



Hemauer | Keller

UNITED ALTERNATIVE ENERGIES



Christina Hemauer | Roman Keller

INTRODUCTION

Latitudes (Max Andrews & Mariana Cánepa Luna)

The art of Christina Hemauer and Roman Keller attempts to make sense of the loss of ideologies – in particular those of socialism, modernism, and environmentalism – which themselves once made sense of the world in terms of conviction, choice and sacrifice. The artists take up this particular thorny question of ideology through their research-based and interdisciplinary art practice neither with recourse to a condition of mourning, nor with a sense that the making and receiving of art should be restricted to a kind of goodwill gesture. Likewise they revisit forms of ideological expression, such as the manifesto speech (as witnessed by the performance *Postpetrolism Was Heralded Here...*, 2006–11) and the workers' song (the *Postpetrolistic Internationale*, 2008–ongoing) not to fetishize them, nor to mock them, but with the full disclosure that the hard rhetoric of revolution has largely been stripped of its traction in affluent societies. Despite this, the difficult questions that arise when consequence and responsibility demand to be linked to real action, as well as thought, are ones which are not going to go away any time soon. Certainly not least while a purported radical 'political' position is frequently claimed quite cavalierly by artists and exhibitions alike.

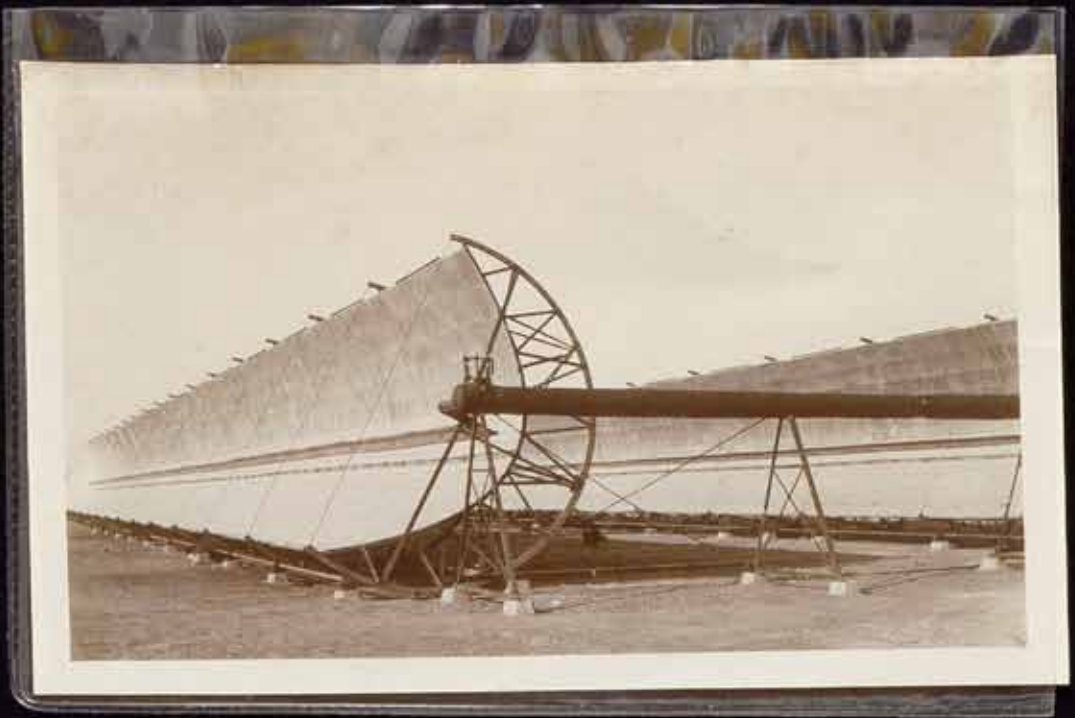
Hemauer | Keller are undoubtedly highly wary of issuing straightforward critique or criticism. However, they offer the conditions for the analysis of evidence and criticality at the same time as their apparent inverse – unquestioning faith. They deal with the veracity of science and the vicissitudes of geopolitics in their investigations into the history of power generation, yet other works are concerned with manifestations of energy even less visible than electricity – the power of religious piety (*Devotional Power*, 2010) as well as the belief and practice of interpreting 'earth energy' (with *From the Series Free Speech – Free Energy: Me, The Cosmos and The United Nations*, 2007, and *Energetic Cleaning*, 2007–11). Similarly, the tenor of their work could be located between two seemingly irreconcilable poles of art practice – wry humor and dry earnestness. At the latter cardinal point, the shamanistic seriousness exemplified Joseph Beuys, whose engagement with ecology is rather unavoidable

in this Mitteleuropean context.¹ Active from the early 1960s until his death in 1986, Joseph Beuys is often celebrated as a founding father of so-called 'eco-art', as well as being one of the founders of the Green Party in Germany. Yet maintaining that Beuys' strategic vision could still have efficacy in today's world would not only be politically disastrous, but artistically irrelevant. The charismatic Beuys adopted a persona with a mystical relation to an allegorized non-human world. This was typified by his belief that he spoke for animals "that cannot speak for themselves".² Such statements that claim special authority based on the premise that some people (i.e. Beuys himself, wilderness-focussed environmentalists, etc.) somehow know what nature wants seem acutely problematic today.

Hemauer | Keller's work avoids the literal-sclerosis of both the narratives of nature-ventriloquism, duty and guardianship peddled by 'eco-art' on the one hand, and also the recourse to naked activism on the other. The artists do not work in an oppositional mode, but instead operate, as the title of the present exhibition suggests, through presenting or (re)uniting alternatives, or to paraphrase U.S. President Jimmy Carter's prescient 1979 speech about oil dependency that is the subject of the artists' documentary of the same name, by exploring "road[s] not taken". Energy innovations that were not exploited, opportunities missed, and situations where society, like a driver who, knowing he has missed his exit from a highway, accelerates in the wrong direction in the hope of another turning, become the points of articulation in Hemauer | Keller's work – not necessarily the breakthroughs. In this light several of the artists' works explore micro-histories in the development of alternative (i.e. not fossil-fuel) energies. The story of the stillbirth of the world's first commercial solar thermal power station dating as far back as 1913, for example. Looking back

1: And at the other pole, perhaps one could locate the humor-filled, deceptively unpretentious work of Peter Fischli & David Weiss, another Zürich-based artist duo.

2: "I speak for the hares that cannot speak for themselves", Beuys in 'Interview with Willoughby Sharp' (1969) in Carin Kuoni, *Joseph Beuys in America: Energy Plan for the Western Man, Four Walls Eight Windows*, 1990, p. 82.



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فرانك شومان ١٩١٤

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Frank Shuman 1914

at such points diachronically, Hemauer | Keller's strategy of reconstructing or re-enacting them in the present supplants the avant-garde language of boundary-breaking, and an entrenched logic based on ascending growth and relentless progress. In parallel they map such movements alongside an understanding of the major forces modern art history from the point of view of the effects of petroleum-power's dictatorship of the global economy for the past century.

How does abstraction or the Readymade seem from the perspective of a fossilized tree? Or more prosaically, what does it mean that the defining financial impetus for modern art in America – the Guggenheim, the Rockefeller and the de Menil fortunes, for example – derived directly from mineral and oil exploitation? A 'classic' trajectory of art's primary relation to ideology might arise with the historical avant-gardes of the 1920s and end with the effective collapse of socialism in 1989. Although it is not offered without a dose of humor in the very act of issuing a manifesto, Hemauer | Keller's proposal for refashioning recent history of art in terms of 'petrolism' (and its anticipated future in terms of 'post-petrolism') presents a twist on this ideological or ethical history and condemns modernism as being inseparably intertwined with industrialization and, as the manifesto describes "the option of disposing of energy in nearly unlimited amounts".

Predating the upheavals in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe of 1989, it is the so-called first and second oil crises of 1973 and 1979 which more profoundly mark recent petrolistic history. It is not so much as a collapse of a political system that was encapsulated by the latter events but something of a pre-emptive coup – or rehearsal – by an economic one. As the scarcity of oil was fabricated and its value simultaneously artificially raised, the immense profits that were realized by the petroleum industry flowed into international banks and stock markets while safeguarding the oil barrel and the dollar as the world's key economic indicators. This new economic paradigm based on the trading of virtual capital – and on information, knowledge and communication – took place alongside an effective uncoupling from actual

commodities and manufacturing per se. In an apparently coincidental move, the autonomous modernist object was being discredited alongside the emergence and monetization of conceptual 'immaterial' art.³ Hemauer | Keller's aforementioned documentary film *A Road Not Taken* (2010) allegorizes the status of this dual physical loss and simultaneous transfer into enhanced symbolic currency. Focussing on the solar panels which President Carter installed on the roof of the West Wing of the White House, only to be taken down by President Regan seven years later, the film records their recovery and (although Carter had feared them merely becoming "museum pieces") constitutes their re-evaluation through art action as symbols and talismans for a re-invigorated debate about energy policy and political consequence. In spite of successive administrations' insistence that the presence, or otherwise, of solar panels on the roof of the most famous residence in the world was merely a matter of an individual household's economy, the star of the documentary is not the panels themselves but what they continue to represent.

"Happiness is wastefulness ... we must find new ways to waste", declares the Postpetrolistic Internationale. What can this mean for so-called 'ecoaesthetics', the subject of 2011's programming at the Aarhus Art Building of which Hemauer | Keller's exhibition forms a part? The artists reject the mindset of restrictions, fears, limits and prevention which single-mindedly sees society's ills as the consequence of too much growth, rather than not enough of the right kind of growth. In 2011 climate change has arguably already 'gone mainstream' as cultural and political agenda, no longer cast as a purely 'green' concern. Alongside this, with the inundation and proliferation of personal, corporate and governmental positions, Hemauer | Keller's practice continues to ask what the role of art is, and how and what it can achieve, by balancing humor and seriousness, detachment and engagement.

3: See Natascha Sadr Haghighian, 'Not About Oil', in Max Andrews (ed.), *Land, Art: A Cultural Ecology Handbook*, RSA/Arts Council England, 2005.

Ved åbningen af *United Alternative Energies*-udstillingen bliver der lavet en performance i form af en tale fremført af skuespilleren Thue Ersted Rasmussen, et manifest, "der indvarsler et nyt kapitel af kunsthistorien – kunst efter oliens tidsalder". Denne nye version af erklæringen genfremfører en tale, der blev holdt af skuespilleren Jesko Stubbe ved et udendørsarrangement, som Hemauer | Keller organiserede for Kunsthof Zürich den 27. april 2006. Efter talen gennemføres der flere forskellige festlige 'postpetrolistiske' aktioner, blandt andet en præsentation af soldrevne musikinstrumenter. En lille plakette markerer manifestets lancering i Aarhus og overgangen fra én energi-æra til en anden hinsides olie.

The Postpetrolism Manifesto-talen omfatter tre dele – en overordnet gennemgang af velstandsfordelingen og klimaforandringerne, de afgørende øjeblikke i udnyttelsen af fossile brændstoffer og deres medfølgende økonomiske modeller og endelig selve manifestet med afsæt i en tiltro til teknologiens og især kunstens evne til at udløse banebrydende visioner og "finde nye muligheder for ekstravagant forbrug". Med en formulering fra geofysikeren Kenneth S. Deffeyes insisterer manifestet på, at "vi i dag bør stoppe op og prise os lykkelige for årene fra 1901 til 2005, hvor enorme forekomster af olie og naturgas muliggjorde store forandringer i vores samfund. Men sådan er det ikke længere, og nu er det på tide at se en ny virkelighed i øjnene".

POSTPETROLISM WAS HERALDED HERE...

(2006-2011)

Tale (ca. 25 min.), talerstol, klokke, trykt manifest, plakette.
Speech (c. 25 min.), lectern, bell, printed manifesto, plaque.

At the opening of the *United Alternative Energies* exhibition a performance took place in the form of a speech delivered by actor Thue Ersted Rasmussen, the proclamation of a manifesto "in order to open a new chapter in the history of art – art in the age after mineral oil". This new version of the declaration restated the speech delivered by actor Jesko Stubbe at an outdoor event which Hemauer | Keller organised for the Kunsthof Zürich art space on 27 April 2006. After the speech several 'postpetrolistic' actions took place during festivities, including the demonstration of solar-powered musical instruments. A small plaque marks the launch of the manifesto in Aarhus and the transition from one energy era to another beyond petroleum.

The Postpetrolism Manifesto speech encompasses three parts – an overview of the contexts of wealth distribution and climate change; key moments in the exploitation of fossil fuels and their accompanying economic models; and the manifesto itself, rooted in an appeal to technology, and especially to art, to trigger pioneering visions and to "seek new opportunities for extravagant consumption". In the words of geoscientist Kenneth S. Deffeyes, the manifesto insists that, "today we should take a short pause and be thankful for the years 1901 to 2005, when oil and natural gas in abundance enabled great changes in our society. But now the time has arrived to face a new reality".



“For næste generation vil denne solfanger enten være et kuriosum, et museumsstykke, et eksempel på en vej, man valgte ikke at gå, eller en lille del af et af de største og mest spændende eventyr, det amerikanske folk nogensinde har begivet sig ud på – forsøget på at udnytte solens energi til at berige vores liv, idet vi bevæger os væk fra vores lammende afhængighed af udenlandsk olie.” Den 20. juni 1979 indviede præsident Jimmy Carter med disse ord solenergianlægget på taget af vestfløjen af Det Hvide Hus. I samme forbindelse annoncerede han en række forbundsstatslige initiativer med henblik på at sikre, at 20 % af det amerikanske energiforbrug ville være dækket af vedvarende energikilder i år 2000.

Dette prestigeprojekt blev imidlertid næsten helt overskygget af gidseldramaet i Iran blot få måneder efter Carters tale, og hans efterfølger på præsidentposten, forkæmperen for de frie markeds kræfter, Ronald Reagan, fik afmonteret solfangerne, da taget blev renoveret syv år senere. *A Road Not Taken* er et dokumentarisk filmessay, der følger Hemauer & Keller under deres forsøg på at lokalisere solfangerne, som de fandt på taget af et cafeteria på et miljøvenligt college i Maine – hvor de havde været i brug fra 1992 til 2005 – og under deres efterfølgende road trip med to af solfangerne fastspændt på taget af en pick-up truck, der kørte på vegetabilsk olie. Carters fik delvis ret i sin advarsel, idet to af solfangerne faktisk er endt på et museum: Kunstnerne forærede den ene af dem til The Jimmy Carter Library & Museum i Atlanta og den anden til The National Museum of American History i Washington. Men hvordan kan man forstå Carters fremsynethed og hans fejlslagne ambitioner i dag? Kunstnerne opsporer de samtidige genklange, de politiske og historiske ekkoer, af dette stort set glemte kapitel af amerikansk politik gennem interviews med de involverede – deriblandt præsident Carter selv.

A ROAD NOT TAKEN

(2010)

HD video, 66 min.

HD video, 66 min.

“A generation from now, this solar heater can either be a curiosity, a museum piece, an example of a road not taken, or it can be just a small part of one of the greatest and most exciting adventures ever undertaken by the American people – harnessing the power of the sun to enrich our lives as we move away from our crippling dependence on foreign oil.” On 20 June 1979, US President Jimmy Carter inaugurated the installation of solar panels on the roof of the West Wing of the White House with these words and announced federal initiatives intended to secure that 20 percent of American energy would come from renewable sources by the year 2000.

The showcase energy programme was largely overshadowed by the Iranian hostage crisis just a few months after Carter’s speech, and his successor, free-market champion Ronald Reagan, had the panels dismantled while the roof was being repaired seven years later. *A Road Not Taken* is a documentary film essay which follows Hemauer | Keller as they locate the panels on an environmentally-minded college’s cafeteria roof in Maine – where they had been functioning from 1992 until 2005 – and their subsequent road trip with two of the panels strapped to the roof of a vegetable-oil-powered pick-up truck. Carter’s warning was partially correct in that two of the panels are now museum pieces: the artists presented one to the Jimmy Carter Library & Museum in Atlanta and the other to the National Museum of American History, Washington. Yet how can Carter’s long-sightedness, and the failure of his ambitions, be understood over thirty years later? The artists trace the contemporary resonances, the political and historical echoes, of this largely forgotten episode in American policy through interviews with those involved – including with President Carter himself.



Energetic Cleaning – som blev realiseret for første gang i 2007 på Centre of Contemporary Art i Fribourg i Schweiz – har forbindelse til geobiologiens og 'jordhistoriens' sandheder og forestillinger. Man kan lytte til et lydspor på en bærbar MP3-afspiller, mens man udforsker udstillingen. Denne alternative galleri-guide består af en optagelse af geobiologen Ken Otto Niensens beskrivelse af energiforureningen i Århus Kunstbyggnings lokaler. Teknikkerne til måling og vurdering af energi samt metoderne til at fjerne de forskellige negative energier bliver forklaret indgående.

ENERGETIC CLEANING

(2007-11)

Lydspor på fem uafhængige, bærbare MP3-afspillere med hovedtelefoner og bjergkrystaller.
Audio on five independent portable MP3 players with headphones and rock crystals.

Realised for the first time in 2007 at the Centre of Contemporary Art in Fribourg, Switzerland, *Energetic Cleaning* is related to the truths or beliefs of geobiology and 'earth history'. Visitors can listen to an audio track using portable MP3 players while they are exploring the exhibition. This alternative gallery guide consists of a recording of geobiologist Ken Otto Nielsen describing the energy pollution present in the galleries of the Aarhus Art Building. Techniques of energy measurement and assessment are detailed and methods used to free the space from the various negative energy entities are explained.



Under installationen af udstillingen blev lokalerne hos Århus Kunstbygning undersøgt for paranormale energi-anomalier – jordstråler – af vandsøgeren Kurt Bertelsen. Teorierne om 'jordenergiernes' virkning, for eksempel Erbst Hartmans (1915–92), har fokuseret på, at Jorden er gennemkrydset af elektromagnetiske energilinjer, et planetarisk gitternet med indvirkning på alle livsformer. Ifølge Hartman løber der enten positivt eller negativt ladede meridianer fra nord til syd og fra øst til vest. Skæringspunkterne er derfor enten positiv-positiv, negativ-negativ eller positiv-negativ, hvilket menes at have forskellig indvirkning på mennesker og dyr i nærheden.

En kobberspiral, der menes at forstærke energifelterne i jorden, er ophængt i galleriloftet på det punkt, der vurderes at have størst energimæssig resonans, og herunder har man lagt en marmorplade på gulvet. Marmorpladen består af samme mørkegrønne stenart, som er brugt til podiet i den store mødesal i FN-bygningen i New York. Spiralen og pladen er ledsaget af en mikrofon, som er tilsluttet en guitarforstærker, og de besøgende tilskyndes til at holde en tale fra denne særligt energiladede position. Grundlaget for værket er parallelt med et verdenssyn, som er helt anderledes end mainstream-videnskaben, og Hemauer | Keller opfordrer os til at drage vores egne konklusioner om denne overnaturlige opfattelse af Jorden i sammenhæng med forestillinger om miljøansvar.

FROM THE SERIES FREE SPEECH – FREE ENERGY: ME, THE COSMOS AND THE UNITED NATIONS

(2007)

'Energi-spiral' (1×1×2m), grøn marmor, kobber og filt, mikrofon, stativ og guitarforstærker.
'Energy spiral' (1×1×2m), green marble, copper and felt, microphone, stand and guitar amplifier.

During the installation of the exhibition, the rooms of the Aarhus Art Building were inspected for paranormal energetic anomalies – earth radiation – through the use of divining rods by dowser Kurt Bertelsen. Theories studying of the influence of 'earth energies' such as that proposed by Erbst Hartman (1915–92) have focussed on an understanding of the Earth as being criss-crossed by lines of electromagnetic energy, a planetary grid which influences all forms of life. According to Hartman, charged meridians run from North to South, and from East to West, with lines either positively or negatively charged. The intersecting points are therefore either positive-positive, negative-negative, or one positive and one negative, and are said to differently effect humans and animals in their proximity.

A copper spiral intended to enhance earth energy fields has been suspended from the gallery ceiling at a point deemed to be the most energetically resonant and a marble platform laid on the floor beneath. The marble is the same dark green stone as that used for the podium of the United Nations General Assembly hall in New York. The spiral and platform are accompanied by a microphone which is plugged into and guitar amplifier, and visitors are invited to make a speech from this energised spot. The basis of the work is formed alongside a world view which is entirely different from that of mainstream science and Hemauer | Keller invite us to make our own conclusions about a supernatural concept of the Earth in relationship with notions such as environmental stewardship.



Der er blevet raffineret olie i Rotterdam siden 1960'erne. Her ligger Europas kapacitetsmæssigt største olieraffinaderi, som ejes af Royal Dutch Shell, ved siden af fire andre olieselskabers faciliteter. Dette vældige energicentrum og det forhold, at Schweiz er direkte forbundet med Rotterdam i form af olieimport via Rhinen til Basel (tæt på kunstnerens hjemby Zürich) fik Hemauer | Keller til at udvikle *Globalising the Internationale* (2009) i sammenhæng med en række offentlige kommissioner på initiativ fra The Port of Rotterdam Authority. Med udgangspunkt i en modbevægelse fik kunstnerne en olietanker til at transportere en træscene fra Basel til Rotterdam og fulgte så dens sejlads på Rhinen. Det dannede baggrund for projektets kulmination den 7. og 8. november 2009. To professionelle kor opførte *Postpetrolistic Internationale*, en polyfonisk korhymne skrevet af kunstnerne i samarbejde med Mathias Vetter i 2008. Det første kor sang på kajen i nærheden af havnemuseet i Rotterdams maritime hjerte, og det andet sang på Maasvlakte (et kunstigt havneområde i Nordsøen) med E.ON's kulfyrede kraftværk som baggrund. Inspireret af gribende socialistiske slagsange problematiserer kunstnerens sangtekst vores villighed til at se fremtidens energimæssige udfordringer i øjnene i lyset af udtømte ressourcer og overdrevet samfundsforbrug. "Happiness is wastefulness" ægger hymnens sarkastiske omkvæd med følelsesmæssige genklange fra kunstnerens *Postpetrolism Manifesto*.

The Postpetrolistic Internationale opføres af et kor ved åbningen af *United Alternative Energies*-udstillingen, hvor Hemauer | Keller præsenterer en videodokumentation af scenens Rhin-rejse og kor-opførelserne i Rotterdam og Aarhus ved siden af selve scenen med partiturer og inviterer gæsterne til selv at opføre dette håb i aktion-hymne. Partituret er også gengivet på denne publikations midtersider.

GLOBALISING THE INTERNATIONALE

(2009 og frem)

Træscene på hjul, (6×3×1 m), fire højtalere, HD video (ca. 25 min.).

Wooden stage on wheels, (6×3×1m), four loudspeakers, HD video (c. 25 min.).

Oil has been processed in the port of Rotterdam, the Netherlands, since the 1960s and Europe's highest capacity refinery, owned by Royal Dutch Shell, operates there alongside the facilities of four other companies. The context of this formidable powerhouse, and the fact that Switzerland has a direct link to Rotterdam by importing oil along the Rhine from Basel (close to the artists' home town of Zürich) led Hemauer | Keller to develop *Globalising the Internationale* (2009) in the context of a series of public commissions initiated by the Port of Rotterdam Authority. Starting with a counter-movement, the artists arranged for an oil tanker to transport a wooden stage from Basel to Rotterdam and followed its progress along the Rhine. This provided the setting for the project's culmination on the 7th and 8th November 2009. Two professional choirs gave public performances of the *Postpetrolistic Internationale* a polyphonic choral anthem written by the artists with Mathias Vetter in 2008. The first choir sang quayside in Rotterdam's maritime heart near the Havenmuseum (Harbor Museum) and the second on the Maasvlakte (port land constructed in the North Sea) with E.ON's coal-fired power station as a backdrop. Inspired by rousing socialist songs, the artists' lyrics question and provoke our willingness to face future energy challenges in the light of resource exhaustion and societal excess. "Happiness is wastefulness" incites the anthem's caustic refrain, echoing the sentiments of the artists' *Postpetrolism Manifesto*.

The Postpetrolistic Internationale was performed by a choir at the opening of the *United Alternative Energies* and in the exhibition Hemauer | Keller present a video document of the stage's Rhine journey and the Rotterdam and Aarhus choral events, alongside the stage itself with music scores and the invitation for visitors to perform the aspirational anthem of hope-in-action themselves. The score is also reproduced in this publication in the 'choral octavo' centre pages.

THE POSTPETROLISTIC INTERNATIONALE





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[...] One thing I feel sure of, and that is that the human race
must finally utilize direct sun power or revert to barbarism.
Frank Shuman 1914

I 1913 indviede den amerikanske opfinder og forretningsmand Frank Shuman (1862-1918) verdens første industrielle solenergi-generator i Maadi uden for Kairo. Med økonomisk støtte fra de britiske kolonimyndigheder, som var opsat på at styrke Imperiets kontrol over Ægypten ved at opgradere landets kunstvandings-infrastruktur, byggede Shuman anlægget udelukkende med lokale materialer. Han udviklede et system med fem 60 meter lange parabol-spejle og en mekanisme, der hele tiden holdt dem i den mest effektive vinkel på solstrålerne, som blev reflekteret ned på vandfyldte kasser for derved at skabe et lavt damptryk, der drev turbinerne. Energien blev brugt til at drive en motor, der kunne pumpe 20.000 liter vand i minuttet fra Nilen og op til de tilgrænsende bomuldsmarker højere i terrænet. Det var en eklatant succes, og anlægget viste sig at være mere økonomisk fordelagtigt end kulkraftværker med tilsvarende kapacitet. Shuman, som var blevet ret berømt for sit anlæg, udtænkte endnu et storstilet solenergianlæg i Sahara-ørkenen, som ville kunne producere lige så stor energi som det samlede brændstofforbrug i hele verden i 1909, mente han. Alle hans planer blev imidlertid forpurret af krigsudbruddet i 1914, og det banebrydende anlæg i Kairo blev solgt som skrot efter blot ét års drift. Efter opdagelsen af umådelige olieforekomster og masseudvindingen heraf i 1910'erne i netop de varme, tørre områder, der ellers ville have været perfekt egnede til opsamling af solenergi, lå såvel solenergien som Shumans teknologiske fremskridt stort set i dvale helt frem til 1970'erne.

Hemauer | Keller samarbejdede med lokale håndværkere om at rekonstruere to fragmenter af dette sindrige anlæg til Cairo International Biennale, og denne skulpturelle struktur blev udstillet uden for The Palace of Arts. Stedet, hvor kraftværket havde ligget, var nu omgivet af forstadsbyggeri og højhuse. Her præsenterede de et vægmaleri med et citat fra Shuman, historisk dokumentation og en informationsbod, hvor lokale beboere og tilfældigt forbigående kunne gå på opdagelse i og bidrage til historien om dette nøglepunkt i den alternative energis historie.

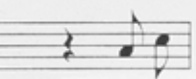
N°1 SUN ENGINE

(2008-09)

Video-projektion og LCD-monitor (20 min.) med hovedtelefoner. Fire indrammede fotografier fra 1913.
Video projection and LCD monitor (20 min.) with headphones. Four framed photographs from 1913.

In 1913, Philadelphia inventor and businessman Frank Shuman (1862–1918) inaugurated the world's first commercial-scale solar thermal generator in Maadi, near Cairo, Egypt. With the backing of the British colonial powers, who were keen to strengthen the Empire's control over the country by upgrading its irrigation infrastructure, Shuman built the plant from scratch using local materials. He developed a system which used five 60 metre-long parabolic mirrors and a mechanism which kept them at the most efficient angle to reflect the sun onto water-filled boxes, creating low-pressure steam which drove turbines. The resultant energy was used to power an engine capable of pumping over 20,000 litres of water per minute from the Nile to irrigate adjacent elevated cotton fields. It was a resounding success and proved economically viable compared to a coal power station of the same capacity. Shuman, now something of an international celebrity, envisioned another solar plant in the Sahara on an ambitious scale, capable of equalling the generating capacity of all the fuel burned around the world in 1909, he believed. Yet all plans were thwarted by the outbreak of World War I, and the pioneering plant was dismantled for scrap metal having only been used for a year. Following the discovery of abundant oil and its mass production in the 1910s in hot dry areas otherwise perfect for gathering sun energy, solar entrepreneurship and Shuman's technological advancements laid largely dormant until the 1970s.

Hemauer | Keller worked with local craftspeople to reconstruct two fragments of this ingenious facility for the Cairo International Biennale, and the sculptural structure was displayed outside the Palace of Arts. At the power station's former site, now surrounded by suburban tower blocks, they presented a wall painting of a quotation by Shuman, historical documentation and an information kiosk where local residents and passers-by could discover and contribute to the story of a key site in the history of alternative energy.



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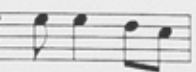
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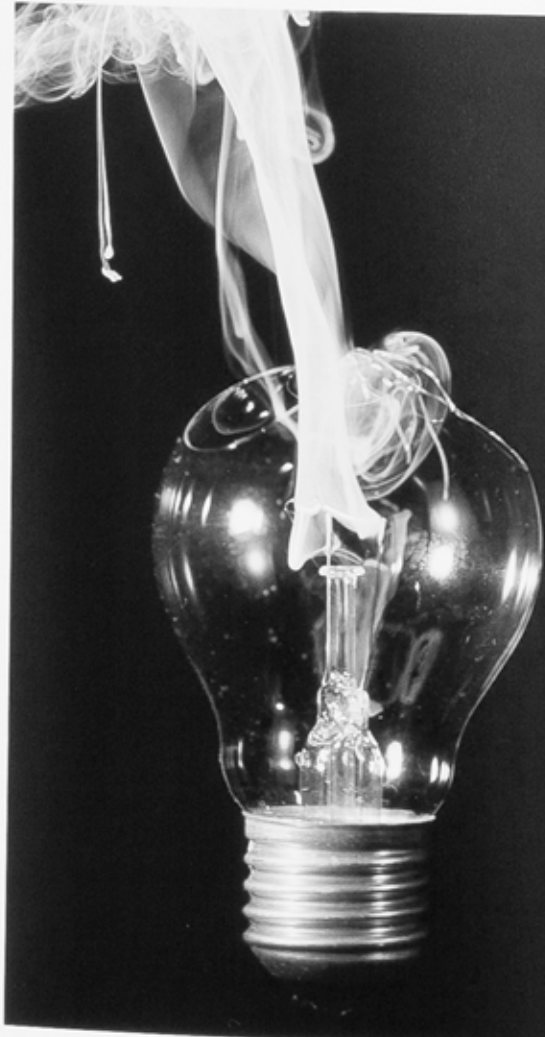
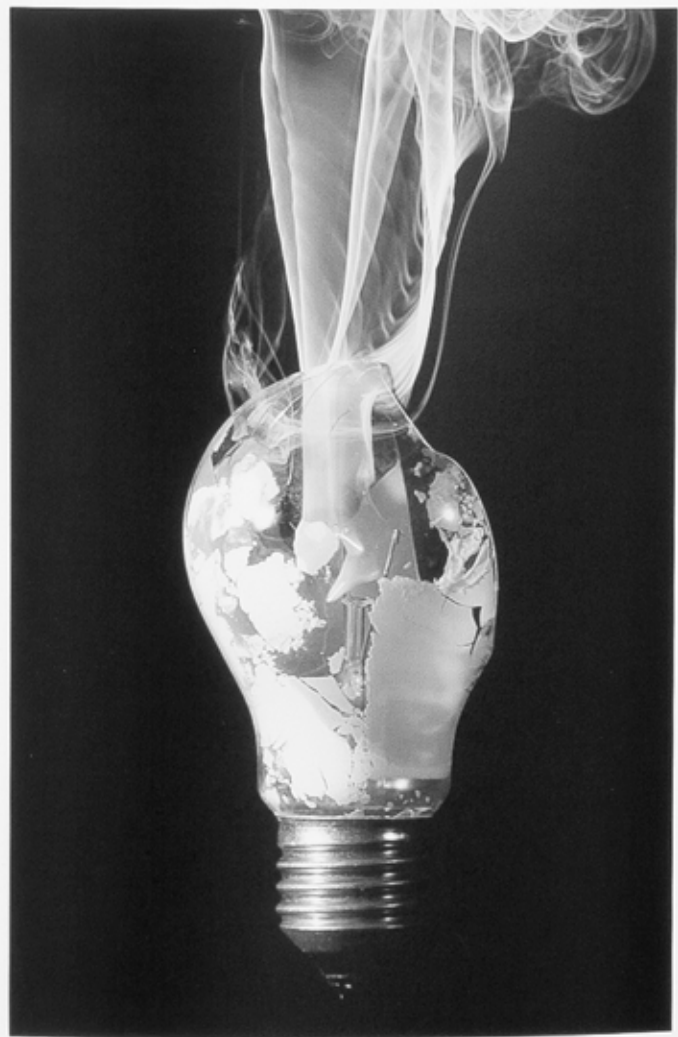
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Den slowmotion-film, der udgør *End of Life* (2010), blev fremstillet under to offentlige arrangementer i Winterthur i Schweiz, hvor de besøgende fik mulighed for at medbringe deres gamle glødepærer og se dem blive destrueret. De fik til gengæld et fotografi af den udbrændte elpære og mulighed for at købe CFL-pærer eller LED-lamper til rabatpris.

Elpærerne blev kort opvarmet med en bunsenbrænder, hvorefter de blev dypet i koldt vand, hvilket fik dem til at sprænge. Elpærernes glødetråde – som nu ikke længere var beskyttet af en ædel luftart – kom i kontakt med ilten i luften og brændte derfor ud og gik i stykker, når de blev tilsluttet strømmen en sidste gang. Filmen viser de sidste sekunder af elpærernes liv, hvor røgen stiger op fra det knuste glas, idet hver pære skaber sin helt egen, endegyldigt sidste 'performance' som et sidste åndedrag. Hemauer | Keller dokumenterer en hverdagsgenstands forsvinden: En genstand som i sig selv er symbol på en god ide, og som kan siges at have haft større indvirkning på vores samfund end nogen anden opfindelse, selvom den er endog særdeles uøkonomisk, fordi størstedelen af energien frigives i form af uønsket varme frem for det tilsigtede lys. Den gammeldags elpære-teknologi, som Thomas Edison opfandt i 1879, finder man i dag uacceptabelt ineffektiv, og faktisk er myndighederne rundt omkring i verden begyndt at forbyde sådanne elpærer. I EU begyndte udfasningen i september 2009 med stadig strammere effektivitetskrav i de kommende år.

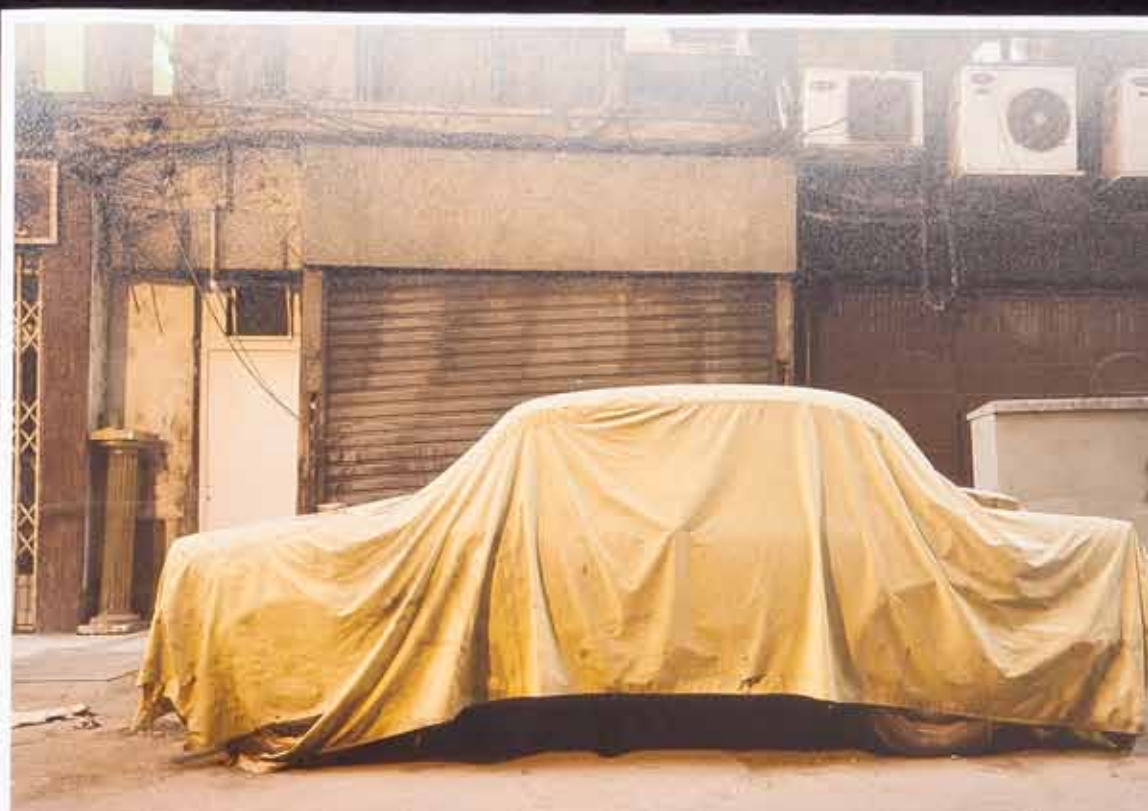
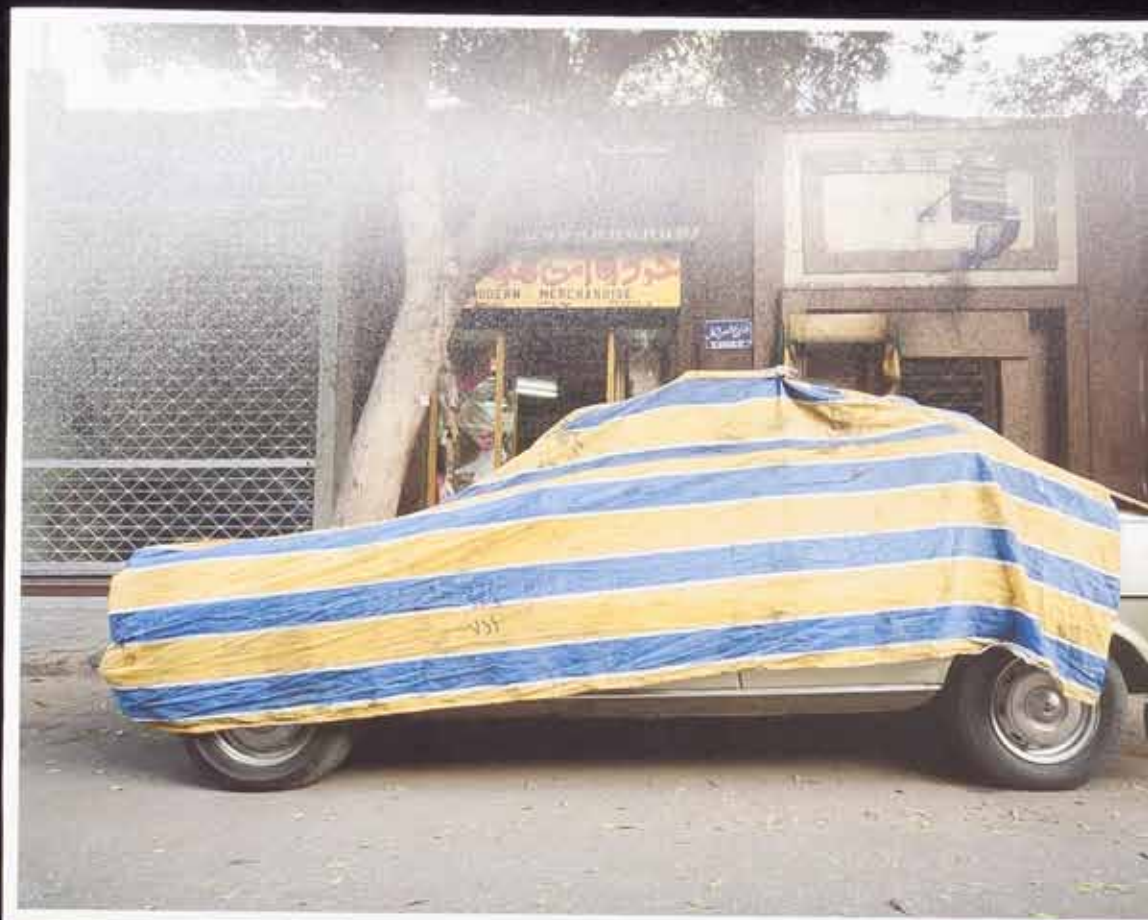
END OF LIFE – CONTRIBUTION TO THE INEFFICIENCY OF POETRY

(2010)

HD video (7 min.) og knuste elpærer.
HD video (7 min.) and broken incandescent bulbs.

The slow-motion film which comprises *End of Life* (2010) was generated during two public events in Winterthur, Switzerland, when visitors were invited to bring their old incandescent bulbs and witness their destruction in exchange for a photograph of the burnt-out bulb and the opportunity to purchase replacement compact florescent lamps (CFL) or LED lamps at reduced prices.

The bulbs were briefly heated with a Bunsen burner before being dipped into cold water, causing them to shatter. The bulbs' coils – no longer protected by an inert gas – came into contact with oxygen and finally burned and disintegrated when switched on for the last time. We see bulbs in their last seconds of life as smoke rises from the broken glass, each one producing its own unique final 'performance' like a dying breath. Hemauer | Keller document the passing of an everyday object – and the very symbol of a good idea – which has arguably changed our society more than any other invention, despite being highly wasteful in that most of the energy is released in unwanted heat rather than desired light. The old-style bulb technology invented in 1879 by Thomas Edison is no longer deemed acceptable efficiency-wise, and indeed governments around the world have begun to outlaw them. In the European Union the phase-out began in September 2009, with efficiency requirement gradually tightening over the coming years.



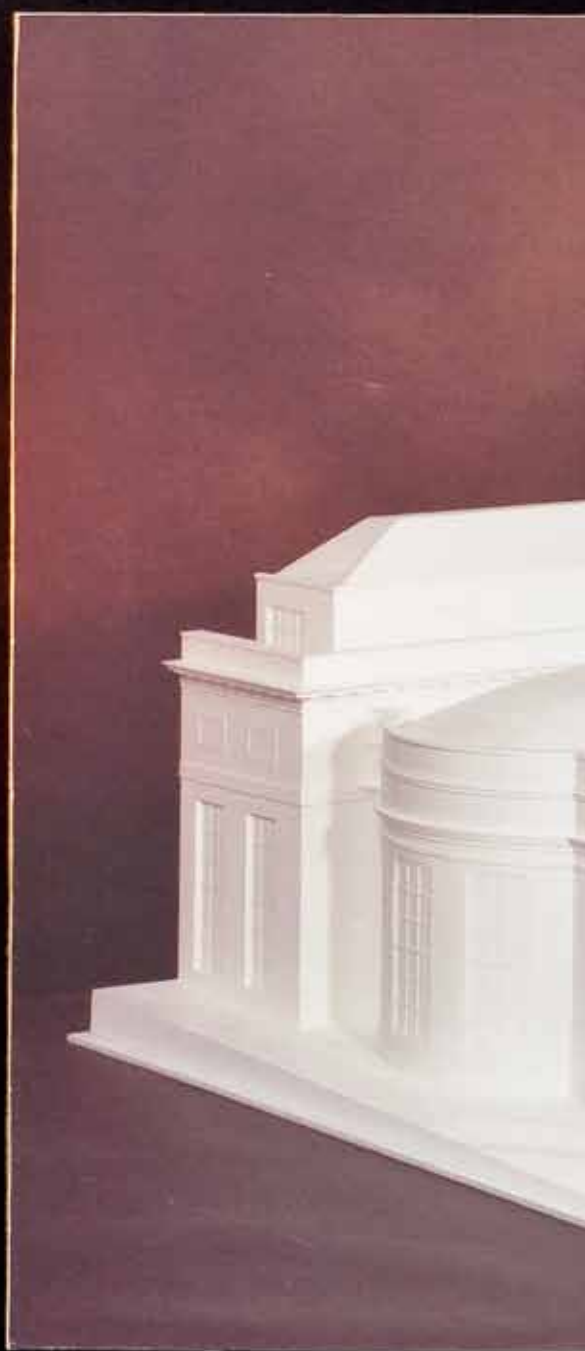
Sleeping Cars præsenterer et udvalg af fotografier taget i Cairos gader, hvor det er almindeligt, at bilejere beskytter deres parkerede biler mod sandstorme med hjemmelavede stofovertræk. Kunstnerne fascineredes af disse skræddersyede 'pyjamas' (nogle af dem er forsynet med særlige lommer til sidespejlene) og opfatter disse syn som et bud på et muligt fremtidsscenario, hvor der ikke længere vil være behov for olie-afhængigt maskineri, som derfor vil blive lagt i mølpose og beskyttet mod tidens gang som relikvier.

SLEEPING CARS

(2010)

Kodak lysbilledprojektor med 81 lysbilleder.
Kodak slide projector with 81 slides.

Sleeping Cars shows a selection of photographs taken on the streets of Cairo, Egypt, where is common practice for owners to protect their parked cars from sand storms with home-made fabric coverings. Attracted by these custom-made 'pyjamas' (some have custom-made pockets for the wing-mirrors), the artists consider these view as a possible landscapes of the future, where oil-dependent machinery would not be needed any longer and therefore will remain dormant, protected from the passage of time as relics.



Man inviteres til at tænde et lys og sætte det på et *bruliere* i en skulptur, der efterligner den katolske kirkes votivpraksis. Man får således mulighed for at gøre en enkel, følelsesladet gestus, som måske er forbundet med fri personlig eller global betydning. Den varme luft, der opstiger fra flammerne, driver en propel, som minder om en moderne vindturbine. *Devotional Power* fremhæver på tvetydig vis en kollektiv og ritualiseret udtalt overbevisning, idet værket samtidig måske lidt absurd demonstrerer potentialet i udnyttelsen af overskydende ikke-spirituel kraft.

DEVOTIONAL POWER

(2010)

Bruliere med votivlys og propel (1,8×1,2×2m).
Bruliere with votive candles and propeller (1.8×1.2×2m).

Visitors are invited to light and place a candle on a *bruliere* in a sculpture which mimics the practice of votive offerings in the Roman Catholic Church. The opportunity is presented to make a simple emotionally-charged gesture in the gallery which might be invested with unprescribed personal or global significance. The warm air that ascends from the flames turns a propeller which is suspended above, a device with blades which resembles a modern wind turbine. *Devotional Power* ambiguously highlights a ritual of collective unspoken conviction while somewhat absurdly demonstrating the potential for exploiting surplus non-spiritual power.



Selvom en konkret olietønde for de flestes vedkommende ikke umiddelbart er en del af hverdagen, har den en totemistisk betydning som en standardiseret volumenenhed, der er udtryk for udnyttelsen og forbruget af olie, og som et indeks for makroøkonomisk udbud og efterspørgsel. *Constructive View of Modernity* bruger primærenheder og geometrisk abstraktion til at skabe en bevidst forenklet sammenhæng mellem den begyndende udnyttelse af olieenergi som drivkraft i industrialiseringen og den modernistiske kunsts opståen.

CONSTRUCTIVE VIEW OF MODERNITY

(2010)

Tre brugte olietønder (blå, rød, grøn), stålstativ (1,5×1,2×1m).
Three used oil barrels (blue, red, green), steel stand (1.5×1.2×1m).

Although for most of us the physical reality of an oil barrel is not a feature of our day-to-day lives, it has a totemic significance as the standard unit of volume expressing the exploitation and consumption of petroleum, and as an index of macroeconomic supply-and-demand. *Constructive View of Modernity* uses primary units and geometric abstraction to make a deliberately simplistic equation between the beginning of the widespread exploitation of petroleum and the subsequent fueling of industrialisation, with the rise of modernist art.

Christina Hemauer (1973) og Roman Keller (1969) bor og arbejder i Zürich. Deres udstillinger og projekter omfatter blandt andet *Globalising the Internationale*, arbejder til *Portscapes* (2009) og udstillingen *Portscapes*, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2010), 11. Cairo International Biennale (2008–9), *Nettoyage énergétique*, Contemporary Art Center Fribourg (2007), *A Manifestation, a Dedication and a Place to Get the Word Out*, Swiss Art Awards, Basel (2007) og *At this place, Postpetrolism was heralded on 27 April 2006*, Kunsthof, Zürich (2006).

Christina Hemauer (1973) and Roman Keller (1969) live and work in Zurich, Switzerland. Exhibitions and projects include *Globalising the Internationale*, commission for *Portscapes* (2009) and exhibition *Portscapes*, Museum Boijmans van Beuningen, Rotterdam (2010); the 11th Cairo International Biennale, Cairo (2008–9), *Nettoyage énergétique*, Contemporary Art Center Fribourg (2007), *A Manifestation, a Dedication and a Place to get the Word out*, Swiss Art Awards, Basel (2007); *At this place, Postpetrolism was heralded on 27 April 2006*, Kunsthof, Zurich (2006).

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