

The Grand Tour

Janne Bøje Andersen

With The Grand Tour section, which is a provisional conclusion to the long time project entitled The Permanent Collection (T.P.C.)*, Jan Skovgård refers to a long European travelling tradition. Scholarly or educational tours. The Grand Tour. Young artists from the periphery of Europe sought the centre of their time - Rome, Paris, Vienna, or Berlin - according to which century we are talking about.

Jan Skovgård has been all over.

All around Europe there are buildings housing concentrations of what was considered of value at different times. The art museums. Jan Skovgård went to these museums. He experienced, worked with, and photographed the masterpieces, and hereby built up an archive of photos. The archive as such is not a work, and the tour is not the central aspect. Rather, they are the fundamental prerequisites.

He compiles the photographed works in new collections by piling up slides on top of each other, and by re-photographing through these, or by scanning them on a computer that samples the information of the pictures. When the photos of the masterpieces are put together, they "enrich" each other. They "rub" so much against one another that you can no longer see where one picture begins and the other ends, where the pictures belong, and where they come from. The list of references to the works involved grows longer and longer, whereas the pictorial result ends up as something resembling a monochrome.

There is a contrast between the closed character, the *relatively* flat picture and the amount of masterpieces it comprises. It comes *very close* to being a monochrome, i.e. a picture with a minimal statement, but at the same time it is also a whole collection where lines are drawn in a crisscross pattern across Europe. Historically, geographically, and artistically. Exactly because it contains all these pictures it gets its own distinctive space - not an ordinary exhibition room or something like that - but a built-in, virtual space. A "virtual reality", where you are tossed around among incompatible forms of "life" or opposite "intentions".

Uddrag fra bogen The Grand Tour, 1994