

Ola Kolehmainen – *Memoria Mundi*

Press Release

Online Exhibition: 7 July – 26 September 2026

Christophe Guye Galerie is pleased to present *Memoria Mundi*, a new online exhibition by Finnish photographer Ola Kolehmainen. Bringing together twenty-one recent works, the exhibition offers a compelling insight into one of the artist's most ambitious and conceptually rich bodies of work, exploring the relationship between memory, light and Europe's cultural heritage.

For more than three decades, Kolehmainen has developed a distinctive photographic language situated between architecture, painting and abstraction. Although his works often begin with museums, churches, palaces or historically significant buildings, they are never documentary records. Instead, architecture becomes the point of departure for an exploration of perception itself. Through reflections, transparency, colour and the careful choreography of natural light, familiar places are transformed into contemplative visual experiences that unfold gradually over time.

The title *Memoria Mundi* – Memory of the World – reflects the conceptual core of the exhibition. Rather than depicting monuments or collections as static repositories of the past, Kolehmainen reveals them as living carriers of cultural memory. Renaissance paintings, classical sculpture, historic interiors and architectural spaces become part of a continuous dialogue between history and the present. His photographs do not simply record cultural heritage; they reinterpret it, inviting viewers to reconsider how collective memory is preserved, experienced and continually reshaped through the act of seeing.

Inspired by museums and historical collections across Europe, the exhibited works establish a quiet yet profound conversation between photography and art history. Light dissolves material boundaries, reflections create new visual relationships, and carefully orchestrated compositions blur the distinction between reality and representation. In Kolehmainen's photographs, architecture becomes atmosphere, history becomes experience, and photography becomes a medium through which cultural memory acquires new form.

At a time when visual culture increasingly rewards speed and instant consumption, *Memoria Mundi* proposes the opposite. The exhibition invites viewers to slow down and engage with images that reveal themselves gradually through sustained observation. Rather than offering immediate answers, Kolehmainen's photographs encourage a deeper awareness of the subtle relationships between light, space, history and perception.

Born in Helsinki in 1964, Ola Kolehmainen is internationally recognised as one of Finland's leading contemporary photographers and a prominent representative of the Helsinki School. Since the early 1990s, his work has been exhibited extensively in museums and institutions throughout Europe, including Kiasma Museum of Contemporary Art, Helsinki; Museum Kunstpalast, Düsseldorf; Haus am Waldsee, Berlin; Pitzhanger Manor House and Gallery, London; Borusan Contemporary, Istanbul; the National Museum of Photography, Copenhagen; and, most recently, the Miettinen Collection, Berlin. His photographs are represented in numerous important public and private collections worldwide.

Memoria Mundi is presented as an online exhibition.

About Christophe Guye Galerie

Christophe Guye Galerie was founded in 2006 in Los Angeles by Christophe Guye and has been based in Zurich since 2010. It is considered one of the leading international galleries dedicated to contemporary fine art photography. The gallery represents national and international artists who situate photography within the expanded field of contemporary artistic practice and who contribute significantly to art historical discourse, the development of the medium, and contemporary art as a whole. The gallery presents four to six exhibitions annually, featuring artists from its programme as well as guest projects. Its activities also include collection consulting, the development and organisation of exhibitions in collaboration with institutions, museums and partner galleries, and regular participation in international art fairs including Paris Photo, Photo London, MIA Milan, Unseen Amsterdam and Photo Shanghai.

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