



Fotografiska
Berlin

Benita Suchodrev: Le bal infernal 2008–2024 *Emerging Berlin*

Press Preview: 10 Oct 2024, 18:00
Runtime: 11 Oct 2024 – 26 Jan 2025

In the labyrinth of Berlin club culture, labels and limitations disappear. For over 30 years, this city has been a refuge for those seeking freedom and reinvention. The club scene is more than just an escape; it's a gateway to a new reality where you can define yourself on your terms. Whether you come to dance, to connect, or simply to be, you'll find a community that welcomes every part of who you are. Here, the dance floor is a sanctuary of possibility, where freedom is not just an idea but something you can feel.

When Benita Suchodrev moved to Berlin in 2008, she was immediately drawn to the city's vibrant nightlife and to the rich variety of social groups within that milieu. It was here that she began documenting the unique energy of the city's nightlife through her lens.

"My life in Berlin is inseparable from this body of work. I discovered the city in the process of taking these photographs," says Suchodrev. Her long-term study has evolved over time, capturing the essence of a city that never sleeps. On 10 October 2024, the exhibition *Le bal infernal* will open at Fotografiska Berlin, including works from Suchodrev's archives, as well as new works being shown for the first time.

Suchodrev shoots intuitively, often capturing moments from the hip to avoid altering the natural flow of events by pointing her camera too deliberately. In situations where permission to be photographed is required, she relies on a personal approach to gain the trust of her subjects.

"To really enjoy a party, I need my camera. I get a rush when I photograph people being authentic and having a good time," she explains. For Suchodrev, each subject has a story, and her photos reflect the hidden narratives behind every fleeting expression or glance. Each shot offers the chance to imagine the untold stories behind the faces.



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“Like a dream, there’s a certain madness and magic to it all: the neurotic flicker of neon lights, the dissolution of the self in a trance to a sinister beat or acting out bliss with a stranger on a shabby couch in a smoke-filled room. Beneath the party facade, these moments speak to a deeper part of the human condition: the endless longing to feel physically and spiritually free.” – Benita Suchodrev

Berlin's nightlife, with its ever-evolving club culture, mirrors the city's constant transformation. It thrives in the in-between spaces – places that offer freedom by escaping the established order outside their walls. Whether it's the choice to hide behind a mask or strip away all pretense, break social barriers, or embrace hedonism, Suchodrev's long-term study *Le bal infernal* captures the fleeting moments and unique characters that define the soul of Berlin. These spaces, however, are not to be taken for granted. Her images remind us of the importance of preserving such environments of freedom and expression, which allow us to briefly escape the outside world and emerge stronger for it.

“I can't think of a better place to showcase this work than Fotografiska,” says Suchodrev, *“because it represents Berlin's past, present, and future.”*

The exhibition is part of our Emerging Berlin talent program, supporting photographers at the early stages of their careers.

BENITA SUCHODREV

Benita Suchodrev was born in the former USSR and immigrated to the United States where she received her Bachelor's degree in Liberal Arts with a focus on Art History from SUNY Purchase, New York, before continuing to a Master of Arts in English Literature and graduating with high honors. Suchodrev relocated to Berlin in 2008 and began an extensive documentation of the cosmopolitan city's multifaceted art scene while working on diverse photographic projects.

She became known with the series *48 Hours Blackpool*, a sociocultural study rich in authenticity and poetry, set in the eponymous coastal town.

Her photographs have been published in the books *Of Lions and Lambs* (Kehrer 2019), *48 Hours Blackpool* (Kehrer 2018), *Nachtleben Berlin: 1974 bis heute* (Metrolit 2013) and *Berlin Now* (teNeues 2009). Her awarded portrait and documentary works have been exhibited in solo and group shows nationally and internationally and are part of stately and private collections. Suchodrev is also a member of the photographer's agency FOCUS. She lives and works in Berlin.

CREDITS

The exhibition is curated by Marina Paulenka (Director of Exhibitions) and Marie-Luise Mayer (Exhibitions Associate and Project Lead for Emerging Berlin). This exhibition is in partnership with photography print partner [WhiteWall](#).



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PRESS PREVIEW

On Thursday, 10 October 2024, at 18:00, we will open the exhibitions *Benita Suchodrev: Le bal infernal* and *Marco Brambilla: Double Feature* to the press. You are invited to join a press tour with the artists. Following the tour, opening speeches will take place in the Ballroom at 19:30, followed by an artist talk with Marco Brambilla.

Please RSVP to immanuel.ayx@fotografiska.com.

ABOUT EMERGING BERLIN

Berlin is a city full of stories, history and change. To empower the local artist community and discover new sides of Berlin, Fotografiska have launched a talent program – Emerging Berlin – where photographers at the early stage of their career are given the space to exhibit. Selected through an open call for proposals, the program will exhibit six artists per year in Fotografiska Berlin's graffiti hall. The exhibiting artists receive a solo exhibition, mentorship, press and media opportunities, and direct professional exchange with experts from the field. The program will also include workshops and portfolio reviews open to the public, to continue to support local talent. Emerging Berlin is a program devoted to researching, supporting and showcasing new voices from Berlin.

ABOUT FOTOGRAFISKA

Fotografiska is the contemporary museum of photography, art and culture. With locations in Stockholm, Berlin, New York, Tallinn and Shanghai, Fotografiska exhibits world renowned artists as well as local, emerging talent. Exhibitions change almost every month to continuously inspire new perspectives. From its restaurant and bars to its parties and talks, the museum offers a social and cultural experience – open late every day, from 10:00 to 23:00.

Fotografiska Berlin

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PRESS

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