

## Claude Closky - *Inside a Triangle*

Inaugural opening on Saturday September 10, 2011, from 2 pm to 8 pm

Exhibition from Saturday September 10 to Friday October 7, 2011



Unlike a road movie, there is no drive and unlike Richard Long's work, there is no walk. With *Inside a Triangle*, one is teleported to a new path in a new country with every turn of the page. Claude Closky's artist's book contains 100 photographs of roads, lanes, trails, sidewalks, and pathways taken around the world. Broad or narrow, all are straight. And what's even more peculiar about these pictures is each superposes perfectly onto the one before it. The path unconditionally forms an isosceles triangle, with the base filling the picture's bottom edge and the apex—the vanishing point—exactly at the centre of the picture's top edge. Chopping off sky, the top edge supplants the horizon. Presented one by one, the photograph's general location appears on the facing page.

All of the pictures in this book are details from photographs found on the Internet. Closky was unsparing, both with his cropping tool and in his selection. Still, the fact that Closky could find so many pictures taken straight down the middle of an unbending lane, makes one wonder what spurs people to do this. The idiosyncrasy of this type of photograph is that, to capture it, one must stand in the way, and maybe even risk getting run over. This is amateur photography par excellence. Even in the history of artless-photography-as-art, few artists have ventured such shots. These pictures, as well as the travel blogs where one might find them, seem to say no more than "Kilroy was here." Like that erstwhile popular piece of graffiti, such blogs assert the existence and whereabouts of an individual, only to blend into anonymity—any number of people could and have made their mark in the same way.

By reframing a hundred such middle-of-the-road pictures, Closky has pared them down to the bare bones, to say something else. This is the world in a flat book. The pages are flat, the roads are flat, and the triangles are flat. We can't help but compare variations in type of road and surroundings, but the focus gets away from the land- or cityscape. It's about extracting the triangle that has been hammered out of the road by the camera lens. It's the story of the long flat band that, no matter where it is, turns into a triangle when you're on it, giving the illusion that you're on a road to infinity.

A good part of Closky's work ensues from an intensive search for a specific type of preexisting image, text, or format. He often closely crops his findings in one way or another before rearranging or revising them. With *Inside a Triangle*, Closky navigates the boundaries of online found photography. While quite different, this book is not unrelated to his blog *Screen--Shots*, where he daily posts pictures he has "taken" while wandering Google Street View, a three-dimensional recreation of the world made from flat photography—thus pulling off a modern-day version of rephotography.

*Inside a Triangle* was printed on one side of an extremely long band of paper, which was then folded into an accordion, sewn at the inner vertical edge, and bound in a classical gray cloth hardcover. The variations of path come full circle. Starting off in Bragadiru, Romania and ending in B n Tre, Vietnam, we go from gloomy narrow lanes, to multiple-lane roads, to snow-covered trails. We stand before tunnels, agricultural rows, and alleys in cemeteries, just to name a few. In closing, we go from fenced-in walkways, to dirt roads and back again to paved narrow lanes, but this time with optimistic patches of light. There is no happier ending than a sun-dappled road.

Jian-Xing Too