

MAJA NYDAL
"AWAITING THE BRIDGE"

What is the role of photography concerning the conflicts that we observe today surrounding us? Situations that reach us, more and more, as distant summaries, which we attend distrust in the age of shared fiction. What responsibilities does the photographer have in documenting reality and in returning his version of events? These are questions that today often raise ethical considerations. Truth is a sensitive surface on which the photographer can impress various impressions. How to get out of this potential vicious circle?

The photography-based visual artist Maja Nydal shows us her methodological perspective built on participative strategies. As in a theatrical performance, the subjects become personalities in search of an author. In doing so, the story is a sort of collective narrative, almost a meta-level of investigation that never appears given. It is not just that; there is more. Nydal shows us how the visual tool can become useful for addressing moods, feelings related to particular and local events, geopolitical issues, situations of conflict or tension.

In the series "Awaiting the Bridge" Nydal is very skilled at dealing with a creeping problem concerning relations between China and Taiwan. And she does it starting from a small island, a disputed portion of land in which political games are played—Quemoy Island, which in the next future will be closer than ever to China thanks to a new infrastructure bridge.

How to represent this impending change? How do the new generations experience this near future? By involving the students of a school, Nydal can place this tension on a different stage. In a landscape marked by anxiety, in a significant context of the world chessboard, where the superpowers' interests are measured, young people become a symbolic element of decontextualization. In their parody of a power game, they manifest the drama of human history that repeatedly repeats itself over and over.

What if children decide the future of adults? What would happen? Nydal pushes me to reverse the common mindset. What if adults were the problem?

Prof. Steve Bisson
Chief editor