

## **AFTER SCHENGEN Ignacio Evangelista**

*"He was only 5 years old when he crossed their first border, the border between France and Switzerland, and he was astonished not to see the red and lilac line that on maps, so closely scrutinized and that were his first game, marked the boundary between the two countries"* (**A Brief History of Portable Literature, Enrique Vila-Matas**)

The "After Schengen" project is about photographing some of the old border crossing points that still exist out of order, in all the states of European Union.

You can see some images of this project in:

<http://ignacioevangelista.com/index.php?seleccion-natural/work-in-progres-after-schengen/>

Border crossings have a function of geographical boundaries, but also an coercitive role, since they prevent the free passage of people between one and another state. So, they are places that, along with a cartographic dimension, are provided with historical, economic and political reminiscences, aspects absolutely related to Landscape from a contemporary and transversal perspective.

These places that previously the Schengen treaty, delimited territories and in which the traveler had to stop and show his documents, currently appear as abandoned places, located in a space-time limbo, out of use and out of the time for which they were designed, as these states have opened their borders to the free movement of people and goods.

The observation of these places in the present time, gives them a dimension related to viewing and reading of some episodes in recent history, with the passing of time and memory in the landscape. These quasi archaeological ruins have become part of the current landscape, forming a presence of the past that lies dormant in the present.

These places throughout Europe form a network of empty spaces between living spaces, and when the reason for its existence is finished, they form symbolic places that cause new thinking from the present, and a way to visualize time and history. Paradoxically, these spaces currently uninhabited, with no function or meaning, that appear devoid of human figures, emphasize the humanity of the countryside.

The project doesn't want to be an exhaustive list as a guide or road map, so there will be photographed only places that have visual interest to the above objectives, discarding those whose buildings have disappeared or have been rehabilitated for other uses. To that end, there is a work of documentation, prior to each trip, contacting the tourist and cultural offices near the border areas, to confirm the existence of these check-points today.

Depending on the topography of the land, the environment, and the roads there are three kinds of border crossings:

-In large transnational highways: border crossings here are huge buildings visible from afar, with great impact on the natural landscape. Composed of various facilities (offices, police station, parking area, storage area, weighing of goods, etc.)

-In the secondary roads: they are generally small buildings on one side of the road, sometimes prefabricated stands.

-In rural roads: these roads are closed to vehicular traffic, the only way people are allowed is walking or by bike. Some simple cairns or small barriers embedded in the ground, mark the boundary between the two States.