

alexanderlevy

Colin Snapp

Latitudes

Feb 25 – Apr 15, 2017

Opening Feb 25, 2017 | 6-9 pm

The gallery alexander levy is pleased to present the first solo exhibition of the artist Colin Snapp in Germany from February 25 to April 15, 2017.

Colin Snapp (*1982 Lopez Island WA, USA) deals with the subject of tourism as a crucial phenomenon of today's mobile world society. His practice revolves around an indexical approach to both the cinematic and photographic tradition, the fascination of everyday life and the relationship between travel and perception.

In his works the observer follows the traces left by travelers. They give evidence of a continually growing tourist industry and mark the beginning of a global movement that drastically transforms present day man and the spaces he passes through. These works speak of the transitory, the need for vacation, adventure and beauty. We encounter the motif of the desire to free oneself from everyday constraints and turn towards a paradise-like life.

At a second glance his practice reveals a darker more bizarre way in which tourism influences the image of a landscape. Through caricaturing touristic perspectives, Colin Snapp establishes a representation of the behavioral pattern of how tourist experience, consume and communicate their holidays. Therefore he examines iconic American destinations such as monuments and national parks. Throughout his observations he presents these locations as sites that behave as arenas for a modern form of religious pilgrimage. The way in which the tourist travels in dictated ways, the repetition of rituals, of clothing and behavior, and the permanent view through bus windows and camera screens serve as a basis for his studies of the contemporary experience.

His perception of nature and humanity was strongly affected by growing up on a small island isolated by the civilization of cities. After studying film production in San Francisco, he worked as a documentary filmmaker. Videos are still the starting point for his work. A fundamental aspect of his production is the development of works of different mediums stemming from one basic idea. In addition to *ND Studies* (neutral density) a new series of photographs, *Setra 215* is also included in the current exhibition. Reminiscent of a Minimal Art work, this large scale sculpture consists of a row of charter bus windows salvaged directly from a modern bus. The candid correlation to the travel experiences of an ordinary tourist shows us a distance to the observed object in the white gallery room.

In turn this notion is also encountered in Colin Snapp's *ND Studies*. Through a glass lens filter he re-photographed images shot with a disposal camera and re-printed them on large format. The *ND Studies* point to the more banal aspect of pre-packaged tours as the in-between zones, images of information plaques, environmental vandalism or viewing platforms. Photographed while traveling aboard tour groups within the scenery of Nevada, New Jersey and Morocco this series acts to glorify aspects of a fabricated sense of place. By using lens filters, traditionally used in film production to filter and control the light situation, Snapp's pictures become observational artifacts, and remind us of the stereotypical filter applied Instagram or social network shots. As a result the artist brings to mind contemporary screen culture. Whether we look through the tinted glass panel of a tourist bus, see the world through social networks on a computer screen, or simply look through sunglasses – every time perception of reality is filtered, altered and abstracted. Furthermore, in the production of the works a kind of reversal of the image process takes place: as Colin Snapp changes notions of post production by using collage and layering, rather than Photoshop, he transfers the digital back into the analogue.

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