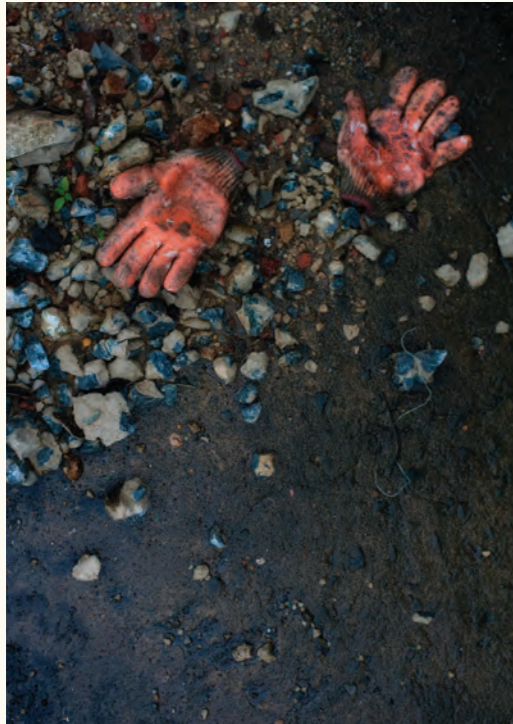




PERSPECTIVES

DATA & MUD

Text: Stephen Black
Photos: Philipp Aldrup



Clockwise from top left:
Gezeitentempel 01, 02 and 04
— Philipp Aldrup



"It is advisable to look from the tide pool to the stars and then back to the tide pool again"

— John Steinbeck

Water is shown only once in Philipp Aldrup's *Gezeitentempel/Tidal Pools* exhibition.

The photograph consists of shallow water softening the shadow of a tree and a drowned plank. The surface of the water reflects the light in such a way that it resembles a hazy sky. The sand, mud and algae resemble a map. *Gezeitentempel 2*, like many of the images in the exhibition, is an optical illusion. Here, a small awkward section of a still pond is also a grand composition filled with the sense of solitude one feels while standing before a panorama of sea and sky. In another image a pile of dirt becomes a continent. In *Tidal Pools* dry construction sites become the remains of long lost underwater cities.

Tidal Pools is not about visual trickery, however. The images are what they are; objects to be contemplated. This is not a show about photojournalism; no story is being told. Here are the places Aldrup experienced while he contemplated his life— and Life itself. For a two year period he explored and photographed anonymous parts of "modern" Singapore, places like highway underpasses and abandoned buildings. He questioned the world, read philosophy and again went out to explore and create. He was inspired

by the works of thinkers like Nobel prize winning philosopher Albert Camus. Again and again he went out with a camera, each trip resulting in a partial answers. Images slowly revealed their common theme.

Aldrup's theme? Man's existence, our brief moment of life as seen against the vastness of time and space. Just as Nature's tidal pools are caught between the rushing tides and the constant sun, Aldrup's tidal pools are caught between the opposing forces of the rational and the absurd. The only vertical image in the show highlights a pair of pink gloves. The gloves seem to float over a mess of stones and dark earth, yet they are stuck to the ground. The timeless image is absurd and rational; a perfect composition for an absent, dirty clown.

William Blake wrote that the universe can be perceived in a grain of sand. With *Tidal Pools* Philipp Aldrup suggests that infinity is a patch of dried mud. Japan has its rock gardens, Singapore has its tidal pools.

Philipp Aldrup's exhibition, Gezeitentempel/Tidal Pools, runs from 1 to 28 February at Objectifs Gallery, 56A Arab Street.

The author of the piece, Stephen Black, is a writer, photographer, artist, videomaker, producer.

For more of his works, please visit <http://glossi.com/SailAirFashion/4776-read-to-wear> (free Kindle downloads in January) <http://glossi.com/bookmerah/4438-half-black-stephen-black-2012-review>