

TRAVEL/REISEN

Ausstellung vom 23.02 bis 15. 03.2013 im artfoyer Cavigelli, Zürich

KünstlerInnen: Nadja Athanasiou, Irina Birger, Andrea Gohl, Daniel Fernández Pascual, Delia Popa, Anka Schmid, Anca Sinpalean
Kuratiert von Anca Sinpalean

Eröffnung: 22. Februar 2013 ab 19 Uhr

Rahmenprogramm: Screening von *Magic Matterhorn* (1995) von Anka Schmid, 1. März, um 19 Uhr

Concept

"Being on the way" has become a way of living for many contemporary artists. Traveling between exhibitions, projects and residencies has influenced the methods and outcome of their work. The exhibition presents some of the forms and functions of artists' travels today, while taking us on a virtual tour of the Swiss Alps, the American Disneyland, the Spanish Coast, the parks and markets of China or of Venice during the Carnival.

The exhibited works are results of architectural surveys, ironic comparisons of cultural stereotypes or of activism. They show the limitations of understanding other cultures while traveling or the illusory search for "home"; some challenge the conventions of touristic imagery by undermining them and by focusing on the banal or the ugly; some explore the political implications of a changing touristic landscape, like the Spanish Coast.

In addition, on the 1st of March at 7pm artfoyer will show the film *Magic Matterhorn* (1995) by Swiss director Anka Schmid. The film is a playful search for today's sentiments of home and takes us through real and imaginary worlds, from the Swiss Alps to the Disneyland in the United States. The film confronts specific conditions of life with clichés and takes a delight in kitsch. The Matterhorn traveling around the world is a symbol for a Swiss person traveling around the world.

Travel, with all its forms, from strolling to immigration, used to hold the promise of the unexpected and the new. But for us, there are no dragons left on the edges of maps. Can artists still transform themselves into cartographers and map the world in new ways?

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Nadja Athanasiou

MENU, installation with book (24 x 28 x 4 cm), ongoing project

"I feel truly happy when I travel. As a stranger I feel most like myself." Travel is for Nadja Athanasiou like food for her eye, an opportunity to understand herself and the world. *MENU* is a collection of visual fragments gathered by Nadja Athanasiou across decades, and used as inspiration for her work. In her very personal 'book of ideas', exhibited for the first time, the images are never documentary, they are metaphorical, they tell a story or convey a state of mind. The photographs are often accompanied by handwritten notes, making the creative process transparent. They often talk about the fragility of the traveller - being lonely in a hotel room, then feeling happy, alert and alive. Travel is for the artist an existential act of collecting nourishment for the eye, to be prepared and savored at later times.



Irina Birger

Masters of Time, 2012, HDV, 28:12 min

Masters of Time (2012) is the title of Irina Birger's video about her journey to China. "I am living the life I always wanted – I am not happy," she said. So she was trying to escape from Europe – pretending it was dead. Irina Birger traveled through Shanghai, Hong Kong, Beijing, Xiamen, trying to relate to this totally new civilization. Through its strangeness and distance, the film reveals the impossibility to connect to people and environments that are culturally so different than one's own.



Andrea Gohl

Urban Walks, 4:52 min (loop), 2007 - present

In 2007 Andrea Gohl started to take photographs during her urban walks in cities like London, New York, Paris, Rome and Sofia/Plovdiv. The images are unspectacular, unpopulated, often taken in deserted city corners, the places' architecture and atmosphere being their main subject. In these urban walks, architecture is perceived in its materiality and universality: walls, bricks, windows, where human presence left only few, unperceivable traces.



Daniel Fernández Pascual

Democratic Transaction : Marketing The Spanish Coast 1975-2012, window installation with 14 postcards

This postcard collection, part of an ongoing research project, illustrates the urban development of the Spanish coast during the country's transition to democracy. It contains postcards from the 60s and 70s showing crowded beaches with holidaymakers and corresponding pictures bought in the same places in 2012, in the time of crisis following the real estate boom. Even if speculative urbanization has become worse, overcrowded beaches are marketed today as empty paradises.

Displaced Soils & The Pseudo-Science Of The Scientific, 31 soil samples (sand, earth, salt, seawater), plastic bags

Speculative development and destruction of the land are further reflected in his other installation *Displaced Soils & The Pseudo-Science Of The Scientific*. This collection of soil samples is part of an on-going archive of contested sites along the Spanish coast: soils that are physically solid and legally liquid. They are arranged in a line on the gallery's floor, so that visitors stepping on them will accidentally displace them. At a microscopic level, geological composition and salinity of the soil become utterly political.



Delia Popa

I am Gustav von Aschenbach or How to Live Your Eternity in Venice, Venice, 2010.

Documentation of the project with album (30 x 30 cm), publication (15 x 21 cm) and photograph (30 x 40 cm)

Delia Popa is showing a documentation of her 2010 project *I am Gustav von Aschenbach or How to Live Your Eternity in Venice* at the Romanian Cultural Institute in Venice, during the Venetian Carnival. The project consisted of performances, actions, interviews with the tourists and a studio reconstruction in the gallery. It questioned whether we become different persons in different places, whether our identity shifts along with the location, or if we can still have a fresh look at a much mediated city and have an authentic experience of it. At the same time, the project aimed to question the conditions under which artists are working at present, influenced by the extreme mobility of cultural projects.



Anka Schmid

Mountain - Travelling and Static, 3D model (6 x 11.6 x 5.5 cm)/ Video: 2 min (loop), color, sound, 2013

(extract of the documentary *Magic Matterhorn* by Anka Schmid, collages in collaboration with Martin Schwarz)

Swiss director Anka Schmid is presenting an installation entitled *Mountain: Travelling and Static* (2013). It consists of a 3D model of the Matterhorn and a video containing extracts of her *Magic Matterhorn* documentary, combined with collages made in collaboration with Martin Schwarz. The video depicts the famous mountain "travelling" to iconic locations around the world. On a second level, the installation is announcing the screening of the documentary *Magic Matterhorn* (1995), on the 1st of March, at 7pm - a playful search for today's sentiments of home. After taking us from the Swiss Alps to the Disneyland in the United States, the conclusion of the film is: "*Perhaps homeland is a mountain of clichés.*"



Anca Sinpalean

I Never Traveled Far Enough, Wall installation with photographs, drawings and prints on paper, 202 x 310 cm, 2013

Anca Sinpalean is presenting an autobiographical work, a wall installation entitled *I Never Traveled Far Enough*. Photographs from the artist's travels taken from cars or airplanes try to convey the experience of moving between places. They are combined with a few drawings and references to the place where the artist grew up, a small village in central Romania. In this work, travel appears as a failed escape from one's past.

Cabinet of Curiosities, display cabinet, albums, shells, wooden drawer, postcards, 16 mm film, 80 x 180 x 35 cm, 2013

The second work by Anca Sinpalean is a "Cabinet of Curiosities", where found albums, objects, postcards and a 16 mm film, made by different anonymous travelers are exhibited in a museum-like manner. The objects are relics of a time prior to Google Maps and the Internet, when the postcard or the printed photograph were at the core of any real or virtual travel.

