

Seeking for a Place of Oblivion

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[...] Perception of space and time is an experiential category of perception, based on reality. However, many media tools have gradually turned the question of reality into one of the key issues for understanding the perceived scenes. In her cycle *Substitute Locations*, Karina Nimmerfall has photographed scenes of fictional crimes which are each week, already for years, solved by the protagonists of the hit TV series *C.S.I.* (Crime Scene Investigation).

If we focused only on the photographed scenes, the conceptual background of the entire project would remain unknown to us. Photographs, uniform in format and the manner of presentation, show anonymous places that automatically remind (us) of American suburbs because of their typical middle-class architecture of family houses with eaves and garages, obligatory benches on the porch and double doors. A beach with palm-trees, as well as an open landscape with dense structures and somewhat dramatic sky does not give a more precise orientation, while the author's view towards other locations results in similar diagonal compositions which in most cases look as if they were made accidentally, in passing. Still, the curiosity why one should be interested in such ordinary places is satisfied by the information under each photographed scene: which episode and *C.S.I.* series it belongs to, its real and fictive address and details utilized by camera-man and directors. An attentive viewer will notice that a beach in California "acts" as one in Miami, a Nevada lake is really in California, while every photographed house actually symbolizes the strategy of the relation towards space and architecture, and their use during shooting.

Karina Nimmerfall's cinematographic shots remind us of the ones created by camera movement, of the elongated continuous view that introduces us to the dramatics of the "on set" events, while the places themselves function as "objective documentation"* of something that does not exist, or rather whose existence is confirmed twice – in the reality (devoid of numerous details that determine a particular place) and in the fictional space. In this way we experience places photographed by Karina Nimmerfall as transitions of some kind, as connections of the mythical (because television contributes to mythologizing) and the real, maybe as heterotopias, which are at the same time a denial of space and its unquestionable confirmation. *Substitute Locations* are aporias, whose status at the first glance seems autonomous, but in actuality depend on other people's interests; they look as if they were stripped of many layers of meaning, but actually are places that are instrumentalized according to the needs of mass culture and entertainment, as well economic interests. [...]

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* Raimar Stange, Preface, in: Karina Nimmerfall. *Cinematic Maps*. 2004 – 2006, Camera Austria, Graz, 2007