

THE BELGO REPORT



LE POINT AVEUGLE – NATASCHA NIEDERSTRASS AT GALERIE TROIS POINTS

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Galerie Trois Points

Natascha Niederstrass

Le Point Aveugle

September 9 – October 28, 2017

Upon entering the Galerie Trois Points, the viewer is presented with an *Inventaire* of twelve works of art. Whether you choose to explore each artwork in the order set out by this inventory, or you simply wander through the gallery space at your own pace, the

result is a piecing together of the *Buenos Aires Cimetière de la Recoleta* as set out by Natascha Niederstrass' *Le Point Aveugle*. Her photographs and objects offer glimpses of their setting, and their subtle details give mention to the spaces that were eventually brought to life by the "click" of a shutter. Looking at this personal archive, *Le Point Aveugle* allows us to imagine the paths that meander through this cemetery and the past lives that touched its remains.

Despite the lack of any human figure in the photos of her *Inventaire*, Niederstrass' images contain a sense of life found within these seemingly long-abandoned places. Her attention to detail highlights the materiality of the space, the dust and grime nearly tangible, and the agelessness of some areas that appear to be untouched by time. Niederstrass play with focus gives the viewer a dreamy sense of viewing, like the imperfect recall of a memory.

Le Point Aveugle triggers the imagination, the out-of-focus areas activate the brain to fill in the blanks. This "blind spot" could refer to the blurred line between the clearly visible and the barely there, which is ever present throughout this exhibition. Even the dark blue walls of the gallery seem to mimic the dark corners of the images, of areas unreachable by light. Perhaps the title of the exhibition refers to the boundary between light and shadow, which is pleasant and promising in some cases, and ominous in others. Figure 8: *Allée no. 1 (Corridor)* is an example of the former. The blur of the alleyway at the base of the image appears to be obscure and unstable, as though the ground could collapse at any moment. Yet, following the strong verticals of the composition, we

are met with the brilliant luminescence of the street beyond and are comforted by the visible passage leading out. Contrasting to this image, figure 12: *Allée no. 2 (Impasse)* evokes the ominous dead-end, both figuratively and literally. The darkness at the heart of the composition draws us in, but are we willing to step into a place where the walls appear to be closing in, inch by inch?

Niederstrass' black and white photographs of the Buenos Aires cemetery provide a unique perspective of an augural space. However, despite the archival structure of her work, the exhibition is not a straightforward guided tour of the *Buenos Aires Cimetière de la Recoleta*. Rather, *Le Point Aveugle* functions as a scavenger hunt where the inventory and the image titles provide hints but leave it up to the viewer to discover how the pieces fit together.

I suggest that you pay attention to the differences between the inventory titles and the image titles. Niederstrass' elimination and inclusion of certain fragments (figures 7, 9 and 11) allow the artworks to exist and be viewed in multiple dimensions and contexts. Overall, *Le Point Aveugle* recounts a story: of the photographers visit, of the spaces that make up the Buenos Aires *Cimetière de la Recoleta* and of the creation of an artist's archive.