

ivorypress

Ivorypress Gallery presents

subverted

EDWARD BURTYNSKY NUNO RAMOS
DAVID MAISEL CARLO VALSECCHI



David Maisei | Terminal Mirage 2, 2003 | Courtesy Ivorypress

Exhibition: From 14 February to 12 May 2012

Venue: Ivorypress Space I C/ Comandante Zorita 48 (Madrid)

Official opening in the presence of the artists: 14 February 2012, 7.30 pm

This coming 14 February 2012, Ivorypress Space I is opening *Subverted*, a group exhibition with artworks by Edward Burtynsky, David Maisel, Nuno Ramos and Carlo Valsecchi. The show throws a spotlight on the rapport between man and Nature, a relationship whose dynamic has been radically altered over the last few decades.

Our culture's way of understanding and looking at Nature has experienced a paradigm shift. Until the end of the 18th century Nature was believed to be a manifestation of a mysterious, superhuman force equated with God. From that moment on, it was identified with a quality that exceeds the human dimension, seen as ephemeral and transitory.

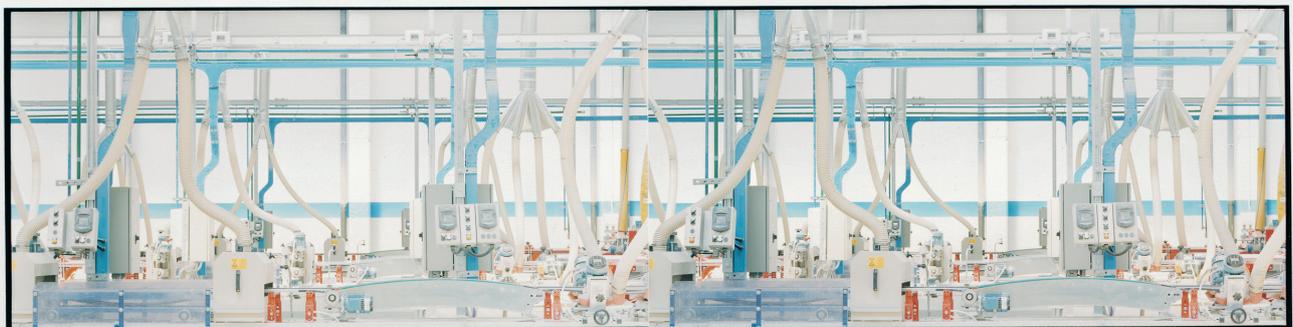
In the history of art, Nature is strongly bound to the aesthetic category of the *Sublime* as formulated by Burke in the mid-18th century and later by Kant and Schopenhauer. Here, nature is much more than a question of form and engages directly with the infinite, while the human is contained and limited. The Sturm und Drang movement was the first to introduce this vision of Nature, which was later adopted by Romanticism in the 19th century as a violent, mysterious and boundless force that transcended human limits.

In our culture today the attributes of both Nature and the human being have been radically subverted. Nature is now perceived as a fragile system abused and exploited by humans. One only has to think of melting glaciers, the deforestation of the Amazon rain forest and climate change in general to get an idea of the tremendous threat looming over the environment. Even natural disasters like tsunamis or great floods are now seen as the effects of man's actions in a highly vulnerable ecosystem.

Subverted takes a look at the intersection of these two realities from a shared language. Where the hand of God was once seen in traditional representations of Nature, we now see the print of the human being. The devastating environmental and human consequences of the world's biggest dam in China or the bed of a lake drained dry by the city of Los Angeles are the images proffered by Burtynsky and Maisel, respectively. Meanwhile, Valsecchi portrays a landscape scarred by human exploitation and industry. Rounding off these three projects is *Black and Blue*, an installation by Nuno Ramos with over ten tons of sand brought from Brazil, speaking to nature consumed and devastated by progress.

None of these projects is innocent. Each one bears implicit a political charge of activism that borders on the radical, suffused with an unsettling foreboding and an almost elegiac approximation to the landscape.

The images in *Subverted* are like containers of these two worlds, civilization and Nature, where the conventional attributes of both have been subverted as a sign of the culture of our time. The works by Edward Burtynsky (Ontario, Canada, 1955), David Maisel (New York, USA, 1961), Nuno Ramos (São Paulo, Brazil, 1960) and Carlo Valsecchi (Brescia, Italy, 1965) are on view at Ivorypress Space I until 12 May 2012.



Carlo Valsecchi | *Fiorano Modenese*, 2003 | Courtesy Ivorypress

For further information, images and interview requests:

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