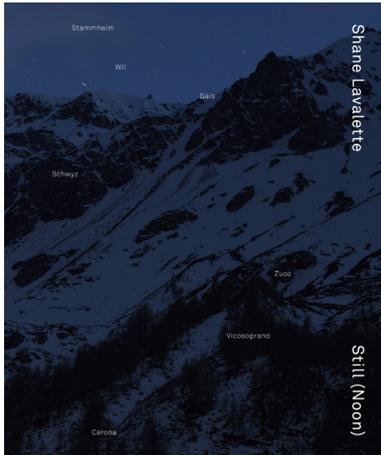


Edition Patrick Frey

Press Release

Shane Lavalette *Still (Noon)*



Something we're not accustomed to happens in Shane Lavalette's pictures: we see the minor details of our everyday lives. We also notice something we Swiss are even less used to seeing: we discover, through the eyes of an outsider, the fine veins of poetry running through these scenes. The soft blades of bromegrass. The red blooms of poppies. Gable roofs in the distance. All mere details, to be sure, but altogether they form something abstract that we call home. We see it, or rather feel it, in *Still (Noon)*, and it stirs something inside us that won't let go.

For we Swiss are accustomed to a different pictorial register, that of the picture postcard. Mountain panoramas! The lakes! Edelweiss! The fondue pot! All marvelous places and things, but stripped of any poetry by their mass-produced picture-packaging for tourists.

In May 2017, however, the Fotostiftung Schweiz commissioned American photographer Shane Lavalette to photograph a dozen Swiss towns with a view to piecing together a portrait of the country as a whole. He shot Carona, Gais, Rüderswil, Saignelégier, Saint-Saphorin, Sainte-Croix, Schwyz, Stammheim, Vicosoprano, Visperterminen, Wil and Zuoz – thereby following in some prominent footsteps. About eighty years ago this was the itinerary of Theo Frey, one of the leading figures in early Swiss photojournalism. Regarded as the European pioneer of long-term documentary projects and a “subtle chronicler of village life” (NZZ 1997 obituary), Frey photographed those very villages for the Swiss National Exhibition in 1939. *Still (Noon)* juxtaposes these old and new views of rural life in Switzerland to offer up an unusual and moving portrait of a nation.

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Shane Lavalette
Still (Noon)

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