



## Orit Raff: *Priming* opens at the Tel Aviv Museum of Art



Madame Bovary, 2013, pigment print, 25 1/2 x 31 1/2" ed. 8

Orit Raff creates photographs of environments described in novels with cultural, sociological and political aspects. Like a fictional photojournalist, she gathers in these sites information that crosses cultures, locations and periods, and enables her to discuss the medium of photography and its complex relations with the world of phenomena and its documentations. Using the protagonists of her chosen novels, their theoretical ideas and their references to well-known philosophers, and through her unique technique of constructing the photographs, without a process of photography, Raff offers new possibilities for the ongoing discourse of simulation and its reference to reality, to imagination and to fiction. The fictional photographer represents a hybrid genre of photography that combines pure documentary photography with carefully staged photography, in a process that does not require a camera yet mimics a photographic site strongly related to the act of photography. Added to Raff's extensive research of periods, locations and relevant design and architectural styles are long hours, days and months of building the environments with the assistance of architects and 3D-imaging specialists.

Raff meticulously shifts her chosen sites from a verbal representation seeking to mediate an image, to a visual representation relying on this description rather than on a real space. This cyclical move, reminiscent of Borges' looped writing, elucidates well the complex transitions Raff creates between literary and visual descriptions, between text and photograph, between reality and fiction. Like many photographs in recent years, the works are printed using a computerized process of injecting ink using a file of algorithmic data whose translation to color parameters provides the visual image. Unlike many other photographs, however, Raff's visual file is not the product of photography but of pure simulation.

The very existence of these photographs takes place in the virtual sphere, as an image (literary metaphor) and not in reality. Their only visual expression is realized in Raff's simulated photograph, in a complex system of signs that have no hold on reality but only on its detached images, the simulacra, as defined by Jean Baudrillard.

Thanks to Noga Gallery for Contemporary Art, Tel Aviv, Julie Saul Gallery, New York and LaxArt, Los Angeles, for their support in the production of the photographs.