HANS-CHRISTIAN SCHINK

INFRASTRUCTURES

Ace Gallery is pleased to present Infrastructures, an exhibition of photographs by Hans-Christian Schink. Infrastructures will debut a new work from Schink’s Burma series alongside the Traffic Projects German Unity (Verkehrsprojekte Deutsche Einheit) and LA Night series. Schink’s work ranges from documentary to experimental, as represented in this exhibition.

The Burma series, Schink’s most recent endeavor, explores two contrasting subjects: the urban landscapes of Burma’s rapidly changing cities, and Buddha statuary at sites of age-old religious practices. Featuring a conspicuous absence of human subjects and keen attention to formal composition at this large scale—familiar qualities in Schink’s work—the Burma series presents possibilities of harmony within paradoxical conditions of continuity and change.

Produced between 1995 and 2003, Schink’s Traffic Projects series records infrastructure development in the former East Germany during the period following reunification. It is an important subject for Schink, who spent his formative years in communist DDR, and experienced firsthand the social and political turns of the late 80s and 90s.

In Traffic Projects, Schink focuses on the structures of the new highways, including bridges, trusses, supports and roadways, particularly in areas outside cities where he emphasizes stark landscape and wintery, overcast skies. In the absence of human activity or evidence of intended use, the architectonic forms intervene in the landscape with a strange serenity, as if reasoned by the artist’s eye. Schink’s approach to his subject has been compared to 19th century Romantic painting. In his essay on Schink, Kai Uwe Schierz director of the Kunsthalle Erfurt, notes that, “as in Caspar David Friedrich, every detail celebrates with a precisely balanced composition the whole image as a meaningful unity, an allegory for an inherently complete cosmos.” Through Schink’s vision one understands this meaningful unity as inherently complex.

In the LA Night series Schink looks at the glittering lights of Los Angeles city at night. Using a daylight film stock, atypical for night photography, Schink crops and dramatically enlarges the images, narrowing the frame and expanding the film grain to create painterly photographic works.
Born in Erfurt, in the former East Germany, Hans-Christian Schink studied photography at the Academy of Visual Arts in Leipzig, the Hochschule für Grafik und Buchkunst, one of Germany’s oldest art academies. In 2008, he received the distinguished ING Real Photography award for his 1h series. His work is in the collections of Bundeskunstsammlung (Contemporary Art Collection of the Federal Republic of Germany); The Museum of Fine Arts, Houston; LACMA Los Angeles; Spencer Museum of Art, Lawrence, Kansas; The Frederick R. Weisman Foundation, Los Angeles; The Tokyo National Museum of Modern Art; the Wilson Centre for Photography, London; as well as private collections in Australia, Belgium, Germany, France, Switzerland, United Kingdom, and the United States.