

ANGELA GRAUERHOLZ EXHIBITION: PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKS BY THIS QUÉBEC ARTIST AT THE MUSÉE D'ART CONTEMPORAIN STARTING JANUARY 27

Montréal, January 11, 1995. From January 27 to April 23, the Musée d'art contemporain de Montréal is presenting **ANGELA GRAUERHOLZ**. This exhibition brings together 33 photographic works, including an installation entitled *Églogue* or *Filling the Landscape*, produced over the past four years. Since the early eighties, this Québec artist has been engaged in redefining photography, through portraits and interior and exterior scenes, with or without people.

Ambivalence and the soft focus

According to curator Paulette Gagnon, "the work of Angela Grauerholz holds an important place on the Canadian and international photography scene. Few artists give the same sense of regular, assured progress, and even fewer photographers have such a pure experimental attitude."

The somewhat heterogeneous subjects of Grauerholz's images (a garden, a pond, tourists, a foot, an office, a window, a nude, a bas-relief, a library, a landscape, etc.) go beyond the territory assigned to the gaze. The subject of the picture is of little or no importance. What concerns the artist most is the notion of ambivalence. The desired distancing effect is heightened by the soft focus.

In Paulette Gagnon's opinion, the artist is interested in allowing viewers to find their own dimension, to form their own interpretations of the photographs. Each image gives rise to a new illusion, a new doubt, a fresh awareness.

Images that are at once commonplace, sublime and unexpected

Never limiting herself to a single theme, the artist explores, constantly alters her approach and establishes novel links between the sites and subjects she employs, thus sparking a highly intense questioning. It is all a matter of gaze, mentality and distantiation. Angela Grauerholz's photographs do not strive for immediate effect. Certain recent works offer the viewer no other point of reference than the ordinariness of the subject itself, while others develop a close connection with humanity, the order of things, and nature.

The dimension of time intervenes in some works in the exhibition, either in the fixity of the scene -- *Sunbather*, *Les Touristes* and *Le Couple*, for example -- or in the flow of movement, as in *Chemin de fer*, accentuated by the photographic blur. This soft focus, this fluid motion of the image, plays upon reverie, fascination and the vertiginous nature of time, and is what gives *Emanation (Ideal Landscape)* its strange, fogbound atmosphere.

The curator observes that "occasionally Angela Grauerholz's photographs favour pictorial reference. An inclination towards the history of painting is confirmed by the subjects of the photographs which evoke the sublime, a romanticism...." For *Quartet*, the artist thus rephotographed fragments of paintings, one dated and the other contemporary, to which she has juxtaposed pictures of landscapes. In the words of Paulette Gagnon: "Oscillating between past and present and poised at a site of passage ravaged by the life cycle, the artist does not resort to using art history or archival documents to reconstruct History; she extracts them from a concrete historical context so as to rearrange them in a new order by denuding their fragmentary nature." *Lessing, Draped Foot, Charm* and *Forum* illustrate this practice.

The curator adds: "There will always be elements of uncertainty in the photographic image upon which the unknown bestows a precise meaning. In their apprehension of this unknown, Angela Grauerholz's photographs derive their strength by their suggestion of something beyond the obvious. No sooner does the idea of the unknown enter the consciousness than a new element is created, a new unknown whose perceptible space is momentarily split by the photographic image's unyielding ambiguity."

Meeting with Angela Grauerholz

Angela Grauerholz will meet the public on Wednesday February 1 at 6:30 p.m., in the exhibition galleries. She will take this opportunity to discuss various aspects of her work.

The *ANGELA GRAUERHOLZ* exhibition is financed, in part, by the Canada Council's Exhibition Assistance Program.

- 30 -

Source: Claude Gu  rin, Head Writer

Information: Louise Faure, Media Relations Officer
(514) 847-6232