

Rémy Markowitsch – Expeditions in the Jungle of Images and Words

Illuminating, elucidating, transluminating: for the series *Nach der Natur/After Nature* (1991-1998), Rémy Markowitsch puts on a headlamp, as it were, to explore the visual order of books, specifically, the photographs he finds in them of plants, animals, people and landscapes. He takes pictures of what appears when one page of a book is transluminated, that is, when the motifs that appear on two sides of a single page are seen simultaneously, creating a new visual cipher: in this case, one plus one is more than two. Most of Markowitsch's photographs are based on his technique of translumination, as in *On Travel* (2004) and the series of tulips pictured in *Bullish on Bulbs* (2007).

In all of his projects, Rémy Markowitsch creates imaginary contextual spaces by drawing on an immense store of references, but these spaces can only be accessed through the sensuality and seductiveness of his objects and photographs, through his light, text and video installations. The beautiful and exotic series of pictures in *On Travel* is enriched by various travelogues and research papers describing encounters with foreign cultures in Africa or Asia. Whether it is an expedition into our reading of foreign cultures as in *On Travel*, an elaborate exhibition project that explores books as warehouses of knowledge and experience as in *Bibliotherapy* (2001-2003), a work in several parts that deals with the **illegal** drug, alcohol, as in *You are not alone, vol. 1* (2004), a collection of references, allusions and quotations that reflect on artistic utopias and the perception of place as in *Insecurity* (2006) or the exposure of the convoluted links between money, the stock market, desire, power, politics and industry, as in his most recent projects, *The Onion Option* and *Bullish on Bulbs* (both 2007): all of Rémy Markowitsch's deliberately conceived and yet sensually accessible works are the result of enthusiastic and extensive forays into literature and research, history and politics, voyages and discovery, colonialism and the appropriation of the other, addiction and a passion for collection. What's more, in his pictures, videos and text pieces, he also reflects on the media he uses: photography, books, video or language. In his latest projects, *The Onion Option* and *Bullish on Bulbs*, Markowitsch turns his analytic and ironic attention to the complex drives that are the motor of our global economy. And

once again, sense and sensuality prevail: the playful and lighthearted art that emerges from his analysis of the human mechanisms intrinsic to all trade and commerce is fraught with meaning.

Nadine Olonetzky, September 2007