

PRESS RELEASE

Berlin, Dec 16, 2025

DÖRTE EISSFELDT

Archipelago

C/O Berlin is pleased to present the exhibition **Dörte Eißfeldt . Archipelago** from **Feb 7 to Jun 10, 2026**. The **opening** takes place on Friday, **Feb 6, 2026** at **20:00** at C/O Berlin in Amerika Haus.

“Photographs are like whales that are capable of carrying entire islands,” writes photographer Dörte Eißfeldt (b. 1950), exploring the world around us, and the medium itself, with a gaze that is at once tender, poetic, and ever curious. One of Germany’s most important experimental photographers, the artist has produced over nearly five decades a multivalent body of work open to constant reinterpretation. With *Archipelago*, she creates a space for these island groups of meaning, memory, analogy, and fleeting impressions.

Nothing in Eißfeldt’s photographs is as it seems. She works with fragments of reality rather than simply depicting it. Photography, in her work, becomes synonymous with transformation. A snowball melts in one image, in another it seems to turn rock-like and celestial. A knife blade appears as a megalith. Surfaces shift in texture, skin turns metallic, then fragile and porous. Through these perceptual displacements, the artist explores our surrounding world, human bodies, and the medium itself, drawing on visual traditions from film, painting, and literature.

Eißfeldt makes use of unconventional methods for developing images, such as experimenting with inverting positives and negatives, as well as multiple exposures and solarization. Her works are typically montages and hybrid series which interweave analog and digital processes. Moreover, she uses unusual supports such as glass, meaning almost all her works are one of a kind, even when they form part of a series.

The artist constantly questions the nature of photography and pushes its boundaries. Seeing becomes an act of recognition, challenging the limits of perception. For Eißfeldt, each image has a body, a material support, and an individual “life” that is defined through paper, chemical processes, and the traces of its creation and its dissemination. Often, she rediscovers her archival works and incorporates them into new projects, creating new relationships in which the older works can be kept alive and which permit them to change over time.

Dörte Eißfeldt studied art at HFBK Hamburg in the early 1970s, with an initial focus on painting and film. She went on to develop an expansive, experimental photographic practice in deep dialogue with the medium over subsequent decades. With its process-oriented and playful approach, Eißfeldt’s practice can be seen as a precursor to the recent shift in the arts toward artistic research. As a long-standing professor at HBK Braunschweig, she has been a key influence on a new generation of artists for more than two decades.

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With *Dörte Eißfeldt . Archipelago*, C/O Berlin presents a long-awaited major institutional exhibition by the artist, who was recently honored with the Prix Viviane Esders. It includes works spanning almost five decades, including never-before-seen early pieces from the 1980s and 90s, key works from her personal archive, large-format series, as well as unpublished sketches, artist books, and notebooks. Curated by Boaz Levin.

Dörte Eißfeldt (b. 1950) lives in Neuenkirchen and Hamburg. Her work is held in many institutional collections including Museum Folkwang, Essen; Sprengel Museum, Hanover; DZ Bank Kunstsammlung, Frankfurt; Staatsgalerie Stuttgart; Museum für Kunst und Gewerbe, Hamburg; Fotohof, Salzburg; Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris; Musée d'Art Moderne, Paris; Musée de la Photographie Européenne, Paris; Museum of Modern Art, New York; and Kolumba, Cologne. *Stehen Liegen Hängen* published by Distanz Verlag in 2024, gathers her work alongside essays by Rebecca Wilton and Steffen Siegel. Dörte Eißfeldt received the Prix Viviane Esders in November 2025.

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Exhibition

Feb 7 – Jun 10, 2026

Press Tour

Feb 6, 2026 . 11:00

Opening

Feb 6, 2026 . 20:00

Artist Tour

Feb 21, 2026 . 18:00

Opening Hours

Daily . 11:00–20:00

Admission

12/6 euro

Organizer

C/O Berlin Foundation

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