



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Exhibition: “Robert Voit: New Trees”

Dates: January 13 – March 6, 2010

Artist’s Reception: Wednesday, January 13, 2010

Amador Gallery is pleased to present the series “New Trees” by German photographer Robert Voit. These large-format color photographs focus on seemingly commonplace trees within urban and rural settings. In their typology, Voit has appropriated the strategy of Bernd and Hilla Becher and his former instructor Thomas Ruff. Yet Voit updates this strategy in a humorous, insightful and visually intriguing commentary on networks and illusion as pervasive mainstays of contemporary life.

Voit’s “Trees” are initially slow to reveal their true nature. Prolonged viewing, however, discloses the artificiality of these central focal points, which, in reality, are cell phone masts that have been meticulously disguised by telecom companies to blend in with their surroundings. One of the photos features a seemingly real palm tree looming above a trailer park in Las Vegas; it stands, dwarfing the other—real—palm trees. Despite its initially convincing appearance, the tree begins to seem uncannily rigid and linear. A subtle, but jarring, sense of artificiality comes to pervade the image, a feeling which is confirmed by the sight of mechanical antenna structures somewhat cloistered within the fake tree’s long, artificial leaves. The trees’ attempts to fit in with their surroundings creates the tension of Voit’s work and make for its great departure from the typological studies of the Bechers; his subjects are aggressively tied to their surroundings and to the social sphere rather than an objective and abstracting gaze.

The attention drawn by Voit to these all-too-perfect imitations calls to the fore the communications and surveillance networks, which pervade the seemingly natural and commonplace world of our everyday lives. Trees, an emblem of shelter, solidity and the incorruptibility of nature, appear ironically co-opted, channeling information invisibly, through walls and in the service of social, commercial and political interests. Likewise, photography is put under scrutiny in these images, its oft-declared allegiance to verisimilitude undermined and its own artificiality and manipulation highlighted by the very illusionism of the documented scene. Voit’s commentary, however, is not acerbically critical. Rather, by stressing the singularity of these objects in contrast to their intended uniformity with their surroundings, Voit humorously exposes the invisible networks the fake trees represent, and he furthermore quips at the absurdity of the effort. Too valuable to be left open, the massive fake trees are often surrounded by fencing or other protective barriers, emasculated and protected from the world into which they are attempting to blend.

A graduate of the prestigious Düsseldorf Akademie, Robert Voit currently lives and works in Munich. The publication “New Trees” is forthcoming from Steidl. He has won several awards including the Europäischer Architektur Fotografiepreis, the Munich Hausderkunst Preis and the Sophie Smoliar Award. In addition to his native Germany, Voit has exhibited widely in Europe and Asia.

Amador Gallery is located in the landmark Fuller Building at 41 East 57th Street on the 6th floor. Gallery hours are 11 to 6 Tuesday through Saturday and by appointment. For additional information, please contact the gallery at (212) 759-6740, for more information visit www.amadorgallery.com or contact us at info@amadorgallery.com.