

STAN DOUGLAS. ABANDONMENT AND SPLENDOUR

Exhibition from September 26, 2013 to January 17, 2014

Vernissage, Wednesday, September 25, 2013, 6 p.m. (last admission: 8:30 p.m.)

Visit the exhibition in the artist's presence at 5 p.m. (reservations required: 01 44 43 21 48)

Curator: Catherine Bédard

A retrospective look at the photographic work produced by Stan Douglas in the last decade of the twentieth century, *Abandonment and Splendour* explores the ruins of certain great Western utopias in their paradoxical beauty.



Michigan Theater, de la série *Detroit Photos*, 1999, avec l'aimable autorisation de l'artiste et de la David Zwirner Gallery NYC, London

The exhibition focused on four series haunted by a history between light and shadow that the image does not explain but evokes with the poetic suspense that is the artist's hallmark. The presence of colonial empires in indigenous territories in the very west of Canada, the application of reforming community models and their transformation (a Ruskinian colony that had given its name to an industrial region of British Columbia; the allotments, or "Schrebergärten", of Potsdam), the idea of progress and the modernist ideal are some of the issues that appear in these projects which Stan Douglas reframes historically and subjectively. The artist takes an interest in disused, deserted, forgotten places that bear inside them the memory of history and the profound marks that it left on the local history of disappeared communities.

While the photographs of *Ruskin Photos*, *Potsdamer Schrebergärten*, *Nootka Sound* and *Detroit Photos* are intimately tied to film and video installations based on these places, they also collectively comprise a mysterious and unsettling representation of the power and opacity of the image. *Abandonment and Splendour*

brings together thirty-six works produced in the 1990s. It chooses to confront the viewer with the most silent part of an oeuvre that deploys itself elsewhere in the moving image and sound. Separated from the installations that they often accompany, Stan Douglas' photographs here display their own density, at a remove from the narrative of the installation. From this ensemble emerges a disturbing splendour fictitiously devoid of any presence other than that of the artist.

Stan Douglas lives in Vancouver. A major figure in contemporary art, he produces films, photographs and installations in which past and present are condensed in complex systems that borrow as much from Hollywood and television, as they do from literature, music and philosophy. His works have been presented as part of many group exhibitions including Documenta IX, X and XI in Kassel (1992, 1997, 2002) and three Venice Biennales (1990, 2001, 2005). His most recent exhibitions have been held at the ZKM/ Museum für Neue Kunst, Karlsruhe (*Fast Forward 2: The Power of Motion*, 2010), Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York (*Haunted: Contemporary Photography/Video/Performance*, 2010), International Center of Photography, New York (*3rd ICP Triennial of Photography and Video: Dress Codes*, 2009 and *Archive Fever: Uses of the Document in Contemporary Art*, 2008), and Hirshhorn Museum and Sculpture Garden, Washington, D.C. (*The Cinema Effect: Illusion*).

Le Carré d'Art – Musée d'Art Contemporain de Nîmes presents the exhibition Stan Douglas from October 12, 2013 to January 26, 2014, in partnership with the Canadian Cultural Centre.

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