

*Wood*, 2006/2007

*Wood* is a series of four photographs depicting installations built in a small East End wood over a period of five months. Although the installations might be said to be some sort of stages, their simple – even primitive – and abstract forms situate them on the side of the iconic, of the sign, rather than of any actual structure. And indeed, the stages were never in use. They existed only to be photographed.

By literally creating stages, the series examines what it means to create a work of art, an image. It is the repetitive act of construction (and implied deconstruction) that asserts itself more and more as the work progresses – a repetition which is underlined through the fact that the branches in the background remain identical throughout the series. As the wooden stages contrast with the branches, materiality is emphasized, and the transformation of the wood into wood becomes an important topic. Across the series there is even the suggestion of a narrative of magical transformation.

The particular stillness of the photograph, the absence of protagonists and the foregrounding of emptiness invite the viewer to animate the space. At the same time, the angle of the camera implies that the viewers are assigned a position on stage. Again thus the question is asked what it means to create a work of art. How are the viewers involved in this process?

*Untitled I–IV*, 2006/2007, from the series *Wood*, Lightjet-print, 122 x 149 cm (48 x 59 in)

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