

Sentinel Series

This series of what Minnette Vári has termed “videographs”, has been pieced together from video footage alone. In each seamless composite image, a panorama is shown that is considerably wider than a normal view of the same landscape could allow. Vári offers these “impossible views” in the context of the following artist’s statement:

On the rooftops and high places of urban Johannesburg, imagine the appearance at dusk of creatures so strange that their role could be that of sentinel, or fugitive, or witness, interloper, heir, envoy, clairvoyant, even impostor. Not entirely of this world, but still with a very real and disfiguring multiplicity that speaks of a bitter and exotic inheritance – their bodies heavy with the relics and anxieties, gifts and weaponry of many generations. And at this moment, the very newest in history, all has been gathered into a tight, tense entirety, and everything is at risk.

Whether that which they carry with them is shelter or shortcoming, or even where their peculiar belonging belongs, is hard to say. We all know that no-one gets to have a bird’s eye view of history. In a new photographic series, Minnette Vári confronts the condition and self-awareness of being both white and African. With, as reference, the family emblems of European settlers to the Cape, she asks what it is that keeps people from really belonging to the place where history has brought them, and why, after all this time and on the brink of political and emotional homelessness, there are those who sit in high places, awaiting the new day that they have promised themselves.

©Minnette Vári (Johannesburg, 2002)



Images: Installation views of the SENTINEL SERIES
Museum of Art, Lucerne, Switzerland, 2004





SENTINEL I

2002 | DIGITALLY CONSTRUCTED IMAGE PRODUCED AS ARCHIVAL PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINTS, MOUNTED ON ALUMINIUM

Edition of 3 and 1 Artist's Print

DIMENSIONS

**LARGE FORMAT EDITION: 3000mm X 1185mm
MEDIUM FORMAT EDITION: 2000mm X 790mm
SMALL FORMAT EDITION: 1000mm X 395mm**



SENTINEL II

SENTINEL III

SENTINEL IV

2002 | DIGITALLY CONSTRUCTED IMAGE PRODUCED AS ARCHIVAL PHOTOGRAPHIC PRINTS, MOUNTED ON ALUMINIUM

Edition of 3 and 1 Artist's Print

DIMENSIONS

LARGE FORMAT EDITION: 3000mm X 915mm
MEDIUM FORMAT EDITION: 2000mm X 610mm
SMALL FORMAT EDITION: 1000mm X 305mm