

Exhibition: In Strange Lands. Axel Hütte

IVAM Institut Valencià d'Art Modern

12th March – 10th May 2009

Organiced by: Fundación Telefónica

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IVAM and the Telefónica Foundation presents the exhibition "In strange lands. Axel Hütte", which brings together 35 large format photographs taken in color for the most part between 2007 and 2008 in Spain, in the towns of La Palma, Lanzarote, Gran Canaria, La Gomera and Aranjuez, and Mexico, USA -- New Mexico, Venezuela, Ecuador, Argentina, Chile and Belize.

For this exhibition at IVAM, the artist has added a number of unpublished works that were not at the Fundación Telefónica in Madrid: *El Hacha*, 2007 (Venezuela), *Cayo-1*, 2007 (Belice), *Sandia Mountains-1*, 2008 (Nuevo México), *Perito Moreno-2*, 2008 (Argentina), *El Calafate*, 2008 (Argentina), *Salar de Atacama*, 2008 (Chile), *Alluriquín-2*, 2008 (Ecuador), *Aonda Camp-1*, 2008 (Venezuela), y *Rio Frio Cave*, 2008 (Belice).

Since his first series of landscapes, Hütte traces the bases of an essential aesthetic difference. The choice of an unusual genre in art today as the landscape and an openly pictorial aesthetic, define the bases of his work.

The work of Axel Hütte is based on the display of nature at its most natural and free state. However, none of his landscapes can be considered as natural even though they may seem so, since they are part of an elaborate cultural process, all of them are handled according to the perception of different perspectives, all these unthinkable in other historical coordinates.

His special way of defining beauty, increasing the feeling that the image has no limits, coupled with a very characteristic way of placing the horizon, are key aspects of his works. We are ahead of a worship traveller, which arranges their journeys with information, geographical and historical data, literary and

especially plastic readings. That knowledge has a direct impact on determining and defining each project.

It is true that the human presence in the photographs of Axel Hütte, is absent, but this is so in an initial vision only. The human presence is nearly invisible in the footsteps that have been left on the way to the places the artist goes to. But this particular cultural trail is present in the way Hütte looks, in the perspective, in choosing an area, in the fragment of reality that every photograph exemplifies and isolates, as an independent world.

According Hütte's own words, "I am more a traveller who travels through time and space. The trip gives me the approach. Years ago I realized that I had to go through 3,500 miles to get the image I was looking for. Once I'm in the place is when I think about what images are very familiar and have been reproduced countless times, because that's exactly what I do not want".

Born in Essen (Germany) in 1951, this disciple of Bernd and Hilla Becher is part of a generation of artists, formed in the same classrooms, which shared languages and plastic attitudes, and that created an artistic movement which, not being a real aesthetic group, has defined the outlines of the so-called new german photography.

Its prestigious career is reflected in the good reception at many international museums and galleries given to his work, from the Reina Sofia Museum in Madrid, to the Fotomuseum Winterthur and the Zurich Kunsthalle in Hamburg. In group exhibitions, he was also present at the Centre Pompidou in Paris or the Guggenheim in New York, among others.