Limits to Representation: Peter Zumthor and Hans Danuser

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In 1987, Peter Zumthor (b. 1943) commissioned the photographer Hans Danuser (b. 1953) to portray his newly built chapel Sogn Benedetg in the village of Sumvitg, in the Swiss Alps. The atmospheric black-and-white photographs marked the radical shift from a documentary device in the style of straight photography of architecture to an artistic interpretation of the architectural work. These photographs stood at the beginning of a series of fruitful dialogues between architects and photographers as testified by the cases of Herzog & de Meuron and Thomas Ruff, Gigon Guyer and Heinrich Helfenstein, Peter Zumthor and Hélène Binet. Danuser was known for his photographs of the interior spaces of nuclear power plants. His photographic campaigns evoked a conflict that during the 1980s remained invisible and could not be easily articulated, in part because of the debate on the apparently conflicting dependence of the Alpine regions on the production of hydroelectricity and the exploitation of the landscape's beauty for tourism purposes. The photographs Danuser made of Zumthor's architecture proposed a link between the isolated chapel and the problem of postindustrialization, rendering evident a discontinuity of space and time that few contemporaries were able to grasp.

Keywords: Zumthor, Peter (b. 1943); Danuser, Hans (b. 1953); Neo-Expressionism; Economic History; Alpine Landscape; Energy Industry; Nuclear Power

Until a few years ago, I was quite certain of my view of Peter Zumthor's (b. 1943) architecture. I greatly respected the beauty and atmospheric effect of his designs. I was also skeptical about his notion of authenticity, about what seemed to me an anachronistic concept of Nature, and the ever-present Romantic undercurrent in his work. As an art historian and critic, I was left little room for maneuver by the self-referentiality and autonomy of his architecture. My view of his work had been formed partly by my visits to some of his buildings, but much more importantly by the photographs Swiss photographer Hans Danuser (b. 1953) took of the Sogn Benedetg Chapel in 1987 and 1988; these were my first introduction to Zumthor's work. Most notably, a shot that shows the chapel seemingly dissolving in the mist (Figure 1) had become inextricably connected in my imagination with the name Zumthor. Associations with Romantic ideals, otherworldliness—even cultural pessimism—inevitably arose whenever I thought of Zumthor's architecture. My view of Hans Danuser was just as certain. I first encountered his work in 1989 in the exhibition *In Vivo* in the Aargauer Kunsthaus Aarau.[1] His grainy, black-and-white images of cooling towers, laboratories, and dissecting tables were both fascinating and discomfiting. In much the same way that I

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Figure 1 Hans Danuser, *Caplutta Sogn Benedetg Sumvitg* (Switzerland), no. I of six parts (I, II 1–II 2, III, IV 1–IV 2), 1988. Photograph on baryt paper, 50 × 40 cm. Image © and courtesy of Hans Danuser.

responded to Zumthor's architecture, skepticism colored my reaction to an artistic approach that seemed to be rooted in the Neo-Expressionism of the 1980s, and that favored an antimodernism and pathos that were wholly alien to my way of thinking.

Then, in spring 2004, I went to see the hamlet of Sogn Benedetg, up above Sumvitg, and I immediately had to revise the images in my head, my views of Zumthor and Danuser. Instead of finding a desolate edifice tucked away in the Alps, merging with the landscape, I came face to face with one of the most elegant structures I had ever seen. Not since my first sight of Herzog & de Meuron's Eberswalde Library in Eberswalde, Germany (1999), had any new architecture made such a deep impression on me. Everything about it seemed to be of our own time, as though this chapel had been built only yesterday—not, as it was, almost twenty years ago. The building itself, or so it seemed to me, consisted exclusively of layered surfaces. It appeared to have nothing to do with space in the usual sense, as a tangible, three-dimensional entity. Nor were there any windows, marking a transition between exterior and interior—which would have served as indicators of spatial continuity of some kind. Instead, the roof was marginally raised to let light in. And the wall, that is, the outermost layer, faced with shingles—that was drawn around the structure like a textile membrane—was splayed open just far enough to create an opening, although hardly one that could be described as a door. Additionally, this structure was anything but earthbound. On the contrary, the few steps leading up to the entrance seemed to shy away from actually touching the chapel, as though a direct connection between the ground and the building were impossible. The topography of the Alpine landscape and the topology of the architecture were at odds with each other, discontinuous.

Zumthor's chapel anticipated much of the architectural debate of recent years. Even so, the topological designs inspired by the Möbius strip and produced by architects such as Ben van Berkel (Dutch; b. 1957) or London-based Foreign Office

Architects looked—in comparison to Zumthor's much earlier solutions—like illustrations for a theoretical treatise. Moreover, Zumthor's chapel was not, as I had feared, simply self-referential. On the contrary, it changed the way that I perceived the surroundings and seemed to imbue the whole valley with a sense of movement. It was not about autonomy and isolation. Far from it—this design was as much about focusing on details as about associations with a larger context. The built structure sharpened my eye for the terrain as a whole and it articulated the energy flowing through this region. This was not in the sense of esoteric energy lines, but of the institutional connections that still link the Catholic Church in this part of the Rhine valley with the once mighty Kloster Disentis, which in turn connects with the global Catholic community—as well as in the sense of the production of electric power crucial to this region. This Alpine landscape was also an industrial landscape. But to me there seemed to be no contradiction with urbanism. Zumthor's architecture made it very clear that there could be no alternative to urbanism for it told of a landscape that was entirely made by the human hand. I was not on the periphery, but right at the heart of a network that extended to Berlin, New York, and Tokyo.

Pictorial Turn

The point of describing this experience was not to make much of my own subjective reaction. For my revised view is a consequence of the general shift in a notion that pervaded architecture in the 1980s but has only recently been satisfactorily described. I am referring to the transition from the notion of architecture as a system of signs, as a text or language that can be "read," to that of architecture as an image that affects the viewer and is "experienced." Central to this transition—part of a cultural trend that is today generally referred to as the "pictorial turn" or "iconic turn"—is the role of photography. And in this process the meeting between Danuser and Zumthor was to be highly significant.[2]

This revision of my view of Zumthor's architecture—prompted by my encounter with the chapel—also gave me the urge to take a closer look at Danuser's photograph. It was only then that it dawned on me that, of course, this photograph did not exist in isolation; it was part of a series that in my mind had run together into a single image. In response to a commission from Zumthor, in 1987 and 1988, Danuser had taken these black-and-white photographs (with a medium-format camera) of the newly constructed chapel, inaugurated in September 1988. The result was a series of six square, black-and-white photographs. They were first shown in the exhibition *Partituren und Bilder: Architektonische Arbeiten aus dem Atelier Peter Zumthor 1985–1988*—which also contained pictures of Zumthor's "Protective Housing for Roman Archeological Excavations in Chur" and his studio in Haldenstein—presented in the Architekturgalerie Luzern and the Architekturgalerie Graz in 1988. They were subsequently also published in the magazines *Du*, *Ottagono,* and *Domus*.[3]

Danuser had photographed different aspects of the interior and the exterior, as though a single image could not do the chapel justice. So his interest was not, as I had imagined, simply in evoking things irrational and capturing the atmosphere, but rather

Figure 2 Hans Danuser, *Caplutta Sogn Benedetg Sumvitg* (Switzerland), no. III of six parts (I, II 1–II 2, III, IV 1–IV 2), 1988. Photograph on baryt paper, 50 × 40 cm. Image © and courtesy of Hans Danuser.

in addressing a much more fundamental issue in art, that is to say, making the invisible visible. The series begins with a shot of the chapel and its surroundings. Danuser passed up the chance to photograph the spectacular view out over the Surselva. In traditional architectural photography, the connection between landscapes and buildings had become so conventional that in effect each would cancel out the other. By deliberately turning his back on the view, he managed to sidestep the "Grisons" cliché —and in so doing drew attention to the focus on the surfaces and textures of the specific materials from this area that is so characteristic of this region's architecture.

Another factor that was at odds with the picture I had created in my mind's eye was that the chapel was not shrouded in banks of mist, as I had thought. In reality, the mist conceals what is beyond it. Consequently it is not, as in German Romantic painter Caspar David Friedrich's (1774–1880) paintings of isolated churches, for instance, as though this world were indistinguishable from the next; on the contrary, it is distinctly non-sublime, sobering. The chapel looms large in its setting, a foreign body that has landed there with the same brutality as the sharp-edged rocks that bespeak the destructive power of Nature. At the time, many would still vividly have remembered the terrifying powder avalanche of February 1984 that had destroyed the original medieval chapel just 200 meters away. And the bell tower is equally unsettling. In my memory, it was something like a tree. But in reality it looks more like a pylon for the cables and mountain railways that crisscross this area, an element that both connects and divides. In short, my Romantic image of architecture that has become one with Nature—presumably inspired by Danuser's photographs—was out of kilter with both Zumthor's architecture and Danuser's interpretation.

My new view of Danuser's photography now gave me the impression that it is not about the aesthetic connection between a building and the landscape but that it brings to light something that is generally overlooked, that is to say, the economic connec-

Figure 3 Hans Danuser, *Caplutta Sogn Benedetg Sumvitg* (Switzerland), no. II 1 of six parts (I, II 1–II 2, III, IV 1–IV 2), 1988. Photograph on baryt paper, 50 × 40 cm. Image © and courtesy of Hans Danuser.

Figure 4 Hans Danuser, *Caplutta Sogn Benedetg Sumvitg* (Switzerland), no. II 2 of six parts (I, II 1–II 2, III, IV 1–IV 2), 1988. Photograph on baryt paper, 50 × 40 cm. Image © and courtesy of Hans Danuser.

tion. Witness the shot that shows the fence almost touching the chapel (Figure 2), which is more than just "picturesque"—although this may be one's first impression. Much more interesting than its formal effect is what it tells us about the financial pressures that are ever-present in this mountainous region and the pragmatic solutions resolved by the locals. By including a section of the new chapel with its visible concrete substructure in this image, Danuser avoids any hint of the nostalgic evocation of a supposedly intact, preindustrial world. He shows the viewer how these artifacts, the fence and the chapel, were made. The roughly worked branches rammed into the ground supporting the cheap bark offcuts from a sawmill are byproducts of the timber trade that produced, for example, the more durable and more expensive shingles that protect the exterior of the chapel from the elements. By viewing the chapel, as it were, with the eye of the farmer, the joiner, and the carpenter, Danuser illuminates the work process—and with just a few photographs tells us more about Zumthor's architectural methods than any text that happens to mention his training as a cabinetmaker. A similarly subtle insight into the chapel's making is found in the details of the floor before and after the benches were installed (Figure 3). Although the boards are small—and hence cheap—the variety and ornamental nature of the wood grain greatly enhances the chapel's interior. The shot of the interior (Figure 4) looks at first almost like a technical commentary on the construction, showing how the load-bearing uprights are connected to the shell. Yet for me it is highly significant in terms of spatial theory. It shows that for Zumthor it is just not possible to think of a space other than as being defined by a sequence of textile planes, like a tent, or a stage that achieves its effect by means of curtains and sets—all flat surfaces.

With his shots of Sogn Benedetg, Danuser radically affected the conventions of architectural photography. Instead of producing a neutral documentation, he pursued his own personal interpretation. Instead of reducing the phenomenon of the chapel to

Figure 5 Herzog & de Meuron, *Architektur Denkform*, exhibition at Architekturmuseum Basel, Switzerland, October–November 1988. Photograph. Image © and courtesy of Herzog & de Meuron.

a single shot, he in effect divided the building into individual components, as though for a short film that dissects its subject matter into sequences, showing it from different perspectives—an approach that would be described these days as "performative." These fragments allow viewers to reconstruct the building in their own imagination. In doing so, Danuser colored the reception of Zumthor's architecture. In the same sense that anyone who has ever seen Hans Namuth's 1950 photograph of Jackson Pollock at work in his studio, so, too, will Danuser's photographs forever be linked with Zumthor's work.

How did Zumthor and Danuser make contact? In the early 1980s, Danuser was already working his way from photography as an applied art to art photography. In 1984, he was the first photographer to be awarded an atelier grant by the City of Zurich that allowed him to go to New York. In 1985, he exhibited three series of photographs in the Kunstmuseum Chur. Zumthor saw this exhibition and later decided to commission Danuser to take the photographs of Sogn Benedetg. The two agreed that Danuser would have a free hand. It was this encounter between Hans Danuser's photography and Peter Zumthor's architecture that was to instigate change in the portrayal of architecture both in Switzerland and far beyond the realms of Swiss architecture. Over the next decade or so, both photography and architecture set about redefining their territory, during which time the architects allowed the photographers the greatest possible freedom. At the same time that Danuser's photographs were on view in Lucerne, the Architekturmuseum Basel was showing the exhibition *Architektur Denkform* by Jacques Herzog and Pierre de Meuron (both b. 1950) in which they confronted the problem of the representation of architecture by completely covering the Modernist window-panes of the museum with transparent photographs of their own buildings (Figure 5). It was not until three years after Zumthor had chosen the art photography route that they followed

suit at the Architecture Biennale in Venice by showing photographs of their building shot by a number of different artists.[4] Since the 1990s, German photographer Thomas Ruff (b. 1958) has been mainly involved with their work; Jeff Wall (Canadian; b. 1946) was involved just once.[5]

This period of just over ten years has a particular place in the long history of the relationship between photography and architecture, and has much in common with the late 1920s, when Ludwig Mies van der Rohe's (1886–1969) Barcelona Pavilion for the World Exhibition of 1929 was famously photographed. Dismantled again after the exhibition, it is as though the Pavilion had been built just for the camera and it was only through photography that it became an icon of modern architecture. After 2000, the onset of "signature architecture" marked the end of this period during which architecture and art converged so productively. Although many artists have actively engaged with architecture, these days—aside from notable exceptions such as Swiss-French photographer Hélène Binet (b. 1959)—architectural photography is once again firmly at the beck and call of the architects as a propaganda tool, and not as an aid to critical reflection. In the meantime, the medium of video has established itself as a useful means to represent architecture. Peter Zumthor was aware of this when he commissioned the Austrian artists Nicole Six (b. 1971) and Paul Petritsch (b. 1968) to produce a series of video installations of his buildings for his exhibition *Peter Zumthor: Bauten und Projekte 1986–2007* at the Kunstmuseum Bregenz.

Cooling Towers and Church Spires

In view of the bleak outlook in the realms of traditional architectural photography at the time, it was only natural that Zumthor would look for someone in the still young field of art photography to create a fitting record of his first major project. In order to shed additional light on his final choice, I would like to take a look at Danuser's exhibition in Chur and, in so doing, also revise my own skeptical reaction to the exhibition *In Vivo*. Both exhibitions arose from a project, dating to 1979 or 1980, that was known in Chur by the title "Wirtschaft, Industrie, Wissenschaft und Forschung," and that was exhibited in 1989 (now with additional series) with the title *In Vivo*; at the same time it was also published as a richly illustrated book and as an exhibition catalog with selected works.[6] On view in Chur were shots from the series *A-Energie*, *Gold*, and *Medizin*. As the catalog tells us, these photographs were taken "in a nuclear power station and in the context of research into nuclear reactors," "in the context of refining, pouring, and storage," and "in the context of research in anatomy and pathology."[7] In Aarau, the series *Medizin II*, *Physik I (Los Alamos)*, *Chemie I*, and *Chemie II* were also on show. When I revisited these works, it became clear to me that Hans Danuser's approach was not primarily expressive, that for him the creation of atmosphere and the evocation of the uncanny were less important than analysis—not only the analysis of an object, but above all of the way that the public perceived it in those days. For the public's reaction could be so emotional that any chance of critical reflection on the role of the pictures just fell by the wayside. With hindsight I find it

Figure 6 Hans Danuser, *Shelters for the Roman Archaeological Site*, II 2 of seven parts (I, II 1–3, III, IV 1–2), 1988. Photograph on baryt paper, 50 × 40 cm. Image © and courtesy of Hans Danuser.

interesting—almost twenty years ago it was scarcely tolerable—to see that Danuser does not deny this emotionality, but even nurtures it in the viewer. So Danuser was not out to deconstruct emotionality, or to undo the sublime—as in the photo series of certain American conceptual artists such as Allan Sekula (b. 1951)—or was he endeavoring to evoke the numinous, in the spirit of photographers such as James Welling (b. 1951). His strategy was the pursuit of ambivalence. Looking back now, it seems clear that his work articulated precisely the indeterminate nature of the situation in those days and that it was also addressing a dilemma. This was very much a live issue in the more general theoretical debate of the day (discussed by philosophers such as Jean-François Lyotard [1924–1998] and Peter Sloterdijk [b. 1947]), namely the problem of art neither being able to establish a critical distance from its own subject matter, nor being able to identify with it.

Danuser had taken pictures in a variety of places, for instance, in nuclear power stations in Switzerland, Germany, the United States, and France. However, his aim was not to identify his shots with particular places, as a documentary photographer would do, but rather to represent general types.[8] He showed how human beings had penetrated the very heart of matter, the innermost workings of the mechanisms of life, how they sought to control and manipulate the forces of Nature, and how, in the process, they were stopped in their tracks by the limits of what human senses and minds can cope with. His work was about centers of power that elude representation: places that were inaccessible to most people yet preoccupied the collective imagination in those days with thoughts of taming the forces of Nature, of human life, of natural resources. Danuser's approach combined the methods of photo-reportage—small-format shots, shifting perspectives that reflect a mobile viewpoint—with artistic aspiration that strove for images that would have a wider relevance, for totality and formal coherence in each individual image. The term "in vivo," used by scientists to

describe a process that runs its course within a living organism—in contrast to the processes that are managed outside a living organism and are referred to as "in vitro"—points to the impossibility of achieving any real distance. Nowadays one might cite the concept of "biopolitics" or the notion of "biopower" coined by Michel Foucault (1926–1984) in the 1970s, in order to lend extra weight to the notion of power and institutional controls.

One can readily understand why Zumthor was attracted by Danuser's approach. On one hand, his own designs are based on images, that is to say, his intention is to give three-dimensional expression to particular images in his mind's eye. He must have been fascinated by the fact that Danuser concentrated almost exclusively on interiors. He may have felt an affinity with his own design methods that always work out from the inside and that assume an element of discontinuity—in other words, that assume it is impossible for the interior to fully correspond to the exterior. Yet most importantly, it seems to me, his own work—like that of Danuser—is about articulating latent processes, about envisioning the invisible. This is very clear, for instance, in his 1986 "Protective Housing for Roman Archeological Excavations in Chur," where the architectural shell not only echoes the contours of long-gone Roman houses but also directs the viewer's gaze to the scarcely visible remnants of a lost civilization; this comes out all the more clearly in Danuser's photographic interpretation (Figure 6). In Sogn Benedetg the "invisible" is the religious faith that architects, painters, and sculptors have sought to portray ever since antiquity. But it is also the complex historical, economic, and social makeup of the Surselva, a topic that was for its part too often sidelined and rendered invisible by the cliché of the intact mountain region.

Comparing the images of Sogn Benedetg and the works shown in *In Vivo*, one cannot help but be struck by the similarity between the first picture of the chapel and the picture of the nuclear power plant. *In Vivo* opened with a shot taken inside a cooling tower (Figure 7). While the silhouettes of cooling towers are familiar visual signs, the interior of these towers all but defies representation. The dark space, only dimly lit from above, is filled with swathes of mist. Were it not for the sloping concrete columns—and for the title *Kühlturmtasse*—one might easily take this for a cathedral, a tunnel, or even a factory site at night. This shot of the dark interior matches the shots of the pale upper edge of the cooling tower that show the thin concrete wall cloaked in mist (Figure 8). In the same vein, one might easily imagine that this shot was taken from a viewing platform in the Alps or on the crest of a dam. The natural phenomenon of the mist mingles with industrially produced steam. The invisible threat inherent in the technology—the explosion of the reactor at Chernobyl in the Soviet Union on April 26, 1986, had drastically demonstrated the deadly danger of nuclear power—counters the atmospheric beauty of the intrinsically perfectly harmless water vapor.

Once again, we could do with a small digression into the past. In the 1950s, the construction of hydroelectric power stations in Grisons heralded a period of rapid economic growth. This economic undertaking, together with tourism, drove the region's upsurge, and many mountain communities—including Vals, that commissioned Zumthor's famous thermal bath in the late 1980s, for instance—owe their prosperity to these power stations, that is to say, to the construction of large-scale complexes and the payments levied for the water they use. Since the 1950s, the

Figure 7 Hans Danuser, "Cooling Tower Cup," 1983. Photograph on baryt paper, 50 × 40 cm. From *A-Energie*, 16 photographs; exhibited in *In Vivo*, 1989. Image © and courtesy of Hans Danuser.

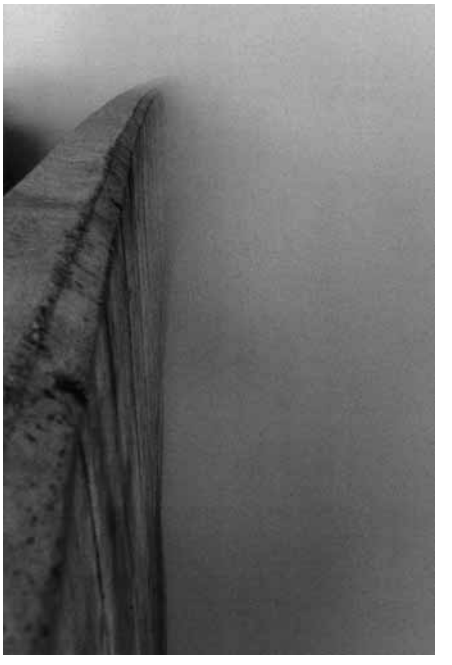

Figure 8 Hans Danuser, "Cooling Tower," 1983. Photograph on baryt paper, 50 × 40 cm. From *A-Energie*, 16 photographs; exhibited in *In Vivo*, 1989. Image © and courtesy of Hans Danuser.

Nordostschweizerische Kraftwerke AG (NOK) has been the main player in these developments. In 1950, a plan was first mooted to construct one of Switzerland's largest power-station systems in the Surselva, with seven giant reservoirs, 140 km of tunnels, eight operating stations, and an annual output of 2000 GWh, almost a quarter of the capacity a nuclear power station would produce.[9] Even though these plans were only partially realized, the region was fundamentally affected. The hydroelectric power stations—Vorderrhein, built between roughly 1962 and 1968 in the upper Surselva, and Ilanz (constructed between 1984 and 1992) with its complicated systems of reservoirs, tunnels, and operations centers—literally ploughed up the wider mountain landscape around Sumvitg.

This region is now inextricably connected with the factories and transportation routes in the heavily populated areas of Switzerland's heartlands. The nuclear power stations run by NOK at Gösgen (since 1979) and Leibstadt (since 1984) are connected with numerous pumping stations in the Alps. Cheap energy, namely energy produced by atomic powerplants, is used to pump water up into the reservoirs where it is turned into expensive hydroelectric energy. Nevertheless, in contrast to the cooling towers of the nuclear power stations that are visible far and wide, for the main part, the infrastructure in the Alps is barely visible and wholly suppressed in tourists' perceptions of the landscape. The problem only attracted attention in the late 1970s when large numbers of ordinary people were mobilized to protest against NOK's proposal to create a new reservoir that would flood the Greina Plain.[10]

The ensuing conflict dragged on for over a decade. In 1986, NOK finally yielded to public and political pressure and abandoned its plans. Subsequently, the parishes of Vrin and Sumvitg, which include the Greina in their terrain, and were deemed to have been disadvantaged by the loss of potential earnings from water rights, were offered compensation; in 1986, they received a first symbolic payment from donations. Following a national referendum in 1992 and the passing of the relevant laws—nicknamed the "*Landschaftsrappen*" (landscape penny)—in Parliament in 1995, financial compensation for preserving the landscape by nonexploitation was introduced throughout the country. Since then, a community such as Sumvitg, for instance, receives annual compensation of over CHF500,000.[11]

It could be said that there is an economic connection between the photographs Danuser took in the nuclear power station at Gösgen in 1981 and the shots he took in 1988 of Sogn Benedetg.[12] Both reflect burning issues in the 1980s in the politics of the nation's energy supply. The fragile chapel—nestled in a mountain landscape that carries a potential for destruction but that has also been partially destroyed by industry—stands in stark contrast to the rawness of the power station in the heartlands. And yet the former is dependent on the latter. For it seems reasonable to assume that without the wealth created by the energy industry and without the output from nuclear power stations, politicians would not have been in a position to halt the construction of additional hydroelectric plants in the mountains and hence to preserve the illusion of an intact landscape and domesticated Nature that is so important for the tourist industry.

Neither Zumthor nor Danuser allude to the connection between the chapel in the mountains and the energy debate—the exploitation of the mountain landscape by the energy companies—although both were no doubt aware of this. They had close links with the region by dint of their roots and in Zumthor's case, through his work. During the 1970s, when he was working for the cantonal department of historic monuments, he encountered the dialectics of modernization and destruction first-hand and knew from his daily praxis the extent of the upheaval in the landscape that ensued from the unprecedented level of construction work going on at the time. Thus he knew a great deal about the forces that were threatening the ethos of building and construction in the Canton of Grisons. However, I would venture to suggest that the connection between cutting-edge architecture in an apparently intact landscape and nuclear power could, in those days, only be demonstrated through the medium of photography, or rather, through photography that was overtly artistic. Danuser went far beyond reportage photography when he chose to address the problem of the invisible rather than succumbing to the cooling-tower cliché. He abandoned the conventions of architectural photography when he chose not merely to illustrate his subject matter, but rather to interpret it, to transpose it into a different artistic medium. He developed his own perspective that allows us—at least with hindsight—to connect seemingly disparate factors. It is also possible to make this connection because, at the time, for a short while, the barriers between different genres had been lowered and the photographs became the common denominator.

For one short moment, architecture, uncertain of its role in society and striving to escape the isolation of its own ivory towers, put its trust in the mediating powers of

photography. And photography, well on the way to artistic autonomy, was enjoying a wholly new freedom that allowed it to use images to make connections that could not be expressed in words. So it was that Zumthor, keen to make the move from historic monuments to architecture, briefly delegated at least some responsibility to an artist. Danuser, for his part, keen to turn himself from photographer into artist, was willing, by way of an exception, to take on the occasional commission. By now, architecture and photography have once again staked out their own territories and their exponents have gone their separate ways; but in terms of cultural history, this chance constellation has been more than fortuitous.

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1 Hans Danuser, *In Vivo: 93 Fotografien*, exh. cat. (Aarau: Aargauer Kunsthaus, 1989).
2 See Ilka Ruby and Andreas Ruby with Philip Ursprung, *Images: A Picture Book of Architecture* (Munich: Prestel, 2004).
3 See Wilfried Wang, "Un architettura di silenziose articolazioni: sull'opera di Peter Zumthor," *Ottagono* 97, "Domestico/Antidomestico" (December 1990): 48–80; *Du: Die Zeitschrift für Kultur* 615, no. 5, "Pendenzen: Neuere Architektur in der Deutschen Schweiz" (1992); and Martin Steinmann, "Peter e Annalisa Zumthor: Cappella a Sogn Benedetg, Svizzera," *Domus* 710 (November 1989): 44–53.

4 *Architektur von Herzog & de Meuron*, photographed by Margherita Krischanitz, Balthasar Burkhard, Hannah Villiger, and Thomas Ruff, text by Theodora Vischer (Baden: Lars Müller, 1991).
5 See *Pictures of Architecture, Architecture of Pictures*: *Conversation between Jacques Herzog and Jeff Wall*, *Moderated by Philip Ursprung* (Vienna: Springer, 2004).
6 *Hans Danuser, Drei Fotoserien*, exh. cat. (Chur: Bündner Kunstmuseum, 1985); see also Danuser, *In Vivo*.
7 Danuser, *In Vivo*.
8 Hans Danuser, in conversation with Philip Ursprung, June 11, 2008.
9 See Hansjürg Gredig and Walter Willi, *Unter Strom, Wasserkraftwerke und Elektrifizierung in Graubünden 1879–2000*, ed. Verein für Bündner Kulturforschung (Chur, Bündner Monatsblatt, 2006), 326.
10 See *La Greina, Das Hochtal zwischen Sumvitg und Blenio* (Zürich: Schweizerische Greina-Stiftung [SGS]; Chur: Verlag Bündner Monatsblatt, 1997).
11 Aluis Maissen, *Sumvitg/Somvix. Eine kulturhistorische Darstellung* (Gemeinde Sumvitg, 2000), 218.
12 "The shots inside and outside, on the cooling tower of the nuclear power station come at the beginning of the cycle." According to Danuser they were taken in 1981 in Gösgen. See also Cornelius Krell, "Formale Elemente der fotografischen Bildsprache bei Hans Danuser," (master's thesis, Philosophischen Fakultät der Universität Zürich, Kunsthistorisches Institut, 2007).