

BRUNO SERRALONGUE

PASCAL BEAUSSE

[O]s stocks de imagens desenvolvidos por Bruno Serralongue (Châtelleraut, 1968) resultam da constituição de protocolos que o conduzem a confrontar-se com as condições concretas de produção e difusão da informação. Definindo procedimentos para cada uma das suas séries fotográficas, simultaneamente precisos e com grande margem de aleatoriedade, Bruno Serralongue toma em consideração múltiplos casos da história do fotográfico e da história da arte conceptual, inscrevendo-se na linha de acção das estratégias intervencionistas surgidas na segunda metade da década de noventa.

Quebrando com a suposta autarcia da arte, o artista passeia-se regularmente pelos lugares da actualidade mediática, entendida como um reservatório de imagens, para trabalhar após, ao lado ou em vez dos foto-repórteres. O princípio da encomenda está no centro dos diferentes procedimentos que põe em prática para desenvolver os seus trabalhos, alheando-se voluntariamente das diversas prerrogativas e liberdades de decisão habitualmente associadas à actividade artística. A sua recusa dos efeitos estilísticos convocados pela assinatura filia-o, claramente, na tradição documental e suas sucessivas reinvenções.

Face ao *zapping* dos *mass-media*, assoberbados de novidade e espectacularidade, Bruno Serralongue propõe a lentidão e o desfasamento com a noção de actualidade. Perante a sobrecarga de informação, age com parcimónia. Diante da grande velocidade, que governa tanto o fabrico da informação como as trocas comerciais, os fluxos financeiros e os transportes, sugere a persistência. O artista representa figuras de resistência que, apesar de minoritárias, obtêm meios de acesso à opinião pública, conseguem apropriar-se de um espaço mediático. A sua estratégia plástica articula-se com as estratégias de comunicação daqueles.

De Chiapas a Mumbai, há dez anos que Bruno Serralongue acompanha a instauração e estruturação do movimento do mundialismo alternativo. Estes grandes acontecimentos mediáticos oferecem-lhe filtros e programas que orientam a criação das suas fotografias. Para Bruno Serralongue, desenvolver um *stock* de imagens é não ilustrar a actualidade, não fornecer um arquivo aberto aos *media*, mas propor um projecto de contra-informação no sentido em que Gilles Deleuze definia a arte como um acto de resistência. Uma informação que se opõe. Um outro regime de velocidade na produção das imagens.

[T]he stocks of images developed by Bruno Serralongue (Châtelleraut, 1968) result from the constitution of protocols that lead him to confront the concrete conditions of the production and diffusing of information. Serralongue, in defining simultaneously precise and somewhat random procedures for each of his series of photographs, takes into account many cases of the history of the photographic and the history of conceptual art, inscribing himself within the line of interventional strategies that emerged in the second half of the nineties.

In a break with the supposed autarky of art, Serralongue regularly strolls through the places of the current media situation, seen as a reserve of images in order to then work on them, alongside or instead of photo-reporters. The principle of the commission is at the centre of the different procedures that he uses in order to carry out his works, voluntarily alienating himself from the several different prerogatives and freedoms of decision usually associated to artistic creation. His rejection of the stylistic effects called up by the signature clearly affiliate him within the documentary tradition and its successive reinventions.

In relation to the zapping of the mass-media, brimming with novelty and the spectacle, Serralongue proposes slowness and an out-of-step attitude to the notion of being current. Faced with the overload of information, he acts with parsimony. In the light of great speed, which governs both the making of information and commercial exchanges, financial flows and transportation, he suggests persistence. He represents figures of resistance who, despite being in the minority, obtain means of access to political opinion and manage to appropriate a media space. His visual strategy is articulated with their strategies of communication.

From Chiapas to Mumbai, Serralongue has for ten years accompanied the setting up and structuring of the movement of alternative worldliness. These major mediatic events provide him with filters and programmes that guide the creation of his photographs. For him, developing a stock of images is not to illustrate the contemporary condition, not to provide an archive open to the media, but rather to propose a counter-information project in the sense that Gilles Deleuze defined art as an act of resistance. An information that opposes. Another regime of speed in the production of images.

Conférence de presse de Kofi Annan, Secrétaire Général de l'ONU, Sommet Mondial sur la Société de l'Information, Media Centre, Kram Palexpo, Tunis, 16.11.2005 . 2005 . Cortesia Courtesy Air de Paris, Paris



Bruno Serralongue é um *self-media*: emissor-receptor que actua de modo autónomo fora da esfera profissional dos *mass-media*. O artista *self-media* trata, produz e difunde informação alternativa e recodificada, ou seja, não submetida às leis binárias dos *mass-media*, dominados pela lógica da imediatividade e pelas relações de poder. É um "falso jornalista", que disserta sobre assuntos que o preocupam, num tempo reflexivo, numa outra articulação com o acontecimento, numa temporalidade que já não é, sem dúvida, a da arte, na medida em que não impõe a si própria o espectacular.

As contra-informações propostas pelo questionamento do trabalho mediático protagonizado por Bruno Serralongue lutam contra a fragmentação de uma experiência vivida como totalidade. Como Joseph Roth e Karl Kraus na década de trinta, primeiros críticos dos *mass-media*, o artista afirma que não há mais do que uma objectividade, a artística. Ante a realidade falsificada pelos *mass-media*, existem as suas alter-imagens [W]

Serralongue is a self-media: emitter-receptor who acts in an autonomous manner outside the professional sphere of the mass-media. The self-media artist treats, produces and diffuses alternative and re-coded information; that is, information that is not subjected to the binary laws of the mass-media, dominated by the logic of the immediate and power relationships. He is a "false journalist", who experiments on issues that concern him, in a reflective time, in another articulation with the event, in a temporality that is surely no longer that of art, in the sense that it does not propose the spectacular for itself.

The counter-information suggested by the questioning of the media work carried out by Serralongue struggle against the fragmentation of an experience lived as a totality. Like Joseph Roth and Karl Kraus in the thirties, the first critics of the mass-media, he states that there is no more than one objectivity: artistic objectivity. In the presence of the reality falsified by the mass-media, there are the alter-images of the artist [W]

Documentation, Media Center, Sommet Mondial sur la Société de l'Information, Palexpo, Genève, 10.12.03 . 2003 . Cortesia Courtesy Air de Paris, Paris





L'information ne se vend pas, elle se partage!, Polymédia Lab, Palladium, Genève, 11.12.03 . 2003 . Cortesia Courtesy Air de Paris, Paris

Opening Evening, speeches by : Ahmed Ben Bella (Algeria), Abdul Amir al
Rikaby (Iraq), Anand Roy (India), Chico Whitaker (Brazil), Jeremy Corbyn
(UK), Shabnam Azmi (India), Shirin Ebadi (Iran), Mustafa Barghouti (Palestine),
World Social Forum, Mumbai, 01.16.04 : 2004 . Cortesia Courtesy Air de Paris, Paris



ALTER-IMAGENS DE UM SELF-MEDIA

[O]s protocolos e estratégias desenvolvidos como modos operacionais do seu trabalho situam-no numa linha de recuperação de alguns dos parâmetros da arte conceptual? Para mim, a fotografia não está em primeira instância. Ela é mediada. Chega em segundo lugar, depois de uma reflexão, após a instauração de um quadro operacional e de regras. Por conseguinte, a minha prática está, efectivamente, associada à arte conceptual.

Pode-se dizer que a sua obra releva da categoria do "fotográfico", no sentido em que Rosalind Krauss o define como resultante de uma convergência entre arte e fotografia; em vez de uma fotografia que se pensa como um campo específico e relativamente autónomo? Sim. Desde o início que me posicionei como um artista no território da criação contemporânea. Era necessário abrir a minha fotografia às outras arenas do contemporâneo. Não sou partidário de uma autonomia da fotografia, ainda que opere sobre os seus princípios ao abordar a imagem de imprensa. Porém, deslocando o seu lugar de inscrição e de apresentação, desejo fazer com que novas questões sejam colocadas.

No seu primeiro trabalho, a série *Faits divers* (1993-1995), surge um texto sob a imagem. Para esta série, tomei como ponto de partida a rubrica dos *faits divers* publicada no *Nice-Matin*, o jornal local da cidade onde, nessa altura, vivia e estudava. Lia diariamente esta rubrica, situando-me à distância na escolha do assunto das minhas imagens. Defini um modo de trabalho e o assunto emergiu. Procurava o lugar onde tivessem decorrido os *faits divers*, tentando ser bastante preciso. Contudo, devido ao desfazamento temporal entre o acontecimento e a sua publicação, não subsistia qualquer vestígio. A imagem mostrava então uma paisagem urbana. Era como uma visita guiada à cidade de Nice, através dos seus *faits divers*. Um texto era serigrafado sob a imagem: constituía um resumo do artigo publicado no jornal, que reaparecia como uma legenda, bastante factual. O texto trazia uma realidade à imagem, que era desprovida de qualquer significado. A imagem, em si mesma, não é suficientemente forte para significar.

Experimentava, assim, de maneira comparativa, as temporalidades do trabalho mediático e do trabalho artístico, que manifestamente não são as mesmas. E fazia igualmente a experiência desta regra básica que consiste em articular texto e imagem sublinhando os processos de montagem. Recentemente, retornou a este tipo de montagem, de maneira mais complexa, com as formas do livro, do leporello, ou do dazibao. Como manipula o texto? Está ligado a dois aspectos: em primeiro lugar, graças ao digital, há uma nova possibilidade técnica de, muito facilmente, integrar texto na imagem; além disso, esta necessidade relaciona-se com os acontecimentos que abordei, cujo objecto principal consistia na ratificação de tratados. Penso, nomeadamente, na Cimeira Mundial sobre a Sociedade da Informação, que se realizou em Genebra e, depois, em Tunis, onde fui tirar fotografias. Nestes acontecimentos, o que me interessava especialmente era o carácter encenado das reuniões da ONU, a sua componente protocolar, mas também as suas lutas internas. De acordo com a regra que estabeleci, estas fotografias seriam ampliadas com 128 x 156 cm, ou seja, a dimensão máxima de uma folha de papel Cibachrome em largura. Todavia, precisava de encontrar, igualmente, outra forma, porque a fotografia não me parecia suficiente para dar conta destes acontecimentos. Regressel, por con-

ALTER-IMAGES OF A SELF-MEDIA

[A]re the protocols and strategies developed as operational models in your work located in a line of the recovering of some of the parameters of conceptual art? For me photography is not in the first instance. It is mediated. It comes in second place, after a reflection, after the setting up of an operational framework and of rules. Consequently my practice is effectively associated to conceptual art.

Could one state that your work rises out of the category of the "photographic", in the sense that Rosalind Krauss defines it as resulting from a converging between art and photography, instead of a photography that is thought of as a specific and relatively autonomous field? Yes. Since the beginning I have taken a stance as an artist in the territory of contemporary creation. It was necessary to open up my photography to other arenas of the contemporary. I do not defend an autonomy of photography, even though I operate on its principles in dealing with press images. But in shifting its space of inscription and presentation I wish to make new questions to be raised.

In your first work, the series *Faits divers* (1993-1995), there was a text beneath the image. For this series I took my starting point from the *faits divers* column published in the *Nice-Matin*, the local newspaper in the city where I lived and studied at the time. I used to read this column every day, placing myself at a distance in the choice of the subject for my pictures. I defined a working method and the subject would emerge. I would look for the place where the *faits divers* had taken place, trying to be very precise. But due to the fact that there was a time gap between the event and its publication no trace would be left. The image would then show an urban landscape. It was like a guided tour of the city of Nice, through its *faits divers*. A text was serigraphed beneath the image: this was a summary of the article published in the newspaper, which would reappear as a somewhat factual caption. The text brought a reality to the image, which was stripped of any meaning. In itself, the image is not strong enough to mean something.

Thus you were experimenting, in a comparative way, with the temporalities of media work and artistic work, which clearly are not the same thing. And you were also experimenting with that basic rule that consists of articulating text and image highlighting the process of the montage. You recently went back to this type of montage in a more complex manner, with

TENTO ABORDAR ACONTECIMENTOS QUE POSSUEM UMA CONDIÇÃO GLOBAL. COMO FOCAR UM ACONTECIMENTO QUE SUSCITA A PRESENÇA DE MILHARES DE PESSOAS? NUM PLANO POLÍTICO, É A QUESTÃO DO FUTURO QUE ME INTERESSA

seguinte, ao texto; um texto específico, dado que nada tinha escrito, tanto para o trabalho sobre a Coreia, com o livro *Rapport de forces* (2004), como para o trabalho acerca da cimeira sobre a sociedade da informação, com o livro *Spillovers* (2004). Trata-se de uma montagem de textos. É uma verdadeira narrativa, mas realizada a partir de extractos de textos provenientes de diferentes fontes — textos oficiais, artigos de imprensa, textos de organizações não governamentais. Esta montagem textual é autónoma em relação à fotografia. Texto e imagem podem ser abordados separadamente. Quis cruzá-los para criar complexidades suplementares. Foi, de facto, a natureza destes acontecimentos que me levou a recorrer novamente ao texto.

Há uma forma de impessoalidade voluntária nestes trabalhos. Parece-me que procura instituir uma neutralidade devedora de uma retirada de cena da subjectividade do autor. Trabalho com uma câmara fotográfica de grande formato, com negativos de 10 x 12 cm. Quando tiro fotografias, o que me interessa mais é a questão do ponto de vista e da distância. Que distância adoptar perante um acontecimento? Cada fotógrafo dá uma resposta muito diferente. Os jornalistas tentam posicionar-se o mais junto possível do acontecimento, quer recorrendo ao zoom quer aproximando-se da personalidade fotografada. No meu caso, com a utilização deste instrumento diferente que é a câmara fotográfica de grande formato, verifica-se necessariamente uma maior distância. Mas é uma distância que varia. É difícil: não há uma distância justa, mas é necessário encontrá-la, determiná-la, em função do que se quer representar. A minha distância é, talvez, a do afastamento do fotógrafo, da perda de uma subjectividade. Isso oferece imagens que quase poderiam não ter autor. O que é falso, claro. Não há objectividade, tudo é racionalizado. O posicionamento de um fotógrafo face a um acontecimento releva de uma estratégia consciente. Na fotografia documental, existe a ideia de regular a distância, que faz com que se veja nem demasiado nem demasiadamente pouco. É necessário encontrar uma distância onde a pessoa ou o acontecimento fotografado "fale".

Nesta procura da distância justa encontra o que, para um artista, une inelutavelmente o ético e o estético. Qual é a sua relação com a natureza destes acontecimentos? Nem todos são políticos, dado que alguns relevam do espectacular. Mas um grande número de acontecimentos que abordou inscrevem-se no mundialismo alternativo. Que contacto tem com este movimento? Tento abordar acontecimentos que possuem uma condição global. Como focar um acontecimento que suscita a presença de milhares de pessoas? Num plano político, é a questão do futuro que me interessa. A escolha dos meus assuntos assenta num potencial, nos desafios que estas cimeiras lançam para o futuro[1].

I TRY TO DEAL WITH EVENTS THAT HAVE A GLOBAL CONDITION. HOW CAN ONE FOCUS ON AN EVENT THAT AROUSES THE PRESENCE OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE? ON A POLITICAL LEVEL WHAT INTERESTS ME IS THE QUESTION OF THE FUTURE

the book form, the leporello, or the dazibao. How do you manipulate the text? It is connected to two aspects: in the first place, thanks to digital, there is a new technical possibility of very easily integrating text into the image; besides this, this need is related to the events I dealt with, the main object of which consisted in the ratification of treaties. I am thinking namely of the World Summit on the Information Society that took place in Geneva and then in Tunis, where I went to take photographs. At these events what particularly interested me was the staged character of the UN meetings, their protocol component, but also their internal struggles. According to the rule I established, these photographs would be blown up to 128 x 156 cm, that is, the maximum size of a sheet of Cibachrome paper in width. But I also needed to find another form, because the photograph didn't seem enough for me to recount these events. So I went back to the text; a specific text, given that I had written nothing both for the work about Korea, with the book *Rapport de forces* (2004), or for the work about the information society summit, with the book *Spillovers* (2004). This is a montage of texts. It is a true narrative, but constructed using extracts of texts from different sources — official texts, press articles, texts from non-governmental organizations. This textual montage is autonomous in relation to the photography. Text and image can be seen separately. I wished to cross them in order to create supplementary complexities. Indeed, it was the nature of these events that led me to return to using text.

There is a form of voluntary impersonality in these works. It seems to me that you attempt to set up a neutrality that is due to the withdrawing of the author's subjectivity. I work with a large format camera, with 10 x 12 cm negatives. When I take photographs what interests me most is the questions of the point of view and of the distance. What distance should one use when shooting an event? Each photographer will give a very different answer. Journalists tend to get as close as possible to the event, whether using a zoom or getting close to the person being photographed. In my case, with the use of this different instrument that is the large format camera, there is necessarily a greater distance. But it is a distance that varies. It is difficult: there is no right distance, but one has to find it and determine it according to what one wants to depict. My distance is perhaps that of the withdrawing of the photographer, of the lack of a subjectivity. This provides images that could almost have no author. Which is false, of course. There is no objectivity; everything is rationalised. A photographer's positioning in relation to an event arises from a conscious strategy. In documentary photography there is the idea of regulating the distance, which means that one neither sees too much nor too little. One needs to find a distance in which the person or event photographed "speak".

In this search into the right distance you surely find that which, for an artist, inevitably unites the ethical and the aesthetic. What is your relationship to the nature of these events? They are not all political, given that some of them come from the spectacular. But a large number of the events you have dealt with are inscribed within alternative worldism. What contact do you have with this movement? I try to deal with events that have a global condition. How can one focus on an event that arouses the presence of thousands of people? On a political level what interests me is the question of the future. The choice of my subjects is based on a potential, on the challenges that these summit meetings bring up for the future[2].





MOUNTAINEERS FROM THE BALTIC STATES WILL CLIMB GASHERBRUM II TOGETHER

In the summer of 2005, mountaineers from the Baltic States will climb, jointly, one of the world's highest peaks in the Karakorum range. For the first time since the restoration of independence, climbers from these countries will co-operate for a combined expedition. During the expedition, they will climb one of the world's eight thousand meter peaks: Gasherbrum II. In terms of height, this is the 14th highest peak in the world; its altitude is 8035 meters. The participants of the expedition are planning to climb this mountain following a classical route from the Pakistani side. Austrian mountaineers, led by F. Marovec, were the first to climb this peak in 1956.

During the expedition, the climbers will use Satellite connection and the Internet; the information on the course of the expedition will be constantly updated on the webpage www.baltuzygiai.lt

The expedition is organised by the foundation Baltuzygiai and the Lithuanian Mountaineering Association.

06 06 2005

On the morning of 4th June, the leader of the first international Baltic States' expedition to G2, Saulius Vilius, left for Islamabad. The first problems of the expedition started already in London: three climbers from Estonia: Tarmo Riga,

Gasherbrum II in around a week. All the climbers feel well.

16 06 2005

The members of the expedition have moved today from Paju higher up towards the base camp.

The expedition has around 2000 kg of gear. More than 80 local porters carry all the cargo of the expedition. These are mostly Balti porters. Vilius said that they have constant problems with the porters. They go on strike, refuse to go to the base camp due to deep snow and it is difficult to walk; they do not have good shoes or glasses and are ill. However, according to the leader, this is mostly used just to get additional payment.

20 06 2005

The team reached Concordia camp next to the Broad Peak on Saturday. The second highest, and one of the most difficult peaks to climb - K2 - is visible from this place. On Monday (June 20), the team have to reach the base camp of Gasherbrum II. At the moment, there is a great deal of snow in the mountains, but until the expedition reaches the base camp, the situation is expected to improve.

21 06 2005

In addition to the Baltic team, there are also Korean, British and American teams in the base camp. The climbers know about the danger of avalanches this week and claim that they

arrived today. Participants of all the expeditions talked about the climbing route up to the assault camp and discussed the possibility to co-operate and fix the ropes necessary for climbing together.

27 06 2005

The team arrived at the base camp on 20th June where they were immediately met by an avalanche from the G1 solid slope. It opens to an impressive view to the G1 and G2 peaks. Although, the British and Korean teams were already there when the Baltic States team arrived, nobody had yet climbed to camp 1 (via South Gasherbrum) even though both aforementioned teams tried to do this.

On June 22, Lithuanians and Estonians together with the Korean team started climbing the ice fall. The alpinists did not reach camp 1 as planned due to the layer of snow covering the ice, which made holds invisible. The team stopped at 5450 meters and spent the night there. After a day at that altitude, the team descended to the base camp (5100 m) where they celebrated St. John's night.

The team continued on 26th June, and after seven hours of hard climbing, they reached camp 1 together with the Italian and British teams at an altitude of 5900 meters. From the Baltic team, only Lithuanian Vilius was able to climb further towards camp 2 and fix the ropes together with the Italians. On 27th June, Vilius, Tarmo Riga and Alar Sikk, climbed further and fixed the ropes up to 6300 meters. Tomorrow the



Alar Sikk and Priit Melnik were late for the airplane to Islamabad. Another mountaineer, Darius Paulauskas, arrived in Islamabad today (6th June). On Monday, Vilius will participate in a briefing at the Ministry of Tourism; paying particular attention to the organisation of the expedition.

12 06 2005

On 8th June, the remaining members of the expedition arrived in Islamabad. First of all, the Estonians had to go to the Migration Office where they left their passports in order to get their visas prolonged. At first, they were told that visas would be ready only after a few days, but after a small 'gift', so popular in Asia, the visas were ready the following morning. Meanwhile, the leader of the expedition paid a \$6000 deposit for use of a rescue helicopter.

The participants of the expedition also bought the necessary food and together with the head of the Karakorum agency, Anchan Ali Mirza, dined in a private club.

On 9th-10th June, all of the team together with the liaison officer, cook, his assistant and a sirdar went to Scardu where they bought food for expedition: meat and vegetables. The climbers also obtained oxygen, which they would use in case of altitude sickness or any other extreme situation. Scardu is the last place where one could use the Internet. Later they will get online only through their satellite phone. Scardu is over 2000 meters above sea level.

On Sunday, they reached Askole in jeeps: the last large settlement. Askole is approximately 3000 meters above sea level. From here, the team will walk to the base camp of

are in a completely safe place - although the avalanches around them are really quite large and frequent. Tomorrow, the Baltic States team will try to cross the ice fall and reach camp 1. They plan to set it at an altitude of 5900 meters. Climbers led by Vilius will be the first this season to reach camp 1 of G2.

The team has a huge problem. Approximately one third of the expedition's cargo has remained in Concordia camp due to a porters' strike (two days away from the base camp). The porters refused to carry the cargo further and asked for quite a large additional payment. Vilius said that the team could survive with the things it possessed in the base camp for around two weeks. Other expeditions have similar problems.

23 06 2005

On 22nd June, they rose from the base camp at 5111 meters to 5450 meters. They did not manage to reach the assault base camp due to many crevasses, which were invisible because of a thick layer of snow covering the ice. The alpinists spent all day at an altitude of 5450 meters. From here, they were able to see the whole route, which they will follow to the Gasherbrum II peak. Early on 23rd June the alpinists descended for a short break to the base camp. All the team felt great. On 25th June, the team is planning to rise up to the assault base camp and at the same time to carry there as much equipment, food and fuel, necessary for further ascent, as possible.

More expeditions have arrived at the base camp of Gasherbrum II. Next to the settled English, Koreans and Americans; Spanish, Argentinean and German expeditions

team will decide whether it would descend to the base camp or try to rise further up to camp 2.

29 06 2005

Today all the members of the team have descended to the base camp to rest. As Saulius Vilius informed, the climbers had not reached camp 2 because they did not have enough rope.

30 06 2005

On 27th June, the team fixed 300 meters of rope. Deep snow and the steep slope, reaching up to 70 degrees at times, made climbing more difficult. On 28th June, the British Jacket Globes and American expeditions fixed around 300 meters of ropes higher up to camp 2.

The same day, Riga, Sikk and Vilius, who had climbed around 150 meters higher, did not set camp 2. They only left food and gas there and descended to camp 1.

There was no possibility, yet, to fix ropes safely due to deep snow. In addition, the ropes themselves and firm hooks were missing. Local guides claim that this year, the G2 route had become much more difficult due to the large amount of snow. In addition, according to the team member, Tarmo Riga, who scaled the Broad Peak several years ago, G2 is much more complicated. Thus, the participants of the expedition are surprised that literature describes the G2 peak as one of the 'easiest' to mount among the 'eight thousands'!

Eleven expeditions have already settled in the base camp. Most of their members are now getting acclimatised in camp 1. It is spring in the base camp, but the weather is getting

worse. All members of the Baltic States expedition feel fine. The team will rest in the base camp depending on how long the bad weather will last.

07 07 2005

During the last few days, bad weather persisted at the G1/G2, Broad Peak, K2 and other nearby peaks. It was constantly snowing and misty. Members from all the expeditions are resting in their base camps.

In such weather, the Baltic tent is constantly visited by many guests. Many want to use the expedition's satellite connection. The team is waiting for fresh food to be brought soon: potatoes, vegetables, meat and Pakistani whiskey.

08 07 2005

Depending on the latest weather broadcast and the actions of the surrounding teams, the Baltic team will decide when to climb to camp 1, when to set up camp 2 and to try and pitch camp 3. The team has successfully managed to solve the problem of the tent for camp 3. In this camp, they plan to use the tent of the Moscow team, use it and leave it there for the 'Muscovites' who are planning to climb later.

Lately, the weather has been bad, almost hundred per cent humidity, cloudy and snowfall. Only the guides of the Japanese G1 expedition and the leaders of the German Amikal commercial team had risen to camp 1, but this was, perhaps, more a wish to show their work and not a logical action.

The group have information that the weather is going to get worse from 12th July, heavy snowfall is expected, so, they plan to go down to camp 1 or to base camp.

11 07 2005

Today at twelve o'clock the Baltic team have erected camp 2 at an altitude of 6550 meters. Tomorrow at four o'clock, they will move towards camp 3. In addition to the Baltic group, there are teams from Russia and Italy. The camp of the Global Jacket expedition (British) is situated slightly lower. The Baltic team feel confident.

The expedition doctor has decided not to ascend from the base camp.

13 07 2005

Yesterday, the group tried to climb from camp 2 to camp 3. In the morning, the team started fixing ropes towards camp 3. After having hung 100 meters of rope, Estonian Sikk fell a couple of meters followed by Vilius. Both climbers are well and have no serious injuries. However, Vilius's rucksack (containing video and photographic cameras, walkie-talkies and a satellite telephone) fell 600 meters. Everything was damaged. Today the climbers have descended to base camp and after a couple of days, weather permitting, they will try the ascent again. Now it is snowing heavily at the base camp. The chances to reach the peak are getting smaller and smaller, as the weather is not improving, and none of the expedi-

descend towards the Gondogor pass. On 26th July, the team should reach Scardu, and on the 28th, Islamabad.

20 07 2005

Lithuanian and Estonian climbers together with several other expeditions abandoned their ascent of Gasherbrum II's peak. Yesterday, two members of the team, Tarmo Riga and Darius Paulauskas, together with German mountaineers tried to reach and set up camp 3, from where they would have climbed the peak. They gave up when they noticed characteristic warning signs of avalanches. On the morning of 20th July, they descended to their base camp. Yesterday Saulius Vilius, also returned from the lower camp after his condition improved.

The expedition doctor, Priit Melnik, is constantly busy in the base camp. The day before yesterday, the leader of the Argentinean expedition was flown in a helicopter away to Scardu with a pre-heart-attack condition.

On 21st July, around 30 porters had to leave the base camp, and on 22nd July, all the expedition will descend towards Scardu. On the way back, the alpinists expect one more obstacle: the Gondogor pass at an altitude of five and a half kilometres.

25 07 2005

Today, all the team has reached Scardu in three jeeps. As expected, the Gondogor pass posed especially difficult challenges when returning to the mountain town. Much effort was required to cross it. Usually there is no snow on the



Yesterday, from base camp, the route waiting for the climbers was visible again for the first time in a week. On the slopes that had been covered with snow before, ice could be seen in some places.

At the moment the steep 350 slope presents the greatest danger. The expectation of avalanches is quite high, especially climbing this slope. In the case of good weather, in a day or two the slope should become safe.

Unfortunately, due to bad weather, the situation is getting complicated. A great deal of time has been lost; there is no guarantee that the weather will settle. The climbers might have only one possibility for the assault on the peak, and it might be particularly difficult to reach it.

Due to abundant snow, avalanches are happening day and night surrounding the base camp. Vilius says that he has never seen so many of them. The avalanches cannot reach the base camp, but turbulence caused by the avalanches sometimes reached the tents situated higher up. Because of bad weather and the problem of porters, additional food for expedition is late. Some products are becoming rare in the kitchen.

10 07 2005

On 10th July, the Baltic team climbed from the base camp to camp 1. The mountaineers left the base camp at two o'clock in the morning and reached camp 1 at seven o'clock a.m. On 11th July, they will climb to camp 2 at 6500 meters. Here, they are planning to pitch two tents and, if the weather conditions are favourable, to erect camp 3 on the following day.

tions has set up camp 3; in addition, nobody has climbed higher than the Baltic team. The Lithuanian and Estonian team should move, at the latest, to Islamabad from the base camp by 22nd July.

The alpinists will try to keep in contact through satellite telephones used by surrounding expeditions; the team will not be able to get direct weather broadcasts any more.

16 07 2005

The Baltic States' expedition postponed their ascent to camp 1 on the morning of 16th July due to the ill-health of their leader. The expedition doctor, Priit Melnik has diagnosed him with bronchitis. On the doctor's instructions, Saulius Vilius together with the assistant cook, descended to Concordia camp. He will have no chance to try and reach the peak of Gasherbrum II.

On 17th July, Estonian Tarmo Riga and Lithuanian Darius Paulauskas together with the Korean team are planning to climb to camp 1 and, if weather conditions are favourable, to assault the Gasherbrum II peak on 20th July.

Liaison officers from surrounding expeditions made a surprise announcement: teams that had fixed their ropes during their ascent of Gasherbrum would have to remove them; if not, they would have to pay a \$700 fine to the Ministry of Tourism. The Baltic team did not use their own ropes, but had utilised over 400 meters of other expeditions' ropes, so the penalty would not apply to them.

On 21st July, over 30 porters will climb to the base camp of Gasherbrum II. On 22nd July, the Baltic expedition will

southern side of the pass, but there was plenty of it this year. So, the climbers and the porters used ropes when scaling the pass this year, which were constantly fixed and looked after by a rescue team staying on the pass. Over 30 porters carried the equipment up to the village of Hunza; there were again problems. Additional payments were once again demanded. The day after tomorrow, the alpinists plan to reach the capital of Pakistan, Islamabad.

From left to right: Saulius Vilius, Tarmo Riga, Darius Paulauskas, Priit Melnik and Alar Sikk, photographed in Tallin and Paris, June 2005.

Concept, Photographs and Design: Bruno Serralongue
Text: Saulius Vilius

First Published as a poster on the occasion of the IX Baltic Triennial, Contemporary Art Center, Vilnius, September- November 2005.

© Bruno Serralongue, 2005

Mountaineers From the Baltic States
Will Climb Gasherbrum II Together . 2005