

Daniela Keiser: *Ar & Or*

The new works by Daniela Keiser, which are on show at Galerie Stampa under the title *Ar & Or*, appear to address two entirely contrary geographical spaces: photographs of snow-covered fields and small town greyness in an extremely cold landscape that contrast with a spectrum of yellow desert sand, dryness and temporary architectures. The images not only implicitly reflect the different living conditions in the northern and southern hemispheres they also show different economic and social everyday realities without, however, reproducing the clichéd view of a voyeuristic otherness. To this extent the atmospheric view of different habitats and living conditions is only merely one element in Keiser's photographs. Just as key are the processes and dynamics that led to the photographs, and which remain in part legible in them. Accordingly, the same scenario is shot twice, in black-and-white and in colour, by sunlight and at night, or from a slightly altered angle, as is the case in the photographs from the series *Moutier*. One of the artist's specific interests in photography appears to manifest itself in this processual approach. In this context she references Marguerite Duras and the possibilities intrinsic to the medium to admit the unpredictable and the obvious.

Daniela Keiser often collaborates with other people in her projects, for example in the *Kairo Übersetzung* (Cairo Translation), where she asked twelve residents of Cairo to write a text in Arabic by hand about one of her photographs. The translations of these texts in English and German have finally also become part of the work by virtue of being integrated into the piece in a specially produced newspaper-style publication. The display and the presentation on self-designed tables, for its part, is an essential moment in a variation of this translation project, the installation *Ar und Ors Augenblicke* (Ar and Or's Moments). With a repetition of similar formal procedures — the process of multiple writings of history is to be found in both works — Keiser not only references an oriental narrative tradition by mixing fictional and real levels but she also engages with a special narrative mode where processes of internalisation are taken to a kind of abstract ornamentation. In this case translation does not mean the transfer from one language to another but also the transfer of one artistic medium, photography, into another, text. Ar and Or, Moutier and Cairo, North and South: Just as the Alpine meadows of Nurdein and Anarosa are brought together in her exhibition, the artist also introduces what are purportedly the most varied of worlds under one roof in the exhibition space itself.

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