

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Dutch photographer Koen Wessing's images of the 1973 Chilean coup exhibited in Chile for the first time

Koen Wessing: The Indelible Image is a multi-platform project that shows Koen Wessing's coverage of the 1973 military coup in Chile and more of his Latin American work from the 1970s for the first time in Chile. The project is a collaboration between Dutch photographer Koen Wessing, filmmaker Kees Hin and curator/designer Jeroen de Vries. The exhibition is produced by Paradox for the Centro Cultural Gabriela Mistral (GAM) in Santiago de Chile.

The project includes an exhibition at the GAM from March 8 to April 30, 2011, and the donation of selected prints of Wessing's photographs from 1973 to the Museo De La Memoria. Additionally, the work will be incorporated into the Chilean National Photographic Archive for Cultural Heritage (Centro Nacional del Patrimonio Fotográfico) for scientific and educational purposes.

Koen Wessing and Chile

Koen Wessing, a legend in the history of Dutch documentary, was one of the few photographers who documented the 1973 military coup in Chile against Salvador Allende's progressive government. These images, just like his reportages of the insurrection in Nicaragua and the massacre during the funeral of Archbishop Romero in El Salvador, established him as an internationally renowned photographer. The Chilean images were published in his famous photo book *Chili, September 1973*, but they have never before been shown in Chile as a result of the repression following the coup.

As an outsider and socially engaged photographer, Wessing provides a view of these events unrivalled by any photo documentation currently available in Chile. Wessing, who had been seriously ill during the last few years, increasingly felt the responsibility to show his 1973 work in Chile. Curator/designer and personal friend Jeroen de Vries, Paradox (producers of documentary projects) and Hollandse Hoogte (agency) have made Wessing's wish come true. Recent developments, such as the first ever inquiry into the death of socialist president Salvador Allende, make exhibiting his work to the Chilean public seem all the more relevant. And they once again remind us how deeply embedded in Chile's collective memory, yet unclear and mystified these events and their consequences still are.

The exhibition:

Koen Wessing: The Indelible Image comprises an immersive photographic installation of three major parts. The first part of the exhibition brings together a collection of selected works from Wessing's Latin America portfolio. The second part is an audiovisual three-screen projection showing the events surrounding the military coup. This projection is accompanied by a filmed conversation between Wessing and filmmaker Kees Hin. This interview is one of the rare occasions that Wessing actually talks about his work. Finally, an online catalogue will make all elements of the exhibition accessible globally and for years to come.

Koen Wessing (1942-2011)

Regrettably, Koen Wessing will never get to see the finished exhibition as he passed away in Amsterdam in the morning of February 2, 2011. Until the last moment he had been involved in the preparation of the exhibition. Knowing that the show was going to happen gave him a lot of strength during the last period of his life.

About the locations:

The GAM (Centro Cultural Gabriela Mistral) was a cultural centre during the Allende administration that was occupied by the troops after the military coup and was used as the headquarters for the military regime. In September 2010 the cultural centre was reopened. www.gam.cl

The Museo de la Memoria, which opened its doors in 2009, was built to commemorate and reflect on the 1973 coup, and the subsequent period of dictatorship and repression.
www.museodelamemoria.cl

Publication:

To mark the exhibition in Santiago de Chile, publishing house LOM Ediciones (www.lom.cl) has agreed to publish a photo book, due out in April 2011. The book will be titled *Koen Wessing: The Art of The Question Made Visible*.

Credits:

Photography: Koen Wessing / Curator and Exhibition Design: Jeroen de Vries / Curatorial Assistance: Frank Ortmanns (Paradox) / Production: Frank Ortmanns, GAM / Sound: Wart Wamsteker, / Montage: Frank Ortmanns, Thomas Vroege, Susanne Schanz / Film Production and Interview: Kees Hin, Jeroen de Vries / Translation: Erik Pezarro

Support and funding:

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