bennett / Yvonne Mueller

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A fascinating insight into the abandoned five-star Carlton Hotel in Johannesburg

Once a thriving metropolis, a city of gold – with the end of Apartheid, Johannesburg experienced a fundamental change: Houses were suddenly empty, the crime rate rose, and the infrastructure crumbled. Today? A lively, exciting, and pulsating city. At its very center a hotel which hosted many protagonists of these political and economic developments, as well as numerous stars from around the world. The five-star Carlton Hotel was closed in 1997 and is now guarded around the clock for fear of illegal occupation and vandalism. An empty shell with more than six hundred rooms on thirty-one floors. Much has transpired in the various rooms of this hotel – numerous meetings and congresses were held and ground-breaking decisions made. With their unique photographic documentation, Leif Bennett and Yvonne Mueller, two Swiss artists from Basel, provide fascinating insight into the once best hotel in the southern hemisphere.

»From the very beginning, Johannesburg was an economic centre; a city marked by migration, social disparities, great promises, and hopes, as well as by discrimination and disappointment. It is also a city of myths – then as now.«

– from the text by Fiona Siegenthaler

Yvonne Mueller (born 1973 in Basel, Switzerland) is a visual artist, who lives and works in Basel. She studied Fine Art at the School of Art and Design (Basel, 1998–2001). She works in the media of photography, video, and painting. Since 2009, she has been concentrating on architectural details and realises these predominantly site-specific works in the form of installations comprised of photographs, paintings, and drawings. She has received two six-month studio grants: in 2005 for Paris and in 2013 for South Africa, as well as an execution loan from Kunstcredit Basel-Stadt for the art-and-architecture project ZeitRaum, which she realised at the Basel Vocational College in 2014.

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Leif Bennett (*1974 in Schaffhausen, Switzerland) currently lives and works in Basel. Since 2003, he has been exhibiting on a regular basis in institutions in Switzerland and occasionally also abroad. In 2007, he received an execution loan from Kunstcredit Basel-Stadt for his public art project Pocket Park. In 2013, he received – together with Yvonne Mueller – a six-month studio grant in South Africa, sponsored by iaab (International Artists' Exchange Programme of the Basel Region, since 2014 Atelier Mondial, Christoph Merian Foundation Basel). The sojourn was divided into three months each in Johannesburg and Cape Town.

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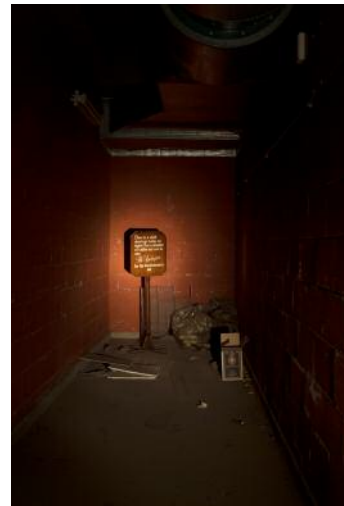
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