

Capitain Petzel

JOHN STEZAKER

Crossing Over

Capitain Petzel, Berlin June 27 - August 31, 2013

Capitain Petzel is pleased to announce 'Crossing Over', the second solo exhibition by John Stezaker at the gallery, presenting more than 40 new collages and three films - 'Horse' (2012), 'Crowd' (2013) and 'Cathedral' (2013).

'Crossing Over' is the title of a recent series of postcard fragments, shown on the first floor of the gallery, that relate to Stezaker's '3rd Person Archive'. Whereas the '3rd Person Archive' focused on the incidental figure from the black and white world of 1920's and 30's travel encyclopedia, the 'Crossing Over' series takes this universal figure of the everyman over into the world of the post-war colour postcard.

In the main exhibition hall of the gallery, collages from various series are presented, including 'Tabula Rasa' (2012), 'Natural History' (2012/13) and 'Path' (2013).

As well as becoming an avid collector of the last traces of the material image - of a paper world - Stezaker has also been using image abundances to open up new ways of addressing the image in terms of digital dematerialization. His films however, shown for the first time in Berlin, explore a different relationship with the culture of image multiplicity. Whereas the collages emphasise the materiality and uniqueness of the mass-produced image, the films explore a confrontation with the unknowable multiplicity of the image. Stezaker's new film works are all 'animations' of different parts of his image collection.

Many of the collages on show derive from a recently acquired archive of film stills from a defunct German film magazine and 'Crowd' is a filmic response to it. Pre-war German films as well as post-war GDR cinema contain abundant crowd scenes and 'Crowd' is literally a cinematic crowd of crowd scenes. Scenes of crowds of 'extras' are meant to be subliminal images, disappearing as background to the appearance of the 'stars'. Paradoxically however, Stezaker's bombardment of discontinuous crowd scene stills at 1/24th of a second makes these subliminal images strangely indelible. Several of the still collages also on display are also responses to the image of the crowd and there is a suggestion of a supernatural quality to their movement - crossing over bridges or recoiling from a confrontation with paradisaal or arcadian other-worlds of the image.

Stezaker presents collage as a process of crossing over between worlds: between different times, as is predominant in the postcard / film still combinations or between personae [or worlds of the subject] - as in the 'Marriage' series. In this sense, 'Crossing Over' is a metaphor for the hidden subjective relations with the image in our culture of images and for its exposure through the process of collage.

John Stezaker was born in 1949 in England. Alongside solo gallery exhibitions at Petzel Gallery in New York, Galerie Gisela Capitain in Cologne and The Approach in London, institutional solo exhibitions in recent years have included the Tel-Aviv Museum of Art, Israel (2013), The Whitechapel Gallery, London, UK (2011) then touring to MUDAM, Luxembourg and Kemper Art Museum, St. Louis, USA (2012), Kunstverein Freiburg, Germany (2010), A Palazzo Gallery, Brescia, Italy (2008), GAK Bremen, Germany (2008). His works are included in the public collections of the Museum of Modern Art, New York, the Tate Collection, London, Los Angeles County Museum of Art, the Ellipse Foundation, Caracas, and the Rubell Family Collection, Miami.

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Opening hours: Tuesday - Saturday 11 am to 6 pm