



Alexander Odermatt, *Illicit work*, de la série *Maroc (System Research #4)*, 2005-2007

" The pictures I made between 1978 and 1982 showed me some paths I could take... how I could work in real places on themes derived for the most part from my own experiences, remembered and reconstructed. I guess that was the start of what I came to call my 'near documentary' pictures. I also think of those pictures as having a Neorealist quality, an affinity with both reportage in photography and the look of the films I liked from the 1950s on."

Jeff Wall, interview with James Rondeau, in *Jeff Wall: Catalogue Raisonné 1978-2004*, Schaulager, Basel, 2005

NEAR DOCUMENTARY

Exhibition of contemporary documentary photography, April 23 - May 3, 2009, organized by association NEAR during Festival Visions du Réel, Nyon (23-29.04.09)



Élisa Larvego, de la série *Sculptures mobiles*, Mexico City, juin 2007

NEAR DOCUMENTARY

Near Documentary, 23.4.-3.5.09, 14h-18h, à la Fondation Esp'Asse, 20 Rte de l'Etraz, Nyon, www.near.li

An exhibition of documentary photography in Nyon organised by NEAR, a swiss association for contemporary photography, from 23th April until 3rd May 2009 in collaboration with Vision du Réel (23-29th April).

With: Emmanuelle Bayart, Aurélien Bergot, Élis Larvego, Pierre-Yves Massot, Gian Paolo Minelli, Alexander Odermatt and Carine Roth.

Near Documentary presents over one hundred recent photographs taken by seven young artists in which they consider various political and social issues in Switzerland and the rest of the world, such as: borders, migration between continents and asylum seekers in Switzerland ; marginalised neighbourhoods, urban mutation and questions of post colonial identity in Latin America...

The title of the exhibition, *Near Documentary*, is taken from an expression by a famous Canadian artist, Jeff wall, used in the sense of "almost documentary". It also allows a play on words: "near" expressing proximity, in particular that which connects each photographer to his subject and also each of us to their representation.

Near Documentary marks the creation of the association NEAR (www.near.li) which promotes contemporary photography.

Curator : Nassim Daghighian, historian of photography, president of NEAR

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Gian Paolo Minelli, #031, de la série *Buenos Aires_Villa Miseria* n°20, 05.03.2009



Gian Paolo Minelli, *Maxi y Alejandra*, de la série *Buenos Aires_Villa Miseria* n°20, 05.03.2009

NEAR DOCUMENTARY

Closer to the real

Documentary photography, by its very nature, is called upon to question the complex relationship between the real and its representations. The photographers, like all artists working with this approach, are not satisfied to merely record the world as it is. As well as being interested in the situations that they observe, they are also concerned by how they can be portrayed in their photographs. Representing the real in a personal way, that simultaneously generates reflection, is one of the challenges of documentary.

The photographers exhibiting in *Near Documentary* are not united by a common theme. They deal with diverse current issues: relating to cultural, social and political spheres, these issues are all connected to economic parameters and to individual as well as collective history. These topics are represented in the media in a stereotyped fashion, or, quite frequently, not made known to the public at large. With creativity and economy of means, the photographers use the fixed image and text to bring sometimes dramatic situations to our attention, without claiming to have found a solution. The difficulty facing the artist is this: how can one take sides on an ethical and aesthetic level when the means of direct action in the world seem limited? The documentary photographers invite us not to abandon the sphere of the real to the media and to confront it with a critical mind.

The title of the exhibition, *Near Documentary*, is taken from an expression by a famous Canadian artist, Jeff wall, used in the sense of "almost documentary". Wall is particularly interested in the ambiguity between the imagined, constructed image and the documentary image which takes the real as its starting point. In his work, the *mise-en scène* of the "near documentary" photographs are close to the reality experienced by the artist or by the characters represented in them playing their own role, as in neo-realist cinema. For Wall, the aesthetic of a work of art is as important as the theme treated by the artist: "to be understood, grasped by the spectator, a subject which is meaningful demands a good image." The title of the exhibition also allows a play on words: "near" expressing proximity, in particular that which connects each photographer to his subject and also each of us to their representation.

The photographers of *Near Documentary* speak to us about their concerns with strong images to make us think and react.

Nassim Daghighian, photography historian, exhibition curator for NEAR.

NEAR DOCUMENTARY

Overview of the exposition

Emmanuelle Bayart, *Dans le labyrinthe du métro*, Mexico, 2008 :

This series reveals the omnipresence of cultural representations from Mexico's complex past in metro stations in the capital and it questions the identity of a mixed-race society.

Aurélien Bergot, *Coalition*, Genève, 2007 ; *Nations*, Genève, 2008 ; *Rétention*, 2008 :

Coalition and *Nations* are two series devoted to façades and barriers of the permanent missions of the UN in Geneva; *Retention* is a diptych about the question of asylum in Switzerland.

Élisa Larvego, *Sculptures mobiles* Mexico, 2007 ; *Juxtaposition*, Mexico, 2007 :

Mobile Sculptures is a series of still lifes which portray their owners, the street hawkers, combined with the series *Juxtaposition* of urban views which take up the idea of packaging.

Gian Paolo Minelli, *Buenos Aires_ Villa Miseria n°20*, 2008-2009 :

In his recent images of Argentina, the photographer associates portraits of young people from marginalised neighbourhoods with views of their everyday urban environment.

Alexander Odermatt, *Maroc (System Research #4)*, 2005-2007 :

Morocco, a melting pot of migration has a no man's land zone "without image", a real challenge for a documentary photographer.

Pierre-Yves Massot, *Nouvelles lois # 1, Urgence*, 2007-2009 :

New Laws #1, Emergency treats the right to asylum in Switzerland and the everyday problems of emergency aid in different cantons through stark images of places and objects.

Carine Roth, *Nouvelles lois # 2*, 2007-2009 :

New Laws #2, presents a personal vision evoking the psychological violence experienced by asylum seekers and the reality of emergency aid centres.

Event

Meeting with the photographers: Saturday 25th April at 4pm.

Organisation



Partenaires

Avec le soutien de la


MIGROS
 pour-cent culturel

photo**rotation**
Laboratoire photographique professionnel Genève

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Overview of the exposition



Emmanuelle Bayart, *Dans le labyrinthe du métro*, 2008



Aurélien Bergot, *Coalition*, 2007 ; *Nations*, 2008



Élisa Larvego, *Sculptures mobiles* ; *Juxtaposition*, 2007



G.P. Minelli, *Buenos Aires_Villa Miseria n°20*, 2008-2009



Alexander Odermatt, *Maroc*, 2005-2007



Pierre-Yves Massot, *Nouvelles lois # 1, Urgence*, 2007-2009



Carine Roth, *Nouvelles lois # 2*, 2007-2009