

The City Show

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In 2005, Australian environmental philosopher Glenn Albrecht coined the term “solastalgia” to describe the deep existential distress visiting upon a man, whose close and familiar environment has become unrecognizable due to continuous climatic changes, or other reasons. The most recent great divide in human history, comparable only to the Neolithic or Industrial Revolutions, came to the fore the moment we learned that more than half of the world’s population no longer lives in the countryside but rather in towns and cities. In his *Planet of Slums*, Mike Davis contends that in the future urban population will not live in cities as we know them today. Instead, it will be based in megaslums, in which various policing forces will fight with armed militias over the control of billions of people living in the gutters, surrounded by chemical waste and exposed to all kinds of pestilences.

And even if such an apocalyptic vision still seems far away, we must concede that extreme globalization contributes to the homogenization of space. The world (the global village, town, or megaslum) is not necessarily shrinking, but is rather becoming all the more unified. Thus, there are fewer and fewer sceneries, and places are being replaced by spaces as time goes by.

For some time now, I have been suspecting that a curious law governs photography, a law unparalleled in nature or elsewhere: in photography, things do not end and nothing ever vanishes. And even if something is to disappear, evaporate, and die, it is immediately resurrected, reappearing in the pictures of other photographers.

This exhibition brings together German and Israeli photographers. Images of different cities from around the world are displayed here alongside photographs taken in Israel (a small country, big city and archeological site with no beginning or end). The exhibition strives to find out how different places with common features look, how places that were repeatedly photographed and re-photographed look. Sometimes, or so it seems, photography changes things, re-creates and reinvents them. Sometimes, different worlds seem like their photographed images but also like photographs not yet taken. Wasteland becomes a populated land, and photographs become reality.

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