



In colour photographs taken in Texas in 2006 and 2007, Peter Granser focused with keen and objective precision on the plethora of relics and signs that proliferate across the landscape, providing us with insights into the strange and contradictory state of contemporary American identity.

Photography Peter Granser | Words Dr. Christoph Schaden | www.granser.de

In a conference room at the Fort Hood military base, the US Army's biggest army base, two clocks indicate the time in the USA and in Iraq. The whiteboard beneath them is empty, as if there were nothing to say, no plans to be made, with the exception of a doodle by a little girl in the corner, smiling and pretending, that everything is in order. Plastic cups pressed into the holes of a fence in front of supply containers spell out a welcome home for soldiers returning from Iraq. JOB WELL DONE is the message, in the red-white-and-blue colours of the American flag.

A flag also adorns NASA's legendary Saturn V moon rocket in Houston, but it is covered by a clear plastic tarp. In the town of Midland, oil derricks, traditional symbol of the wealth of the Texan oil magnates, survive only as silhouettes lined up on a mural that decorates the facade of a high-rise building in an empty city. A mass religious event in America's biggest mega-church, which Peter Granser composed in the

form of a monumental triptych, is staged as a faceless place where the human individual no longer has any value. Salvation takes precedence.

In this series of photographs, resonant with scepticism, emptiness and stagnation dominate the atmosphere, whose formal qualities and motifs deliberately refer to the work of various American documentary photographers, such as Walker Evans, William Eggleston and Henry Weasel. *Signs* add a new chapter to this legacy, depicting present-day Texas as an intellectually ossified realm where rigorous puritanical devoutness mixes with capitalist and patriotic interests to create a menacing brew.

With an unmistakable style, which uses medium-sized, square format and is inspired by tendencies in the *New Documents*, *New Topographic* and *New Colour Photography* movements, in his *Signs* series, Peter Granser reveals a level of political engagement and knowledge that gives him the ability to incisively illuminate a significant aspect of contemporary society.

SIGNS



The *Signs* book is published by Hatje Cantz.

Signs will be showed at Galerie Robert Morat, Hamburg, Germany (January 8th 2010 - February 17th 2010), at the group-exhibition of the finalists of "Fotokunstpreis Stiftung Alison & Peter Klein" at Kunstwerk, Nussdorf, Germany (January 26th 2010 - March 28th 2010) an at Museu da Imagem, Braga, Portugal (April 2nd - May 9th 2010).









