

# Hefei Rhythm

JOSEF SCHULZ

March 7 – April 11, 2026

Opening: Friday, March 6 / 6 pm

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Josef Schulz's *Hefei Rhythm* opens a view onto the choreographed movement of a city. Over the course of 7:42 minutes, a black-and-white sequence unfolds across three channels aligned with three lines of sight—straight ahead, to the right, and to the left. The work centers on a pedestrian roundabout above a multi-lane highway interchange in the Chinese metropolis of Hefei, a city that exemplifies a highly condensed, infrastructure-driven urban environment in which human movement, traffic, and architecture unfold in complex and often contradictory rhythms.

Images change every two seconds: figures, buildings, and trees dissolve, only to reassemble in the next moment. Reinforced by a sound composition by the artist Frauke Berg, the rhythm draws attention to the construction of movement itself. Rather than emerging from continuous film footage, the sense of motion arises through the succession of individual photographs—287 per channel—taken during one of Schulz's trips to China. The urban space of Hefei was fragmented in postproduction, structured into a rhythm, reassembled. Visible breaks between photographs are deliberate and precisely calibrated, making it clear that what we see is an animation.

Entering into dialogue with *Hefei Rhythm* are works from the series *Terra Incognita*, the latter drawing on nineteenth-century illustrations from publications such as *Brehms Tierleben* (Brehm's Animal Life) and the *Illustrated London News*, which presented distant worlds in dramatic and idealized terms. Schulz digitizes and enlarges these prints, foregrounding their graphic structure while altering their composition and scale. While Hefei represents a contemporary form of urban infrastructure, the Great Wall of China in *Terra Incognita #22 #d7111f* appears as a historical instrument of control: one that halts, channels, and organizes movement territorially. The works address infrastructure not only as built form but also as a system that shapes perception, revealing that space is never neutral but structured by regimes of order, boundaries, movement, and vision.

Katrin Rollmann