

Christopher Köller

Parádeisos

beam contemporary

24 June – 16 July 2011

Beam Contemporary is excited to present *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.
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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.
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List of Works

Clockwise from left to right



- Palácio Fronteira, Lisbon, Portugal, 2009
84 x 105cm (Framed 114 x 133cm).
Ed. of 7 + 2 AP



- Palácio Fronteira, Lisbon, Portugal, 2009
84 x 105cm (Framed 114 x 133cm).
Ed. of 7 + 2 AP



- Jardim Botânico da Ajuda, Belem, Portugal, 2009
84 x 105cm (Framed 114 x 133cm).
Ed. of 7 + 2 AP



- Palácio Fronteira, Lisbon, Portugal, 2009
84 x 105cm (Framed 114 x 133cm).
Ed. of 7 + 2 AP



- Alhambra, Granada, Spain, 2009
65 x 81cm.
Ed of 7 + 2 AP



- Jardí Botànic de Sóller Majorca, Spain, 2008
65 x 81cm.
Ed of 7 + 2 AP



- Alhambra, Granada, Spain, 2009
65 x 81cm.
Ed of 7 + 2 AP



- Le Grand Trianon, Château de Versailles, France, 2007
65 x 81cm.
Ed of 7 + 2 AP



- Le Petit Hameau de Marie Antoinette, Château de Versailles, France, 2007
65 x 81cm.
Ed of 7 + 2 AP



- Jardí Botànic, Cap Roig, Calella de Palafrugell, Spain, 2008
65 x 81cm.
Ed of 7 + 2 AP



- Santa Església Catedral Basilica, Barcelona, Spain, 2008
65 x 81cm.
Ed of 7 + 2 AP



- West Hollywood, Los Angeles, 1998
65 x 81cm.
Ed of 7 + 2 AP



- Temple of the Winds, Royal Botanical Gardens, Melbourne, 2007
65 x 81cm.
Ed of 7 + 2 AP



- Shugaku-in, Imperial Villa, Kyoto, 2003
65 x 81cm.
Ed of 7 + 2 AP

Publication:

Christopher Köller *Parádeisos*, Essay by Katrina Grant.

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\$55

All works from the publication are available and are also available in a larger format size of 137 x 111cm. Ed of 7 + 2AP.

* All prices include GST



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