

PRESS RELEASE

Jérusalem, Izmir, Alger...

une question de point de vue

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Opening

Tuesday, September 10th, 2013

Show from September 11 to October 13, 2013

Wednesday to Saturday, from 2-7pm

And by appointment

Some landscape photographs are uninspiring. Whatever is happening within the frame stems from this simple, descriptive aspect. Such objectivity and strict description tend to convey an indifference to the wonder of Nature. The photograph winds up depicting a dismal spectacle of natural desolation. Others recount the story of an organic power lying within an architecture long ignored. And then, there are the other images - landscape photographs that in themselves are a revelation of utopian spaces.

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Alexis Cordesse **Border Lines**

About *BORDER LINES*, by **Michel Poivert**.

The work grouped under the title *Border Lines* was made during trips to Israel and the Palestinian Territories. The implementation of these images makes a fundamental appeal to digital technology; based on a montage in the panorama format, the images maintain a descriptive and utopic connection to reality.

The scenes were all observed from a precise topography but according to different temporalities. Therefore, in the same space, the discrepancies of time are re-synchronized by the images and the seams are left exposed: the Holy Land becomes a place of possible encounters while remaining present in its topographic reality.

Reworked by successive copying, the shots function as a sketchbook and as visual notation. Digital treatment is not used for effects but to amend the real, a powerful use of digital photography which conditions the contact with the world. The world which Cordesse shows us, these places so symbolic and generally caught up in media stereotypes, is a grand scene where the daily joins the historical issues of civilisations which co-exist.

In this way, the artist puts into place a practice which, starting from the problematics of image treatment, situates itself half-way between the reflection of the photographs responsibility and its potential for the imaginary. To show, if needed, that digital art has transformed itself from candid expressive exploration to become a veritable instrument of creative innovation.

Michel Poivert is a professor of history of contemporary Art / history of the photography at Paris I Panthéon-Sorbonne University. Among others, he published « *The pictorialisme in France* » (national Höebecke / library) in 1992, « *Robert Demachy* » (Nathan / coll. Photo-pocket) in 1997, « *The contemporary photography* » (Flammarion) in 2002, « *The image in the service of the revolution* » (The Publishing Day point) in 2006. He was with André Gunthert co-editor of « *The Art of the photography, from the origins to our days* » (Citadels and Mazenod) in 2007.

BIOGRAPHY

Born in 1971, Alexis Cordesse lives and works in Malakoff, near Paris.

At the age of 20, he travelled to Iraq where he took his first photographs, which were published in the UK in The Independent Magazine. He carried on working for the press for several years as a photo-reporter, in France and abroad (Kurdistan, Afghanistan, Bosnia, etc). His work on Somalia led to his first exhibition in 1992 at the “Visa pour l’Image” festival in Perpignan, France.

Between 1996 and 1998, he worked with Israeli film director Eyal Sivan on a series of short films made from his own photographs and sound recordings. The film Itsembatsemba on the genocide in Rwanda was shown at many festivals around the world, at the Dokumenta XI in Kassel (2002), as well as at the first ICP Triennial of Photography and Video, New York (2003). Alexis went back to Rwanda in 2004 for French national daily Libération to work on a project entitled l’Aveu (“The Confession”), a series of portraits and interviews of genocide perpetrators.

His photographic work also focuses on social issues in France. Together with employees on strike at a factory owned by the food giant Danone, he made Du Beau Travail ! (“Good Work!”), an installation combining photography and sound which was shown in France and Belgium. Following an invitation to participate in the “Clichy sans cliché” project (“Clichy Beyond the Clichés”), he worked with the residents of a housing estate in this suburb of Paris where the 2005 riots broke out. A book was subsequently published by Delpire edition and an exhibition was put on in Clichy as well as in the Paris Town Hall (2006).

Since 2009, Alexis has been travelling regularly to the Middle-East to complete Border Lines. This project was awarded Lucien & Rodolf Herve Prize (2010) and Arcimboldo Prize (2011), and was exhibited in Paris as part of the “Month of Photography” (2010) and at the Artotheque in Caen (2012).

Alexis Cordesse
Border Lines



The Green Line, Limite between East and West Jerusalem, Israel – occupied territories, 2009

C-Print

55 x 197 cm

Edition of 9 + 2 AP



Border Lines

Salah Ad-Din Street, East Jerusalem, Occupied Territories, 2009

C-Print

55 x 269 cm

Edition of 9 + 2 AP



Interior Wall

Separation wall between Moshav Nir Tzvi and the arab quarter of Pardes Snir, Lod, Israel, 2010

C-Print

80 x 289,6 cm

Edition of 9 + 2 AP

Ezra Nahmad
Without/ Sans

In the small territory of Israel and Palestine, borders are forever changing. A conspicuous presence, they control all movement, and often need to be crossed several times a day. The more constraining they are, the more people try to forget them, because they mean risk, war and confusion. Not only are they an invasive space, a blot on the landscape, they are also the visible signs of history, something you experience in your everyday life but can never clearly grasp as they undergo innumerable shifts and alterations. When you walk along the borders, all the contiguous barriers that divide the Israeli and Palestinian territories, you sense how risk transforms even the light, how in order to feel the passing breeze or to smell the perfume of wild sage, you must fight against anxiety. You look around and you feel that you are being watched, perhaps even targeted; you walk and you realize that in not driving, you are doing what nobody does anymore, and loneliness engulfs you. You see constructions everywhere, bulldozers and buildings, but only a few people. Everything is naked. Noise and activity bring only emptiness, and you understand how this accomplishment, this landscape emerges as if from something already withdrawn, sealed and inaccessible. Like imitations of life rather than life itself. And from these whims of fate you make photographs, because photography is precisely about night and history and chance, about seclusion, bareness, anxiety, and puzzling certitudes. The touch of the wind, the dusty scent of wild sage.

BIOGRAPHY

My parents are Egyptian ; my family is originally from Aleppo, Istanbul, Morocco, and Italy. As for myself, I was born in Israel and grew up there until I was ten. I had a happy childhood. When I was little, I was accustomed to hearing three languages at home. The sea was my daily horizon for a long time and then at ten I left for Paris by boat with my family.

I went to a lycée in Paris in the 19th district. I lived in a sixth floor walk up in Ménilmontant. When I'd do my homework, I'd look out and see all of Paris from my sixth floor vantage point.

Later on, as an adolescent, I was absolutely crazy about the movies. I spent a lot of time in movie theaters ; I used to draw and do collages. All of this, of course, was after my baccalaureate.

I went back to Israel because my parents no longer wanted to stay in Paris. I lived there for another 5 years and enrolled at the university without much enthusiasm. I became a political activist. But I didn't feel comfortable and decided to return to Europe. I intended to go to Paris, but I stopped in Italy, in Florence, for ten years. There I studied Art History and began to paint and exhibit my work.

After my Masters degree (my thesis advisor was an art historian and poet), I began my work as an editor, translator and author of monographs published for major Italian museums.

I still like languages. After this long stay in Italy, I went back to Paris to continue painting and working in journalism as a critic. I have regularly participated in or set up educational projects ; I like sharing my experience with amateurs in all kinds of fields.

As of now, I'm photographing and still writing on photography as a critic (I use a pseudonym). I live in Paris and the Loire valley, near Angers.

