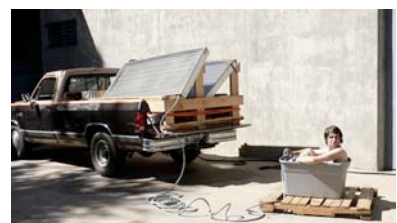


SCRIPT, DIRECTORS, PRODUCERS	Christina Hemauer, Roman Keller
EDITING	Kathrin Plüss
MUSIC, SOUND MIX	Mathias Vetter
GRAFIC DESIGN	Beat Cadruvi

LENGTH	66 Min.
FORMAT	16:9, HD
LANGUAGE	English with German, French, Italian, Spanish, Chinese and English subtitles
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WEBSITE	www.roadnottaken.info

CONTACT	Atelier Hemauer Keller Lutherstr. 30 8004 Zurich
E-MAIL	hemauerkeller@dense.org
LAND LINE	+41 44 291 53 45
MOBILE HEMAUER	+41 76 436 2837
MOBILE KELLER	+41 79 691 9836

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«We simply must balance our demand for energy with our rapidly shrinking resources. By acting now, we can control our future instead of letting the future control us.»

Jimmy Carter, 18. April 1977

SYNOPSIS

A documentary about the story of the solar panels that former US President Jimmy Carter had installed on the roof of the White House in a visionary campaign in 1979. His successor, Ronald Reagan, had the panels removed - accompanied by a radical alienation from Carter's energy program. The highly symbolic solar panels were ultimately stowed away in a storehouse and forgotten.

Thirty years later Christina Hemauer and Roman Keller tracked down Carter's solar panels and traced the story of the two panels on their journey back to Washington D.C. and Atlanta, Georgia. In their movie they meet people who were actively involved in Carter's energy program or directly affected by the oil crisis in the 1970s.

FILM

Thirty years ago Jimmy Carter dedicated the solar panels on the roof of the White House with the words: 'A generation from now, this solar heater can either be a curiosity, a museum piece, an example of a road not taken, or it can be just a small part of one of the greatest and most exciting adventures ever undertaken by the American people.'

Christina Hemauer and Roman Keller are fulfilling one part of his prediction by handing over one original White House solar panel to the Jimmy Carter Library and Museum, and another to the Museum of American History at the Smithsonian Institution.

On their way from Unity, Maine to Atlanta, Georgia they meet many persons who were involved in the symbolic installation of this solar heater, for instance the White House solar panel installers and two of the speechwriters who wrote the most important speeches about energy in 1979.

After their first exhibition of a video installation in the Center for Contemporary Art in Fribourg (Switzerland) they got the opportunity to interview Jimmy Carter in 2007. This interview and the footage of his energy speeches in the 1970s bring up the spirit of the time. The film follows Carter's policies and the issues that led to his defeat in 1980.

DVD/BOOK

The DVD/Book publication contains the film on DVD with subtitles in six languages and a 24-minute bonus track. The hardcover book the size of a DVD case includes 64 pages in color, mostly unpublished pictures and facsimiles which document the story of the Jimmy Carter White House solar installation. A timeline describes the events around the solar panels since 1972. Detailed captions provide a deeper insight into the "Road not Taken".

BACKGROUND

ON A SOLAR PHANTOM

Text by Rein Wolfs, written for the exhibition in the Centre for Contemporary Art in Friebourg, Switzerland

At some point the world changed. Simple and clichéd as this statement sounds, its temporal reference is vague. “At some point” is imprecise - or more accurately, “at some point” is at best only an apparent reference to a specific point in time.

“At some point the world changed” could also be the first sentence of a fairy tale. In any case it isn't true; to be true, it would at least have to be written in the plural. The world has changed more than once - it's changed many times - and is in a permanent state of flux.

When we consider the world in which we live now, it's probably 11 September 2001 that's most often seen as the critical turning point in world events. The virtually incomprehensible act of destruction on that traumatic day has been by far the greatest upheaval experienced in our young millennium. Since then, September 11 has been blamed for almost everything that has gone wrong. The tenor of our era, dominated by fears of terrorism and economic disaster, seems to have been engendered on that fateful date.

But the seeds of September 11 were actually sown earlier. They lie in the religious coup in Iran at the end of the 1970s, where the United States was held in check by what was an almost endless hostage crisis, or in radicalisation and the Russian invasion of Afghanistan. Both mark the inception of moments when the world changed that predate the great turning point of September 11. After that fatal date, towards the end of the 1980s, came the fall of Soviet communism, which in retrospect seems to have been played out more as a sideshow. The response - a radically new relationship between church and state in the east, and American protection of so-called western values of freedom, two developments that occurred in the 1970s and 1980s - threw the world out of balance and marked the beginning of a new era of post-Cold War polarisation. In consideration of this, it is fair to say that at some point in the late 1970s and early 1980s, the world changed.

A European

On 20 June 1979, the 39th president of the United States, Georgia Democrat and former peanut farmer James Earl (Jimmy) Carter Jr., addressed the press with an impressive expression of his commitment to environmental and energy issues. He managed to make his forward-looking standpoint brilliantly clear, in both theoretical and practical terms. Carter's speech marked no less than the symbolic launch of a new environmental policy, together with the inauguration of a solar panel installed on the roof of the White House at the behest of the president himself. America, according to Carter, stood on the threshold of a great future where solar energy would be the response to the politically driven energy crisis and a growing scarcity of fossil fuels. The magical Year 2000 was set as the target date when a new, sustainable energy policy would triumph.

Carter had already spoken of the need for a new energy policy in his first presidential address to the nation. According to critics, he made the faux pas of calling on Americans to turn down the heating and don warm pullovers. Americans are famously averse to discomfort, and, unlike Europeans, would rather wait for new technology to solve a problem than do without familiar comforts. If resources are running out, you go and find new resources; you don't go the rough, spartan route of abandoning good old American values like prosperity, world leadership and economically-founded rationality.

But Carter didn't stop with the pullovers and turning down the thermostat. During his four-year term he invested many millions in solar energy-related research. A proper Department of Energy was set up under his leadership. Carter's newly formulated energy policy and environmental consciousness made people aware of the fact that the world could not go on using resources at the same pace forever. Was Jimmy Carter a precursor to Al Gore, an energy guru before the appellation was even conceived of? Whatever the case, in retrospect his commitment to sustainable values looks more European than American in light of that nation's virtually proverbial refusal to combat global warming.

An American

Carter lost the next presidential election to his Republican opponent, Hollywood B-movie actor Ronald Reagan. One of the main reasons for Carter's failure to gain re-election was his fumbled handling of the Iranian hostage crisis, where 52 US citizens were held captive at the embassy in Tehran for 444 days. In terms of foreign policy, Americans saw Carter as weak. Rather than opt for a military response to the Soviet invasion of an increasingly radical Afghanistan, he chose instead to boycott the 1980 Olympics in Moscow, a move that did not go down well with voters. So Carter wasn't the man to firmly counter the growing ambitions of Muslim fundamentalists or the expansionary plans of the Soviet communists. What people often forget is his decisive contribution to the Camp David peace talks between Israel and Egypt, and how he hammered out the SALT II arms accords with the Soviet Union. He was even awarded the Nobel Peace Prize in 1992 in recognition of his efforts.

During the press conference held to dedicate the solar panel on the roof of the West Wing of the White House and to present his wide-ranging solar energy programme, Carter - perhaps lacking confidence in his statesmanship - also cast doubt on his own ideas. He raised the possibility that in a generation's time, the solar heater could also be "a curiosity, a museum piece, an example of a road not taken". And indeed the heater had only been in operation six years before his successor had it dismantled and packed away. The next decade saw the neglected solar panel installed on a college roof in Maine, where, for all its presidential past and symbolic significance for the country's energy policy, it was used as a power source for the student canteen.

In a society so utterly driven by success, it has become common for the new person in charge to radically break with the ideas of their predecessor. Constant renewal and reinvention are perennial features of a capitalist system built on values such as competition and freedom. Reagan, a capitalist monstrosity par excellence (certainly as compared with Carter), was the ultimate caricature of a free market economy personified - almost more American than the Americans. Poor Carter couldn't have had a more utterly different successor. Compared with the straight-shooting actorprophet of capitalist expansion with his short-sighted focus on maximising profits, in retrospect Carter looks something like a philosopher, a long-term strategist with a sustainable agenda, who consciously accepted - and articulated - the risk that his politics could soon become a museum piece. Yes, like a philosopher or even an artist of sorts - whose policies were built more out of the sand of his global visions than the steel of the weapons favoured by his presidential predecessors. Everyone knows that sand is not as hard as steel, but it is more flexible, adaptable, agreeable and readily available for most people on our planet. The story of this artist-cum-president with a European tinge versus the grotesquely macho American actor could be the stuff of popular tragedy. As it turns out, it is the stuff of a subtle work of art about a world that, at some point, changed.

Two artists

A curiosity, a museum piece and an example of a road not taken is a composite work by Christina Hemaier and Roman Keller. Using contemporary artistic strategies, the conflicts outlined above are circumscribed, revealed and transformed into a transhistorical work of art. At the opening of the exhibition, Carter's press conference was made into a performance through the technique of re-enactment. The technique of the black and white documentary film is used to transform the seemingly straightforward historical peregrinations of the solar panel into a many-faceted, pregnant metaphor of world history somewhere between fact and fiction. The technique of the installation is used to fuse the different levels of the exhibition space into a richly overlaid amalgam of different perspectives and approaches.

In a curiosity, a museum piece and an example of a road not taken, Hemaier and Keller confirm themselves as political artists whose artistic ambitions engage with political facts and events. The result is an art installation that tries to get to the bottom of the paradoxes of sustainability and economics (also the hidden theme of today's over-

commercialised art world). How close can art get to the commercial before its significance as a medium of sustainability is jeopardised? Christina Hemauer and Roman Keller's installation at the Fri-Art Centre of Art is a contemporary 21st-century re-staging and displacement of a piece of largely neglected world history whose significance is decisively coloured, among other things, by today's interpretation and the deliberate choice of artistic perspective. It is questionable whether Carter's solar energy tour de force and its inevitable failure - given the historical and political developments - will be judged to be important in historical terms. Is the material from which Christina Hemauer & Roman Keller's work is composed one of the decisive moments in 20th-century world history, or is it ultimately nothing more than a footnote to a greater, more epic text that has remained as a literary and documentary distillate of the post-age? Did the world really change at some point in the late 1970s and early 1980s?

A museum

While Jimmy Carter, in a speech characterised by the uneasy premonition and existential doubt usually reserved for Europeans, may have anticipated that his showcase project could ultimately fail and be consigned to a museum, he could not have foreseen that almost 30 years later, two Swiss artists would literally turn his solar phantom into a museum piece at a Fribourg exhibition. But maybe he secretly dreamed that his solar panels, with their limited life-span, would at some point end up moved to an institution whose very job is seen as preserving lasting values. Admittedly Fri-Art is not one of those museums dedicated to conservation, but as a centre of art it certainly deals with something that could be lasting: art. Now, so much later, it is in an art museum that Carter's energy programme is again receiving public acclaim, an impetus to more profound reflection.

Hemauer and Keller look at the resolute course of history and transatlantic issues; they look at Carter's energy policy, an historical and failed project, and the way art can behave towards reality. One could say they have made a museum piece out of a worn-out piece of propaganda and the way that perception of historical events can shift. Presented in an artistic installation in a museum, Carter's speech becomes a grotesque in which everything turns into exaggeration - an exaggeration, however, that is simultaneously countered by the meticulous quality of the video documentation produced to accompany it. The museum is the place of reflection, and art is a place where truth is put into question. If the art of the last hundred years has made one thing clear, it is surely that almost nothing is as it seems, that truth as such does not exist, and that perception and perspective are crucial to the meaning of things. Even though in most museums a clear art-historical approach is usually seen as the be-all-and-end-all, the contemporary museum is also a place that celebrates doubt, relativity and critical questioning. A museum could easily present Carter's solar energy policy as a historical phenomenon with current relevance. But that wouldn't make it art. It's politics, or the politics of a dreamer, and slightly poetic - certainly compared with the ideologies of most American presidents. In the museum-fit mental space of this artwork there is Carter meets Christina Hemauer & Roman Keller, and politics meets art. At Fri-Art the attentive viewer will realise that Jimmy Carter's act was primarily political in nature, and that Hemauer and Keller have transformed it into an artistic act and converted it transhistorically into an act full of doubt, relativity and critical scrutiny. Carter's Europeanlike doubt becomes artistic relativity, its significance interpreted in cultural or even artistic terms. And with an approach often reminiscent of a journalist's, the two artists deliberately exert an influence on political events whose course they re-interpret from a 21st century perspective. A curiosity, a museum piece and an example of a road not taken fulfils the premise of Michel Ritter's words: "Every artistic act is a political act."

(Text from the catalogue «Day after Day», Centre for Contemporary Art Fribourg, 2003-2007)

DIRECTORS

Hemauer | Keller is an artist duo with international exhibition activity. They have investigated the concept of energy for several years. One of their main areas of interest is the history of oil and its competing alternatives, notably solar energy. Thus the artist duo heralded the era of «Postpetrolism» for the arts with a manifesto and a performance in the year 2006 (www.postpetrolism.info). The following year, their video installation «A Curiosity, a Museum Piece and an Example of a Road Not Taken» recalled Jimmy Carter's early and ultimately futile efforts to promote alternative forms of energy generation as symbolised by the installation of solar collectors on the roof of the White House. In their work for the Cairo Biennale 2008/09 in Egypt, Christina Hemauer and Roman Keller dealt with a largely forgotten episode from the early history of the commercial use of solar energy in 1913.

CHRISTINA HEMAUER



Born in Zurich, Switzerland in 1973

Education

1993-98 | Bachelor's and Master's degree from the Zurich University of Arts

1996 | Advanced Studies at the Academy of Arts Gent / Belgium

Filmography (extract)

- 2010/11 «Globalizing the Internationale», video documentary, 25 min. together with Roman Keller
- 2010 «1. Tour de Sol (1985)», short film, 12 min. together with Roman Keller
- 2009 «No1 Sun Engine», short documentary, 18 min. together with Roman Keller
- 2008 «L'Energia siamo noi - Studio Frauenfeld», video documentation, 30 min. together with Roman Keller
- 2007 «A Moral Equivalent of War», double video installation, 40 min., together with Roman Keller
- 2007 «C.», short film, 12 min.
- 2006 «At this Place. Postpetrolism was heralded on April, 27, 2006», video documentation, 25 min., together with Roman Keller
- 2006 «A.», short film, 5 min.
Festivals: 2006 Viper 25. Internationales Festival für Film, Video und Multimedia (Basel)
- 2002 «Camilla wonders», video and sound installation, 30 min., together with Mathias Vetter
- 2002 «Evidence 03.34», short film, 5 min., together with Mathias Vetter
Festivals: 2002 Videopreis Boswil; 2002 Videoex, Experimentalfilm und Videofestival (Zürich); Viper 21. Internationales Festival für Film, Video und Multimedia Basel
- 2001 «Artificial Gardens», video and sound installation, together with Mathias Vetter

ROMAN KELLER



Born in Liestal, Switzerland in 1969

Education

1997-98 | Visiting student at Karlsruhe University of Applied Science and Arts, professorship for art photography, Candida Höfer

1996-98 | Training as a photographer, Gaf, Zurich; International Center of Photography (ICP); School of Visual Art (SVA), New York

1989-95 | Master's degree in Environmental Sciences from the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology, ETH Zurich

Exhibitions and Projects (extract)

- 2011 «Spaghetti Junctions», CUBITT Gallery, London, together with Christina Hemauer
- 2011 «United alternative Energies», Aarhus Art Building, Denmark, together with Christina Hemauer
- 2010 «End of Life», Internationale Winterthurer Lichttage, Switzerland,
- 2010 «Portscapes», Museum Boijmans Van Beuningen, Rotterdam, Netherlands, together with Christina Hemauer
- 2009 «Endgame - Blue Gold», Darb 1718 Contemporary Art and Culture Center, Cairo, Egypt, together with Christina Hemauer
- 2009 «Stranded Positions», Ausstellungsraum Klingental, Basel, Switzerland, together with Christina Hemauer
- 2008/9 «No1 Sun Engine», 11th Cairo International Biennale, Egypt, together with together with Christina Hemauer
- 2008 «The Invasion of the Laughing Jackass», Swiss Art Awards, Basel / Switzerland, together with Christina Hemauer
- 2007 «A Manifestation, a Dedication and a Place to Get the Word out», Swiss Art Awards, Basel / Switzerland, together with Christina Hemauer
- 2007 «A Curiosity, A Museum Piece And An Example Of A Road Not Taken», Ausstellung Kunsthalle Fri-Art, Fribourg (incl. 40 min. video installation «A Moral Equivalent to War», www.moralequivalent.info) together with Christina Hemauer
- 2007 «Energy Plan for the Western Men», Artist grants in Labs, Paul Scherrer Institut Villigen
- 2006 «At this Place, Postpetrolism was heralded on April, 27, 2006», documentation (25 min.) together with Christina Hemauer (www.postpetrolismus.info)
- 2005 «Green-Please verkaufen», short film for Agents Provocateur, Zurich
- 2003-2005 «From Here On Out», conception and realization of an online art project against standby power losses. Nine swiss artist and art groups were invited to contribute a short animation. (www.on-out.info)
- 2002 «Spez. X-mas-Baum zu verkaufen», short film (12 min.)
- 2001/2 «Expomat - 1341 Projekte der Mitmachkampagne für eine Schweizer Landesausstellung», conception and realization of the book about 1341 projects for the Swiss national exhibition, Edition Patrick Frey, Zürich (www.expomat.ch)

APPENDIX

ENGLISH NEWS -> <http://roadnottaken.info/news>

THE BOSTON GLOBE: «Jimmy Carter's dream», by Beth Daley on September 13, 2010

REPUBLICAN JOURNAL: «350' group to return solar panel to White House» by Ethan Andrews, September 9, 2010

SCIENTIFIC AMERICAN: «Where Did the Carter White House's Solar Panels Go?», by David Biello, August 6, 2010

ORGANIC CONVERSATION: «A ROAD NOT TAKEN in on air», July 31, 2010

ABC NEWS: «Going Green at the White House: Where Have Jimmy Carter's Solar Panels Gone?», by Julie Percha, July 16, 2010

THE OIL DRUM: «Solar Panels, Jimmy Carter, and Missed Opportunities for Change» by Francois Cellier, June 23, 2010

SCIENCE MAGAZINE: «Takes on Hunters and Roads», June 18 2010 Vol 328, pp. 1483 - 1484

OFFICIAL GOOGLE BLOG: «Back to the Energy Future», by Alice Ryan, January 21, 2009

<http://roadnottaken.info/moralequivalent/?cat=3>

FRIEZE: «The Whole Truth», text by Max Andrews, edition June-July-August 2007, p. 214 - 219

www.we-make-money-not-art.com: «Ecological Strategies in Today's Art», blog by Régine Debatty, January 3, 2008

MORNING SENTINEL: «Energy Crisis Symbol Sees Comeback», Maine, October 6, 2006

WABI-Television, at the day of arrival at Unity, Maine, October 2, 2006

ABC-Television, at the day of arrival at Unity, Maine, October 2, 2006

GERMAN NEWS:

«Sternstunde Kunst: A Road not taken», 52 min. version broadcasted on Swiss National Television on May 8, 2011 (with three repeats)

«Ein Ogi, der Eier kocht, kann da nicht mithalten», Tages-Anzeiger, interview with Philippe Zweifel, May 5, 2011

«Der Wunsch nach Alternativen», BaZ, by Annette Scharnberg, September 2, 2010, p. 45

«Nichts Neues unter der Sonne», DIE ZEIT, by Benedikt Erenz, N°28, 8. July 2010, S.19

«Review», Independentfilme.com, by Georg Simic, June 2010

«Weg vom Öl? Obama wie Carter vor 33 Jahren», Blick, by Daniel Meier, June 19, 2010, p. 2-3

«Box Office: Movie of the Week», Swiss National Television, June 17, 2010

«Ein Sonnenkollektor macht noch keine Energiewende», Die Wochenzeitung, by Franziska Meister, June 17, 2010, p.27

«Seiner Zeit um 30 Jahre voraus», HK-Gebäudetechnik 2/2010, by Peter Warthmann, editorial, p. 3

«Carter Sonnenkollektoren», Katholische Internationale Presseagentur, by Walter Ludin, January 29, 2010

«Ein unbeschränkter Weg», WDR-Zeitzeichen, radio broadcast by Almut Finck, April 20, 2007

«Kulturplatz», Swiss National Television, April 4 - 8, 2007

«An Unpleasant Talk», review by Nicola Schröder in *Artensuite*, edition 05/07

FRENCH NEWS:

«Jimmy Carter avait promis le soleil...», review by Jaques Sterchi in *La Liberté*, Magazine Culture, 2007-04-14; p. 3

FESTIVAL PRESENCE:

2011:

- Princeton Environmental Film Festival, New Jersey/USA
- Cinema Planeta, Cuernavaca City/MÉXICO
- International Women's Film Festival Dortmund/GERMANY
- Ecozine, International Film Festival and Environment, Zaragoza/SPAIN
- Santa Cruz Film Festival, California/USA
- FICMA, International Environmental Film Festival, Barcelona/SPAIN

2010:

- Solothurn Film Festival, SWITZERLAND
- DC Environmental Film Festival, Washington D.C./USA
- CinemAmbiente - International Environmental Film Festival, Turin/ITALY
- Maine International Film Festival, Waterville/USA
- Atlanta International Documentary Film Festival, Georgia/USA
- Planet in Focus - International Environmental Film and Video Festival, Toronto/CANADA
- 34th Duisburg Film Week/GERMANY
- CRiterio Ambiental, La Fortuna de San Carlos/COSTA RICA
- Camden International Film Festival, Maine/USA
- Mostra de Ciencia e Cinema, A Coruña/SPAIN
- International Environment Film Festival in Kairouan/TUNISIA

FILM AWARDS:

- Best Documentary: Golden Sun 2011, FICMA, Barcelona/SPAIN