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Opening: 9. 3. 2007

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Artists:

Marika Asatiani (Georgia), Christoph Grill (A), Sylvia Henrich (D), Karina Nimmerfall (A), SofijaSilvia (Croatia), Verena Winkelmann (Norway), Andrea Witzmann (A)

Marika Asatiani



Marika Asatiani, from: Achara o.T. / Achara Untitled, 2006.
© the Artist / Courtesy: Camera Austria, Graz.



Marika Asatiani, from: Achara o.T. / Achara Untitled, 2006.
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Rural scenes photographed in the Zemo Achara region, close to the Turkish border in Georgia, describe almost archetypal types of construction and life-styles, that Marika Asatiani has explored in her "Achara Untitled" project. "The region was a highly guarded and closed off territory during the Soviet times, due to its proximity with Turkey. Partly, because of this, some of the villages preserved their unique character. The population there is mainly Muslim (since for 300 years it used to be under control of the Ottoman Empire). I was interested in exploring a concept of 'place' in the aesthetic, societal, economic, political sphere, in looking at the relationship between people, at the houses they live in, the clothes they wear. During my time there, the mist accompanied me, wherever I went, coming and going in tides, thus showing off bits and pieces of places, and never the entire place, thus making surroundings look even more mysterious and poetic. And this explains, why some of my photos look a bit fictional, besides being a documentation."

Christoph Grill



Christoph Grill, November 2005, Aktau, Kasachstan.
© the Artist / Courtesy: Camera Austria, Graz.



Christoph Grill, November 2005, Kyzyl-Orda, Kasachstan.
© the Artist / Courtesy: Camera Austria, Graz.

Landscapes and urban views created en route to the Aral Sea in Kazakhstan reveal traces of political upheavals and their economic and ecological effects, that Christoph Grill documents in his travelogues. For more than ten years, he has been concentrating his photographic work on a single project: describing the path to independence of the fifteen successor states of the USSR. One key concern of his work is to document the people's everyday life, their daily struggle for survival, in these years of deep-rooted change and reorientation. With these personal travelogues – texts and photographs – Christoph Grill tells of the politically conditioned change of the new states – focusing on Kazakhstan for the exhibition – among other things, in order to show that the states not only underwent renewal but also had to accept standstill and regression in the postsocialist era.

Sylvia Henrich



Sylvia Henrich, Wasserfall / täglich 12-13 Uhr und 16-17 Uhr (I,II,III), 2000. © the Artist / Courtesy: Camera Austria, Graz.

An artificial waterfall in Umbria, the theme of countless meanwhile historical, primarily romantic-idyllic landscape pictures, gives Sylvia Henrich occasion for a project on the relationship of nature as an artificial creation, ideal projection surface, but also energy resource. Her multi-part work done in 2000, "Wasserfall / täglich 12–13 Uhr und 16–17 Uhr" (Waterfall / daily 12am–1pm and 4–5pm), not only presents three photographs of the same waterfall but also a poster indicating the exact times at which visitors can expect to see the "natural spectacle". For today, the waterfall itself is used exclusively to generate power, flowing at different speeds due to the varying levels of damming. Thus, Sylvia Henrich not only presents nature as a construct overwritten not least with economic interests, what is more she explains that, as observers, we still pursue the idea of ideal nature beyond our awareness of economic processes and ecological change.

Karina Nimmerfall



Karina Nimmerfall, from: Cinematic Maps, 2004-2006. © the Artist / Courtesy: Camera Austria, Graz.

Karina Nimmerfall visited supposed crime scenes that play a rôle in the popular American television series "Law and Order". In "Cinematic Maps", she contrasts the real places with her fictitious allocations. At first glance, this work, done between 2004 and 2006, seems to refer to the aesthetic strategies of 1960s' concept art. However, Karina Nimmerfall works against this documentary aesthetic and claim to objectivity: While she does appropriate its style and systematic method, the stories behind the images must throw the purported objectivity into doubt – the "Cinematic Maps" allude to the modes of representing space and its allocation in US film and television production. The result is an apparent realism, that is further augmented by displaying supposedly accurate addresses to indicate the location of the film plot.

SofijaSilvia



SofijaSilvia, from: boxed, 2000 - 2006. (Diptychon / diptych). © the Artist / Courtesy: Camera Austria, Graz.

The method employed by SofijaSilvia could be described as a meandering movement through space: The photographer as an unnoticed observer, who doesn't disturb the place she traverses in any way, occupying it only for a short time, and in whose field of vision everything visible enters into a temporary relationship.

"In the calculating world of spectacle – and we may refer to the world in which we live as such with little hesitation – SofijaSilvia's photographs appear at first glance to add nothing new. The scenes appear familiar, as if we had already seen or at least noticed them somewhere (...). The dimension of space that the artist shows is determined by an emptiness that is hard to grasp, this being (...) scenes in which the concepts of place and duration lose their conventional meaning."
(Sandra Krizic Roban)

Verena Winkelmann



Verena Winkelmann, from: Skien, 2003.
© the Artist / Courtesy: Camera Austria, Graz.



Verena Winkelmann, from: Skien, 2003.
© the Artist / Courtesy: Camera Austria, Graz.

Verena Winkelmann photographed residential houses in a garden city and their inhabitants: To the artist, the Norwegian city of Skien appeared to be the classic example of a small town in which the ruptures in the ostensibly stable, orderly habits in the modern welfare state soon become visible. A dormitory town by day, Skien only comes to life in the afternoon when the adults return home from work and the children come home from school. Verena Winkelmann chose this late hour to spotlight life in this small-town structure. What she encounters there, however, is not the images of social decline, as you might expect in big-city suburbia, or images that do not match the clean façades found here, but rather images of order, of tedium, that is to say, of ordered life: Skien is mediocre, average, and, as such, absolutely representative.

Andrea Witzmann



Andrea Witzmann, Compilation 5, 2004.
© the Artist / Courtesy: Camera Austria, Graz.



Andrea Witzmann, Compilation 6, 2004.
© the Artist / Courtesy: Camera Austria, Graz.

Andrea Witzmann presents living space as a variable construction kit with her "Compilation" works done at her Paris studio in 2004: What she creates here are situations in which she uses the existing furnishings to build spatial units in different model experiments. These photographs are accompanied by four works of recent date, "Wo die Piraten warten" (Where the pirates wait), that deal with the transient experience of space by capturing the moment of the New Year's fireworks over Berlin, along with a direct transmission for the duration of the exhibition showing the living situation of the artist's pair of guinea-pigs, for which she is constantly building a new world for them to live in. This image constellation shows that formulating exact interfaces in the timespace continuum is the starting point for analyses in Witzmann's photographic practice. Here, space acts as a transitory category, it can be filled with identities and designations, its complex construction is owed to the exact investigation of temporality. This documentation of temporary states suggests new possibilities of perception within which an interior view permits unforeseen changes of perspectives.