

**Dieter Blum**

***Cowboys. The First Shooting 1992.***

***Photographs from the Daimler Art Collection on Show at Weston Park***

*The Granary Art Gallery, Weston Park*

*Wednesday 6<sup>th</sup> of June – Monday 27<sup>th</sup> of August, 2018*

Open daily, 11.00 am – 4.00 pm

Admission to the Granary Art Gallery is free

The Granary Art Gallery, Weston Park, Weston-under-Lizard, Shifnal, TF11 8LE, UK

**Dieter Blum**

***XTC. Dance and Eros. Selected Photographs***, 1994–98

*Wolverhampton School of Art*

*Friday 8<sup>th</sup> of June – Monday 27<sup>th</sup> of August, 2018*

Open Monday to Saturday, 9.00 am – 5.00 pm

Admission is free

Wolverhampton School of Art Est. 1851, Foyer, Molineux Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1TD

**Dieter Blum: Artist's Talk**

Wolverhampton School of Art est. 1851, Lecture Theatre (MK045), Molineux Street,  
Wolverhampton, WV1 1TD

Tuesday June 26<sup>th</sup>, 2018, 5 – 7 pm

The work of German photographer Dieter Blum (born 1936) is presented for the first time in the UK in two parallel exhibitions held in the West Midlands and organised by the Daimler Art Collection, Stuttgart/Berlin.

The exhibition *Dieter Blum. Cowboys. The first shooting, 1992. Photographs from the Daimler Art Collection on Show at Weston Park* is organised in partnership with the Weston Park Foundation and focuses on the artist's novel take on the cowboy subject, developed in this series which emerged in 1992 as trial shoots for the famous Marlboro advertising campaign. The photographs are now shown for the first time internationally since their rediscovery and purchase by the Daimler Art Collection in 2016.

Wolverhampton School of Art Est. 1851, University of Wolverhampton, in a collaboration with Dieter Blum and the Photography Department of this art school – one of the first to have been founded in the UK – is opening its 2018 degree show with the exhibition *Dieter Blum. XTC. Dance and Eros. Selected Photographs*. Here, the public will be offered a selection of the photographer's acclaimed nude shots of ballet dancers (1994–98) and meet Dieter Blum on the occasion of an artist's talk hosted by the school.

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## Dieter Blum's *Cowboys at Weston Park*

The exhibition *Cowboys. The First Shooting 1992. Photographs from the Daimler Art Collection on Show at Weston Park* will, for the first time, bring a series of around 60 photographs by German photographer Dieter Blum to the heart of England, where they will be on show at the Granary Art Gallery in the grounds of the historic country house Weston Park.

Dieter Blum's images on the theme of the Cowboy emerged in 1992 in the context of the famous Marlboro advertising campaign. Blum was invited to the USA by Philip Morris to produce a series of trial shoots and from 1994 onwards he eventually went on to produce the iconic imagery for the brand until 2004; he was the only German photographer to participate and his work would mark a high point in the advertising campaign.

Nevertheless, the trial shoots Blum produced prior to working on the campaign remained forgotten for almost 25 years since they were never published nor exhibited. Today, they enable us to understand how Blum laid the foundations to become one of the most influential international figures for product advertising and documentary photography at that time. Blum's images were highly unusual as they show the daily life of cowboys as a novel and individual choice of subject-matter.

Cars and motorbikes, railroads and telephones, traffic lights and parking garages, daily newspapers and rodeos, the Stars and Stripes, contemporary parades and celebrations –this world of mundane phenomena has nothing to do with the world of Western and cowboy romance. It is seemingly a contradiction in terms. Dieter Blum puts the everyday world of the men working as cowboys, as depicted by him in 1992, into the centre. He photographs it from a bird's-eye perspective, in close-up, in cut-out sections and in zoom view, in colour, in black-and-white, etc.

Dieter Blum's team players on horseback from the first shoot of 1992, who are seen mastering the low-lying areas of the everyday, exist somewhere between the two major poles of the current reinterpretation of the cowboy myth. Photographing brief moments that are in fact impossible to photograph is one of the advantages of Dieter Blum's essentially intuitive working methods. He succeeds in creating spectacular 'speed ornaments' out of the rapid movement of the animal, the rider, and the lasso.

It is as a result of these qualities of Blum's Cowboy photographs in the context of the Marlboro campaign that the images have achieved a lasting place in our visual memory and are also relevant for the international art context. They provided the 'material' for a younger generation of artists, like Richard Prince, who have been working, in their turn, on the Cowboy theme.

In 2016, the trial shoots were acquired as a sole existing complete series by the Daimler Art Collection, Stuttgart/Berlin, the art collection of German car manufacturer Daimler AG, and exhibited for the first time to the public at Daimler Contemporary in Berlin.

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The series is now being brought to the UK in a collaboration of the Weston Park Foundation with the Daimler Art Collection and exhibited for the first time internationally. This is also the first exhibition thus far in the UK dedicated to the work of Dieter Blum.

## **Dieter Blum**

Dieter Blum was born in Esslingen, near Stuttgart, in 1936 and he lives and works in Düsseldorf. From an early age he was drawn to photography and began auto didactically. Concentrating at first on commercial photography, since the 1960's he has subsequently positioned himself in the domain of free artistic photography, the genres often fluidly merging, and he has gained international acclaim for his work.

From 1972, Blum worked from his own photographic studio in Esslingen near Stuttgart collaborating with major corporations in the region such as Daimler-Benz, Bosch or Porsche. As a photo journalist he has worked for magazines such as *Time*, *Vanity Fair*, *Zeit Magazin*, *Der Spiegel* and *Stern*. For the latter he regularly created independent photo spreads, which eventually led to extensive work on the subject of music and dance as part of his artistic photography, which often evolves around series pursued over long periods of time. Alongside this, Blum's subjects also often relate to national cultures, the erotic, politics and economics.

Amongst his series dedicated to natural cultures, Dieter Blum produced a group of works dedicated to Africa, for which he travelled the entire continent for several years from 1968, and which were published in an opulently illustrated photo book in 1976. The publication shortly afterwards led to him being invited as the first photographer ever to produce aerial photographs of Russia, which culminated in the publication of another photo book dedicated to that country with a print run of 100,000.

Further series of particular relevance, as they were taken within the art context, are: *A Part of Art* which he pursued from 1995 to 2015, and in which Blum portrayed renowned contemporary artists who he had surprised with a nude model at the appointment; *Pure Dance (Stuttgarter Ballett)* from 2004, for which he had followed the Stuttgart Ballet for a number of years, often photographing the dancers naked, captured in the very instant of breath-taking leaps and in sculptural bodily formations. Further dance series were dedicated to the dancers Ismael Ivo and Vladimir Malakhov, whom Blum followed for 18 years, resulting in another dedicated book to that dancer in 2009.

For *Stern* magazine he produced a portrait series on the musicians of the Berlin Philharmonic Orchestra under Herbert von Karajan, for whom he worked for over 25 years. A portrait of the orchestra in Tokyo saw him awarded the World Press Photo Award in 1982, whilst in 2015 he was recognized for his life's work with the Médaille de vermeil from the Société académique Arts-Sciences-Lettres in Paris, amongst other awards.

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## Weston Park and its tradition of horse-related art and of photography

At Weston Park, the former home of the Bridgemans, Earls of Bradford, Dieter Blum's *Cowboys* ties in with the historic link to horses and horse related art present in the house, whilst the Bridgeman family also has a connection to early photography. The 17th-century mansion set within a 1,000 acre landscape park designed in the 18th century by Capability Brown is now owned and preserved by the Weston Park Foundation. It is regarded as one of the most important country houses in Britain and still houses its important indigenous historic art collection.

Weston Park's collection includes a series of 18th- and 19th-century works by important British equestrian painters such as John Ferneley, Thomas Weaver, and John Boulton. Perhaps most notable is George Stubbs whose painting *Two Horses in a Landscape* was commissioned by Sir Henry Bridgeman, 5th Baronet and later 1<sup>st</sup> Baron Bradford (1725–1800). Orlando Bridgeman, 3rd Earl of Bradford (1819–1898), who was a politician and owner of thoroughbred race horses, is commemorated in the house in a painting by Charles Lutyens – father of the famous architect Sir Edwin Lutyens – showing the putting-to of a state landau in the Royal Mews at Buckingham Palace, which Lord Bradford would have known well in his role of the Master of The Horse to Queen Victoria, which he occupied from 1874–1880 and, again, from 1885–1886. His race horses, bred at a stud at Weston Park, are depicted in a series of paintings in the collection charting such victors of the turf as ›Retreat‹, a horse that won the Doncaster Cup, ›Chippendale‹, winner of the Hardwicke Stakes at Ascot, and ›Sir Hugo‹, champion of the 1892 Derby. The Weston Park stables still remain much as they were in the 3<sup>rd</sup> Earl's time and today proudly show a 19<sup>th</sup> century family coach that was coach-built by Thrupp & Maberly, a company that went on, in the age of the motor car, to coach build for Bentley and the British Daimler Motor Company, which built the Daimler Motor and commercialized it under licence in Great Britain and major parts of the Commonwealth countries.

Weston Park also played a role during the early days of photography, since the daughters of the 2nd Earl of Bradford, Lady Lucy and Lady Charlotte Bridgeman, took up calotype or wet-plate photography and pursued it as a pastime from 1855 until their untimely deaths three years later. They established a dark room in the grounds, in the cellar of the Temple of Diana, and produced photographs of the people and surroundings they frequented, often giving photographic albums as gifts to their friends. Today, their often candid images survive not only as part of the collections of Weston Park but also in the Victoria & Albert Museum, the Philadelphia Museum of Art and the collection of Princeton University, for example.

Weston Park hosts an annual curriculum-based series of school visits from within a forty mile radius, with up to 7,000 children visiting plus a stimulating family activity programme for summer visits. For this exhibition it is proposed to create a specific educational trail, which will seek to engage with and maximize the educational potential for learners of all ages.

The exhibition seeks to engage the viewer with the relationship between man and horse power, and with the artistic quality of the photographic medium and how it captures the relationship in movement.

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It also intends to challenge the health issues that the subsequent use of Blum's images in the Marlboro campaign now raise for contemporary twenty-first century society

### **Dieter Blum at Wolverhampton School of Art est. 1851**

During the time of the exhibition at Weston Park, Wolverhampton School of Art Est. 1851, part of Wolverhampton University, is hosting a parallel exhibition with selected dance photographs on loan by Dieter Blum, thanks to the collaboration of the School's Photography Department, thus enabling the public in the region to discover another facet of Blum's artistic work. Wolverhampton School of Art is one of the earliest art schools in England, founded in the year of the Great Exhibition 1851 with the aim of contributing to reforming art and design in Britain. The exhibition will open the Wolverhampton School of Art's annual Degree Show, showcasing the student's work to the wider public.

The School has exhibited over 8,000 students' work since opening its doors at the first degree show in 1969, and features some of the brightest new artists and designers in the country. This year, artwork from over 300 students across 16 BA (Hons) and BDes (Hons) courses will be on display, embracing the areas of Applied Arts, Digital Media, Fashion and Textiles, Fine Art, Graphic Communication, Illustration, Interior Design, Product Design and Photography.

Entry is free and open to everyone.

The department of Photography at the Wolverhampton School of Art, with extensive specialist facilities and an international reputation, is also hosting an artist's talk by Dieter Blum open to the general public and scheduled to take place on Tuesday, 26<sup>th</sup> of June, 2018.

### **The Daimler Art Collection**

The Art Collection started in 1977 with the acquisition of a painting by Willi Baumeister. The first phase of the Art Collection's history was essentially pictorial, and featured artists from South Germany, teachers and pupils from the Stuttgart Academy like Adolf Hölzel, Oskar Schlemmer, Willi Baumeister and the Swiss artists Hans Arp and Max Bill. What all these figures had in common was their artistically motivated interest in an interdisciplinary dialogue between fine art, functional product design, architecture and graphic design, in the Bauhaus tradition. The Daimler Art Collection is still committed to this kind of exploratory artistic thinking, a thinking that invariably speaks to people, to their imaginations and to their ability to innovate.

The Daimler Art Collection was able to develop a clear profile that has been built up steadily and systematically – since 2000 headed by Dr. Renate Wiehager – and a concentrated focus on content relating to abstract-constructive, conceptual and minimalist positions. The international public has followed further development attentively ever since the Collection opened its own gallery, Daimler Contemporary, at Haus Huth on Potsdamer Platz, Berlin. New acquisitions are presented in Berlin, but are also put on display internally in Stuttgart and Sindelfingen in temporary themed shows, where they appear in dialogue with classical holdings from the Collection and also with works from major private collections.

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Today, the Daimler Art Collection comprises about 3,000 works by 800 international artists. We see it as our duty to enlarge our collection, because only a lively collection that integrates and communicates the latest developments in art is perceived as an active agent in the promotion of culture. The purchasing of emerging art – especially art by artists from Europe, South Africa, India and South America or China – contributes to a conscientious policy of support, and is part of the company’s Corporate Social Responsibility. The integration of young art brings current trends in aesthetics, design, lifestyle, and the formation of values into the company as topics for discussion.

The Daimler Art Collection is engaged in an extensive exhibition programme both in Germany and internationally, of which the present exhibition on the work of Dieter Blum forms part. The UK has previously seen Andy Warhol’s *Cars* series from the Daimler Art Collection at the Milton Keynes Gallery in 2001 – the series resulted from a special commission by Mercedes-Benz from 1986.

Since 2003, a selection of 150 works from the Daimler Art Collection – by a wide range of artists including Josef Albers, Andy Warhol, Sylvie Fleury and Andrea Zittel – has been touring the globe, visiting various major international museums worldwide. The exhibitions, which are conceived individually for each exhibition venue, are thematic displays of painting, sculpture, photography and video art that cut across generations and classifications. The tour started in 2003 at the Museum für Neue Kunst | ZKM in Karlsruhe, going on to visit the Detroit Institute for Arts (2003/2004) and the main museums in Cape Town, Johannesburg and Pretoria (2004) as well as Tokyo (2006), the MASP São Paulo (2007), the Fundación Juan March Palma de Mallorca and Madrid / 2007/08) and also MALBA Buenos Aires and mumok Vienna (2010), the Mercedes-Benz Museum Stuttgart (2011) and Museo di Santa Giulia in Brescia (2013). An essential part of our world tour is an extensive education programme for learners and students at each venue.

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Website:

<http://www.weston-park.com/event/daimler-art-collection/>

General Enquiries: 01952 852 100

Group Visits: 01952 852 100 / [www.weston-park.com/groups/](http://www.weston-park.com/groups/)

Educational Visits: 01952 852 104 / [www.weston-park.com/visit-weston/education/](http://www.weston-park.com/visit-weston/education/)

Opening Times and Pricing: [www.weston-park.com/visit-weston/times-pricing](http://www.weston-park.com/visit-weston/times-pricing) (Admission to the Granary Art Gallery is free)

Link to the Daimler Art Collection homepage: <http://art.daimler.com/en/dieter-blum-2/>

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Website: <https://www.wlv.ac.uk/about-us/our-schools-and-institutes/faculty-of-arts/arts-outreach/wolverhampton-school-of-art-est-1851/>

General Enquiries and information for group visits: 01902 321 000 / [arts@wlv.ac.uk](mailto:arts@wlv.ac.uk)

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