

# AXEL PFENNIGSCHMIDT

Press release

## EXHIBITION • LOOK AT GUELIZ and ICH BIN WICHTIG (I AM IMPORTANT)

2 - 4 May 2014 | 10am - 7pm

Pförtnerloge | Potsdamer Straße 79 | 10785 Berlin



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As part of Berlin's Gallery Weekend, Axel Pfennigschmidt will be presenting his new series *Look at Gueliz*. This is augmented by an experiment in the form of a collage series titled *Ich bin wichtig (I am important)*. The Pförtnerloge in the former Tagesspiegel building is the ideal exhibition space for the small formats, as it offers both an intimate and at the same time everyday environment that is very well suited to the art works being shown.

### *Look at Gueliz*

These photographs of poster fragments originate from the Gueliz district of Marrakesh and are very much in the tradition of Pfennigschmidt's *2nd Glance* series. The various layers and the opportunity this offers the observer to make their own discoveries while looking at the photos form the conceptual core of the photographs both in terms of their content and with respect to formal aspects. Gueliz was the French colonial extension of Marrakesh at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century and in today's up-and-coming Morocco the district is subject to enormous pressure to change after 100 years of existence. Historical motifs on a construction fence for a new city quarter position themselves in front of everyday perspectives and create images out of light, shade and structures which are reminiscent of collages, although they are photographed. None of Axel Pfennigschmidt's motifs has been digitally edited, and they are reproduced exactly the way he found them on site. The interlinked layers of meaning transform while looking at the photographs with every new detail discovered there.

### *Ich bin wichtig (I am important)*

In contrast to his usual work, in this exhibition, Axel Pfennigschmidt has composed the collages in the *Ich bin wichtig* series in layers he has actually arranged himself. Old book covers and headlines from recent newspapers have been newly arranged with other picture elements. Pfennigschmidt responds in an amusing way to sensationalist journalism, in which assertions, purported true stories and confessions are seen by media makers as a legitimate means to gain attention and increase circulation. In a reconciliatory tone, he says: "Using fitting visual ideas and with book covers as an adhesive substrate, the over-the-top headlines soon become tolerable contemporaries."

After completing his degree at Berlin's University of the Arts, *Axel Pfennigschmidt* worked for many years at various well-known communications agencies in Hamburg, Frankfurt, New York and London. He has now been working in Berlin for some years and his photographs and collages take a closer look at visual and verbal messages in public spaces – both the simple and the more complex.

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