

PRESS RELEASE

GEISSLER & SANN – the real estate **20 November 2009 – 30 January 2010**

„the real estate“ definite article
not artificial, fraudulent, or illusory
the degree, quality, nature, and extent of one's interest in land or other property
(Definition Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2009)

A major crisis is spreading through global capitalism. This crisis, the worst in many decades, was triggered in part by a faltering American real estate market. Throughout urban and rural North America hundreds of thousands of homeowners are being forced into foreclosure, foregrounding the underlying relationship between globalization and the issue of shelter.

The photographic series "the real estate" (2008/2009) - by Chicago-based artists Beate Geissler and Oliver Sann - documents homes in foreclosure along with the scarred biographies inscribed in them. The series also provides a socially concerned, time diagnostic instance of artistic production. "the real estate" is inductive in the extreme: specific examples represent the universality of the capital process and its manifest effects on individual biographies. The series is characterized by a dissecting cruelty which derives from its subject matter and is essential to its aesthetic embodiment. Shelter is only present as loss: there is no redeeming insight here and none should be expected of this, or any, artistic production. But the series also incorporates the tenderness of precise observation, suggesting a precarious balance between surgical cruelty and affectionate tenderness which culminates in aesthetic indeterminacy.

"the real estate" embodies a recurring theme of Geissler and Sann's art: latent universalism. Kant's notion of a universality effected by distillation and disinterestedness is effectively challenged. Revealed instead is a potentiality, one paradoxically veiled at the very moment of its disclosure. It is in fact the aesthetically singular which allows aesthetic universality to emerge.

Excerpt from the essay "There is no Good Housing in the Estate of the Real. Universality and the Ambivalence of Aesthetic Indeterminacy" by Prof. Dr. Johan Frederick Hartle, University of Amsterdam.

Beate Geissler born 1970 in Neuendettelsau, Germany.

Oliver Sann born 1968 in Düsseldorf, Germany.

They live and work in Chicago, USA.