

# Christoph Grill

Globina polja |  
Depth of Field



15. 5. – 13. 6. 2025

PHOTON



»Globinska ostrina« je tehnični izraz, ki priključuje tako »globino« slike kot številne plasti pokrajin, ki so prevladujoč motiv fotografskega dela Christopa Grilla. Za ta projekt je značilno njegovo raziskovanje »bujne praznine« in pogled v globino – prostrane pokrajine, kot utelešenje surovosti, ranljivosti in vztrajnosti življenja. Kot fotograf in arheozoolog Christoph Grill raziskuje globlje plasti pokrajin – analizira, kako se sledovi preteklosti vpisujejo in prekrivajo. Vse je upodobljeno v pokrajinah; tu so zajeta vsa eksistencialna, družbenopolitična in ekološka

vprašanja, marsikaj pa ostane stoletja ohranjeno kot usedlina.

Christoph Grill goji odprtost popotnika; za vsemi njegovimi podobami se skrivajo osebne zgodbe in srečanja, pogosto pa se pusti presenetiti nad tem, kar najde, brez posebnih usmeritev. Njegove fotografije ne usmerjajo pogleda; so bolj vizualni delčki, ujeti v trenutku njihove kompozicijske zgoščenosti, fascinantnega in vabljivega odkrivanja, kot trenutka, ki pripoveduje večjo zgodbo, saj vsebuje neizrekljiv presežek smisla.

Po eni strani je Grillovo fotografsko delo konceptualno raziskovanje tega, kar se že predstavlja kot podoba – in je vzeto takšno, kot je, da se lahko pretvarja, da je nekaj drugega. Po drugi strani pa Christoph Grill predstavlja »moteče pokrajine« na enak način, kot je avtorica Esther Kinsky koncept, ki izhaja iz biologije, razširila na poetično raziskovanje interakcije med človekom in naravo (v v svojem eseju »Disturbances« Kinsky raziskuje človeške in naravne vplive na naše okolje, ki povzročajo temeljne spremembe). Grill najde podobe, ki zajemajo

ogromne motnje političnih ideologij in kapitalističnega ekstraktivizma. Vendar to, kar pritegne Christopha Grilla in kar izražajo njegove podobe, ni distopično, temveč nekakšna notranja svetloba, ki izžareva spoštovanje do človeškega, tudi v najtežjih okoliščinah.

*Astrid Kury*



*Unknown, Unnamed,  
Unclimbed,  
Austria 2023.  
From the series:  
On the True Semblance  
of the Eight-Thouser.*

Harbour, Belarus,  
2004.  
From the series:  
Short Stalks at Distant Shores



»Depth of field« is a technical term which evokes both the image's depth and the many layers of landscapes, which are the dominant motif in Christoph Grill's photographic work. This project is characterized by his exploration of »lush emptiness« and the gaze into the depths - vast landscapes, as the epitome of the brutality, vulnerability, and persistence of life. As a photographer and archaeozoologist, Christoph Grill explores the deeper layers of landscapes - analyzing how traces of the past are inscribed and overlap one another. Everything is depicted

in landscapes; all existential, sociopolitical, and ecological questions are encompassed here, and much remains preserved as sediment for centuries.

Christoph Grill cultivates the openness of a traveler; behind all his images lie personal stories and encounters, and he often allows himself to be surprised by what he finds, without any specific guidelines. His photographs don't direct the gaze; rather, they are visual pieces captured in the moment of their compositional condensation, fascinating and inviting discovery,

as a moment that tells a greater story because it contains an unspeakable surplus of meaning.

On the one hand, Grill's photographic work is a conceptual exploration of what already presents itself as an image – and is taken as it is, so that it can pretend to be something else. On the other hand, Christoph Grill presents »disturbed landscapes« in the same way that author Esther Kinsky expanded this concept, which comes from biology, to the poetic investigation of the interaction between humans and nature (in her essay

»Disturbances«, Kinsky explores the human and natural influences on our environment that bring about fundamental changes. He finds images that capture the massive disturbances of political ideologies and capitalist extractivism. But it is not the dystopian that attracts Christoph Grill and that his images express; rather, it is their radiance, which is essentially also borne out of respect for humanity, even in the most difficult situations.

*Astrid Kury*

Campground, Negev desert,  
Israel 2021.

From the series:

On arid and desolate regions, generally known  
as deserts, wherein are related many strange  
and wonderful accidents, containing remarks and  
observations upon the people, some animals, plants.



Bus station, Armenia,  
2005.

From the series:

Short Stalks at Distant Shores.

Shipwreck, Aserbaidshan,  
2001.

From the series:

Short Stalks at Distant Shores.



Christoph Grill se je rodil 1965 v Avstriji. Študiral je biologijo / zoologijo na Univerzi na Dunaju, kjer se je osredotočil na arheozoologijo – področje, ki preučuje ostanke živali v arheološkem kontekstu. Danes živi in dela kot fotograf in arheozoolog v Gradcu .

Od leta 1996 redno potuje po nekdanjih socialističnih državah vzhodne in jugovzhodne Evrope ter republikah nekdanje Sovjetske zveze. Njegovo umetniško delo se osredotoča na raziskovanje teh regij, pri čemer dokumentira preobrazbe in posledice političnih sprememb. Med letoma 1999 in 2010 je obiskal vseh 15 nekdanjih sovjetskih republik, njegov cilj je bil dokumentirati obdobje po »perestrojki« in preobrazbe v teh državah. Pri raziskovanju perifernih regij teh držav, je iskal prizore, ki odražajo preteklo veličino in zapuščene sanje nedavne zgodovine. Fotografije prikazujejo zaprte tovarne, opuščene vojaške komplekse in pozabljene spomenike, pogosto brez prisotnosti ljudi, kar poudarja občutek osamljenosti in zapuščenosti. Kljub temu Grill ne zapade v stereotipe o sovjetski strogosti; namesto tega v svojih delih razkriva človeško odpornost in prilagodljivost. Na primer, pastir v Armeniji uporablja zapuščen avtobus kot pergolo, lovec

pa si je uredil dom v stražarski baraki nekdanjega ženskega kazenskega taborišča na ruskem otoku Sahalin.

Kot rezultat večletnega projekta je nastala fotografska knjiga **Short Stalks at Distant Shores**, ki je bila izdana leta 2012 pri založbi Hatje Cantz in vsebuje 106 fotografij, ki ponujajo neolepšan pogled na vsakdanje življenje v teh regijah. Grill je sodeloval v številnih skupinskih razstavah po Evropi ter imel samostojne razstave v državah, kot so Češka, Avstrija, Francija, Slovenija in Rusija. Njegova dela so vključena v zbirke v Avstriji in Franciji.

Christoph Grill was born in 1965 in Austria. He studied biology/zoology at the University of Vienna, where he focused on archaeozoology – the field that studies animal remains in an archaeological context. Today he lives and works as a photographer and archaeozoologist in Graz.

Since 1996, he has been travelling regularly to the former socialist countries, mainly the republics of the former Soviet Union. His artwork focuses on exploring these regions, documenting the transformations and consequences of political change. Between 1999 and 2010, he visited all 15 former Soviet republics, his aim being to document the post-perestroika period and the transformations in these countries. In exploring the peripheral regions of these countries, he sought out scenes that reflected past grandeur and the abandoned dreams of recent history. The photographs depict closed factories, abandoned military complexes and forgotten monuments, often devoid of human presence, which emphasises the sense of loneliness and abandonment. Yet Grill does not fall into stereotypes of Soviet austerity; instead, his works reveal human resilience and adaptability. For example, a shepherd in Armenia uses an abandoned bus as a pergola,

and a hunter has made a home in the guardhouse of a former women's penal camp on the Russian island of Sakhalin.

The result of a multi-year project is the photography book **Short Stalks at Distant Shores**, published in 2012 by Hatje Cantz, which contains 106 photographs that offer an unvarnished look at everyday life in these regions. Grill has participated in numerous group exhibitions across Europe and has had solo exhibitions in countries such as the Czech Republic, Austria, France, Slovenia and Russia. His works are included in collections in Austria and France.

Airport, Kazakhstan,  
2005.  
From the series:  
Short Stalks at Distant Shores.



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