Candida Höfer was born 1944 in Eberswalde, Germany. She studied at the 1973-76 Kunstakademie, Düsseldorf, from 1973 to 1976. During her last year, she applied to the photography class of Bernd Becher with a series of photographs, begun in 1972, of Turkish workers in Germany. From 1976 to 1982, she worked closely with Bernd and Hilla Becher.

During the 1980s Höfer moved from photographic series dealing with people to photographs of interior sites, unpopulated and often grandly scaled interior architecture of public spaces: libraries, lobbies, train stations, banks, and museums.

Höfer has been featured in exhibitions at the Irish Museum of Modern Art, Dublin; Institute of Contemporary Art, Philadelphia; Kestnergesellschaft, Hannover, Germany; Venice Biennale, 2003; and many other public institutions and commercial galleries. In addition to MIT, her work is in the collections of the Bibliothèque Nationale de France, Paris; Centre Pompidou, Paris; Deutsche Nationalbibliothek, Frankfurt am Main, Germany; Kunsthalle Basel, Switzerland; Kunsthalle Hamburg, Germany; Kunsthalle Bregenz, Austria; Museum of Modern Art, New York; San Francisco Museum of Modern Art; and St. Louis Art Museum.

Candida Höfer currently lives and works in Cologne.