

**ARNOLD ODERMATT – HEIMAT**

OPENING: FRIDAY, JUNE 24, 2011, 7-9 p.m.  
EXHIBITION: JUNE 24-JULY 30, 2011



*Buochs*, 1954  
Gelatin silver print, ed. 8  
30 x 30 cm

The photographs by the policeman and photographer Arnold Odermatt (b. May 29, 1925, in Oberdorf, Switzerland) bear his own, unmistakable handwriting, sobriety, and clear arrangement lend them great urgency and authenticity.

Taken with a Rolleiflex camera from the mid-1950s to the late 1970s, the works from the *Heimat* (Homeland) series, which are being shown in this exhibition for the first time, offer a diverse picture of a changing society.

In addition to a world of farmers and artisans that is often described today as contemplative, his photographs show a society entering a new era. Customs, traditions, and time-honored lifestyles are confronted with new realities.

The photograph of miles of cars in a traffic jam on a highway is striking next to a photograph of a herd of sheep: where the highway now cuts through the landscape to provide more and more transportation for individuals, sheep were still being kept a few years earlier. The rescue of an army jet that had crashed in Lake Lucerne is much more than an image of an accident; it bears witness to changing times. The Alpine dairymen taking enormous balls of hay on their shoulders into the valleys also bears witness to a past epoch. The chronicler Arnold Odermatt also recorded the engineering feats of building highways as they pointed the way to the future.

In his work, Arnold Odermatt does not make accusations; rather, he places a finger on this wonderful world, gently, sometimes lovingly. *Buochs*, 1954: the head forester has saved a Bambi late at night. Arnold Odermatt both of them for us. Everything is fine.

Arnold Odermatt's visual idiom is related to the work of Weegee and of his role model, Werner Bischof. Arnold Odermatt first came to the attention of a broader public with the series *Karambolage* (Collision), photographs from sometimes surreal junkyards with cars that had been in accidents. In 2001 Harald Szeemann exhibited this group of works at the Forty-ninth Venice Biennale. Comprehensive exhibitions of the artist's work have been shown at the Art Institute in Chicago, the Fotomuseum Winterthur, and the Museum Morsboich Leverkusen, among other places.

For additional information about the artist or for illustrations of the works in the exhibitions, please feel free to contact the gallery at any time.