



NEW RELEASE

Işık Kaya & Thomas Georg Blank Second Nature

Texts by Amy Clarke, Ziad Mahayni
Designed by Işık Kaya & Thomas Georg Blank
Softcover with open spine in slipcase, tête-bêche binding
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»Disneyfied« artefacts of the digital age as part of the Southern California landscape

With the uprise of mobile devices, the infrastructural needs of the telecommunication industry have exploded, and since the 1980s, cell towers have started to fill the planet. The scenery changed dramatically when an antenna was transformed into an artificial pine tree for the first time in 1992. Since then, this kind of camouflage has evolved into a global phenomenon that raises fundamental questions about the relationship between humans and nature.

The images from the series *Second Nature* focus on cell tower trees that became part of the Southern California landscape. The series depicts these artefacts of the digital age as, in Amy Clarke's words, a »societal preference for ›fake‹ aesthetics over ›ugly‹ reality«.

The book consists of two parts, *Mono-Palms* and *Mono-Pines* – you read one side, then flip the book over and read the other one.

From the text *Transcending Nature* by **Ziad Mahayni**:

One can understand the mobile phone trees as camouflaged technology or as optimised nature, as a tree that can do more than ›just‹ look like a tree. One can understand the mobile phone trees as optimised, transcended nature, which would be completely in line with the new paradigm of the dawning digital age. In this way, the tree becomes a trans-tree, a trans-arbor, a prototype of transcended nature that is supposed to be able to do more than just be nature. Seen from this perspective, the mobile phone trees are part of a development that since the late twentieth century has created and is yet to create many similarly irritating hybrid artefacts, from genetically optimised plants to cloned animals and artificial organs printed out in 3D bioprinting.

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The title of the series of images by Işık Kaya and Thomas Georg Blank, Second Nature, ingeniously reflects the ambivalent and tilting nature of the mobile phone trees. It can be read as a second skin in the sense of a new garment for nature, or as the next stage of evolution, as optimised and more efficient nature, as »Nature 2.0«.

Işık Kaya and **Thomas Georg Blank** are lens-based media artists whose work explores the ways in which humans shape and inhabit the world. Their research-heavy approach is deeply rooted in documentary practices.

However, by pushing the boundaries of how reality can be depicted, they transcend the domain of representation and create completely independent, often hyperreal visual worlds. As a result, the boundaries between reality and fiction in their work become blurred.

Their projects often focus on traces of economic infrastructures and how humanity's dominance over nature finds its manifestation in everyday architecture. By framing their subjects almost exclusively at night, they aim to accentuate the artificial and uncanny qualities of contemporary urban environments and human settlements.

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Exhibitions

Windmill Library Gallery, Las Vegas

27.01. – 12.04.2022

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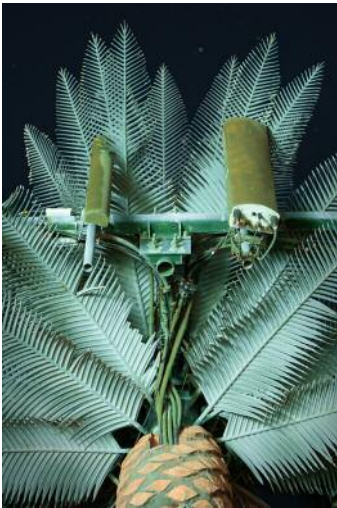
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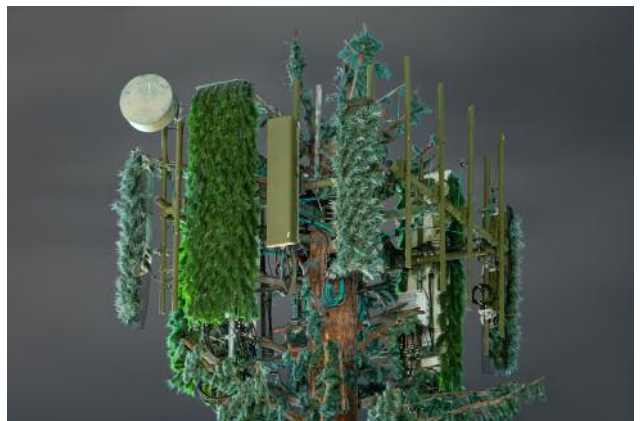
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