

GEERT GOIRIS & VINCENT LAMOUREUX

TURBULENCE

11.12.2010 - 23.01.2011

English

Artists Vincent Lamouroux (°1974, Saint-Germain-en-Laye, France) and Geert Goiris (°1971, Bornem, Belgium) have chosen to present their work under the common title 'Turbulence'. The concept of 'turbulence', and the ways it can spark off the interaction between their work, the space it inhabits and the visitor, serves as the starting point. At KIOSK, the conventional arrangement of Goiris' monochrome photographs is engaged in a confrontation that is both mental and physical with Lamouroux' architectural construction.

Upon entering the exhibition space, one is immediately confronted with Lamouroux' 'Heliscope' in the hemicycle room. This spiral staircase – the central piece in the show – is eight meters high and leans forward into the room; effectuating a dynamic upward movement starting from its firm footing. The upwards structure of the staircase lifts up the room, its whiteness reflects the light and its subtle imbalance disorients the viewer. Like a tornado, the sculpture seems set on absorbing its entire surroundings, a radical sensory experience which prompts an entirely new reading of the room.

The visitor is invited to walk around and under the staircase, to climb it, to allow oneself to be thrown off balance. Like an unsteady springboard, the staircase offers those who climb it an overview of the exhibition space. One does not, however, get a wide view as the windows are whitewashed, effectively cutting the visitor off from the world outside and enhancing the physical experience of the room. This playful, formal intervention acts both as an architectural utopia and as a statuesque sculpture, inhabiting the space both organically and as a construction.

Goiris' work is deliberately swept along by the uncompromising whirlwind that is caused by 'Heliscope'. If Lamouroux' sculpture presents a mainly physical confrontation, Goiris' photographs demand a more indirect, mental contemplation. With the sculpture's effect still vibrating through the visitor's body, the photographic sequence – 'Leo', 'Mammatus', 'Colorado', 'Murmansk', 'Half Life' and 'Dead Bird' – can be read as subsequent moments of approaching dread, accumulating energy or amassing clouds before a thunderstorm, while birds caw in agitation.

Like a constructed, cryptic memory, the sequence of photographs brings to mind all sorts of associations, with a strong suggestion of mental chaos. Goiris' works succeed in showing us isolated places whose existence immediately suggests their alienating nearness. The landscapes he presents are not mere representations of the actual locations he has visited, but rather bear witness to a certain way of looking.

This idea is emphatically present in the work 'LAIR' and the new series 'Giants' which shows us black-and-white images of sequoia trees (also known as giant redwoods). These stand out against a white, cornerless space like dark surfaces, their monumental character reinforced by the fact that the sequoia is one of the oldest and tallest trees in the world. Goiris' work demands slow observation, allowing the gaze to adapt time's own pace in penetrating the rows of ancient trees and exploring the infinite horizons. Both fore- and background are shot with incredible focus. Goiris' landscape shots are often made using a slow shutter speed, a quality one can clearly perceive in contemplating them.

Our gaze steadily progresses through a universal, mental landscape until reaching a moment when a glimpse of another reality, of another time scale is caught. Fact and fiction seem to fuse together in the perception of the landscape. The attention we pay to this landscape shrinks into insignificance when faced with the past of two thousand years these trees carry within them. Time, inherent to the present subject and the creative process of photography, fixes itself on top of the image, like a final, destabilizing layer of perception.

Together, the works of Lamouroux and Goiris engage in a shared and well-considered game with light, contrastive horizontal and vertical lines guiding the gaze, the construction of different views and the huge difference in scale of the visitor, Lamouroux' sculpture and the photographic sequence 'Giants' from Goiris. The turbulence arising between the two arrangements is made palpable in the interaction between the upward force in the sculpture and the monumental pull of time and gravity on 'Giants', as if it were a continuous struggle between distinct physical experiences.

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