

Eva Borner «Ich will eine Wahrheit, die erfunden ist» (I want a truth that has been invented)

Text by Anna Daphne Alessi, culture scientist

Eva Borner's photomontages, being assembled from digitally treated images made with a digital camera, are unsettling. The onlooker's eye is drifting up and down, left and right, searching for a normal perspective, but cannot find it: the image evades any classical perspective by confronting the human standpoint with irreally deplaced views, often surreally modified. Interiors and exteriors start to disintegrate: we're dealing with realistic photographs and yet they aren't. By placing well-acquainted furniture in interiors on floors that belong to seemingly far away landscapes these images open up a third place, a place where borders between object, surroundings, subject and nature have long been transcended and still ask for their right of being. By offering themselves as a result of the photographic view, they question it at the same time, but not in the sense of a simple "as if", but in a more refined combination of realistic geste and imaginative composition. This combination visualises the intransparency of many people's lives in the sign of globalisation.

An everyday object, placed in the middle of a natural landscape, or a natural perspective locked inside a room are immediately recognisable, but the object or the landscape are displaced from their natural surroundings and set into a new and surprising context. The natural scale of things is distorted, the object seems enormous compared to the landscape surrounding it, and the shadows it had thrown in its original surroundings are still there. This discussion of the image as well as actually looking at it convey treacherous contemplative calmness, well-ordered aesthetics and supine knowledge. Often one can only guess at whether it is one photo or a montage of various photos that led to one of her images. Sometimes one can't even be certain if an image only shows one single view. Are those clouds or just a dirty wall? Is the object in a room which is enlarged by the montage of a landscape, caught by its own shadow that is cast onto the landscapes hinting at imaginary walls? The tonality, statics and the aesthetic objects, harmonic views of nature that were chosen by Borner on the one hand, and the plentiness of ideas evoked by the pictures on the other hand grind against each other.

Is the world being nicely collaged here, dismembered beyond recognition, or are things getting even more real than they actually are through the chosen perspectives? In the same manner in which these objects impose themselves over nature by their fictional size and in which they show their history and cultural background through their traces of wear, have they forever lost their natural context, their purpose and their homes. And even though they are momentarily freed from their instrumental purpose, they still cast their original shadows. Then you suddenly see them standing in their original locations, ghostlike and eroded by time, the river that will eventually carry everything with it. In her series of photomontages Eva Borner is playing with the interdependence of multiple contexts and boundaries, not least with the famous ones like subject and object, nature and culture. The question seems unanswerable and still dominates the room: is nature merely a subject, subjugated under the reign of the "all-object" created by man? Or is the man-made artefact only possible thanks to nature's elements? By questioning any final possibility of objectivation and subjectivation of something or someone, even if simultaneously suggesting the longing for this possibility, Borner is subtly criticising culture and authority. And all of a sudden one isn't so sure anymore if the chest of drawers or the pitchfork aren't simply artefacts but rather an extension and representation of man who, in an unpacifiable tension between nature and culture is representing the intersection between peripherals. Borner's pictures rekindle this tension inside us, getting it to move until, irritated, we move our eyes away to walk on to the next picture.