

DARIUSZ KANTOR – women in mining

Photographs from the coal washery 2002 - 2004, Upper Silesia/Poland



Tainted by Coal

„The portrait on the cover – a face covered almost completely by a mask of dust – is immediately recognisable as a woman. The other photographs, however, require closer scrutiny. The photographs were taken in twelve different coal mines in Upper Silesia, Poland. The women, whose faces are tainted by coal, work in a coal-cleaning plant. 'Dariusz Kantor comes from the area himself and although ever since he has lived elsewhere, it would seem that, for his work at least, he keeps returning to the place.' These are the words of Petra Wegmann, Kantor's agent and editor of the book "Von Kohle gezeichnet". Between 2002 and 2004, Kantor produced this series of captivating black and white photographs. 'The authenticity of his work is, that it doesn't pass any judgement. It does not reduce the women to the role of victim, the 'heroine of the working classes' or to that of the self-sacrificing mother. For Kantor, reality is not a fixed point, but a spectrum. It is left up to the viewer to decide.'

Dariusz Kantor's work balances on the borderline between art and journalism. According to Wegmann, 'he has difficulty himself in qualifying his work as 'art' and prefers to use words like 'documentary' or 'reportage'. With both feet firmly on the ground, he cuts a quiet, unassuming figure, merely looking for the undemonstrative prose rather than seeking out spectacular effects.

The whole exhibition is composed of 43 photographs. They are beautifully presented in off-white mounts and wooden frames. Sometimes museum visitors will ask why these hard-hitting images of reality are presented in such aesthetically pleasing surroundings. Kantor explains that this format was chosen partly out of sense of homage to the women and their work. What's more, the contrast only serves to accentuate the reality.' [...]"

Drukkerij Rosbeek, printer of the book Von Kohle gezeichnet

In captivating black and white photographs Dariusz Kantor remembers the often forgotten contribution of women concerning history and present of mining industry throughout the world. His pictures are a lasting and impressive tribute to the women and their work in coal washeries and separation plants. At the instance of Big Stuff 2007, Henrichshütte/Hattingen we present some of the photographs of his current exhibition.

ABSTRACT	EXHIBITION PHOTOGRAPHS	MEDIA
Photographer Dariusz Kantor	Number 43 black and white photographs	exhibition: 43 photographs; fee for exhibitionon application photographs: 10/10 limited edition, apiece500 € 682.87 \$
Title of the exhibition Tainted by Coal, women in mining	Measure of photographs 18.5 inch x 12.2 inch / 47 cm x 31 cm	1 poster mask of dust, DIN A2 , 42 x 59,4 cm 16.53 x 23.38 inch12 € 16.39 \$
Subject Women working in silesian coal washeries	Measure of frames 19.68 inch x 27.55 inch / 50 x 70 cm	1 poster band conveyor, 74 x 52 cm / 29.13 x 20.47 inch . 15 € 20.49 \$ 1 postcards, apiece2 € 2.73 \$
Project development 2002 – 2004	Baryte Copy by photographer	12 postcards/Subjects, set18 € 24,58 \$
Location 12 collieries in Upper Silesia, PL	Edition limited 10/10	1 book of photographs: 64 pages, 40 duplex photographs, report german/polish, hardcover 8.85 x 11.02 inch / 22,5 x 28 cm29,80 € 40,71 \$