

Sometime, Somewhere, Somehow

On the photography of Gábor Arion Kudász



The Green Area – a summary title of Arion Gábor Kudász’s new work – is an urbanistic expression, brought to life by the occasional need of creating an illusion of nature within the structure of the city, in order to break the monotony of artificial surfaces and buildings.

The green area is in this sense a public place, a transitory state, accompanied by the terms care and maintenance, used to keep the domesticated nature of plants. The place described with this term is also specific as to the use of it. It offers the city dwellers the possibility (or illusion of) relaxation, resting and entertainment, where the cultivation and nursing is also a distinctiveness of the present people, who come there to condition their bodies, souls or relationships, thus turning the area into true, accomplished cultural space, that offers the option for self-education.

The big city green areas are at least to the same extent prone to be withdrawn from this cultivation, to turn wild, which does not mean a return to some ancient, originally natural state, since – based on its artificial genesis – it never had such a past. The original function transforms, newcomers take or fill in the place of the less and less frequent locals. From then on, they are filling in the place that is always the center of Arion’s work.









However, it is typical for him not to give the main role to a single space, instead to the borderless and undefinable sphere. The place of the space is taken by the territory, which does have some range, but it is only one of the aspects of physical space. This closely undefinable space makes up the semblance of the landscape and its visual presentation on Arion's photographs. Though his pictures depict such landscapes, they cannot be considered true landscape pictures. First of all he shows no respect nor is he looking for the distance, that would be needed to be kept. On one hand he shows too little with not trying to open a wider field of understanding and placing the view within it. There are no cultural indexes, no reference points and no moments identifiable storywise, politically or socially. The landscape appears not in its concrete form, rather in a simplified, almost symbolic form, as an unidentifiable sign and parts from all culturally defined and pressed-between-corridors possibilities of idea association and interpretation.

On the other hand Arion shows too much when he lets

the view up so close, from where the flawless structure of the “landscape” rips apart and uncovers forms and events that cannot be reconciled with the meaning of the landscape being a source of a conflict free experience. Thus, these views become haunted with the strange feeling of confusion. This uncertainty bearing confusion is very important. It deconstructs the “perfect harmony”, causes the landscape to dissolve, slowly absorb and disappear from the picture and leave us facing the confusion as an interpretational problem.

We are forced to realize the sources and marks of different conflicts, unwillingly meet problems rooted in the endowment and the use of given space and are touched by the chilly breath of fear born from dark loneliness. We are no longer disposing with the security creating but false feeling of knowing what we are watching. One of the reasons for this is that Arion denies us the comfortable position we would normally take up when viewing landscapes. Here everything exists in a way that it really does not exist, but nothing is not what is “left behind”, it is something else, something not precisely describable. This not nothing and not something creates insecurity, we cannot any longer approach it with careless and unwary unambiguosity, which destroys the feeling of an entertaining experience. The events foreshadow a scary perspective through the cracks in the perfection created by imagination. They do not osculate into empty, interesting, entertaining affairs. The pictures become non-pictures yet without negating the existence of anything, including that of their own. The non-spaces of his non-pictures become the stage of tense anticipation taking place in the liminal state stuck between the “was” and the “will be”, with the mood of “something was” and “something will be again” ruling the ether.

Another factor in the background of the feeling of uncertainty created by a constant lack of confirmation is the light. Arion creates strangely looking light conditions not only with stressing a single source of light, but also due to his use of both artificial and natural lights coming from different sources and places with different strength. The artificial light does not come from flashlights or spotlights; instead, the author uses given light sources for his own needs.

This is where his veiled and looming lightings spring from, contributing to a depressive feeling of neither day nor night that disrupts our inner clock, and increases feelings of tension. What could be the origin of this? Possibly that what we see does not reveal anything, does not show anywhere further than its own self or maybe that it does not mean anything besides itself? Maybe because we have to face that we are up to the unperceivable and incomprehensible presence of “is” here and now? Up to the banality of that what was and was in a way in which it still is there, is no more and will not ever be?

The genuine meaning of photography is not its present quality – being true or false – instead it’s simply just to shed light upon this current existence. Arion makes this knowledge, falling into oblivion, accessible through his pictures.

Gábor Pfisztner

GÁBOR ARION KUDÁSZ – Born 1978 in Budapest

SOLO EXHIBITIONS ~ 2007 ~ Under The Concrete, ZAK Gallery, Berlin ~ 2006 ~ Green Area, Lumen Gallery, Budapest ~ 2005 ~ Emese and Arion, Hegyvidék Galéria, Budapest ~ 2001 ~ Photo Digital, Budapest ~ Sisters and Brothers, Budapest ~ 1998 ~ Makroworld, Budapest

SELECTED GROUP EXHIBITIONS ~ 2007 ~ Gallery for Wintertime, ZAK Gallery, Berlin ~ reGeneration, Alyce de Roulet Williamson Gallery, Art Center College of Design, Pasadena, USA ~ Muse, Körszögyár, Budapest ~ Pécsi József Grant, Accademia d’Ungheria, Rome ~ Elek, Fabricius, Kudász, Vintage Galéria, Budapest ~ 2006 ~ Budapest Feeling, Month of Photography in Kraków, Jagiellonian University, Kraków ~ 24 Minutes, Berlin Budapest Festival, Tüzkaktér – Budapest, Berlin ~ ConZerve? ~ Kortárs Építészeti Központ (KÉK), Budapest ~ Triptichon, Jövő Háza, BudapestreGeneration, Pingayo International Photography Festival, Pingayo ~ reGeneration, Aperture Gallery, New York ~ 2005 ~ The Digital Print, Millenáris, Budapest ~ Balett, Westen City Center, Budapest ~ Hungarian Press Photo, Palace of Arts, Budapest ~ reGeneration – 50 photographers of tomorrow, Musée de L’Elysée, Lausanne ~ reGeneration, Galleria Carla Sozzani, Milan ~ ARC Poster Exhibition, Budapest ~ 2004 ~ A Painting for Sale, Nocating Project, Budapest ~ Dokumentum 6, Mai Manó House, Budapest ~ Nem térkép e-táj, Millenáris, Budapest ~ Offline 2, ~ Vizivárosi Galéria, Budapest ~ Stardust, Ponton Galéria, Budapest ~ Szélfoglaló, Ponton Galéria, Budapest ~ Morfomans, Fort of Monostor, Komárom ~ 2003 ~ Invitation, Nocating Project, Budapest ~ Last Drop Festival, Budapest ~ Diploma, Millenáris, Budapest ~ 2002 ~ Final Exhibition, Athens School of Fine Arts, Athens ~ ARC Poster Exhibition, Budapest ~ XIII. Országos Tervező Grafikai Biennále, Békéscsaba ~ Labirintus, Sziget Festival, Budapest ~ Last Drop Festival, Budapest ~ European Way of Life, Paris ~ Us and the Others, Goethe Institut, Budapest, Porto, Rotterdam ~ Socrates-Erasmus, Budapest ~ 2001 ~ ARC Poster Exhibition, Budapest ~ 2000 ~ Sziget Festival stage designs, Budapest (2000 – 2002) ~ 1999 ~ Self-Portraits, Budapest

AWARDS AND GRANTS ~ 2007 ~ József Pécsi Photographic Scholarship ~ 2005 ~ Hungarian Press Photo, Nature and Environment (series), 1st prize ~ Pro Cultura Urbis, Budapest Photographic Scholarship ~ Epson Art Photo Award, best selected work ~ 2004 ~ József Pécsi Photographic Scholarship ~ 2002 ~ ARC Poster Exhibition, Prize of Quality ~ ‘Us and the Others’ International Photo Competition, 2nd prize ~ 2001 ~ Hewlett-Packard Invision International Digital Photo Competition, overall winner

EMPLOYMENT ~ 2003 ~ Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Budapest, Faculty of Photography, artist teacher ~ 2007 ~ Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Budapest, Faculty of Photography, assistant lecturer

EDUCATION ~ 2004 ~ Transatlantic Culture Exchange, choice mastercourse ~ 2003 ~ Moholy-Nagy University of Art and Design Budapest (MOME) ~ 2000 ~ Pázmány Péter Catholic University, English-Communication

RESIDENCIES ~ 2002 ~ Athens School of Fine Arts (ASFA) – Erasmus ~ 2000 ~ Ioan Andreescu Academy of Visual Arts in Cluj-Napoca – Ceepus ~ 1995 ~ Bellefontaine High, Ohio, USA – Youth For Understanding (YFU)

MEMBERSHIPS ~ Association of Hungarian Artists (MAOE) ~ Studio of Young Photographers (FFS) ~ Young Photographers United (YPU)

SELECTED PUBLICATIONS ~ 2007 ~ Tábor (Camp), Holnap Kiadó ~ 2006 ~ Fotóművészet (2006/5 – 6) ~ 2005 ~ Pictures of the Year, Publication of Hungarian Press Photo ~ reGeneration – 50 photographers of tomorrow, Thames & Hudson ~ 2004 ~ Szélfoglaló, Publication of MOME ~ Imago, (2004/4) ~ Choice, Publication of the Mastercourse ~ 2003 ~ Antenna, (2003) ~ Fotóművészet (2003/3 – 4, 2004, 2005) ~ Holidays, Just Pictures series, Városháza ~ 2001 ~ Octogon, (2001/5) ~ Fotó-Videó, (2001/7 – 8) ~ Digitális Fotó Magazin, (2001/11) ~ 1998 ~ Boomerang freecards (1998 – 2001)