

24 June – 16 July 2011

Opening and book launch Saturday 25th of June 3pm - 5pm

Beam Contemporary is excited to announce *Parádeisos*, an exhibition of photographs by established and influential Melbourne artist Christopher Köller. Following the success of his 2010 video retrospective, *Killing Time*, Köller continues to reflect on the themes and pre-occupations that have consumed him over the past two decades.

Parádeisos takes as its starting point an everyday subject often pursued by amateur photography, but which is hugely significant in the history of art—gardens. Uniquely all of the photographs of gardens were captured using a \$7 plastic analogue camera. Köller delights in the camera's 'mistakes': its limited focus, unexpected bursts of colour, and tendency to reveal artefacts of the negative, like arrows and frame numbers. In *Parádeisos*, these unpredictable camera-effects blend with and complement the gardens. The gardens themselves embody a similar tension between order and randomness, as planned designs are subject to the serendipitous impacts of the natural world and the effects of the passage of time.

Produced between 1997 and 2009, *Parádeisos* moves us from rigorous Zen meditation gardens in Kyoto to a roadside in West Hollywood, from Marie Antoinette's simulations of peasant life at Versailles, to Sunday Reid's potager garden at Heide Museum of Modern Art. The diversity of locations portrayed in the *Parádeisos* photographs reflects both Köller's insatiable curiosity for travel and also the nomadic lifestyle typical of contemporary artists. Residencies in Italy, Japan, Spain and the USA have allowed the expansion of the *Parádeisos* series and have also helped to define Köller's artistic practice more broadly.

Spread across enormous expanses of geography and historical periods, the stories behind the gardens of *Parádeisos* are similarly diverse. Colonial expansion, religious significance, individual obsession and commercial exploitation have all acted as motives for the construction, and in some cases the dilapidation, of these gardens. Weaving together this diversity is Köller's unusual photographic technique and his eye for both the beauty and melancholy that has accompanied humanity's search for an elusive paradise. Amidst the chaos of contemporary life, the acute observation and moody evocation of place found in Köller's garden photographs is an irresistible invitation to take a moment and to reflect on the beauty found in both the most manicured of gardens, and also in the rough tussle of plants on any roadside.

Parádeisos at Beam Contemporary coincides with the release of Köller's book of the same name, published by M.33, Melbourne. The opening of the exhibition will also launch the book, certain to be a major event in Australian photographic publishing.

Christopher Köller has had numerous Australian and international solo and group exhibitions. His work has been collected by major public and private collections including the National Gallery of Australia, the National Gallery of Victoria, Monash Gallery of Art, Griffith University, the Bibliotheque Nationale of France and the Sata Corporation Collection Tokyo. www.christopherkoller.net

**For further information about the publication please contact Helen Frajman at M.33.
e: hfrajman@netspace.net.au p: +61 3 9527 1547.**

**The exhibition will also travel to the Queensland Centre for Photography.
Exhibition Dates: 29 October – 27 November, 2011.**

**For press quality images and all other enquiries please contact Kyle Weise.
e: kyle@beamcontemporary.com.au m:+61 408 311 978.**

Image: Temple of the Winds, Royal Botanical Gardens, Melbourne 2007 (detail)



beam contemporary

level 1, 30 guildford lane melbourne victoria 3000 australia | wednesday to saturday 12 – 6
info@beamcontemporary.com.au | www.beamcontemporary.com.au | mobile: +61 408 311 978
phone: +61 3 9670 4443 | mail: p.o box 664 north melbourne victoria 3051 | abn 73 007 998 346