

Fotostiftung Schweiz

Schweizerische Stiftung für die Photographie
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Press Release

Jean-Luc Cramatte – Inventory

Fotostiftung Schweiz, Winterthur, 3 March to 28 May 2012
Opening on 2 March 2012 from 6 p.m.

The photographer Jean-Luc Cramatte (* 1959) comes from the Jura mountain district and has lived for about 30 years in Fribourg. Since the 1990s he has been carrying out extensive photographic research into issues to do with regional and cultural identity. His photographic studies document present-day life and the on-going changes in it. Cramatte started out as a self-taught photographer and initially worked as a photo-journalist, an activity he quickly abandoned however. As an obsessive picture-maker and collector, he fills in the gaps in our collective memory in a playful and slightly ironic manner.

Cramatte's approach and his research work have been inspired by, among other things, the projects of the Direction de l'aménagement du territoire (DATAR) in France, or the FSA (Farm Security Administration) in the United States. These are a kind of inventory of different worlds that are in the process of disappearing: a hostel in Fribourg (*Asile de Nuit*, 1991), Post-offices in Switzerland (*Poste mon Amour*, 2001-2008), a medical institution in Lausanne (*Policlinique*, 2002) or agriculture in the era of globalization (*Paysage de Ferme*, 2011-2012). Cramatte is very sensitive to impending upheavals. Sometimes his inventories turn out to be merely pseudo-inventories and can also take a parodistic turn. For example, he revived the wearing of the traditional costume of Alpine herdsmen and women for a couple of days by portraying quite ordinary customers at a shopping centre in that very costume (*Bredzon Forever*, 2009). The resulting series of photographs makes a bit of a mockery of the traditional clothing, which becomes a fiction, an ideal. Within the framework of specific projects, Cramatte's series of photographs deal with the banality of the everyday, the anonymity of the city, or with non-places (*Basler Inventar*, 2010). Occasionally he tries to render the invisible visible (*Limite helvétique*, 1991) by, for example, searching for real or fictional traces still left behind at the scenes of violent crimes (*Cuers*, 1995; *Par-dessus l'épaule de Théodore*, 2004). Ultimately, he reinvents reality by stretching the term catalogue to its limits.

The exhibition organized by the Fotostiftung Schweiz shows a selection of Cramatte's most important inventories of the past 20 years and also presents his new work *Paysage de Ferme*, which focuses on the decline of Swiss agriculture and the subsequent changes in rural areas. The exhibition also highlights yet another way in which this photographer devotes himself to promoting collective memory: the Enquête photographique fribourgeoise, of which Cramatte is a co-founder, commissions young photographers to capture changes in everyday life in Canton Fribourg. Excerpts of their projects will be shown in the form of a projection.

www.fotostiftung.ch

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