

## PERCEIVING LANDSCAPE(S)

Through the spectrum of publishing as creative practice there exists an elusive space where one can be liberated from suspicions of insincerity or gimmicks, empowered by shared proclamations of commitment to generous truth seeking. 'Perceiving Landscape(s)' has been sparked in obligatory stillness and nursed by unrequited desire to be floated away on a piece of paper. Each work opens to its own different rhythm, to its unique flow; a page turns, and wanderlust ensues. I search inside every nook and crevice to climb into; I want to see everything - can I do that? - and how?

Perceiving Landscape(s) can be seen to unfold on different strands, separated by a difference of intention. The works themselves perform an exercise in how different intentionalities become distinguishable through codified visual elements, strewn by a hair thin and almost invisible thread that prompts us to arrange them in melodies, in melismatic crescendos. The (s) in brackets indicates more than our understanding of perceptual profusion, it is the plurality of subjects withheld within a single, individual perception, manifesting through the act of publishing itself as a series of decisions about emotional states that we consciously assign to a place.

The first part of the project includes works created in and through activations of memory for new and idiosyncratic narratives that seek to fill gaps in our own errorful ways of perceiving. Sandra Koestler's Derive series (2016, 2018, 2020) has its primary focus not in landscape itself but one's emotional entanglement with it; 'How do you realize you still feel something for a place?' asks Kostler in a series of small editions each of which explores her personal entanglement with different landscape(s).

Greek Diary by Bojan Mrdanovic and Stipan Tadic interweaves their respective practices of photography and painting, presenting a collaborative effort towards a shared commitment; to immortalize an instant or a commitment to the mindful preservation of the here and now. Similarly, the work of George Salameh Hear You Athens strikes as a powerful commitment to accepting or even seeking resolution. Can images heal? Can the act of photographing relieve wounds? The images of streets, roads, sidewalks are paths walked in a pursuit of closure; a photograph taken as intentionally or unintentionally as profound emotional depth reveals to us in Salameh's correspondence with Alexandros Mistrionis that poetically finishes the book.

In what remains my perception text of choice, Phenomenology of Perception (1945), Merleau Ponty writes 'I treat my own perceptual history as a result of my relations with the objective world', an intention that becomes vividly animated in Veredas Mágicas (in English Magical Paths) by Norma Vieira as she revisits her father's history with archival imagery, in turn performing an attempt to share (his) perceptual history by reliving that which his perception has prompted him to record. Revisiting places of memory and lived experience, Onde Jaz Meu Céu Estrelado (Where my Starry Sky Lies) by Juliana Jacyntho mediates the discrepancies between a past upon which we reflect and a future for which we meditatively prepare; through fragments of jagged recollections one begins to collect clues about the perceptual history of another.

In his essay on Darren Almond's Full Moon works, T.J Demos draws parallels between Almond's photographs of the Central Atlantic islands and the raw landscape that Darwin must have encountered upon his arrival at the islands. Landscape prompts a mysterious emergence of a sense of connection, not with the past, but with the history of the world in a vast kind of totality. The book No Escape From Paradise by Eva Brunner establishes its own connection to a sense of 'origin' or 'beginning' that asks to be contemplated anew. In No Escape From Paradise

human bodies become compositional elements within lushly green, picturesque landscapes of almost unattainably purity or simply passing, nonchalantly, through. Similarly, Sonia Dias' book Floema directly positions the body in a series of landscape images that shift our focus between objects and agents of perception, and Mutter Architektur by Florian Glaubitz interweaves bodies rolled in soft clay with kiln-fired tiles and bricks.

Segwaying into a different section of the project, we find a series of publications that explore perception itself as an ambivalent process of subverting expectations by simultaneously revealing and concealing, providing and at the same time obstructing access; as perceiving or, perhaps, not. The book Looking North by Jessica Auer provides us with seemingly idyllic looks of Iceland through scenes of nature tourism only to remind us that this is what the world looked like right up to the emergence of the Covid-19 pandemic. Auer's images of tourists posing in front of waterfalls, glaciers and moss covered rocks begin to slowly give way to the panic-stricken scream reminiscent of Munich's painting, where nature is neither willing nor complicit in humancentric narratives that are perpetually developed against that which has created us.

Similarly to Auer, Thomas Kneubühler's Alpine Signals presents sequences of Alpine forests where technological protrusions appear so remarkably similar to the tree trunks that surround them that they begin to raise questions around our different means of assimilating our omnipotent presence upon landscape(s). Alpine Signals performs an alchemy that is both subtle and treacherous; interrogating our perceptual faculties in every step, from its images to its title, which retrospectively reveals itself to be both a literal contextualization whilst simultaneously suggesting towards the idea of images as signals, as condensed frontiers of opaque narratives unfolding upon geographical location not having yet internalized; Alpine and Signals. Natural landscape and human presence.

In Golden Peak, a large format newsprint publication by Ilias Lois, we are faced with a series of desolate urban landscapes accompanied only by two simple pieces of information: a) the sites we look at constitute mayhems of human mobility during week-days, and b) that Lois is photographing during the weekends. Lois similarly subverts expectations on purpose, creating a publication that performs an impossible alchemy of representing absence. Not unlike Lois' intention to visualize anew something which is otherwise perceived differently, Arturo Soto's work In the Heat also offers a series of urban landscapes marked by an intensely paradoxical absence of that which typically defines their representation or assists our process of recognition. Strangely enough, or rather, because of an expressed over-familiarity the body is intentionally absent from that which it seeks to examine, it resists inserting itself in the very situations that have led to the investigation that we are called to witness.

This absence, or deliberate exclusion of human presence continues in Michael Crocker's work The Orchard. The book casts a haunting glance at desolate landscape(s) enveloped in thick fog, frustratingly preventing us from fully seeing that which is depicted; like Caspar David Friedrich's figures looking out at landscapes enveloped in clouds of mist, in The Orchard we attest to the powerful willingness of perception to render itself liquid and ever-changing in sensing our surroundings in some secret infirmity their solitude grants them. These deliberate conjurings of subversion continuously allude to something post-human, an apocalyptic scene where nothing remains of our once omnipotent presence in Nimbus by Elaine

Pessoa as dark abstractions of stark tree branches become increasingly blurred, overlaid and intersected while images themselves hide inside folded pages whose pages remain bound on the edges.

Contrary to what most would assume, the nose is not our only way of perceiving scent. There are olfactory receptors on our skin, capable of detecting scent molecules; in other words we smell with our skin. The olfactory sensors on our skin can sense the healing properties of sandalwood and can help to alleviate headaches. Even though the skin is not what we use to smell through, it can, however, perform a process of smell. Much like skin poetry, perception of landscape becomes visual poetry, something fleetingly elusive despite the fact it can still provide us with information. Sheung Yiu's Ground Truth interweaves information collected in forests with photography and graphic collages leading to a climactic abstraction of that which we perceive when we are immersed within landscape(s). Ground Truth asks what we see and how we see it, intertwining scientific processes of collecting information about landscape with visual representations of the means by which we do so. Documentation processes become animators of empirical truths, guiding us to new visualisations of perception. Like Yiu's work, the book American Sights by Lars Dyrendom introduces landscape as a field upon which objects and tools shape representations of landscape as the book takes its material from View-Master reels of images throughout the 20th century. Submerged in all their grit and grain glory, the works become fields upon which we can converse anachronistically with history; and, ultimately, share mutual fascinations with ambiguities of past, present and future.

*Othonas Charalambous*

\*This text considers some of the works in the exhibition as an indicative selection, the complete list of which can be found on the following page.

\*References

- "Photography at the End of the World", T.J. Demos, IMAGE & NARRATIVE, Vol.16, No.1 (2015)  
- "Phenomenology of Perception", Maurice Merleau Ponty, Routledge, 2012, Translated by Donald A. Landes (Originally published 'Phenomenologie de la perception', Editions GALLIMARD, Paris, 1945)

## PERCEIVING LANDSCAPE(S)

IAPT:PhotoBook:2021, Perceiving Landscape(s), is the third edition of the photobook exhibition series organized by the International Association of Photography & Theory [IAPT]. As suggested by the title, where land and/or landscapes can point into an array of physical, material or conceptual manifestations, the works - photography books and artist's editions selected through an open call - constitute an attempt to explore different methodologies of approaching, sensing and recording information that inform each unique perception of landscape and the relationships that develop between place and viewer.

From idiosyncratic activations of memory and intersections of personal experiences with archival imagery, to fragmented representations of place and space, to ambiguous abstractions of scientific data, or even through fabricated constructions of imagined lands, Perceiving Landscape(s) examines how contemporary photographic and publishing practices seek to engage in explorations of landscapes both physical and otherwise, to negotiate modes of landscape accessibility and to provide insight into new and potential processes of sensing, understanding or conceiving landscape in its nuanced complexities.

How is landscape perceived, defined, visualized, shaped or accessed? How do we attain, record, and how do we create information about landscape(s)? What is our relationship with landscapes and how can it be challenged?

*Othonas Charalambous, Nicolas Lambouris, Theopisti Stylianou-Lambert*

### IAPT:PHOTOBOOK:2021 Perceiving Landscape(s)

**dates:** 16-30 November 2021

**opening:** 16 November 2021, 19:00-22:00

**opening hours:** Tue-Fri: 15:00-19:00, Sat: 10:00-13:00

**space:** Korai Project Space

The exhibition is organized by the International Association of Photography & Theory [IAPT]. Supported by: the Cultural Services, Cyprus Ministry of Education, Culture, Sport & Youth, Visual Sociology & Museum Studies Lab (VSMS lab), Cyprus University of Technology, UNIT [Photography. Media+Film. Center], Frederick University, and Korai Project Space

photographyandtheory.com



## PARTICIPATING ARTISTS

**Arturo Soto**, *In the Heat*, 2018. The Eriskay Connection (NL)

**Bojan Mrdenović & Stipan Tadić**, *Greek Diary*, 2018  
Museum Museo Lapidarium (HR)

**Efrem Zelony Mindell**, *Primal Sight*, 2021. Gnostic Books (US)

**Elaine Pessoa**, *Nimbus*, 2016. Foto Editorial (BR)

**Eva Brunner**, *No Escape From Paradise*, 2020.  
Self-Published (DE)

**Florian Glaubitz**, *Mutter Architektur*, 2020/21.  
Self-Published (DE)

**George Salameh**, *ΑΘΗΝΑ Σ' ΑΚΟΥΩ (Hear You Athens)*,  
2021. MeMSea Productions (GR)

**Ilan Kelson**, *Tempus Fugit*, 2020. Foto Editorial (BR)

**Ilias Lois**, *Golden Peak*, 2019. Self Published (GR)

**Jessica Auer**, *Looking North*, 2021. Another Place Press (UK)

**José Diniz**, *O Céu Vem Abaixo*, 2019. Foto Editorial (BR)

**Juliana Jacyntho**, *Onde Jaz Meu Céu Estrelado (Where My  
Starry Sky Lies)*, 2020. Foto Editorial (BR)

**Lars Dyrendom**, *American Sights*, 2019. Edition Taube (SE)

**Lucas Lenci**, *Still Life*, 2020. Foto Editorial (BR)

**Marcelo Costa**, *Lugar Onde O Tempo Sofre*, 2016.  
Foto Editorial (BR)

**Mario Lalau**, *Tropeço*, 2017. Foto Editorial (BR)

**Michael Crocker**, *The Orchard*, 2021. Self-Published (UK)

**Natasha Ganme**, *O Perfume (The Perfume)*, 2020.  
Foto Editorial (BR)

**Nicos Philippou & Christiana Stylianou**, *Κήποι του  
Καιμακλιού (Gardens of Kaimakli)*, 2020. OWK Press (CY)

**Nicos Philippou**, *Sharqi*, 2016. NiMAC (CY)

**Norma Vieira**, *Veredas Mágicas (Magical Paths)*, 2020.  
Foto Editorial (BR)

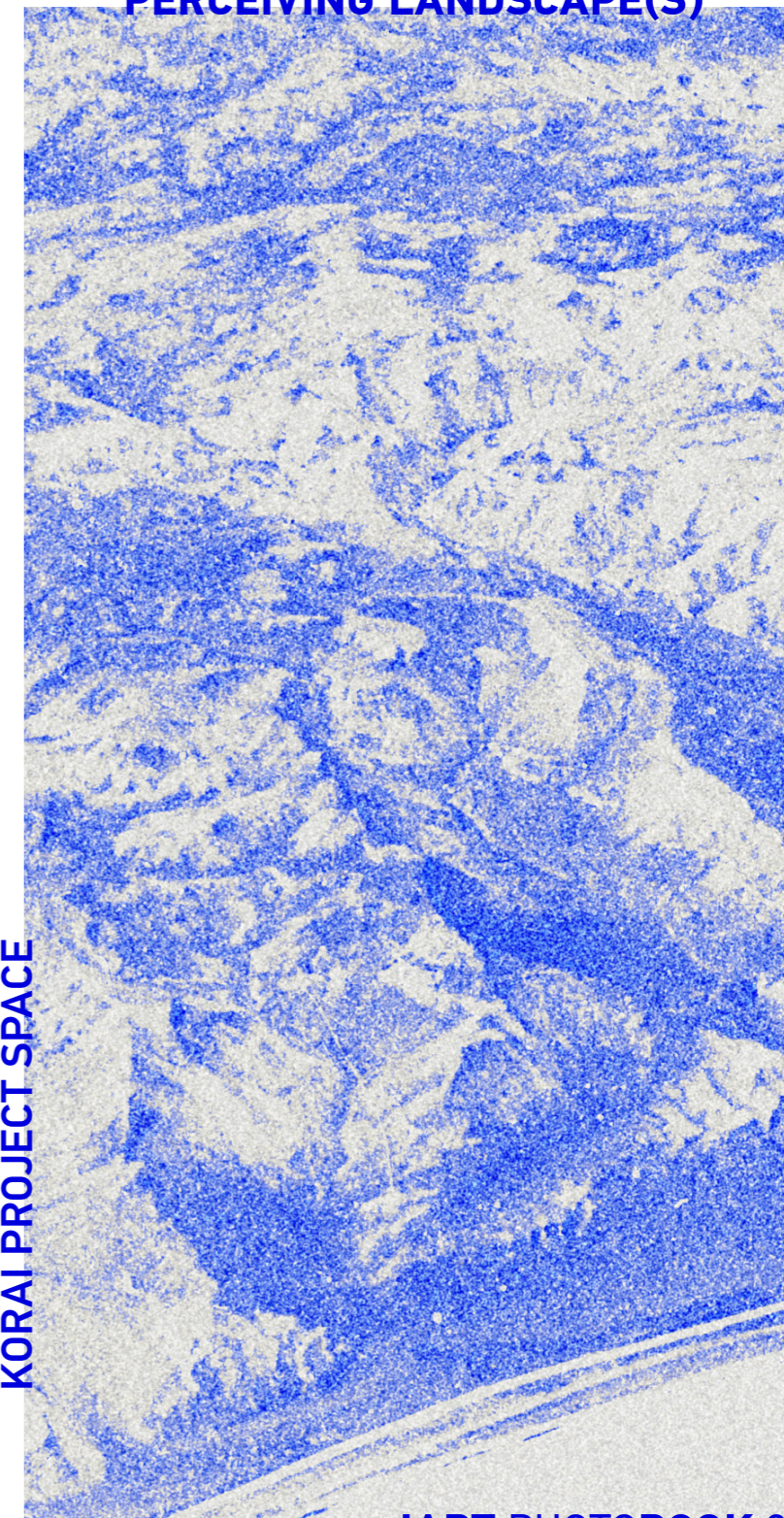
**Sandra Köstler**, *Dérive 1: 'Money. Wahlheimat'*, 2018,  
*Dérive 2: 'A Sort of Homecoming'*, 2019, *Dérive 3: 'The  
Island'* 2020. Self-Published (DE)

**Sheung Yiu**, *Ground Truth*, 2021. The Eriskay Connection (FI)

**Sonia Dias**, *Floema*, 2018. Foto Editorial (BR)

**Thomas Kneubühler**, *Alpine Signals*, 2021. Verlag für  
moderne Kunst (AT)

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KORAI PROJECT SPACE

16-30/11/2021

IAPT:PHOTOBOOK:2021