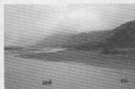


Shigeru Takato



Jungfrau (2003)



Rangitata Gorge (2003)



Mannheim (2003)

# Landscapes

In April 2003, Shigeru Takato presented *Back to the Garden* at Ramp Gallery. The exhibition was made up of four lightboxes. Three of these presented images of empty television news-desks. The fourth was a nightscape of an unnamed city, its lights dotted across the dark space, becoming, in Takato's words: 'a small-scale analogue of what we see in the sky at night.'

The exhibition was concerned with the transmission of energy and information. But beyond this content, it demonstrated Takato's remarkable control of large-format photography. Not long after this exhibition, Takato moved to Düsseldorf to study at its Kunstakademie. The images reproduced in this magazine come from a project he began while still in New Zealand and which he continued in Germany. They extend his interest in landscape, travel and the transmission of information, and once again illustrate his impressive technical control.

**Anthony Byrt**  
Editor

*Whenever I see a landscape photograph, it feels like I have seen it before somewhere.*

In May 2000, I received a small parcel from my mother. On it, there were twenty-two newly issued Japanese stamps. They celebrated Japanese popular history, including images of famous writers, hit songs, classic cartoon characters and sports heroes. There were also historic events like the atomic bombs in Hiroshima and Nagasaki and the Pearl Harbour attack, as well as contemporary social issues like a new public health insurance scheme. I'm not quite sure why these particular stamps were issued in Japan, but what interested me about them was that the parcel reduced all these events to a single idea, namely 'commemoration'. The events became uniform. Even the prices of the stamps were similar. I don't remember what my mother wrote in the letter in the parcel, but I remember the stamps, and feeling an uneasy nostalgia about Japan.

With the Internet, television, magazines and the growth of new media, images are traveling at a very fast rate. Holidaymakers can consume and process pictures of their destinations at home before they even start packing for the trip. So what does all this mean for our landscapes? Are they becoming more familiar to us? Or are we separated from them by the heavy traffic of this image-culture?

This series of photographs is of landscapes in Germany, Switzerland and the South Island of New Zealand. They try, in their own way, to make sense of this image-culture and address the way we relate to landscape in contemporary society.

**Shigeru Takato**  
Artist