

## The MIES Project. Architectural Portraits Arina Dähnck

Joint exhibition at the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion and CaixaForum  
From 6 May to 6 de June 2021  
In the framework of Barcelona Architecture Week



Press kit:

[mies.link/TheMiesProject\\_PressKit](https://mies.link/TheMiesProject_PressKit)

Barcelona, May 2021.-

Fundació Mies van der Rohe and CaixaForum present “The MIES Project. Architectural Portraits”, a photographic Mies van der Rohe Pavilion and CaixaForum. The opening took place on Thursday 6 May at 18h with a conversation between the artist and Michelangelo Sabatino which marked the start of the programme of activities proposed by the entity for **Barcelona Architecture Week**.

This is the first time that photographer Arina Dähnck presents her work in Barcelona and she will do it simultaneously in two emblematic, neighbouring spaces: the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion and CaixaForum Barcelona.

Her delicate photographs portray the details of Mies van der Rohe’s works in different lighting and weather conditions that interact with the buildings and become **architectural portraits**.

Urban life and urbanity, the contrasts between indoors and outdoors, the lack of definition and focus, reflections and mirror images, the play with the viewer’s perception: these are the pictorial topics of the photographer. Arina Dähnck discovered Ludwig Mies van der Rohe’s architecture in 2012, when, after an electric storm, she perceived Neue Nationalgalerie as a fascinating and paradoxical spatial experience of unlimited immensity, and a simultaneous feeling of being retained. Since then, she photographed the building under different

conditions until its closing in 2015. The photographer **followed Mies van der Rohe's steps** from Berlin to Brno, from Chicago to New York and captured his most famous buildings, including the Mies van der Rohe Pavillion, Villa Tugendhat, the Seagram Building and the Lake Shore Drive Apartments, in some impressive series of photos that convey her creative inspiration and the spatial experience of architecture itself.

This photographic project, previously presented at the **IIT College of Architecture** in Chicago, the **Farnsworth House** in Plano and **Villa Tugendhat** in Brno, arrives now in Barcelona to interact with the city's visitors.

*"Certainly, these images are not just formal architectural photography, they represent a different way of seeing and reveal a poetic quality in Mies's work that has so far largely been undiscovered. Dähnlick works without a tripod, and while these images are not staged, they are nevertheless composed by a very discerning eye that often captures a moment that is not repeatable."*

**Dirk Lohan**, architect, Chicago

*"The MIES Project reveal how, contrary to what advocates of postmodernism have claimed, Mies's buildings engaged with their surrounding context. Thus, with their reflections and shadows, Arina Dähnlick's architectural portraits add yet another layer of understanding to the complex legacy of Ludwig Mies van der Rohe."*

**Michelangelo Sabatino**, architect, preservationist and architecture-art-design historian, Chicago

The presentation of the photographs is complemented by the **publication** Arina Dähnlick – Architectural Portraits. The MIES Project.

Inventory of the presented work (appendix)

**11 photos at CaixaForum:**

2 images Mies van der Rohe Pavilion, 1 Seagram Building, 1 IBM Building, 1 Farnsworth House, 2 Federal Centre, 1 S. R. Crown Hall, 1 Lake Shore Drive Apartments, 2 images 900-910 esplanade.

Photographs taken in the years 2017-2019

**12 photos at Pavilion:**

3 images Neue Nationalgalerie, 2 images Pavilion Mies van der Rohe, 2 Seagram Building, 2 Tugendhat House, 2 Farnsworth House, 1 Lemke House.

Photographs taken in the years 2013-2019

### **About Arina Dähnck**

Arina Dähnck, an active photographer in the fields of fine arts and architecture lives and works in Berlin. Having grown up in a creative family, she came into contact with art and photography at a very young age.

She had her first professional photographic exhibition when she was 17 years old. When, in 1986, Arina Dähnck decided not to make a living of her art, it led to a long pause in her production. The presentation of her work at the Leica Camera Blog 2014 was followed by countless exhibitions, as well as publications in newspapers and magazines. She made a name for herself both in Germany and abroad and gained a firm position on the international photographic scene with her series Perfect Life, Contemporary Architecture Barcelona and The MIES Project.

When she visits the world's metropolises, she always has a legendary Leica M camera (an unusual option for architectural photography). Thus, the artist follows her photographic intuition, selects the angle and distance, the mood that different moments of the day and different seasons bring, sets the aperture, the exposure and the focus manually. She does not add anything to the result and constantly renounces any post-processing that might manipulate the images.

The key topics that Arina Dähnck approaches in her images are the life and urbanity of the city, the reflection and experience of space, the diametrical opposites of indoors and outdoors, of blurring and sharp clarity. Her extraordinary photographic eye penetrates the exterior façades in search of the poetic qualities and mysteries of urban space. With her camera she captures the soul of architecture, using colour and lines to create an intimate sensory experience of the spacial environment. The intertwined layers of images initiate a multifaceted play with reality and generate a perspective that is halfway between external reality and an imaginary inner eye.

### **About the artistic interventions program at Mies van der Rohe Pavilion**

Interventions by plastic artists devised for the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion normally take the form of installations or small-scale, short-term exhibitions.

This programming of the Pavilion's exceptional spaces brings a unique type of activity to the city. The installations are a way of maintaining an active dialogue and giving sense to the Pavilion's continuing topicality. A periodicity of 1-2 projects per year is planned, ensuring a proper balance between artistic and architectural contributions.

### **About the Pavilion**

The Barcelona German Pavilion was designed by Lilly Reich and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe as the German national pavilion for the 1929 Barcelona International Exhibition that was held in Montjuïc. This symbolic piece of work of the Modern Movement has been exhaustively studied and interpreted, while inspiring the work of several generations of architects. Built from glass, steel and different kinds of marble, the Pavilion was conceived to accommodate the official reception presided over by King Alfonso XIII of Spain along with the German authorities.

After the closure of the Exhibition, the Pavilion was disassembled in 1930. As time went by, it became a key point of reference not only in Mies van der Rohe's own career but also in twentieth-century architecture as a whole. Given the significance and reputation of the Pavilion, thoughts turned towards its possible reconstruction.

In 1980, Oriol Bohigas promoted this initiative from the Urban Planning Delegation of the Barcelona City Council, and architects Ignasi de Solà-Morales, Cristian Cirici and Fernando Ramos were the ones appointed to the research, design and direction of the reconstruction of the Pavilion. Works began in 1983 and the new Building was inaugurated in 1986 on its original site.

**Fundació Mies van der Rohe** was created in 1983 by Barcelona's City Council with the initial aim of carrying out the reconstruction of the German Pavilion. In addition to preserving and disseminating knowledge about the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion, the Fundació promotes debate and awareness on contemporary architecture and urban Planning issues.

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**OPENING CONFERENCE:**

06.05.2021, 18:00 CEST at the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion.

Activity programmed in the framework of the Barcelona Architecture Week 2021.

→ Watch the presentation [here](#)

**OPENING HOURS AND VISITS:**

Dates: Del 06.05.2021 al 06.06.2021

Place: Mies van der Rohe Pavilion (Av. Francesc Ferrer i Guàrdia, 7 Barcelona)

Opening hours: Monday through Sunday 10h-20h

**INTERVENTION DISCOUNT:**

50% discount at CaixaForum Barcelona by showing the ticket to the Mies van der Rohe Pavilion and viceversa.

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