# Michael Danner Projects







### Michael Danner Projects

#### Salamanca 2001

These photographs are the result of a commission from the European City of Culture Salamanca 2002. My work investigates the housing estates orbiting the historic town center of Salmanca.

The exhibition catalogue Salamanca, A Photographic Project features all the commissions work by Lynne Cohen, Michael Danner, Candida Höfer, Valérie Juve, Xavier Ribas and Humberto Rivas.

But there is no such distinction in the spaces chosen by Michael Danner to express his particularvision of the city. There is none for the simple reason that these are economically less buoyant zones; humbler dwellings, blocks where small apartments are huddled together. Public and private are superimposed inside and outside the buildings. There the relationship with nature is different too. I have always been struck by the stubbornness of undergrowth, bent on returning to its domain through the tiniest crack in the concrete. The humble weed, despised as an ornamental element, which we have relegated to the lowest rung of the plant ladder, is always the pioneer in the return of nature to reclaim what once belonged to it. >

And that is so because, in fact, undergrowth is from nowhere because it is from everywhere. It is the very image of disorder and the first thing man eliminates, both from the wood (the representation of untouched nature) and the garden (the expression of tamed nature). In the juxtaposition of spaces with opposite meanings, united by the presence of a single element, undergrowth, Danner finds the continuity between the natural space and an urban space which never quite imposes its order of asphalt and cement. And here there is a twofold criticism. First, of the spaces which town-planning terminology defines as ,dormitory towns', and which are nothing more than a sarcastic comment on the idea of city to which the -misunderstood- architectural avantgarde has brought us. Spaces for a collective life which, if it is conspicuous at all it is conspicuous by its absence. Not to mention the old pastoral idea that sees primitive nature as a welcoming environment where we can build a life in harmony with our surroundings. What Danner's images show is an environment as unpleasing as the city (indeed the plant element is repeated), although we cannot avoid evoking it and repeating it there.

Extract from the essay by Ramón Esparza in *Salamanca*. A *Photographic Project*. Consorcio Salamanca 2002, Salamanca (pp 141-142)

## Michael Danner Projects

### About

Born in Reutlingen (Germany) in 1967, I now live in Berlin. I studied photography at the Fachhochschule Bielefeld (D) and the University of Brighton (UK) and subsequently lived in London from 1997 to 2000.

My artistic and photographic work focuses on the life-world. Here, I develop visual strategies that serve as a means of stepping back from the scene at hand, thus allowing for observation, interpretation and staging.

The distance thus achieved creates space for various levels of meaning, such as social and historical references or medial reflections. My aim is to facilitate a dialogue between image and recipient that reaches beyond the subject itself and links with the observer's life-world.

In addition to numerous publications and exhibitions, my photographic works have been entered into renowned collections and have been awarded many prices.

#### Contact

Michael Danner Zelterstrasse 14 10439 Berlin, Germany

mobile +49 175 2026704 studio +49 30 44717800

mail@dannerprojects.com www.dannerprojects.com