



KATALOG 25.1



Susanne Wellm

Inner Landscapes

Heartbeat of the object; transcendence of place

Genstandens hjerteslag, stedets transcendens

By Celina Lunsford

Autobiographies come to the protagonists in many ways. Robert Frank once commented about his book *The Lines of my Hand* as if he looked down the road he had been on and it all came back instantly. His references to journey and to time are essential. In Susanne Wellm's *Inner Landscapes* it is the heartbeat of the object and the transcendence of place that are essential. She invites us to a story of life and change: nature spells her journey and time is told through a collection of things and gestures.

A worn checkerboard domestic cloth holds "Inner Landscape" together. It is the canvas of everyday. Folded, faded, loved, stained, crumpled, pressed and needed. Woven of the hours of immediacy which come from anticipation, woven with the actions that formed the past. This book's rhythm interspersed by detail and distance, keeps the wanderer and the viewer looking and probing. A frame, perhaps an antique mirror is turned over on itself: devoid of reflection. A telephone, an envelope, a radio, an empty plate effectively resonate as postmodern still-lives. Entities that we spend time with, sometimes too much time with, modifying, composing and serving our existence.

By issuing fantasy to her visual narrative, our author delivers her story as the handbook of change. Symbolic butterflies, transforming faces and altered environments highlight how she embraces metamorphosis as an elixir of life.

The landscape fluctuates along her "Wanderweg". Natural scenery is ironic as a crater impression; poignant as familial excursions; transitional as coming out of a tunnel; and uncertain as viewed through a curtain or effected by weather. The places are revisited in another light, for another purpose beyond reminiscing what was. The inner appears as landscapes and portraits draped with paint. The adaptations expose reaction and signal the now. They are brazen expressions of change, stepping out of the photograph, out of the past, but also synchronise the acceptance of relating to another place and time.

Inner Landscapes is one of the most important soul photography books of 2012. It is a chapter of life, a story past that is ever present. It sings, whispers, shouts and howls. The contents are not documentary facts but the medium for Susanne Wellm's experience in simply... being.

Susanne Wellm (*1965, DK) graduated from The School of Art and Craft, Copenhagen in 1995. Since then she has exhibited extensively and received several grants and awards – the latest is FotoTriennale.dk Award in 2012. Previously, she has published *Photogravure* (Rhodos, 2000) and *Inner Landscapes* (Kehrer, 2012). Her work is held in the many collections in Denmark, USA and Japan.

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Selvbiografier kan komme til hovedpersonen på mange måder. Robert Frank bemærkede engang om sin bog *The Lines of My Hand*, at det var som at se ned ad den vej, han var gået, og det hele med ét kom tilbage. Hans referencer til rejse og tid er afgørende. I Susanne Wellms *Indre landskaber* er det genstandens hjerteslag og stedets transcendens, der er afgørende. Hun byder os ind til en historie om liv og forandring: naturen skriver hendes rejse, og tiden fortælles gennem en samling genstande og gestus.

En slidt, køkkenternet dug holder *Indre landskaber* sammen. Den er hverdagens lærred. Foldet, falmet, elsket, plettet, krøllet, presset og tiltrængt. Vævet af de timer af nærvær, der kommer af forventning. Vævet af de handlinger, der formede fortiden. Bogens rytme, afbrudt af detaljer og distance, fastholder vandreren og beskueren i at se og sondere. En ramme, måske et antikt spejl, er vendt mod sig selv: blottet for refleksion. En telefon, en kuvert, en radio, en tom tallerken har effektiv klang som postmoderne stilleben. Ting, vi tilbringer tid sammen med – somme tider for meget tid – modificerer, sammensætter og tjener vores eksistens.

Ved at tilsætte sin fortælling fantasi frembyder forfatteren sin visuelle historie som en forandringens håndbog. Symbolske sommerfugle, ansigter i transformation og forandrede miljøer understreger, hvordan hun favner metamorfosen som en livseliksir.

Landskabet veksler langs hendes "Wanderweg". Naturscenerierne er så ironiske som krateraftryk, så vedkommende som familieuflugter, så overgangsagtige som tunnelmundinger og så ubestemmelige, som var de set gennem et gardin eller påvirket af vejret. Stederne genses i et andet lys, af andre grunde end for at mindes det, der var. Det indre fremstår som landskaber og portrætter indhyllt i maling. Tilpasningerne afdækker reaktionen og signalerer nuet. De er bramfrie udtryk for forandring, der træder ud af fotografiet, ud af fortiden, men som også synkroniser en accept af at forholde sig til en anden tid og sted.

Indre landskaber er en af de vigtigste, sjælfulte fotobøger fra 2012. Den er et kapitel af livet, en altid nærværende historie. Den synger, hvisker, råber og hylér. Indholdet er ikke dokumentariske fakta, men mediet for Susanne Wellms oplevelse af simpelthen... at være.

Susanne Wellm (*1965, DK) er uddannet ved Danmarks Designskole i København i 1995. Siden da har hun udstillet hyppigt og modtaget adskillige legater og priser - den seneste er FotoTriennale.dk Prisen i 2012. Hun har udgivet *Photogravure* (Rhodos, 2000) og *Inner Landscapes* (Kehrer, 2012). Hendes værker er i mange museumssamlinger i Danmark, USA og Japan. Hun bor og arbejder i København. www.susannewellm.com

◀ *In Your Mind*, 2011. All images are Archival Pigment Print.