



Uta Barth, *Deep Blue Day (Untitled 12.10)*, 2012, pigment print, 95.6x102.5 cm

## REFLEXIVITY IN CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHY

Essay  
Nassim Daghighian

## Reflexivity in contemporary photography

Nassim Daghighian, November 2014

Translated from French

See images at the end

### Preamble

Photography seems elusive. It is a multifaceted medium, useable for a variety of purposes, and which remains relevant in today's world of digital images by being able to pass between various other media. In this expanded field of photography, the medium's plurality and heterogeneity matters as much as its ambiguity and the various dualities that characterize it; not only light and shadow, but double and multiple, snapshot and long exposure, index and icon, document and art, *mimesis* and *poiesis*, transparency and opacity, to name but a few. For more than thirty years, I have felt passionately about photography because of its paradoxical complexity and apparent ease of access, whether it be a means of expression, a source of aesthetic pleasure or subject of critical reflection, an image in our daily visual environment, an intimate object, a metaphor used by Sigmund Freud for the psychic apparatus or a theoretical object for many artists, historians and art critics...

This short essay deals with reflexivity and the current relations between metaphotography and intermediality. Academic studies on these concepts have mostly developed since the 1990s, whereas the reflexive artistic practices probably date back to ancient times and experienced resurgence in popularity in the "metapainting" of the 16th and 17th centuries (Victor I. Stoichita, 1993). Reflexivity is a play of mirrors that occurs when a work of art reflects and returns back on itself as a medium or picture.

The definition of a metaphotograph can start from the better known term "metapicture" (Thomas William J. Mitchell, 1994). This is a reflexive image that invites the viewer to reflect on the photographic medium, its history or socio-cultural role; on the device, thus the "photographic act" (Philippe Dubois, 1983) including the various steps of production, distribution and reception of photos; or, on the result obtained, that is the photograph as an image and a material object (picture).

Intermediality is the interaction between two or more media, and even their fusion (Dick Higgins, 1966). By the late 1990s, Rosalind Krauss (1998) speaks of a "post-medium condition" and the need to "reinvent photography" at the time of its obsolescence. Since its transition to digital technology and its widespread use via the internet, photography is integrated into a large stock of images available on such networks. The term "metaimage" would probably be more appropriate than metaphotograph to qualify the reflexive and intermedial practices of our current visual culture, but this is beyond the scope of my introduction to this vast topic.

To briefly summarize the history of reflexive practices in photography, it is useful to note that they are heirs of the "metapainting" tradition (from the invention of the medium in the 19th century onwards), of the historical avant-gardes of the 1910s to 1940s, in particular experimental and abstract photography, of modernism which sought the "purity" and specificity of the medium (the formalism defended by the art critic Clement Greenberg in the 1940s to 1960s), of conceptual art and postmodernism, which in the 1960s-1980s, embraced photography in various ways and developed a critical discourse on representation. During the course of its history, the boundaries of the photographic medium have often been challenged by artists that combined several artistic mediums (painting, sculpture, film, video) or put the art in connection with the mass media. Their works reveal the close links between intermedia and reflexivity, which became frequent and explicit in the 1960s.

### Contemporary metaphotography

In the years 1990-2010, the artistic practices of contemporary metaphotography overtake the oppositions inherent in modernist (autonomy and essence of the medium) and postmodernist discourses (pluridisciplinarity; the importance of the context of production and reception of images; the critic of representation). They question not only the specifics of the medium in the digital age by post-conceptual deconstruction of its various features, but also photography's borders and its relationship to other media - in both senses of the word, means of artistic expression and means of mass communication - highlighting the decline of analog photography as well as the fluidity of digital images. In the field of metaphotography, reflexivity is thus combined with multidisciplinary exchanges described by the neologisms of intermediality, hypermediality and transmediality (unfortunately, theorists do not always agree on their respective definitions). This hybridization of media encourages the broaching of photography in an "expanded field" (George Baker, 2005) consistent with the transformations related to the digital. Contemporary photographers



extend this decompartmentalization by going beyond the traditional distinctions between genres (portrait, landscape, still life, etc.) and the separations between fine art and mass media. Artists like Roe Ethridge and Elad Lassry do not hesitate to use the conventions of commercial photography or to mix images taken under commission with their personal work.

To structure my analysis of many contemporary reflexive practices, I will base myself on the notion of process from a diachronic perspective. Since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, photography seems to be divided into four major trends related to different processes:

- 1) the factual record of the real, namely in the fields of reportage, documentary and photography in the tradition of Straight Photography or of *Neue Sachlichkeit* (for example: James Welling, *Light Sources*, 1977-2005, and Allan Sekula, *Waiting for Tear Gas (White globe to black)*, 1999) ;
- 2) the staging that allows the creation of a possible world, a fiction, or even a narrative, usually in the contemporary form of a photo-tableau (famous cinematographic photographs by Jeff Wall and Gregory Crewdson, or *The Great Unreal*, 2005-2009, by Taiyo Onorato & Nico Krebs);
- 3) the appropriation of found images (archives, anonymous photos, family albums, press or advertising photos, etc.) or the citation of famous images (Hans-Peter de Feldmann, *Sunset*, 2004, and Jean-Marc Bustamante, *Lumières*, 1987-1993);
- 4) the experimentation that promotes the exploration of the potentials and borders of the photographic medium, as well as abstraction (James Welling is a major artist in these fields and he had a great influence on the next generation, as one can notice in Walead Beshty's work).

This is of course a simplified view. The boundaries between these four trends are in fact very permeable: some artistic movements, such as Surrealism, expressed themselves through various processes and at the individual level, any artist can move from one process to another.

The metaphotographic practices in the 2000s-2010s have freely used these four processes. Either the artists focus on one process or they are testing several or all of them, like Adam Broomberg and Oliver Chanarin, who were the artistic directors of *Colors* magazine. They have continued to question the photographic medium and their own work. They moved away from the classic documentary approach conducted in large format (*Ghetto*, 2003) to explore the possibilities of abstract experimental photography (the photograms of *The Day Nobody Died* series, 2008, are a critic of embedded war reportage), of cutting and collage (*Afterlife*, 2009), of appropriation of press images and archives (*People in Trouble*, 2010; *War Primer 2*, 2011 or *Holy Bible*, 2013), as well as of fiction, when they curated the Krakow Photomonth on the theme of *Alias* in 2011.

After a brief overview of the first three processes, I will focus on experimental photography, which is probably less known by the general public, but has played a very interesting part in photography over the last fifteen years.

### Documenting the digital transition

In the documentary tradition inherited from Allan Sekula, among others, several photographers have witnessed the end of the silver processes and their related industry. Included for example the work of Robert Burley, *The Disappearance of Darkness. Photography at the end of the Analog Era* (2012), Michel Campeau, *Photographic Darkroom / Photogenic Obsolescence* (2013) and Catherine Leutenegger, *Kodak City* (2014). Working on long-term projects, these three photographers were able to show the ambiguity of the situation, between nostalgia for a bygone era and the fascination with a digital technology whose durability is not a given.

In her installation *The Last Click* (2010), Esther Shalev-Gerz photographs a photographic camera staged in the Rollei factories in Braunschweig to show their spaces devoid of humans and, in a video documentary, she gives voice to camera owners who decided to sell them, suggesting through their testimonies the role of these obsolete objects in individual and collective memory.

The work of Christopher Williams, *For Example: Dix-Huit Leçons Sur La Société Industrielle* (2003-ongoing), deals with photography by including it in a critical reflection on the development of Western capitalist societies and of art after modernism. He questions the conventions linked to the program of the *Apparatus* (Vilém Flusser, 1983) on a technical level (the optical system of professional cameras, for example) and expands his discourse to the socio-economic, historical and political *apparatus*. To achieve most of his images, the artist commissioned professional photographers, a radical way to distance himself from his series' problematic. The relationship between photos and texts is important in this work, as it is in David Gagnebin-de Bons' book *De Mémoire* (2004-2010). The photographer moves away from strict documentary objectivity and recounts his intimate relationship with photography with written comments accompanying each picture.

### Staging the photographic act

Among the artists who use staging, following Jeff Wall or Cindy Sherman, the act of shooting is a current reflexive subject, while other operations that follow the trigger are poorly represented (Helen Westgeest, 2011). The presence of the studio and the camera in the picture is frequent. The photographer often plays the double role of operator and model (Elina Brotherus, *Artist and Model Reflected in a Mirror*, 2007, triptych). The viewer is both observer and observed, as in the famous painting *Las Meninas* (1656) by Diego Velázquez. The mirror is a recurring element in reflexive practices and operates as a metaphor for photography. Michael Snow in his *Authorization* installation (1969) and Jeff Wall in his *Picture for Women* (1979) brilliantly demonstrated this. These works, which refer to their own production process, are examples of self-reflexivity often cited by theorists (especially Philippe Dubois, 1983; Thierry de Duve, 1996; David Campany, 2011; Lonneke de Groot, 2007; Helen Westgeest, 2011).

Self-reflexivity (reflectivity of the device) is to be related to the complex notion of *mise en abyme* (reflexivity of the image) applied to photography by Craig Owens in 1978 (Jean-Marc Limoges, 2005; 2008). In the *mise en abyme*, a fragment of the work maintains a relationship of similarity with the whole work, there is repetition of the image in the image (Miguel Ángel Gañeca, *Nobody Knows Vermeer Told Me This*, 2004, from the series *Me, Myself and I*, 2001-2004). *Authorization* combines the *mise en abyme* with self-reflexivity. Thomas Struth's series made in museums are a *mise en abyme* of the observed observer (*Museum Photographs*, 1989-2004; *Audience*, 2004; *Making Time*, 2007) but are not staged, except the images made in the Pergamon Museum (2001). Artists are often inspired by metapaintings or famous photographs for their staged photo-tableaus, using self-representation and the explicit citation of a work. Julee Holcombe reinterprets *De Schilderkunst* (1666) by Johannes Vermeer in her *Allegory of Photography* (2004). Jemima Stehli questions the representation of the female nude and, since 1999, revisits the images of Helmut Newton, including his famous *Self-Portrait with Wife and Models* (1981). The sources of inspiration may be literary, musical, theatrical, televisual, filmic or virtual (computer-generated images, such as video games) in these remakes that combine the staging and the appropriation process. Intermediality is evident in the self-representations of Yasumasa Morimura as painters, Hollywood stars and "actors" of History (*Requiem for the Twentieth Century: Twilight of the Turbulent Gods*, 2007-ongoing). In his metapictures of celebrities who have become "icons" of the past century, reflexivity is, therefore, not limited to photography.

### Reflexive citations and appropriations

Appropriation is in itself a meta-discourse on visual representation. This is a very widely used practice since the 1960s (Andy Warhol and Robert Rauschenberg serigraphs) and the postmodernist *Pictures Generation* of the 1970s and 1980s (Sherrie Levine, Richard Prince, Louise Lawler). Contemporary artists not only use famous photographs (Mark Wyse, *Disavowal*, 2008), their reproduction and various uses, including images from the internet (Mishka Henner), but also appropriate the protocol used by the referenced artist (art books by Edward Ruscha like *Twenty Six Gasoline Stations*, 1963, inspired numerous remakes).

Close to postmodernism and to Christopher Williams, Isabelle Le Minh had Chinese copyist painters reproduce commercials of SLR cameras at the height of their technology for her series of oil paintings on canvas *Faraway so close, made in China, After Alighiero e Boetti (camera bodies)*, 2012. The title pays tribute not only to the Italian conceptual artist from whom she borrows the working method, but also refers to the notion of aura in Walter Benjamin's *The Work of Art in the Age of Mechanical Reproduction* (1935-1939): "the unique phenomenon of a distance, no matter how near" (on this notion, see also Sylvia Ballhause, *AuraCam Pictures*, 2012). This series by Le Minh, part of her *After Photography* project, offers an intermedial reflection on the current status of painting and photography, as well as questions related to the globalization of the economy (most cameras being assembled in China).

Popular uses of photography are appropriated by several artists, including John Baldessari, Hans-Peter Feldmann, Joachim Schmid and John Stezaker. This interest in the vernacular is present in recent works that collect Internet images (Erik Kessels, *24 Hrs in Photos*, 2011-ongoing; Penelope Umbrico, *Suns from Flickr*, 2006-ongoing; see Helen Westgeest, 2012) or in Thomas Vanden Driessche's series that uses with humor an old analog photomaton and a typewriter for his pseudo-educational guide entitled, *How to be a photographer in four lessons* (2013).

In contemporary practices, we also note an appropriation of books on the history and theory of photography, in a playful post-conceptual and subversive way. These works could be considered "metapictures" to the second degree ("meta²", Katharina Bantleon, 2011) since the content of the

books is already a meta-discourse on photography. Adrian Sauer documents the books in German that have marked his career (*Bücher*, 2009); Melinda Gibson realized in 2009-2010 photomontages with pages cut from *The Photograph as Contemporary Art* (2004) by Charlotte Cotton; Taiyo Onorato & Nico Krebs bring together several known books to build photographic cameras called *Book Cam* (2011-2012), which are real cameras with a lens and a film holder frame.

#### Experiments at the borders of the medium

Experimental photography, of which James Welling is an influential representative, is probably the largest area available to reflexive practices. It has known a revival since the 1980s and 1990s. Paradoxically, says Michel Poivert (2010), that by experimental photography being opened to "explicit dialogue" with other means of artistic expression, it has gone the furthest in the interrogation of the medium. With a critical spirit inherited from postmodernism, Joan Fontcuberta and Thomas Ruff followed the evolution of photography in its transition to digital with the intent to "deconstruct" the conventions related to the medium. Both artists experiment the opportunities offered by the analog processes and then, in their recent series, by internet (via images appropriation) and by software for creating images (Joan Fontcuberta, *Googlegrams*, 2005; *Orogenesis*, 2002-2005; Thomas Ruff, *Nudes*, 1999-2006; *jpeg*, 2004-2007; *Zycles*, 2008-ongoing, among other experimental series).

Internationally, a new generation of artists has emerged since the 2000's, supported by teachers, curators and art critics (see, for examples, the exhibitions *What is a photograph?*, New York, 2014; *(Mis)Understanding photography*, Essen, 2014 and *À l'envers, à l'endroit...*, Paris, 2014; the book *Photography is Magic* by Charlotte Cotton, 2015, as well as articles and magazines listed in the bibliography). Recent works go beyond the dual heritage of modernism and postmodernism. Because of the importance of intermediality in these practices, it would be reductive to qualify this photographic trend of New Formalism, with particular reference to Clement Greenberg ("New Formalism" is the expression applied to some contemporary photographers by Christopher Bedford, 2008; see also the word "foRm", Kevin Moore, 2009). We can note that conceptual art plays a pivotal role and is an important reference for these artists, but not a confining one.

Experimental photography usually involves manipulating the image, manually or digitally, at one or more stages of the work's production process, or its diffusion, often to transgress the technical or aesthetic standards of the medium (due to which this process is common in the historical avant-gardes). Reflexive practices, which highlight the materiality of photography, can involve multiple experimental aspects including the following examples:

- studio and shooting (Eileen Quinlan, *Smoke & Mirrors*, 2005-2008),
- light (Uta Barth, *Compositions of Light on White*, 2011),
- colors (James Welling, *Hexagrams*, 2005; Mary Passa, *Wittgenstein*, 2011-2012; David Benjamin Sherry in his landscapes),
- framing and shooting angle (Barbara Probst, *Exposure*, 2000-ongoing),
- time of exposure and photosensitive surface (Heather Ackroyd and Dan Harvey use photosynthesis and grass seeds as photosensitive material; Hannah Whitaker overexposes certain points of the film in *Imaginary Landscape No.1*, 2012, in homage to the eponymous music piece composed by John Cage),
- camera and optical components (Meggan Gould, *Surface tension Vol.4 Viewfinders*, 2011; Stephen Gill, *Outside In*, 2010),
- darkroom and chemical processes such as developing, printing or toning (indirectly, or even ironically, Alexander Gehring, *Messages from the Darkroom*, 2011; Sarah Schönfeld, *All You Can Feel*, 2013),
- digital post-production (see below, "Intermedial flux"),
- or the final picture: painting (Gerhard Richter, *Overpainted Photographs* since 1986), perforation (Clare Strand, *Growth and Form, Retouch*, 2014; Amie Siegel, *Black Moon / Hole Punch*, 2010), cutting (Maggie Cardelus; Brigitte Ziegler), sewing and embroidery (Farhad Ahrarnia; Maria Aparicio Puentes; Carolle Benitah; Julie Cockburn) are among the many "treatments" inflicted to the images.

Working with the image's materiality already fascinated artists in the 1960s and 1970s (Sigmar Polke, Heinz Hajek-Halke or Lucas Samaras), but the notions of support's fragility, the loss of the image and obsolescence of the silver processes are now more pronounced, as in works related to the family album and memory (Seba Kurtis, *Shoe Box*, 2008; Claudia Breitschmid, *Welcome Back*, 2011-2012). The artists sometimes destroy part of the film by shooting in the camera (Jean-Fançois Lecourt, *Shot into the Camera*, since 1977; Steven Pippin, *Point Blank*, 2010; Rudolf Steiner, *Pictures Of Me Shooting Myself Into A Picture*, 1997-2010) or, more frequently, attack the surface of the photos, thus making them more abstract (Marco Breuer folds, scrapes, burns, punctures or waffles the

photographic paper; Matthew Brandt immerses his photos in the water of the photographed lakes themselves for his series of landscapes *Lakes and reservoirs*, 2008-ongoing; to realize *Impermanence*, 2012-ongoing, Seung-Hwan Oh uses a microorganism that attacks the film). The mistake or "fautographie" (Clément Chéroux, 2003) has a place in the experiments, whether voluntary mistakes or not (Jean-Christophe Bechet, *Accidents*, 2012; Walead Beshty, *Travel Pictures*, 2006, whose films underwent X-rays at airports; Eric Baudelaire uses the same "process" as Beshty in *Anabasis X-Rayograms*, 2007-2009).

The interactions between the two-dimensional image and the object are part of many artistic practices that show the importance of the installation and the exhibition as a medium in experimental photography. The photograph becomes sculpture in the works of Brendan Fowler, Clare Kenny, Mariah Robertson and Letha Wilson, among other artists exploring this area. The effect of *trompe-l'œil*, well known in painting, is reinterpreted by Miriam Böhm, Cayetano Ferrer (*City of Chicago*, 2004-2006 and *Western Imports*, 2007-2008) as well as Daniel Gordon, whose work of cutting and three-dimensional pasting evokes both the practices of historical avant-gardes and that of amateurs using Photoshop. These illusion games invite the viewer to remember the ambiguity of representation between 2D and 3D.

Camera-less photography represents the "degree zero" of the medium, in particular the processes of the photogram, the luminogram (László Moholy-Nagy) and the chimigram (Pierre Cordier), which fascinated artists since the first *Photogenic drawings* (1834-1835) of William Henry Fox Talbot, to whom Hiroshi Sugimoto pays tribute in an eponymous series. It is the art of drawing with light, fixing a shadow, keeping a trace or playing with the disappearance of the referent (see the artists presented in the *Shadow Catchers* exhibition and its catalogue, London, 2010).

The photogram is revisited by contemporary artists to emphasize the obsolescence of silver papers (Alisson Rossiter, *Lament*, 2007-ongoing), to involve the viewer in a play of reflections in the mirror of silver (Liz Deschenes), to manipulate the photographic object, folding, bending and moving the paper, involving color variations (Walead Beshty, *Pictures Made by My Hand with the Assistance of Light*, 2005-2006; *Multi-Sided Pictures*, 2006-2009; *Curls*, 2008-2014).

In his cyanotypes, Christian Marclay creates an interesting dialogue between image and sound by placing objects like a vinyl disc or an audio magnetic tape directly on the iron salts photosensitized paper. In contrast, Zoe Leonard works since 2011 without a photosensitive surface by creating a camera obscura in the darkness of the exhibition room (a pinhole, called *stenope*, allows external light to be projected on the walls, the floor as well as the ceiling, and to produce the reverse image of urban space). This method has been used since Antiquity for observing eclipses and is reminiscent of the allegory of Plato's cave in Book VII of *The Republic* (4<sup>th</sup> Century BC)...

Abstraction is a broad area using the experimental process. Since the 1960s, concrete and generative photography remains an important current defended by Gottfried Jäger in his works and theoretical texts. Abstraction is reflexive by its rejection of the conventional role of photography that is to accurately represent reality. Unfortunately, I cannot develop this vast subject in this essay. Many contemporary examples are found such as Fleur van Dodewaard (*Sun Set*, 2011); Jessica Eaton (*Cubes for Albers and LeWitt*, 2010-2013); Stefanie Seufert (*Blind*, 2011) or Wolfgang Tillmans (*Blushes*, 2000).

### Intermedial flux

Today, the computer connected to the internet, the smartphone, scanner and printer are more than tools for photographers; they are technical extensions of the studio or substitutes for the darkroom (Diane Smyth, 2012). Close to the approach of John Hilliard in the 1970s (*Camera Recording its Own Condition (7 Apertures, 10 Speeds and 2 Mirrors)*, 1971), current artists critically "deconstruct" different computer tools, particularly those used in Photoshop, or highlight the risks of loss due to technical problems (Mathieu Bernard-Reymond; Lucas Blalock; Anders Clausen; Diego Collado; Aaron Hegert; John Houck; Virginie Otth; Sean Snyder; Jordan Tate; Melanie Willhide).

Despite the variety of experimental approaches of these post-conceptual artists, they clearly enjoy playing with the so-called specificities of photography, to present the exchanges between different media and, ultimately, to encourage the viewer to have a critical approach of his daily visual environment. Although questions remain open on the evolution of the definition of photography in this expanded field, contemporary artists do not hesitate to test the intermedial fluidity of digital images. Could then experimental metaphotography, as much transgressive as reflexive, have a heuristic function?

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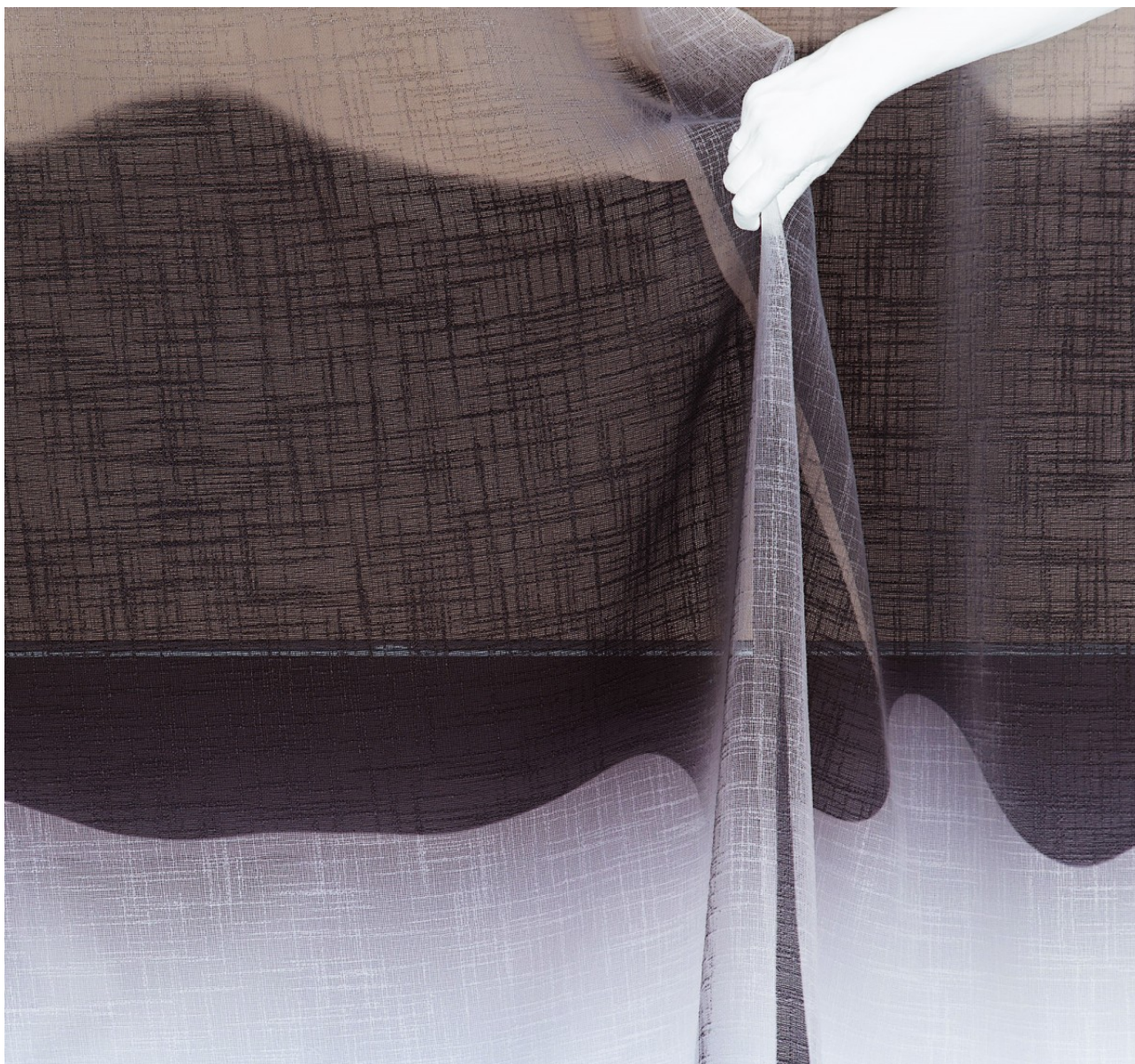
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Uta Barth, *Deep Blue Day (Untitled 12.8)*, 2012, pigment print, 95.6x102.5 cm





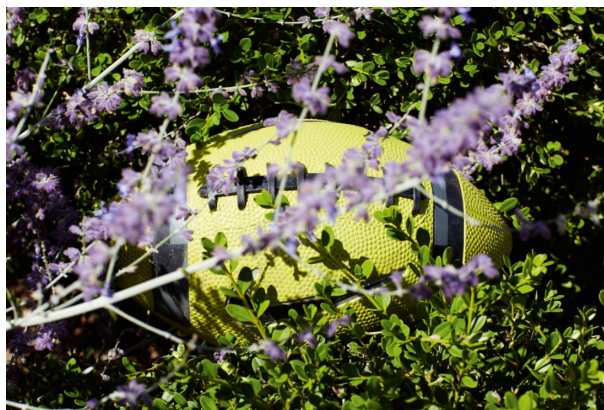
Roe Ethridge, *Deborah Muller*, 2008, c-print, 109x84 cm



Roe Ethridge, *Moldy Fruit*, 2010, c-print, 127x101.6 cm



Roe Ethridge, *Untitled (Alexis Bittar)*, 2013, c-print, 140x105.8 cm, in *Sacrifice Your Body*, 2014



Roe Ethridge, *Muck Covered Wheel*, 2011 & *Football and Lavender*, 2013, in *Sacrifice Your Body*, 2014





Elad Lassry, *Untitled (Red Cabbage 1)*, 2008, c-print, painted frame, 36.8x29.2x3.8 cm



Elad Lassry, *Untitled (Green)*, 2014, paper on c-print, painted frame, 26.7x21.6x3.8 cm



Elad Lassry, *Textile (For Him and Her)*, 2009, silver print, painted frame, 27.9x35.6 cm





Allan Sekula, *Waiting for Tear Gas (White globe to black)*, 1999, projection of 81 color slides 135mm, 16 minutes



Allan Sekula, *Waiting for Tear Gas (White globe to black)*, 1999, projection of 81 color slides 135mm, 16 minutes





James Welling, *Greenhouse I*, 1997,  
from the series *Light Sources*, 1977-2005



James Welling, *Meriden*, 1992,  
from the series *Light Sources*, 1977-2005



James Welling, *Tota Lamp*, 1996,  
from the series *Light Sources*, 1977-2005



James Welling, *Maine Inlet*, 1992,  
from the series *Light Sources*, 1977-2005





Jeff Wall, *After 'Invisible Man' by Ralph Ellison, the Prologue*, 1999-2000, duratrans on lightbox, 174x 250.5 cm, Vancouver, Winter 1999 - Spring 2000, digital montage, cinematographic photograph (accidents of reading)



Gregory Crewdson, *Untitled*, 1998, c-print, 135.5x152.4 cm, from the series *Dream House*





Taiyo Onorato & Nico Krebs, *View 1*, 2008, from the series *The Great Unreal*, USA, 2005-2009



Taiyo Onorato & Nico Krebs, *View 2*, 2008, from the series *The Great Unreal*, USA, 2005-2009



Taiyo Onorato & Nico Krebs, *Red Glow*, 2006, from the series *The Great Unreal*, USA, 2005-2009



Taiyo Onorato & Nico Krebs, *Car 2*, 2008, from the series *The Great Unreal*, USA, 2005-2009



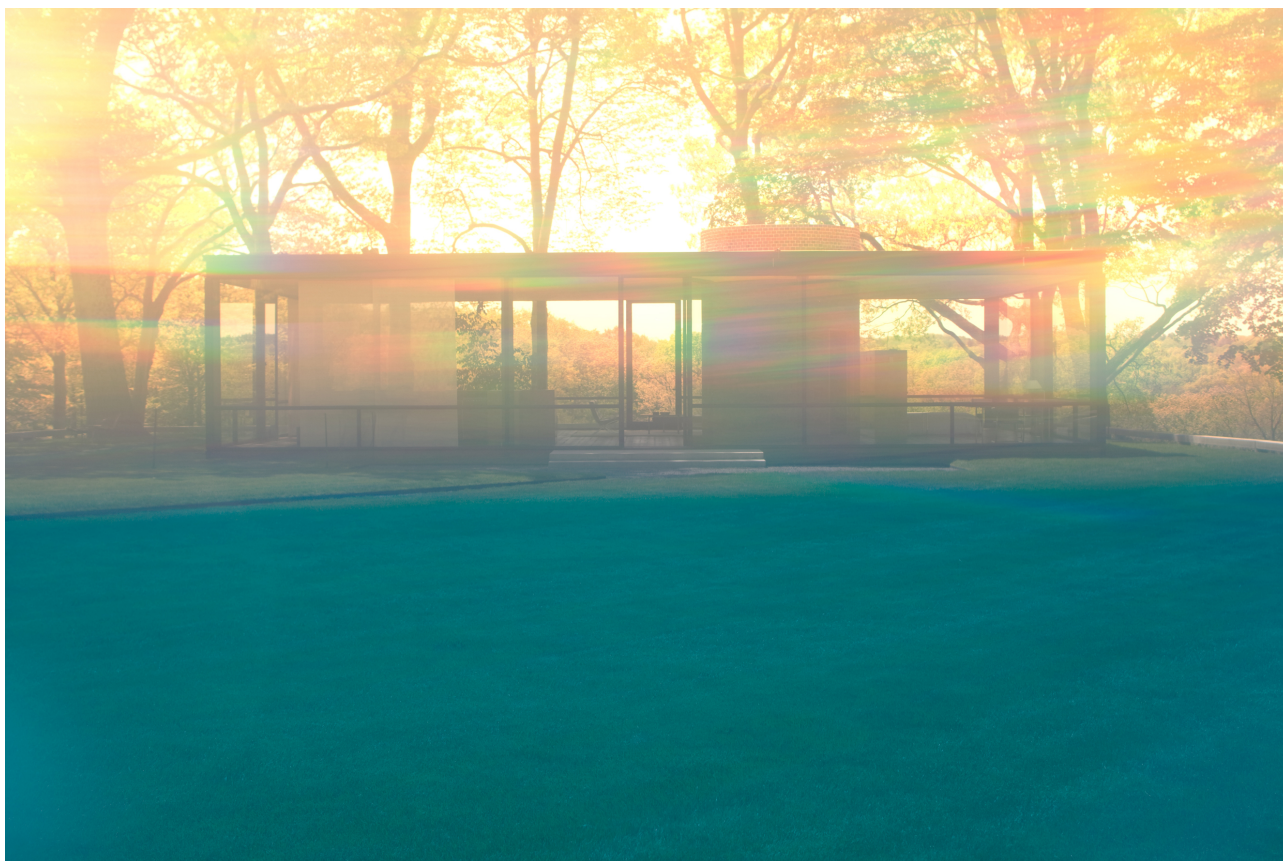


Hans-Peter Feldmann, from the series *Sunset*, 2004, 9 xerox photocopies, 17.8x25.4 cm



Hans-Peter Feldmann, from the series *Sunset*, 2004, 9 xerox photocopies, 17.8x25.4 cm





James Welling, 6063, 2008, pigment print, 85.1x127.6 cm, from the series *Glass House*, 2006-2009 (Philip Johnson Glass House, 1949, New Canaan, Connecticut, USA)



James Welling, 017, 2006, c-print, 116.8x94 cm, from the series *Flowers*, 2004-2011



Walead Beshty, *Untitled*, 2009, photogram cyanotype, 20.3x15.2 cm





Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin, *Rene Vallejo Psychiatric Hospital, Cuba*, 2003, c-print, 40.6x30.5 cm, *Ghetto* series



Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin, *The Brother's Suicide, June 8th, 2008*, 2008, photogram on chromogenic paper, 76.2x600 cm, installation view, from the series *The Day Nobody Died*, 2008



Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin, from the series *Afterlife*, 2009, c-print cut on glass, lead, 41x51 cm, exhibition view [this work is directly connected to the negatives shot in 1979 by Jahangir Razmi in Iran, during the execution of Kurdish prisoners at the airport of Sanandaj, soon after the Islamic Revolution]

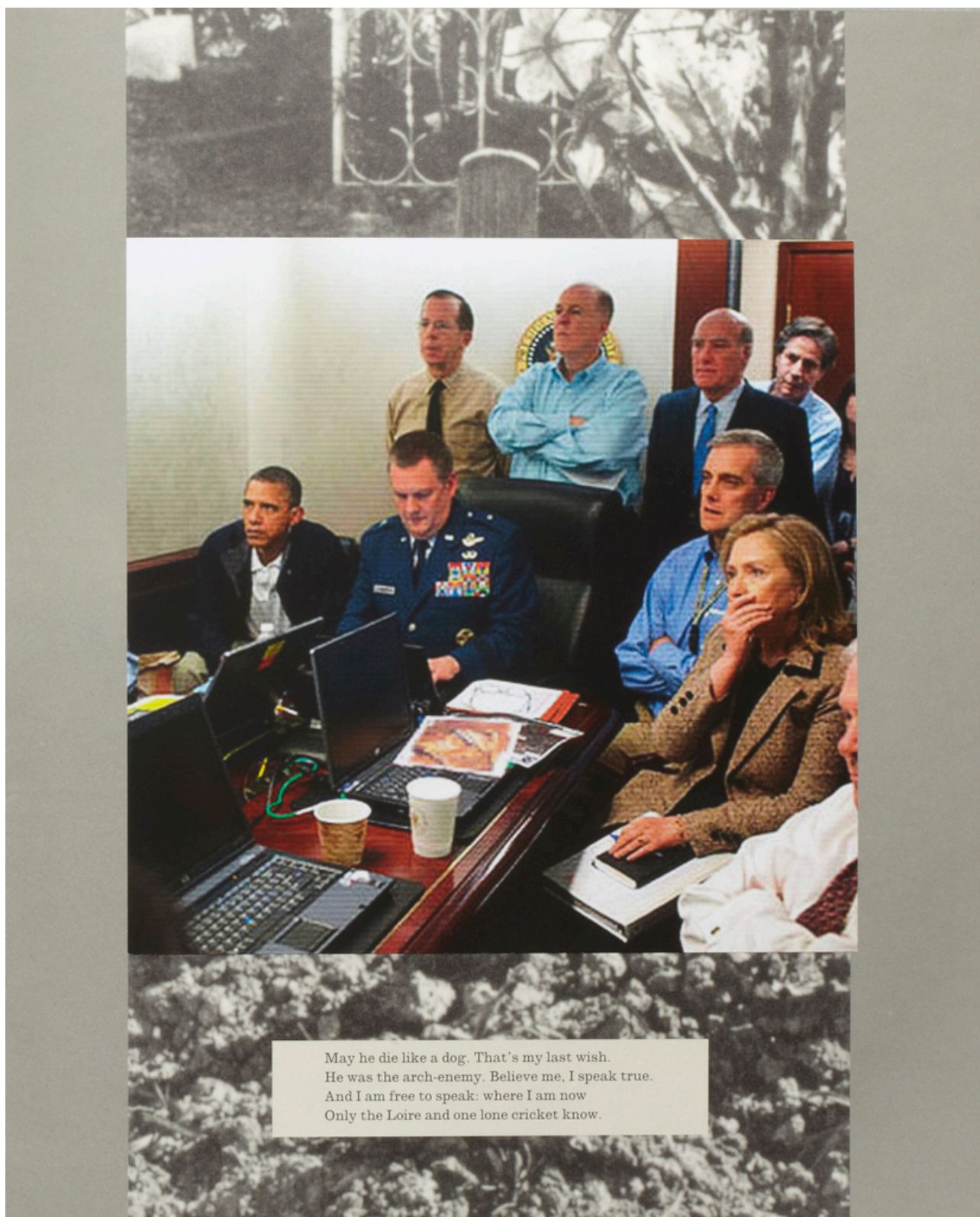


Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin, *Untitled*, from the series *People in trouble*, 2010, 25.4x20.3 cm



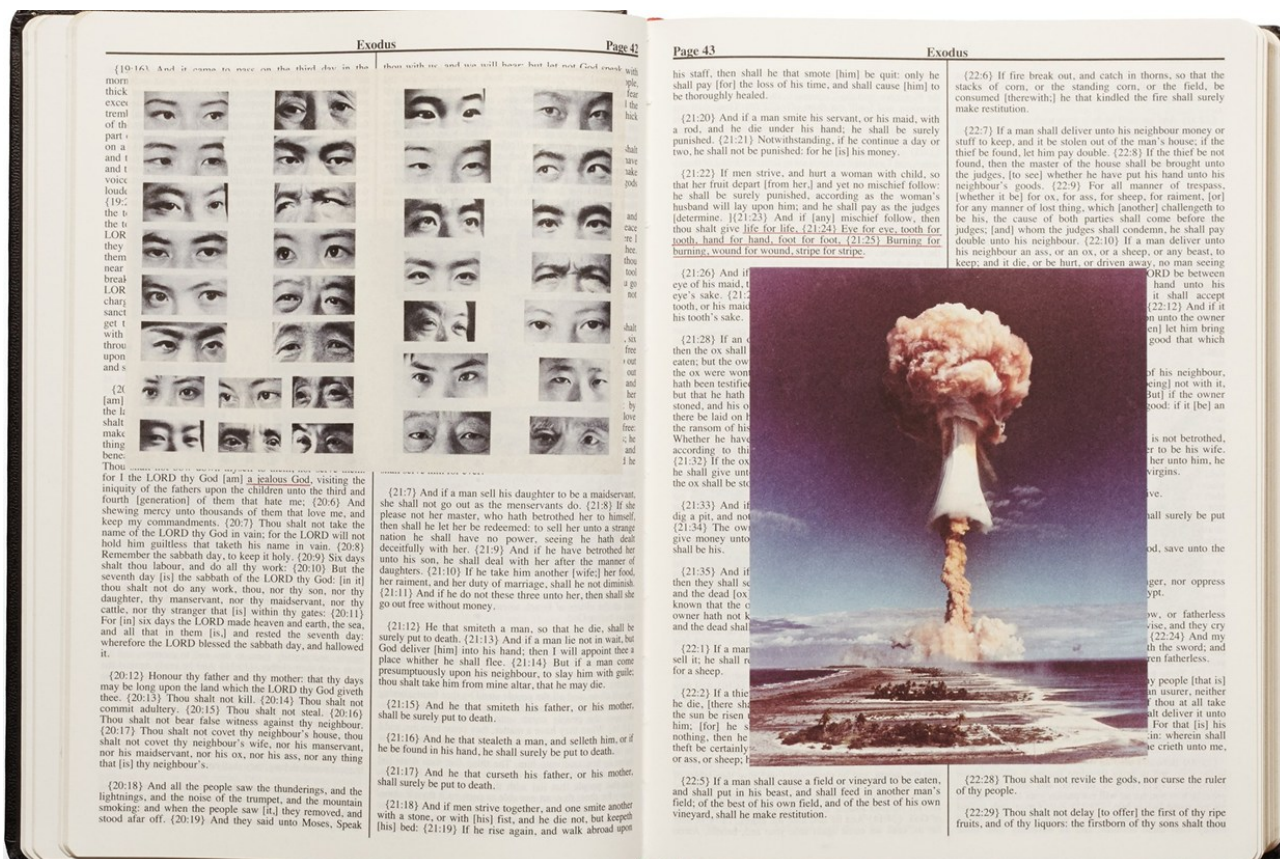
Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin, *Pushed to the ground*, from the series *People in trouble*, 2010, 25.4x20.3 cm



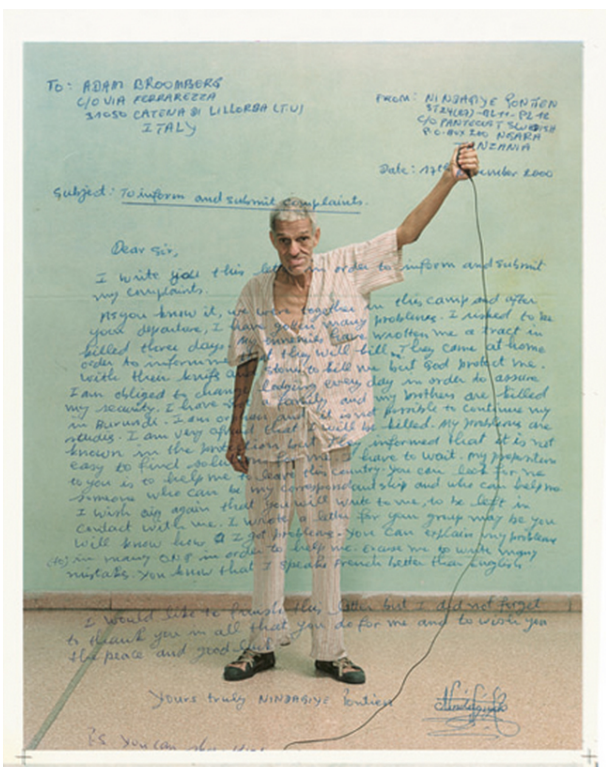


Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin, *War Primer 2*, 2011, London, Mack, book, 29x24 cm, plate 10





Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin, *Holy Bible*, 2013, London, Mack, book, 21.6x16.2 cm, p.42-43



Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin, *Scarti*, London, Trolley Books, 2013, book, 24.8x21 cm, excerpt



## 20

**Roni Horn**

No one can be certain whether these photographs of a young person are of the artist Roni Horn or even whether they all depict the same individual. Despite the striking resemblances between the various images, archivists have struggled to verify the identity of the sitter (or sitters) represented, having gathered the collection from a number of different, unreliable sources. Pairing up the photographs, facial mapping experts tend to conclude that all photographs refer to the same female figure, but their findings remain inconclusive. The possible inclusion of one or more doppelgangers, whilst unlikely, cannot be ruled out entirely.

Roni Horn (b. 1955) has created a number of works addressing concerns of repetition and resemblance. In a.k.a., Horn paired photographs of herself at different stages in her life.



Roni Horn, in *Alias*, 2011, Krakow Photomonth, Krakow; curators : Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin

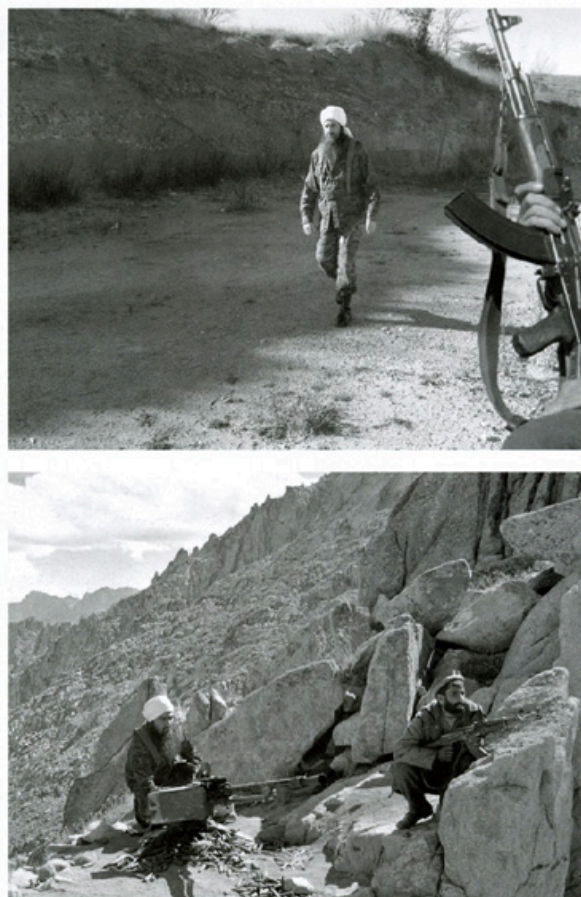
## 35

**Manbaa Mokfhi**

Manbaa Mokfhi— singer, soap star and face of Mecca-Cola's 1997 advertising campaign— has been in hiding for the past five years. Scouted by Al Qaeda to pose as 'Dr Fasqiya Ul-Junat', a fictional terrorist ringleader, Mokfhi was employed to distract US military attention from the real centre of Al Qaeda operations. This elaborate and audacious hoax was exposed by two Qatari photojournalists who had grown suspicious of the uncanny resemblance of 'Ul-Junat' to the Arab world's daytime-TV heart throb.

Faced with this embarrassing revelation, US military intelligence used 'Ul-Junat' as the template for 'Osama Bin Laden' – an invented 'figurehead of hate' used to justify ongoing hostilities. Mokfhi has since been erased from public files.

For his 2007 project *Deconstructing Osama*, Joan Fontcuberta posed in photographs as the fictitious Dr Fasqiya Ul-Junat aka Manbaa Mokfi.

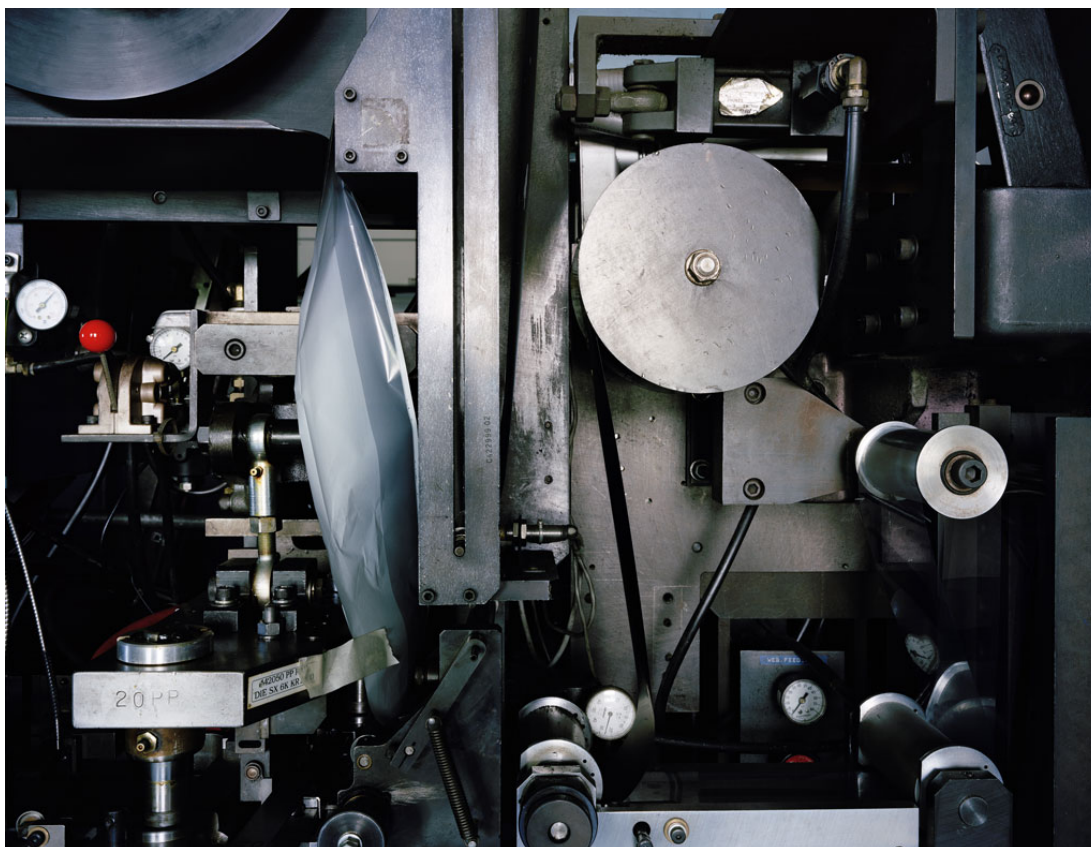


Manbaa Mokfhi / Joan Fontcuberta, in *Alias*, 2011, Krakow Photomonth ; curators : Adam Broomberg & Oliver Chanarin





Robert Burley, *Elsa Dorfman's Polaroid Camera*, Cambridge, Massachusetts, 2009, from the series *The Disappearance of Darkness*, 2005-2012



Robert Burley, *Detail of Machine Used to Create 8x10 inch Polaroid Film*, Polaroid, Enschede, NL, 2010 from the series *The Disappearance of Darkness*, 2005-2012





Michel Campeau, *Sans titre 0310*, from the series *Darkroom*, 2005-2006





Catherine Leutenegger, *Technology Boulevard crossing, Manufacturing Trail, Kodak Park*, 2007, from the series *The Kodak City*, 2007-2012, book published by Kehrer, 2014



Catherine Leutenegger, *Kodak Camera Club, Building 28, Kodak Park*, 2012, *The Kodak City* series, 2007-2012





John Cyr, *Sally Mann's Developer Tray*, from the series *Developer Trays*, 2010-2011, pigment print, 50.8x40.6 cm



Esther Shalev-Gerz, from the series *The Last Click*, 2010

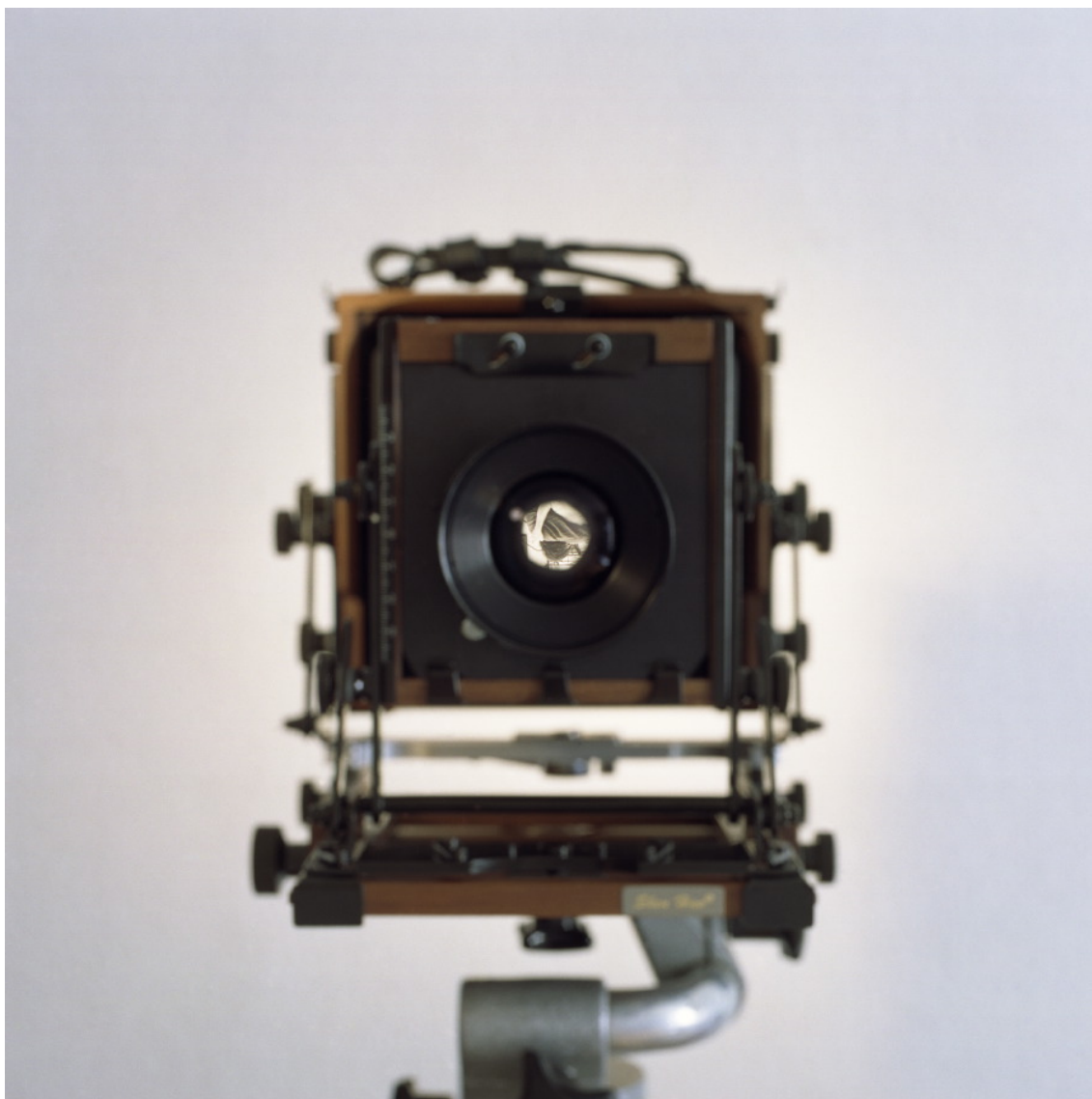


Esther Shalev-Gerz, *The Last Click*, 2010, video, 26 minutes





Christopher Williams, *Linhof Technika V* fabricated in Munich, Germany. *Salon Studio Stand* fabricated in Florence, Italy. Dual cable release. Prontor shutter. Symar-s lens 150mm/f 5.6 Schneider kreuznach. Sinar fresnel lens placed with black tape on the ground glass. (Yellow) Dirk Schaper Studio, Berlin, June 19, 2007, 2008, c-print, 50.8x40.6 cm, from the series *For Example: Dix-Huit Leçons Sur La Société Industrielle*, 2003-ongoing



D. B. me dit alors : « Le grand format, c'est ton format ».

Il y a dans le travail du grand format un acte de lenteur impossible ailleurs, un manifeste silencieux pour la photographie. A l'époque, les images de Martine et de Philippe réalisées dans le jardin sont l'expression de ce processus. Menteuses par deux fois sur le dépoli, elles sont détaillées longuement, avec le regard tout entier, puis plus précisément à la loupe. L'image plus présente que jamais, arrêtée par chaque grain du verre quadrillé.

Le seul moment photographique pour moi où nous sommes trois, le sujet, l'appareil et moi. Question de poids et de taille, plus que de sens. La caméra prend une place active dans l'image.

Caché sous le drap noir – on dirait un vieux photographe –, je travaille le cadre et la netteté, cherchant à l'aveugle, du bout des doigts, les molettes et les leviers. Appréciant chaque fois plus la douceur des matériaux, le glissement précis et doux des éléments. Entraîné distraitemment par le vocabulaire technique : la chambre, les bascules, l'image aérienne, le décentrement, les corps. Sous le drap, je deviens évidemment le prolongement d'un système qui prépare l'image. Je suis dans l'image, mieux qu'à tout autre moment.

Je n'avais pas assez écouté D. B. alors. J'ai parfois l'impression de m'être compromis dans des images rapides, faciles, d'avoir évité par paresse le travail, la lenteur, le poids et l'importance de ce qui ne se fait qu'une fois. Non pas en un instant, mais une fois dans une durée. Une fois dans une relation de longueur à la courte échelle de la photographie.





Elina Brotherus, *Artist and Model Reflected in a Mirror*, 2007, 3 parts, c-prints, each 130x104 cm



Michael Snow, *Authorization*, 1969, installation : 5 black/white Polaroid 55, adhesive, mirror, metallic frame, 54.5x44.5 cm





Jeff Wall, *Picture for Women*, 1979, duratrans on lightbox, 142.5X204.5cm, shot in 5x7", Vancouver, Winter 1979



Elina Brotherus, *Reflection*, from the series *Artist and her model*, 2010





Thomas Struth, *Alte Pinakothek, Self-Portrait*, 2000, c-print, 162.6x189.9 cm [painting by Albrecht Dürer, *Self-portrait with fur collar*, 1500, oil on wood panel, 67.1x48.9 cm, exhibited at the Old Pinakothek in Munich ; right : T. Struth's self-portrait]



Exhibition view of *Reflections on the Self: From Dürer to Struth*, Christie's Mayfair, London, 2.6. - 5.9.2015, curators : Cristian Albu and Jacob Uecker. Photo : Geoff Pugh / *The Telegraph*





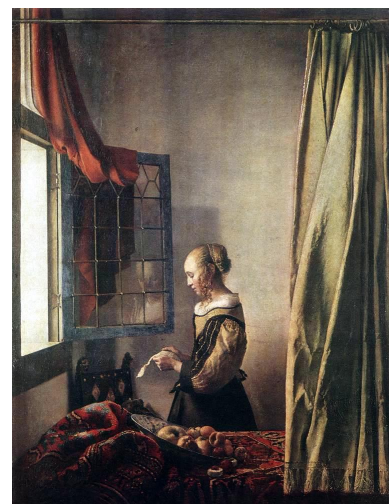
Miguel Angel Gaüeca, *Me, Myself and I*, from the series *Nobody Knows Vermeer Told Me This*, 2004, Cibachrome, 125x125 cm



Diego Velasquez, *Las Meninas*, 1656, oil on canvas, 318x276 cm



Vermeer, *De schilderconst* (The Art of Painting), 1666, oil on canvas, 120x100 cm



Vermeer, *Young Girl reading a Letter*, 1657-1659, oil on canvas, 83x64.5 cm





Julee Holcombe, *Allegory of Photography*, 2003, c-print, 97.4x91.1 cm, *Homo Bulla* series



Yasumasa Morimura, *Van Gogh*, 1985, c-print, 100x120 cm, from the series *Western Art History*





Jemima Stehli, *Self-Portrait with Karen*, 2000, silver print, 200x230 cm



Helmut Newton, *Self-Portrait with Wife and Models*, Vogue Studios, Paris, 1981





Yasumasa Morimura, *After Vivien Leigh 4*, 1996, Ilfochrome, 95x120 cm, from the series *Self-portrait (Actress)*



Yasumasa Morimura, *Vietnam War*, 1968 - 1991, silver print, 120x150 cm, from the series *Season of Passion / A Requiem: Chapter I*, 2006, project *Requiem for the Twentieth Century. Twilight of the Turbulent Gods*





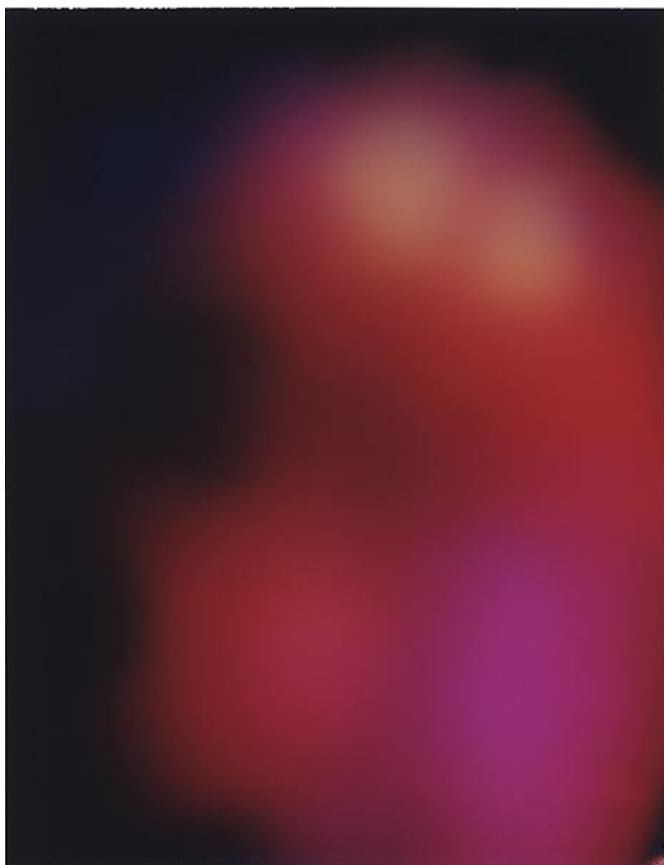
Mark Wyse, Christopher Williams / Nan Goldin, from the series *Disavowal*, 2008, framed reproductions, 2x79.3x48.2 cm



Mishka Henner, *NATO Pipeline Station #1*, Stokkum, Gelderland, 2011, from the series *Dutch Landscapes*



Isabelle Le Minh, *CAMERA BODY #1, MADE IN CHINA BY YE JIAN*, from the series *Lointain si proche*, After Alighiero e Boetti, 2012, oil on canvas, 80x100 cm

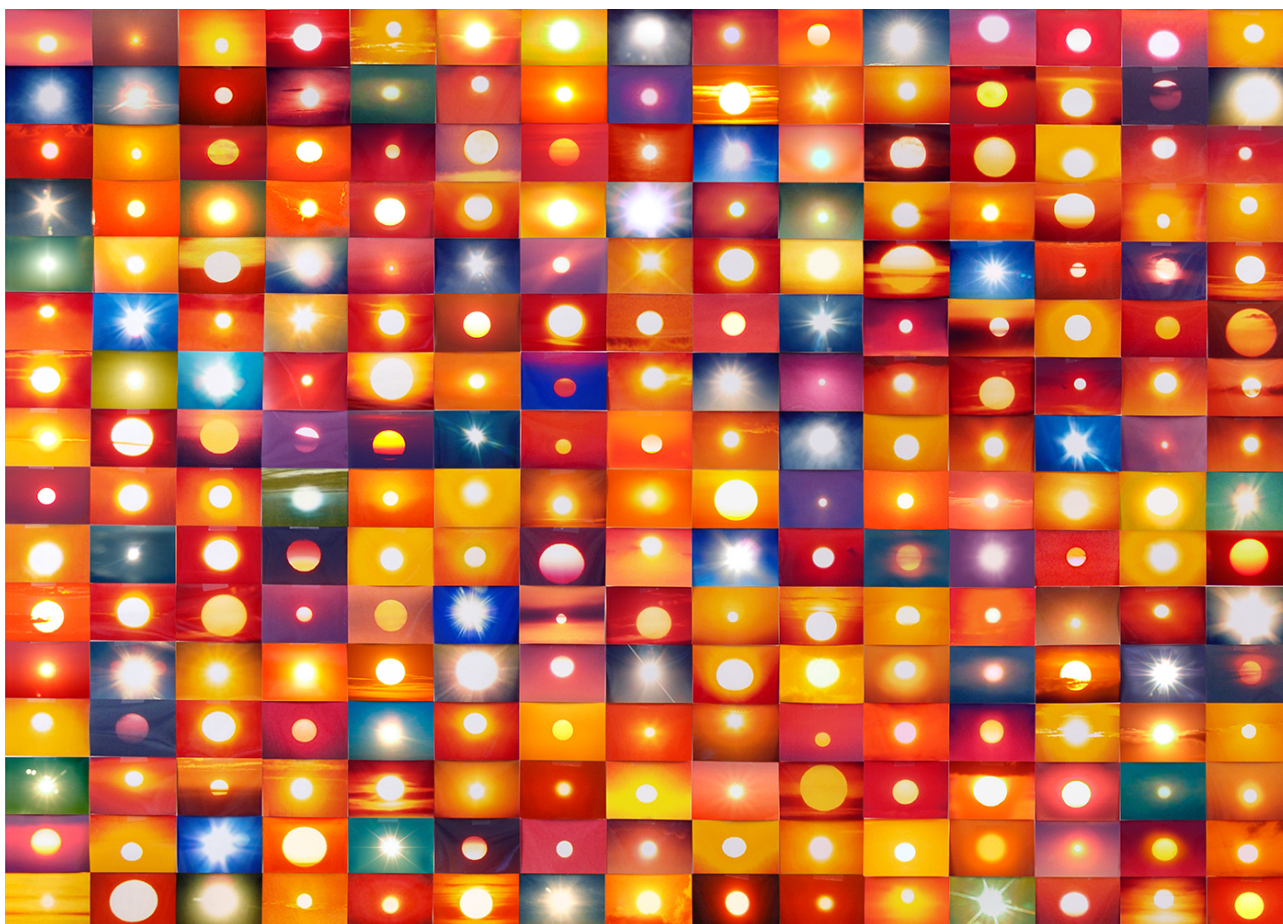


Sylvia Ballhause, from the series *AuraCam Images*, 2012, pigment print, 90x72 cm





Eric Kessel, *24 Hrs in Photo*, 2011-ongoing, installation, FOAM, Amsterdam, every picture uploaded to Flickr in 24 hours



Penelope Umbrico, from the series *Suns from Flickr*, 2006-ongoing, detail





## HOW TO BE A CONTEMPORARY PHOTOGRAPHER?

### Lesson 1

Take your pictures with the crappiest camera you can find. Having a real russian camera from the USSR era is an asset!

### Lesson 2

Use expired films and take pictures of the most boring places and moments of your life... If you still have the luxury to live like a student partying all night, sleeping all day, drinking too much and taking drugs from time to time is an asset. Always put at least one picture of a nude person in a seri

### Lesson 3

Grow a beard, wear big glasses even if you have a perfect eyesight. Do not be scared to open your white shirt a little bit too much to show your vulnerable chest...

### Lesson 4

Be overconfident! Do not allowed any humor in your work (except if your name is M. Parr). Always be very serious and maintain a total mystery on your next Photographic Project...

Thomas Van Den Driessche, from the series *How to be a Photographer in four lessons*, 2013





Adrian Sauer, *Theoriegeschichte*, from the series *Bücher*, 2009



Melinda Gibson, *Photomontage XIX* (from pages 128, 179, 192) and *Photomontage XVII* (from pages 25, 105, 149), from the series *The Photograph as Contemporary Art*, 2009-2010

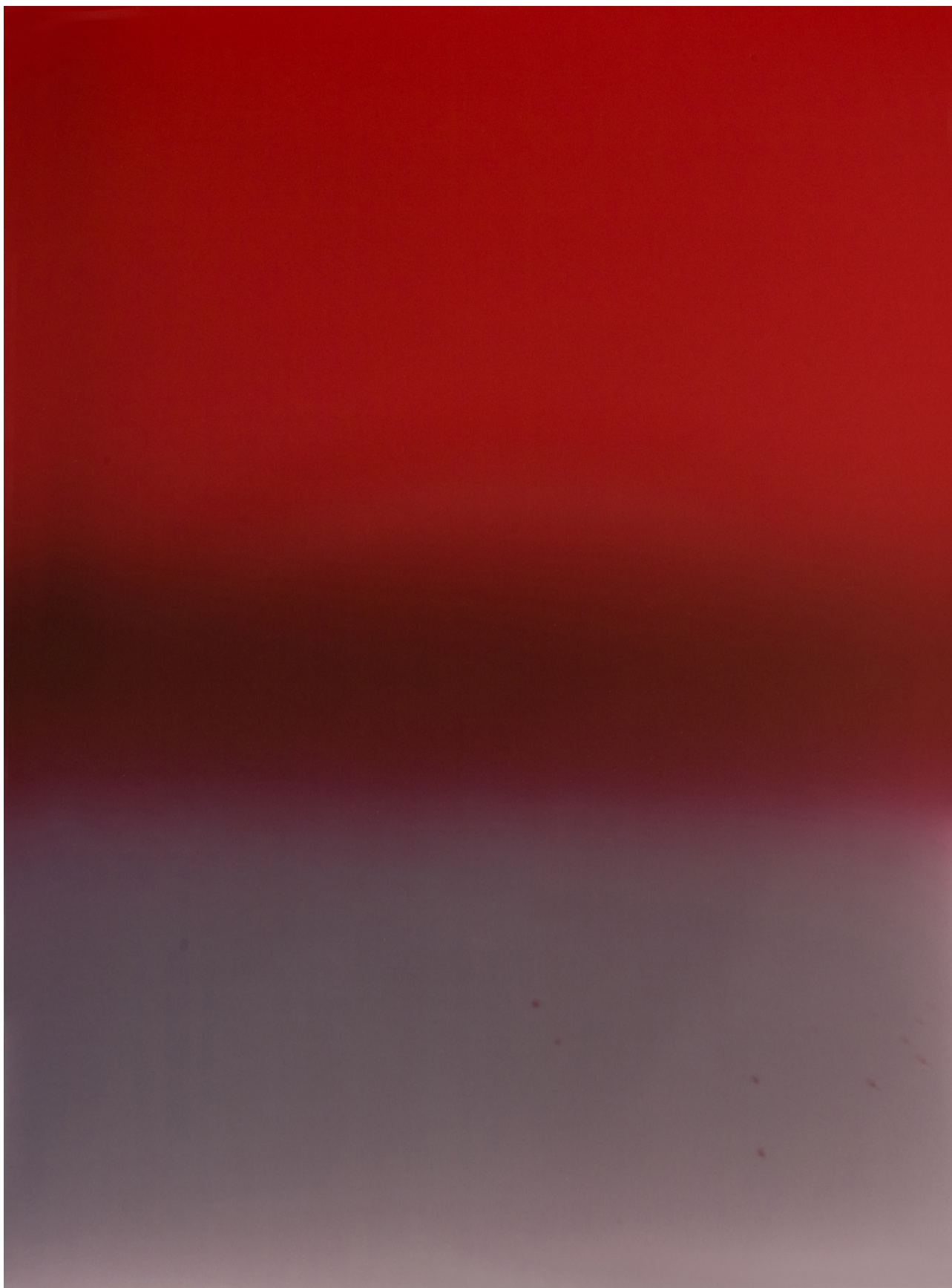


Taiyo Onorato & Nico Krebs, *Book Cam 1*, 2011

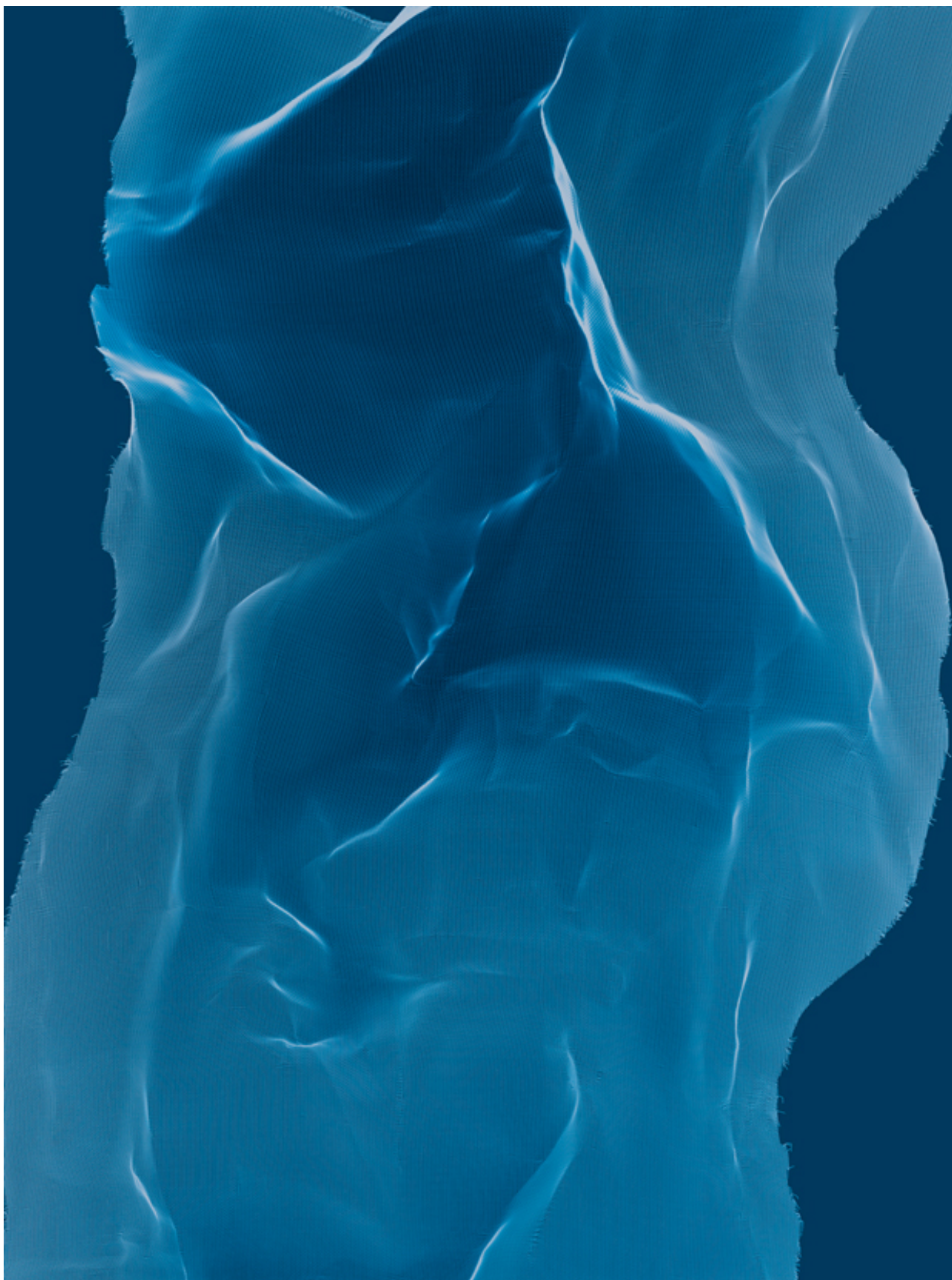


Taiyo Onorato & Nico Krebs, *Book Camera, open*, 2011





James Welling, *IRB2*, 2005, c-print, 112x86 cm, from the series *Degradés*, 1986-2006

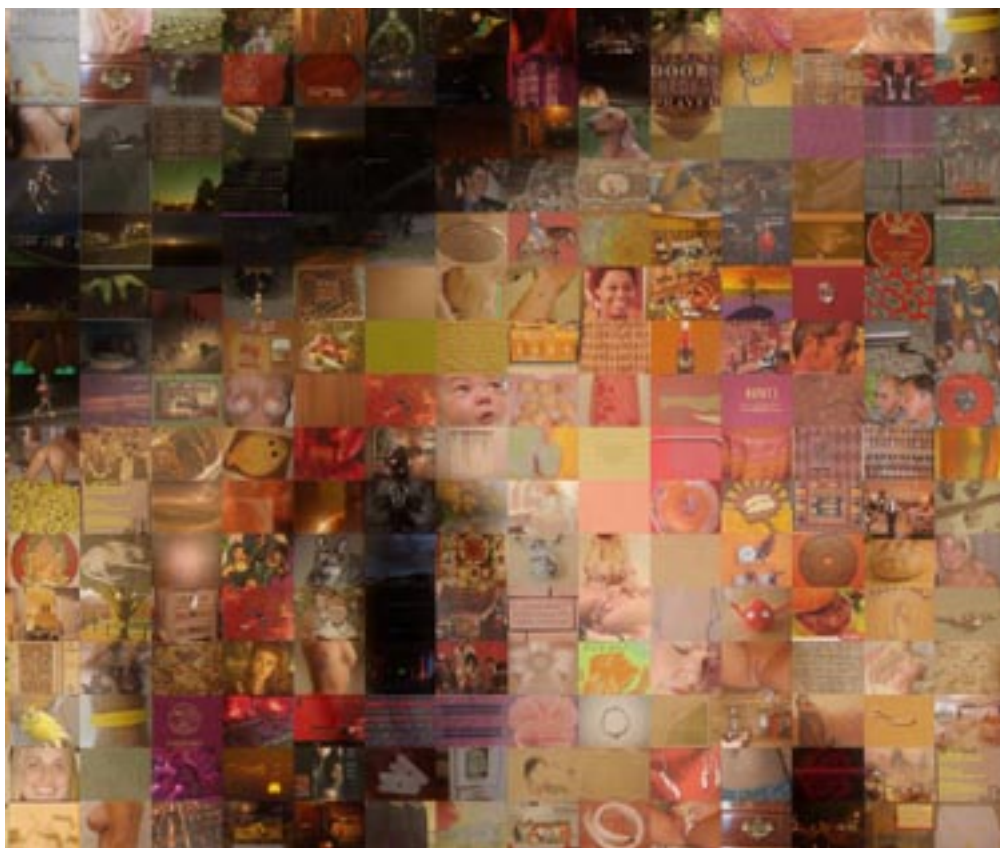


James Welling, *Torso 9-7*, 2005–2006, digital c-print, 116.2x87 cm, from the series *Torsos*, 2005–2008





Joan Fontcuberta, *Sylvie*, from the series *Googlegrams*, 2005 (detail below)







Joan Fontcuberta, *Atget*, 2004, 75x100 cm, from the series *Orogenesis*, 2002-2005 (below, original image by Eugène Atget)

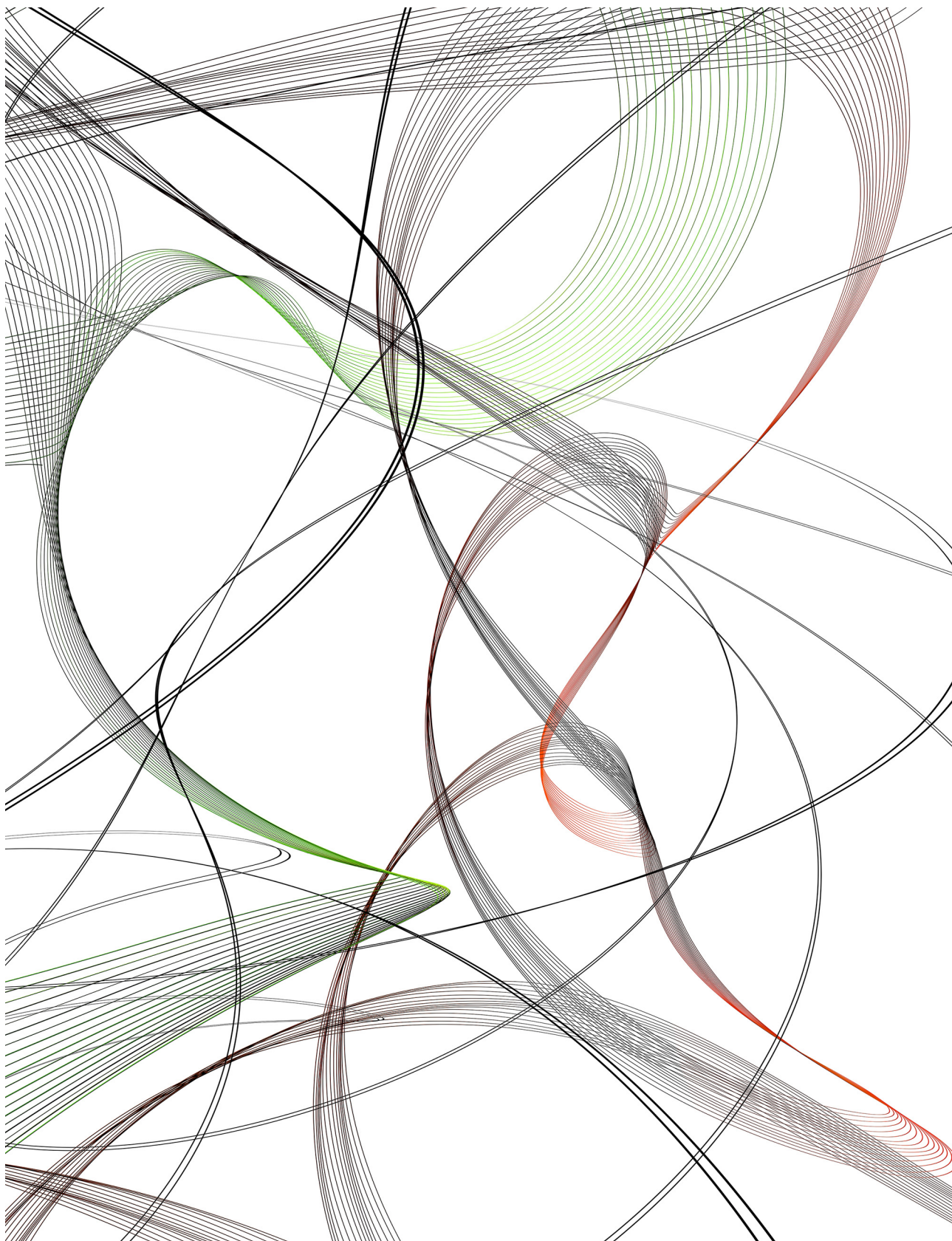


Eugène Atget, from the album *Parc de Saint-Cloud*, 1915-1919





Thomas Ruff, *jpeg msh01*, 2004, c-print, 276x188 cm, from the series *jpeg*s, 2004-2007



Thomas Ruff, *Zycles 3085*, 2009, pigment print, 266x206 cm, from the series *Zycles*





Eileen Quinlan, *Smoke & Mirrors (red)*, 2005, c-print, 61x51 cm



Uta Barth, *Compositions of Light on White #8*, 2011, pigment print, 104.5x122 cm

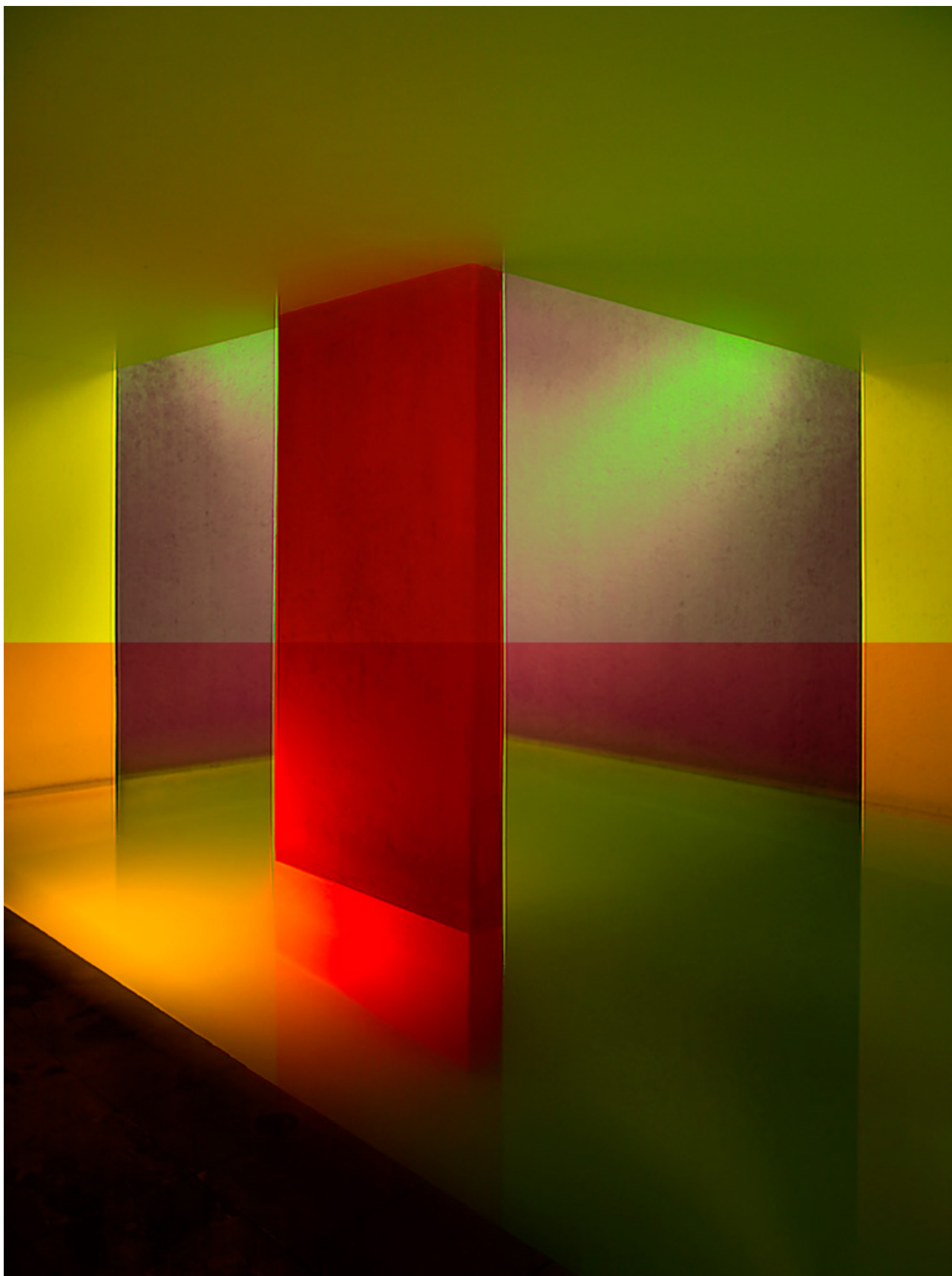




James Welling, *H1*, 2005, digital c-print, 95.2x129.2 cm, from the series *Hexachromes*, 2005-2006



James Welling, *9818*, 2008, pigment print, from the series *Glass House*, 2006-2009 (Philip Johnson Glass House, 1949)



Marie Passa, from the series *Wittgenstein*, 2011-2012, duratrans on lightbox





David Benjamin Sherry, *Lower Yosemite Falls*, Yosemite, California, 2013





Hannah Whitaker, from the series *Imaginary Landscape No. 1*, 2012





Barbara Probst, *Exposure*, #69, N.Y.C., 555 8th Avenue, 02.24.09, 6.16 p.m., 2009, 3 parts, 168x112 cm



Barbara Probst, *Exposure*, #73, Munich studio, 08.21.09, 2.23 p.m., 2009, 3 parts, 168x112 cm



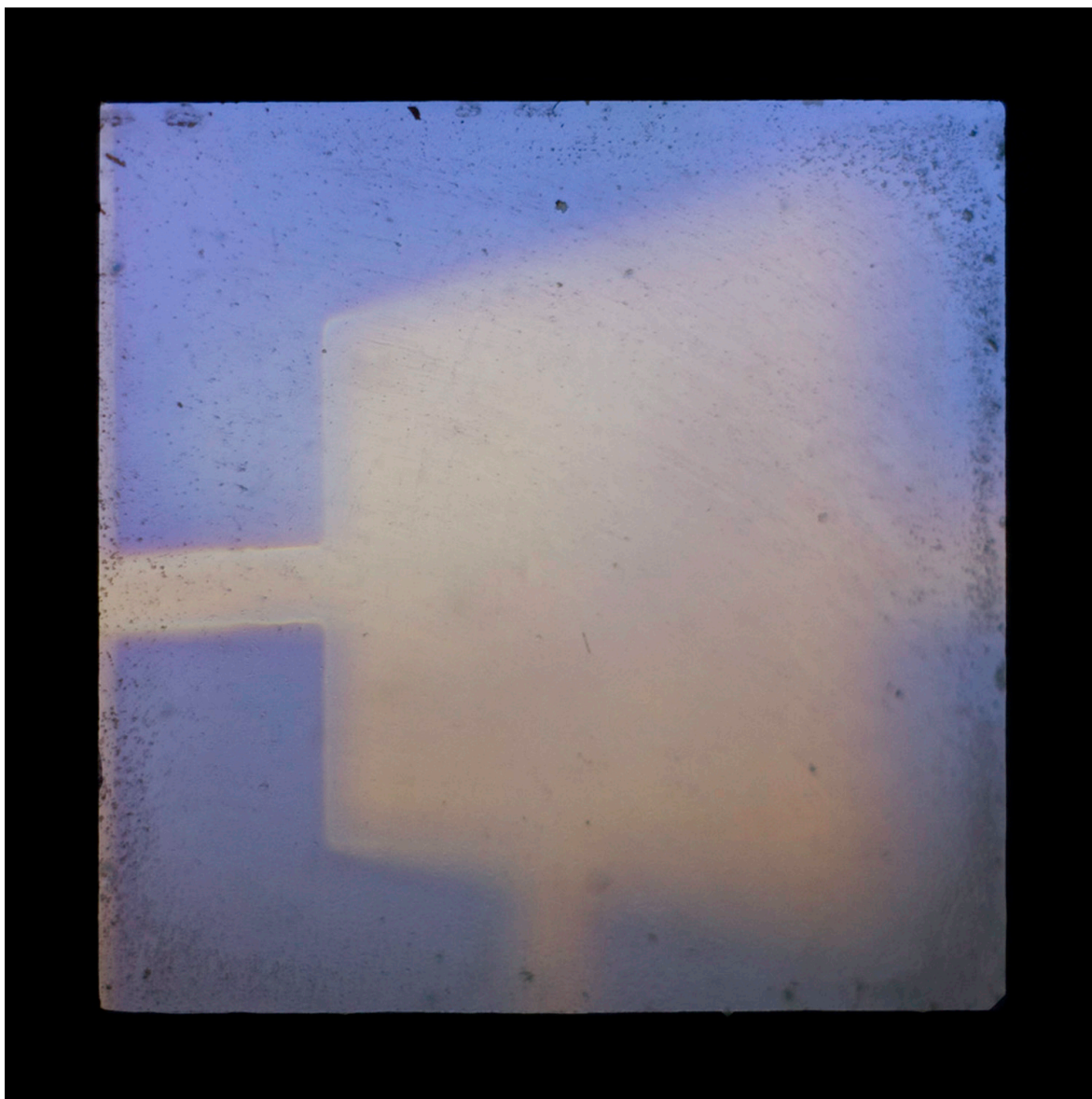
Barbara Probst, *Exposure*, #70, Munich studio, 05.10.09, 3.03 p.m., 2009, 2 parts, 60x60 cm





Ackroyd & Harvey, *Mother and Child*, 2001, photosynthesis on grass, from a negative made in 1998, 180x120 cm





Meggan Gould, *Viewfinder #5*, from the series *Surface Tension Vol.4 Viewfinders*, 2011



Stephen Gill, from the series *Outside In*, 2010

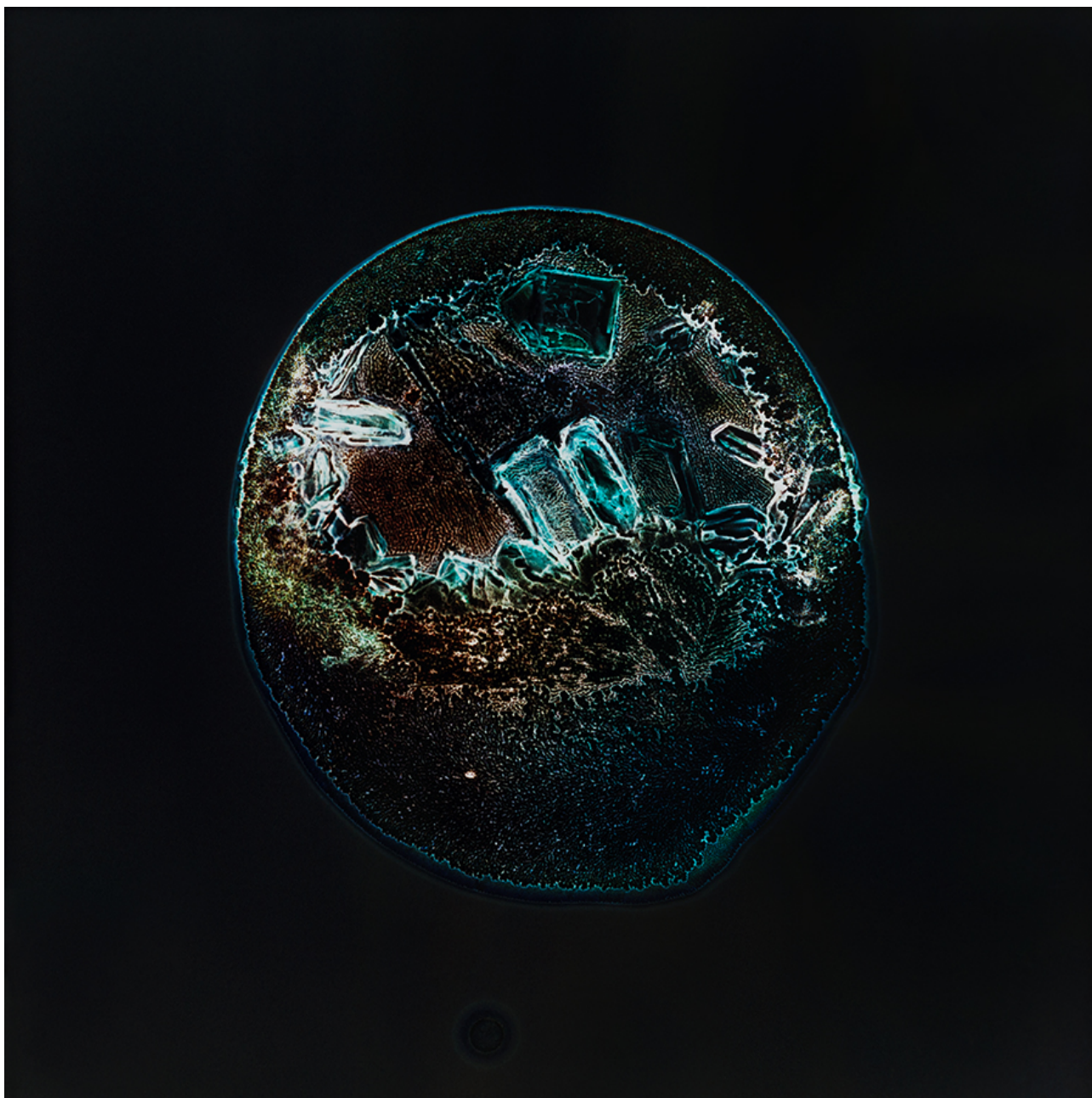


Stephen Gill, from the series *Outside In*, 2010



Alexander Gehring, *Séanceroom*, from the series *Messages from the Darkroom*, 2011





Sarah Schönfeld, *Crystal Meth* [on photonegativ analog enlarged], from the series *All You Can Feel*, 2013, c-print, 70x70 cm



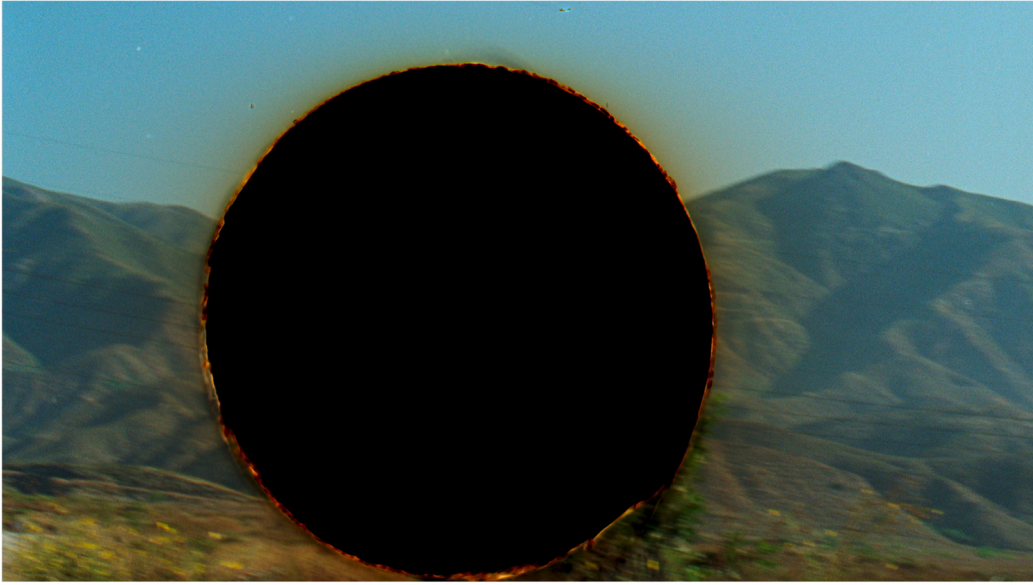


Gerhard Richter, *Sans titre*, 20.11.1999, from the series *Overpainted Photographs*, 1986-ongoing, photograph and paint





Clare Strand, *Retouch #4*, 2014, from the series *Retouch*, 2014-2015, silver gelatin print, 30.5x24.4 cm, with 14mm holes handmade with a hammer and a metal punch, 93% open (Black)



Amie Siegel, *Black Moon / Hole Punch #10*, 2010, Cibachrome, 49.3x76 cm



Amie Siegel, *Black Moon / Hole Punch #7*, 2010, Cibachrome, 49.3x76 cm





Maggie Cardelús, *Flower portrait*, 2003, cut photograph



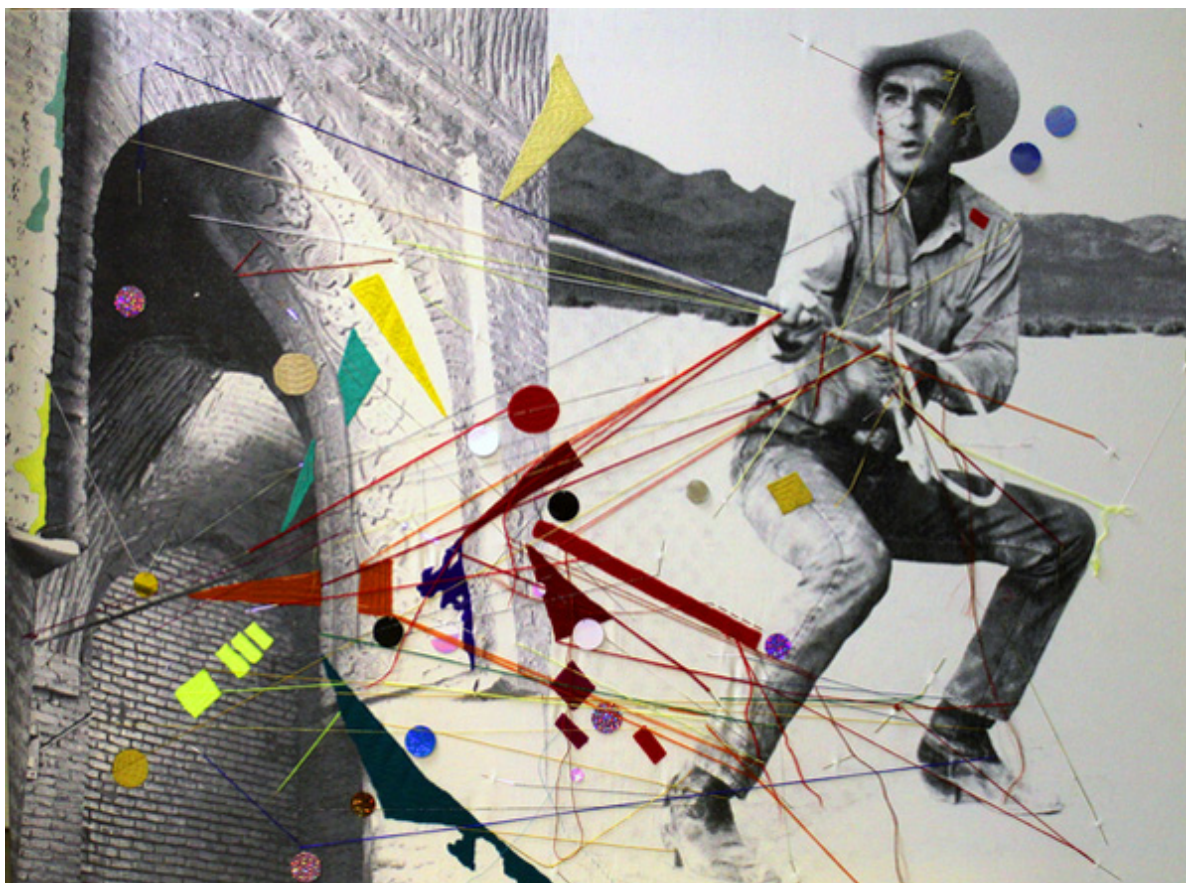


Brigitte Ziegler, *Flower of Power 8*, 2010, cut-out on military poster, 55x70 cm



Brigitte Ziegler, *Flower of Power 6*, 2009, cut-out on military poster, 45x60 cm



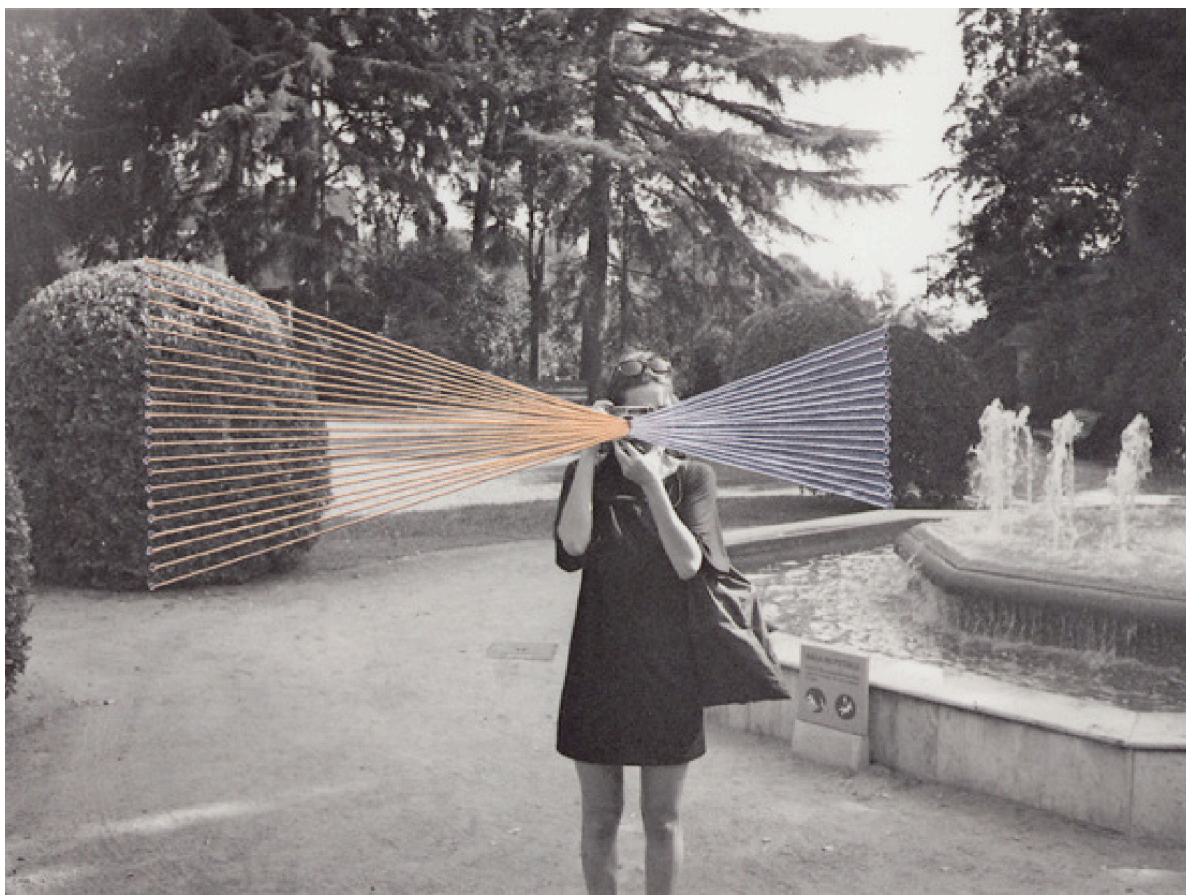


Farhad Ahrania, *Beautiful is the Silence of Ruins 2*, 2011, digital photography, embroidery, 88.5x144 cm

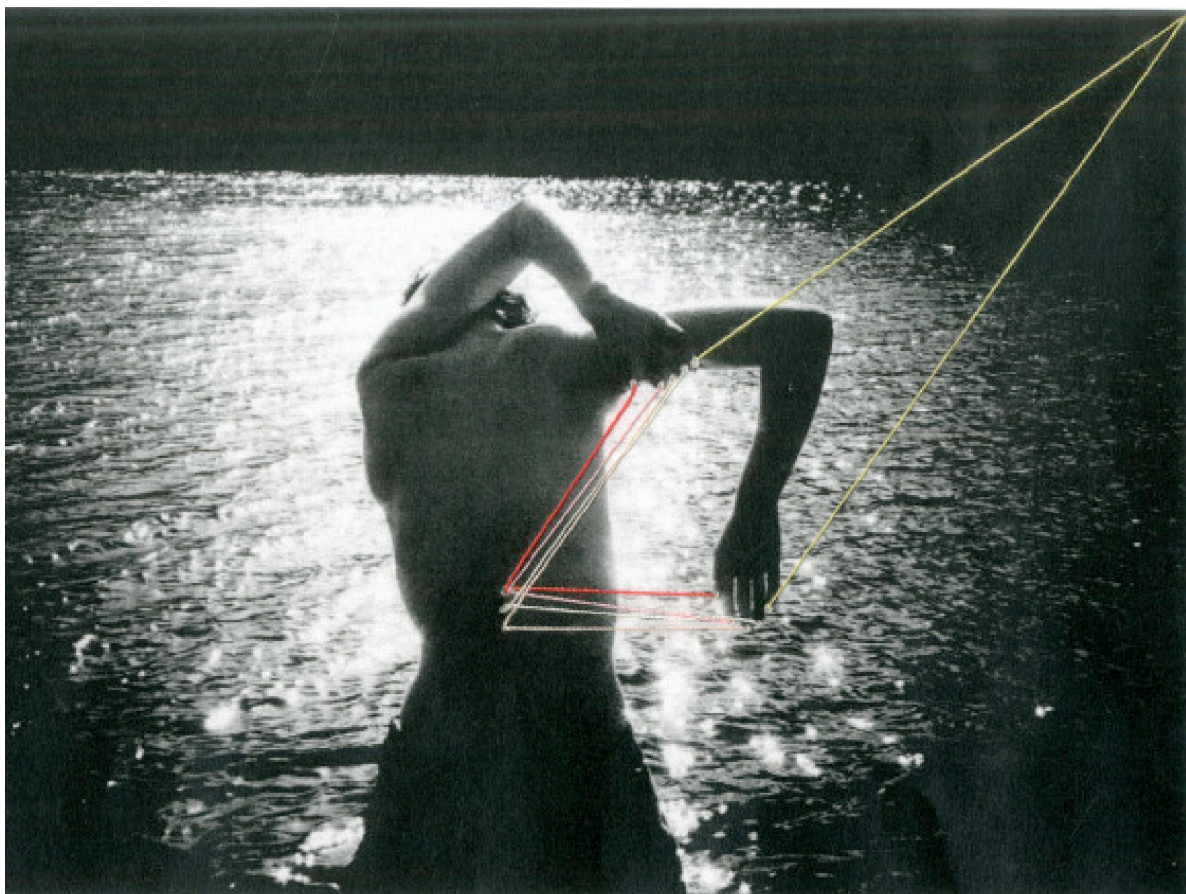


Farhad Ahrania, *Beautiful is the Silence of Ruins 4*, 2011, digital photography, embroidery, 88.5x144 cm





Maria Aparicio Puentes, *Untitled*, 2012, embroidery on found photograph, photo by Claudio A. Troncoso Rojas



Maria Aparicio Puentes, *Untitled*, 2012, embroidery on found photograph, photo by Aëla Labbé, *Geneviève*, 2011



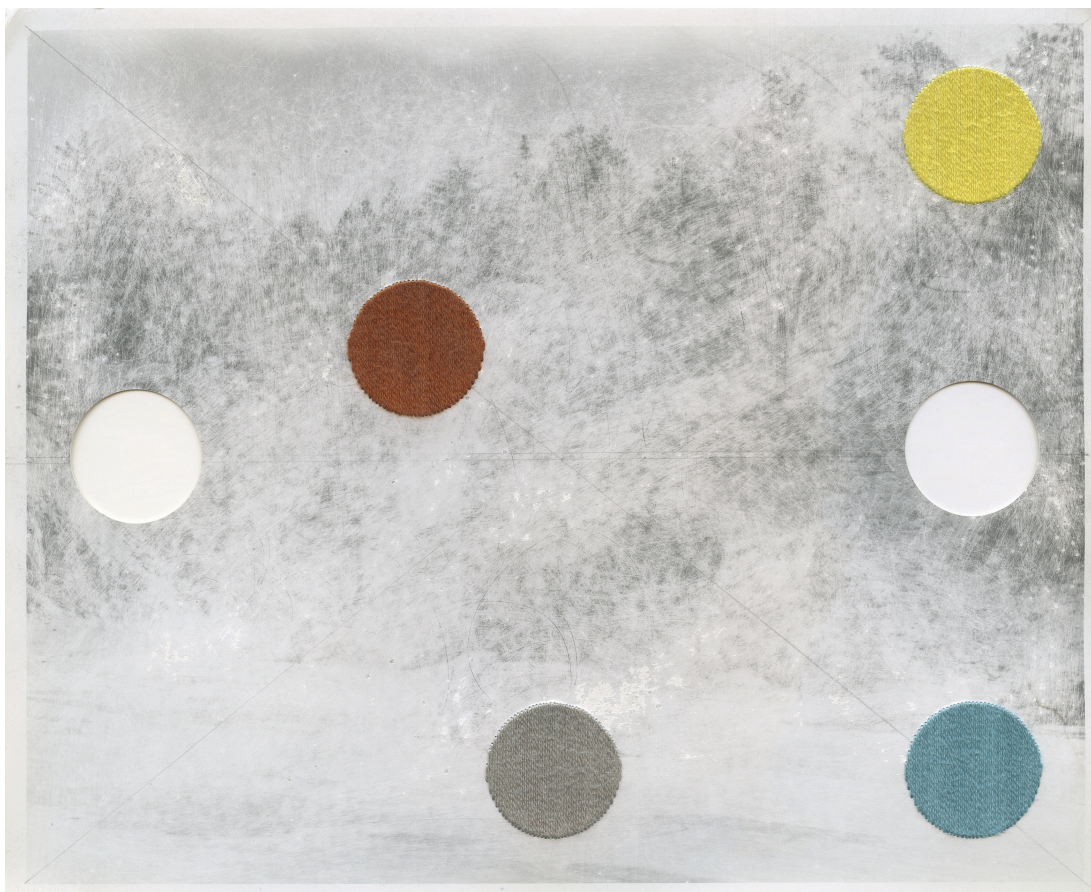


Carolle Benitah, *Le Loup*, 2009, from the series *Photos-Souvenirs : L'enfance*, 2009-2012, embroidery and beads on digital photograph



Carolle Benitah, *La vague*, 2012, from the series *Photos-Souvenirs : L'adolescence*, 2009-2012, embroidery and beads on digital photograph, 53x80 cm





Julie Cockburn, *Happenstance (3)*, 2013, hand embroidery and graphite on distressed found photograph

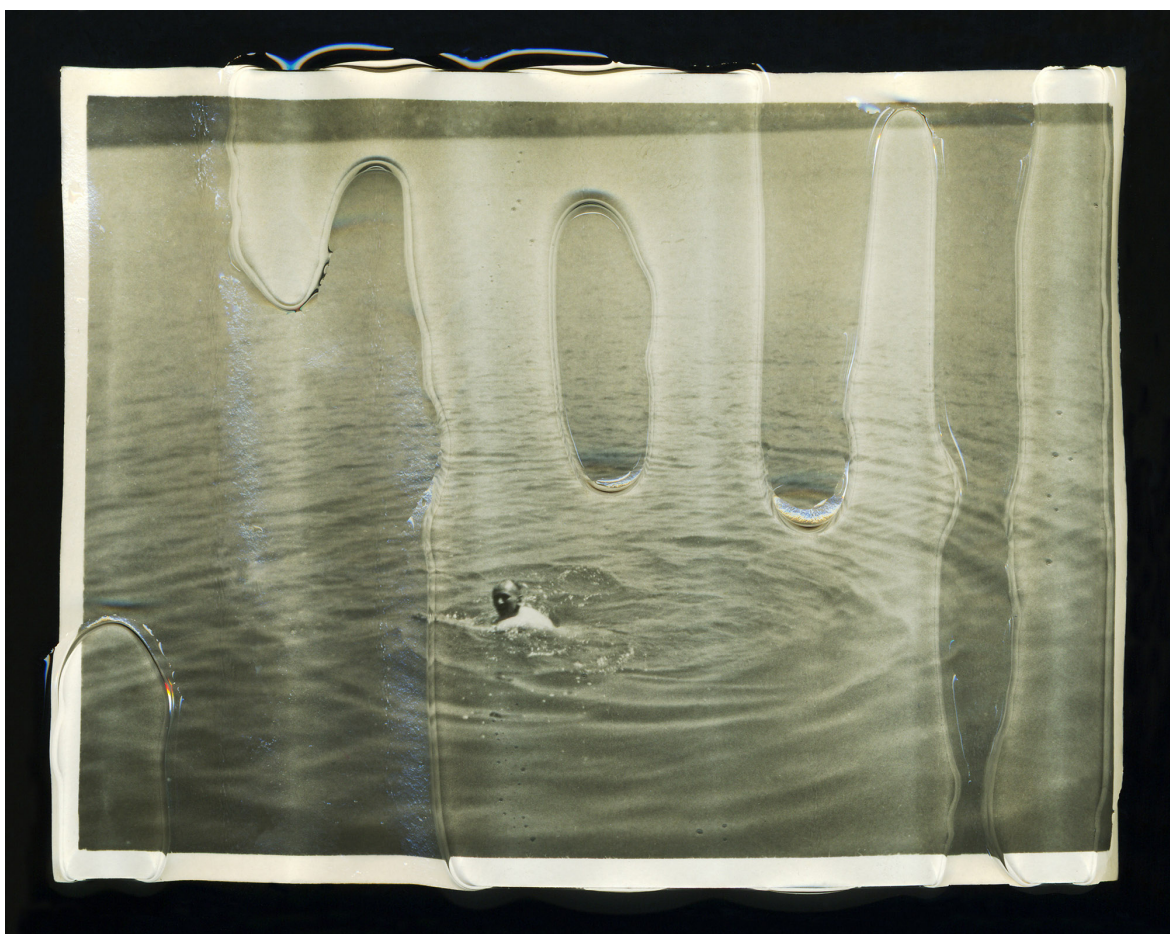


Julie Cockburn, *The Mediator*, 2015, hand embroidery on found photograph, 20x25 cm





Seba Kurtis, from the series *Shoe Box*, 2008



Claudia Breitschmid, *Nachahmung (Imitation)*, from the series *Welcome Back*, 2011-2012



Jean-François Lecourt, from the series *Tir dans l'appareil photographique*, 1985



Rudolf Steiner, from the series *Pictures Of Me Shooting Myself Into A Picture*, 1997-2010



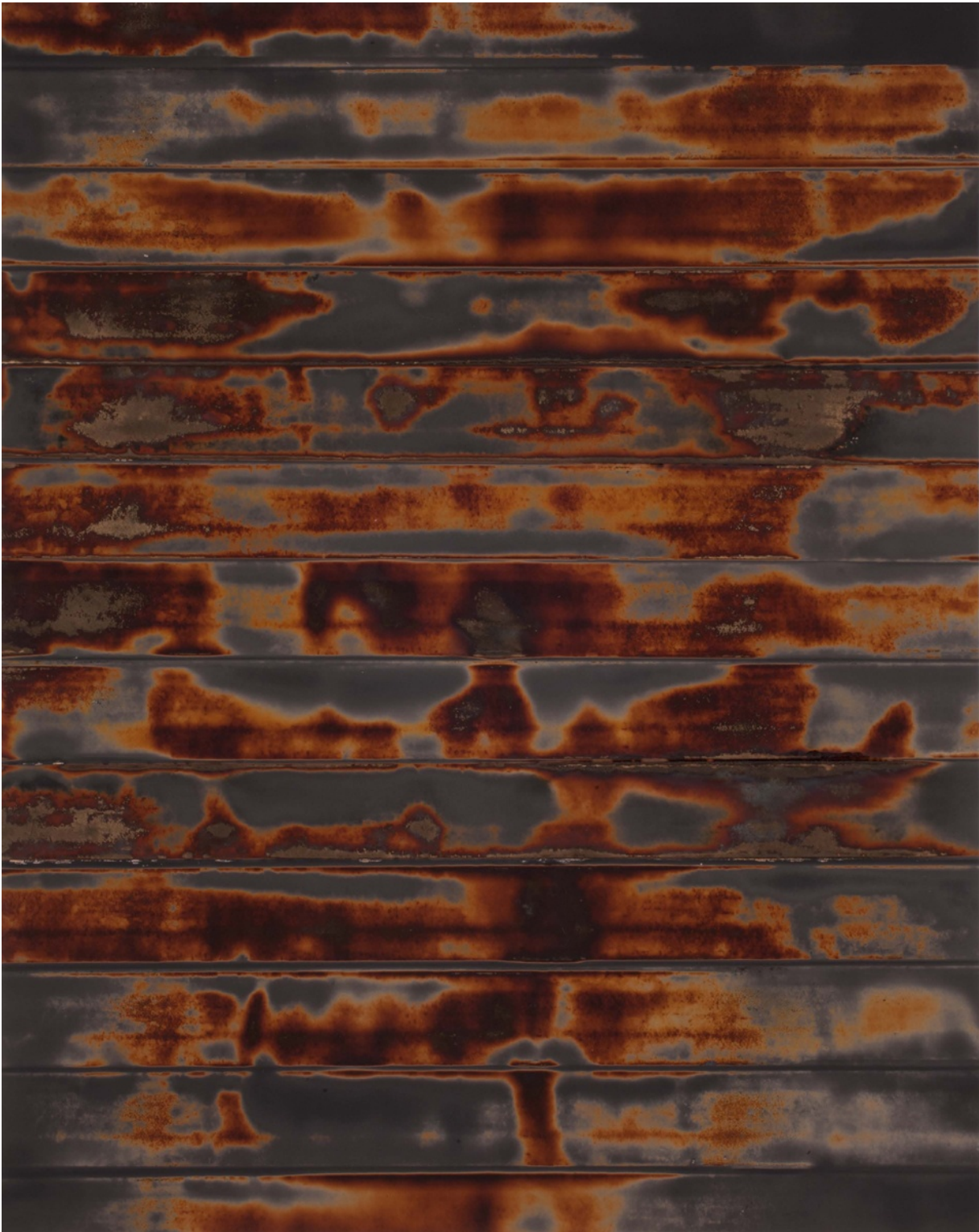


Steven Pippin, from the series *Laundromat-Locomotion (Walking in Suit)*, 1997, silver print, framed, 76.2x76.4 cm



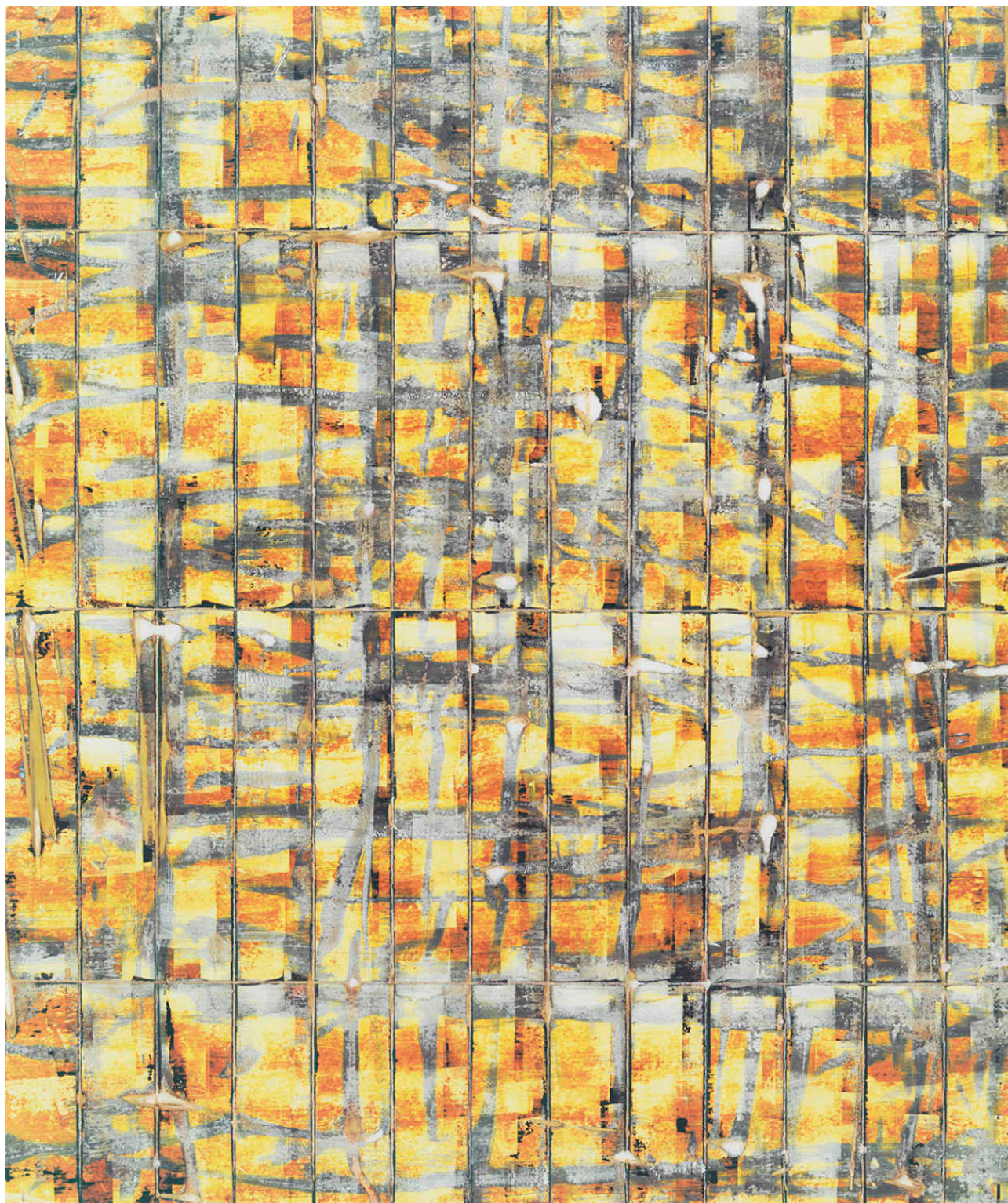
Steven Pippin, from the series *Point Blank*, 2010





Marco Breuer, *Study for (Metal / Day)*, 2000, burned silver gelatin paper





Marco Breuer, *Untitled (C-1485)*, 2014, chromogenic paper, folded, burned and scraped





Marco Breuer, *Untitled (C-1189)*, 2014, chromogenic paper, burned





Marco Breuer, *Untitled*, 1995, burned silver gelatin paper





Matthew Brandt, *Lake Jennings, CA 2*, 2012, from the series *Lakes and Reservoirs*, 2008-ongoing, c-print, 116.8x162.6 cm, soaked in Lake Jennings water



Matthew Brandt, *American Lake, WA C8*, 2011, from the series *Lakes and Reservoirs*, 2008-ongoing, c-print, 116.8x162.6 cm, soaked in American Lake water



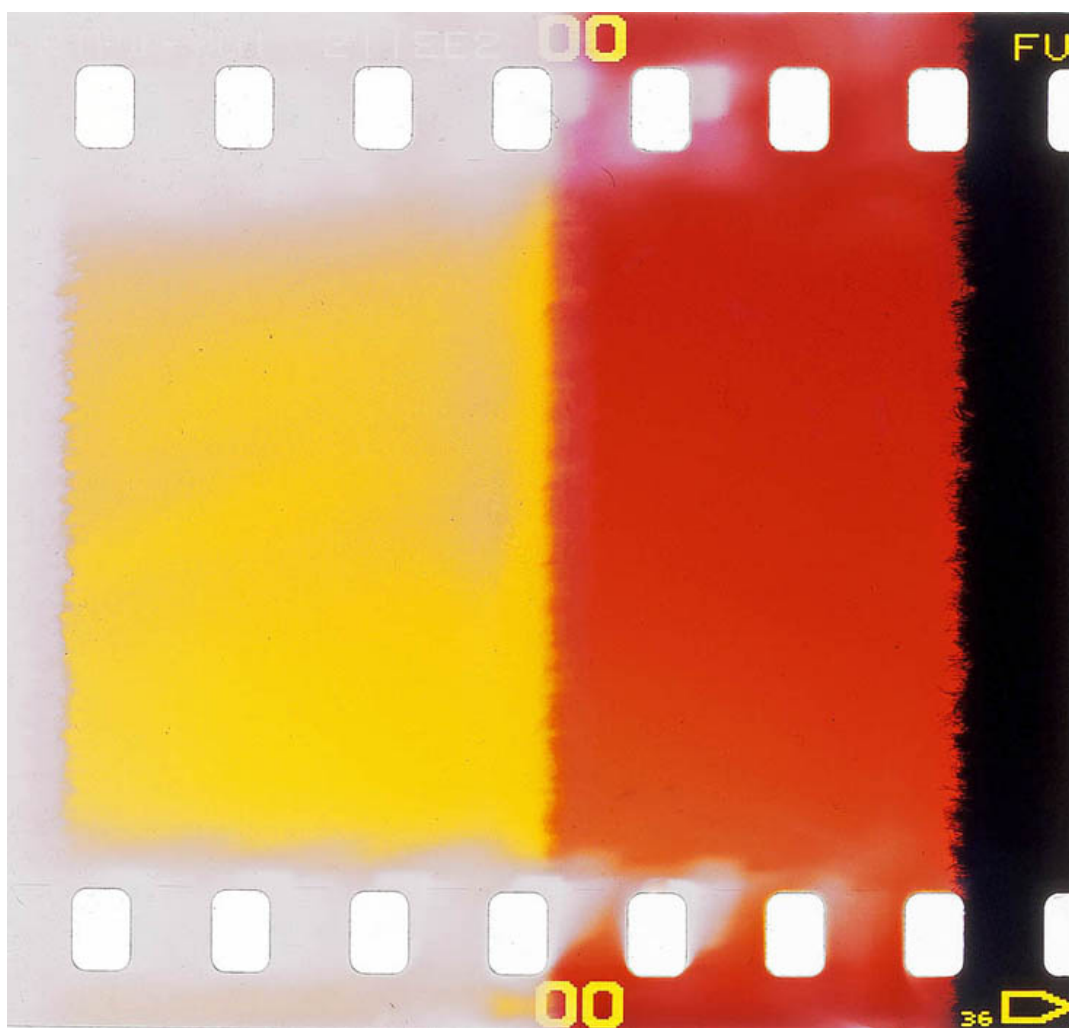


Seung-Hwan Oh, *Straw Dog, Akio*, 2014, from the series *Impermanence*, 2012-ongoing, pigment print, 150x150 cm





Jean-Christophe Béchet, from the series *Accidents*, 2012

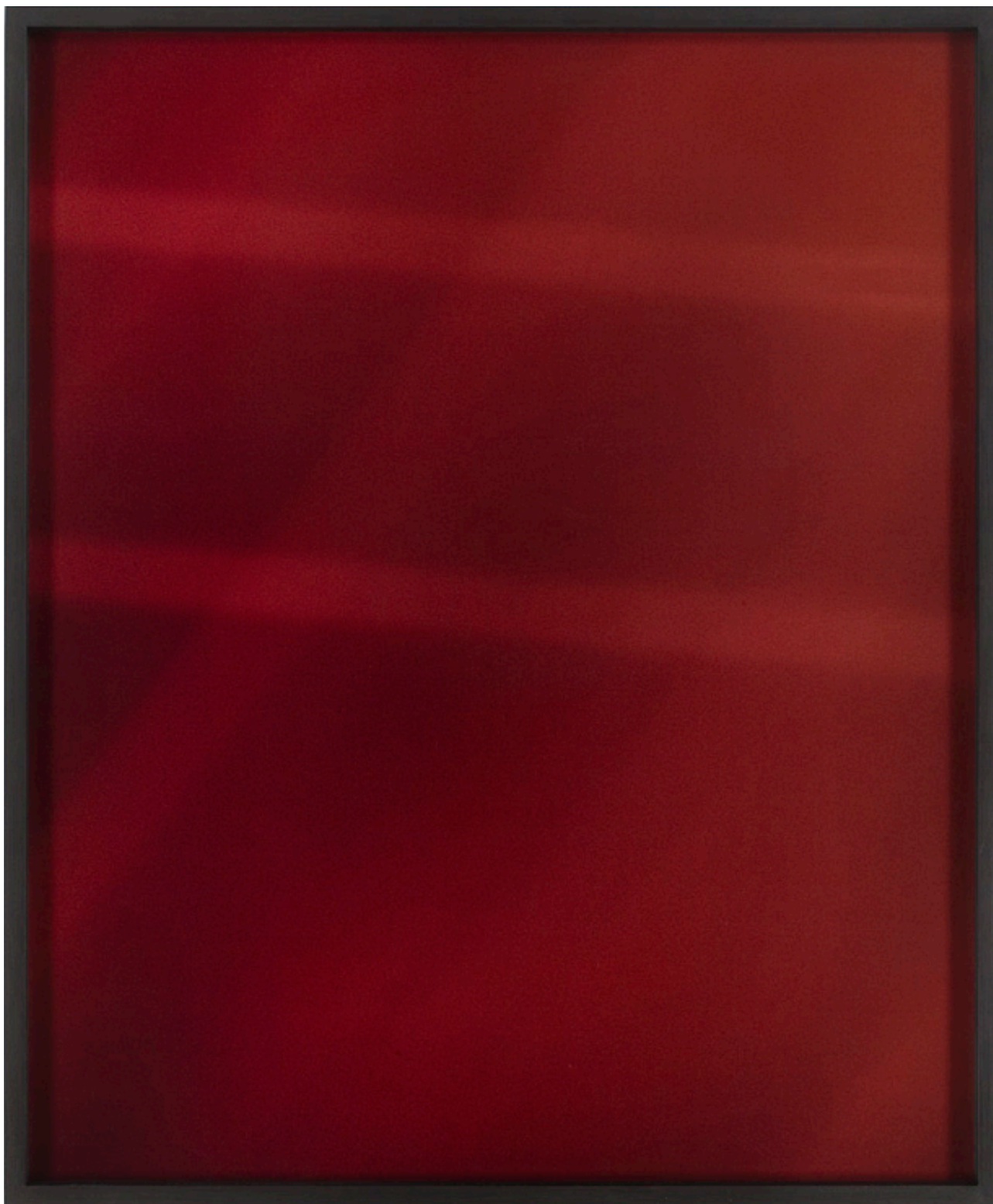


Jean-Christophe Béchet, from the series *Accidents*, 2012



Walead Beshty, *Travel Picture Sunset* [Tschakowskistrasse 17 in multiple exposures\* (LAXFRATHF/TXLCPHSEALAX) March 27th to April 3rd, 2006] \*Contax G-2, L-3 Communications eXaminer 3DX 6000, and InVision Technologies CTX 5000, 2006/2008/2012, c-print, 122x203.2 cm





Eric Baudelaire, *Anabasis X-Rayogram (Tokyo Beirut New York Paris) 1*, 2009, from the series *Anabase 1*, 2007-2009, unique c-print, 67.9x56.5 cm



Brendan Fowler, *Fall 2009 (Storage 1, Finished Wall in House 1, Staining Frames at Studio with Max)*, 2009, digital c-prints, framed, 114.3x71.2x38 cm



Clare Kenny, *Take me out tonight*, 2010, baryt prints, spray paint, 120x80x40 cm





Mariah Robertson, *154*, 2010, unique colour print on metallic paper, 3048x76.2 cm, detail ; below : installation views, International Center of Photography, New York, 2014





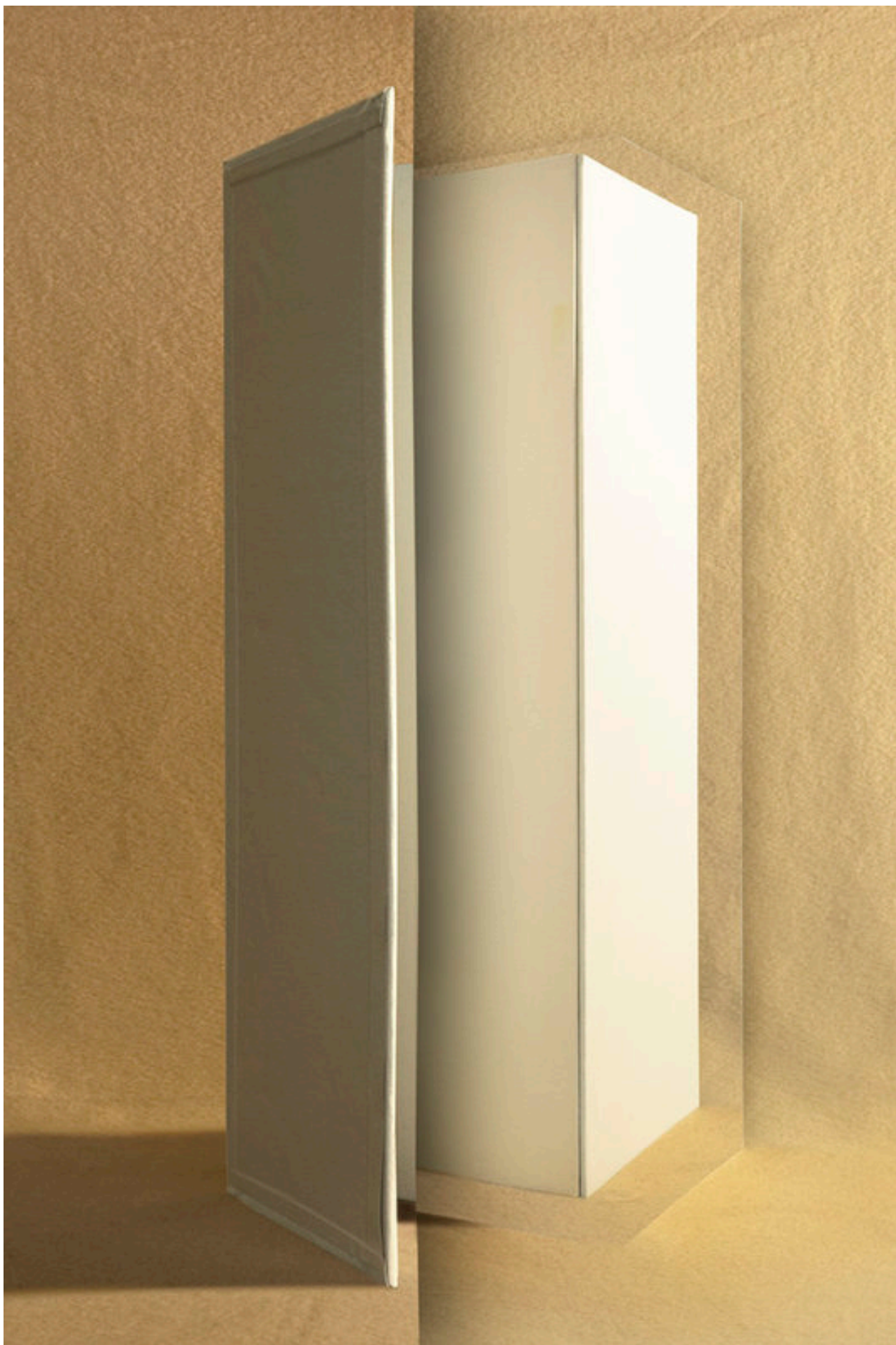


Letha Wilson, *Ghost of a Tree*, 2011-2012, digital print on vinyl, wood, wood column, drywall





Miriam Böhm, *Interlude IV*, 2012, c-print, 78.7x88.9 cm



Miriam Böhm, *Modell VI*, 2011, c-print, 88.9x61 cm





Cayetano Ferrer, from the series *City of Chicago*, 2004-2006



Cayetano Ferrer, from the series *Western Imports*, 2007-2008)





Daniel Gordon, *Tulips*, 2010, c-print, 101.6x76.2 cm, from the series *Still Lives, Portraits & Parts*, 2010-2011





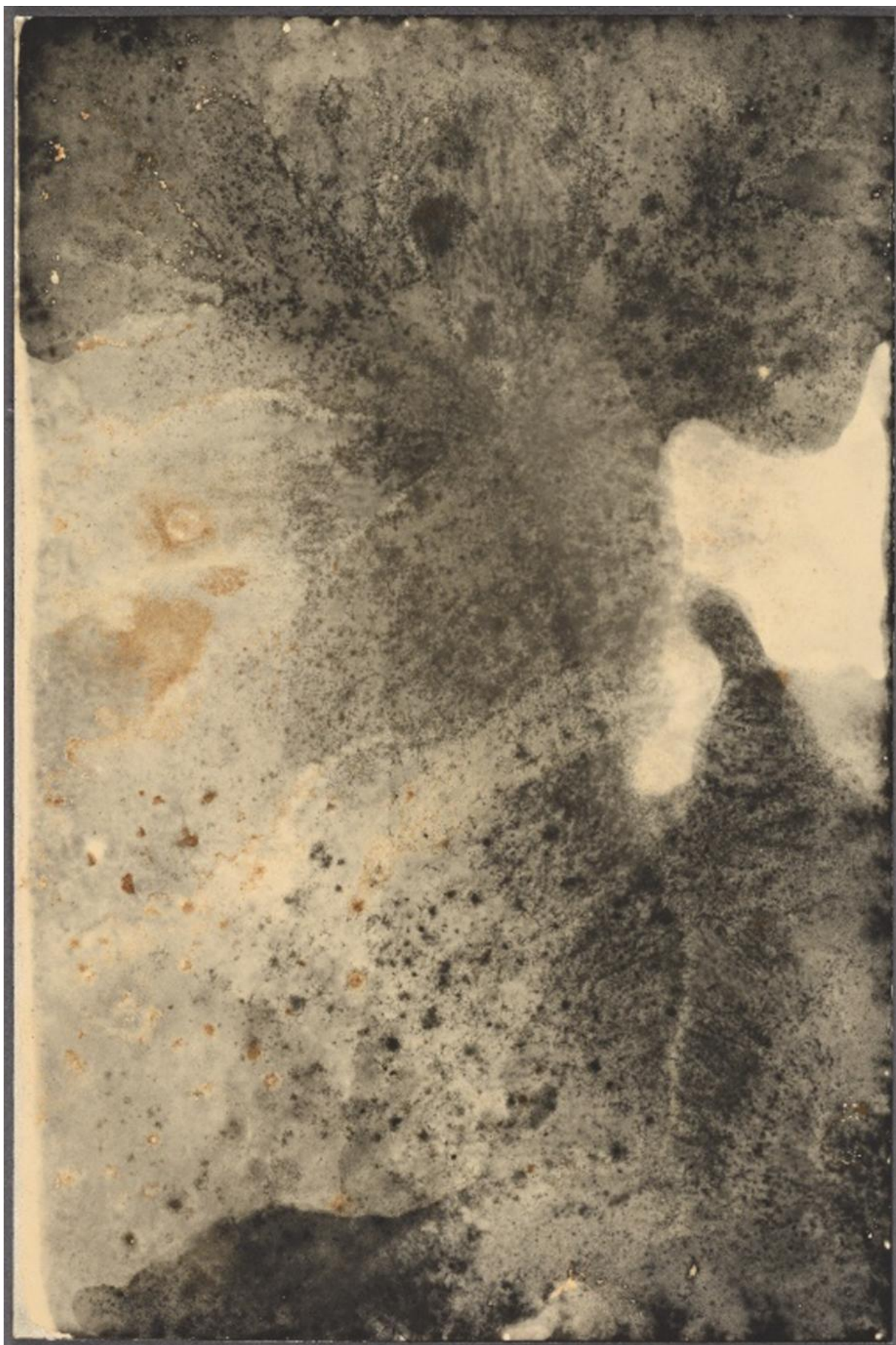
Hiroshi Sugimoto, *A Stem of Delicate Leaves of an Umbrellifer*, circa 1843 – 1846, 2009, toned gelatin silver print, 93.7x74.9 cm, from the series *Photogenic drawings*





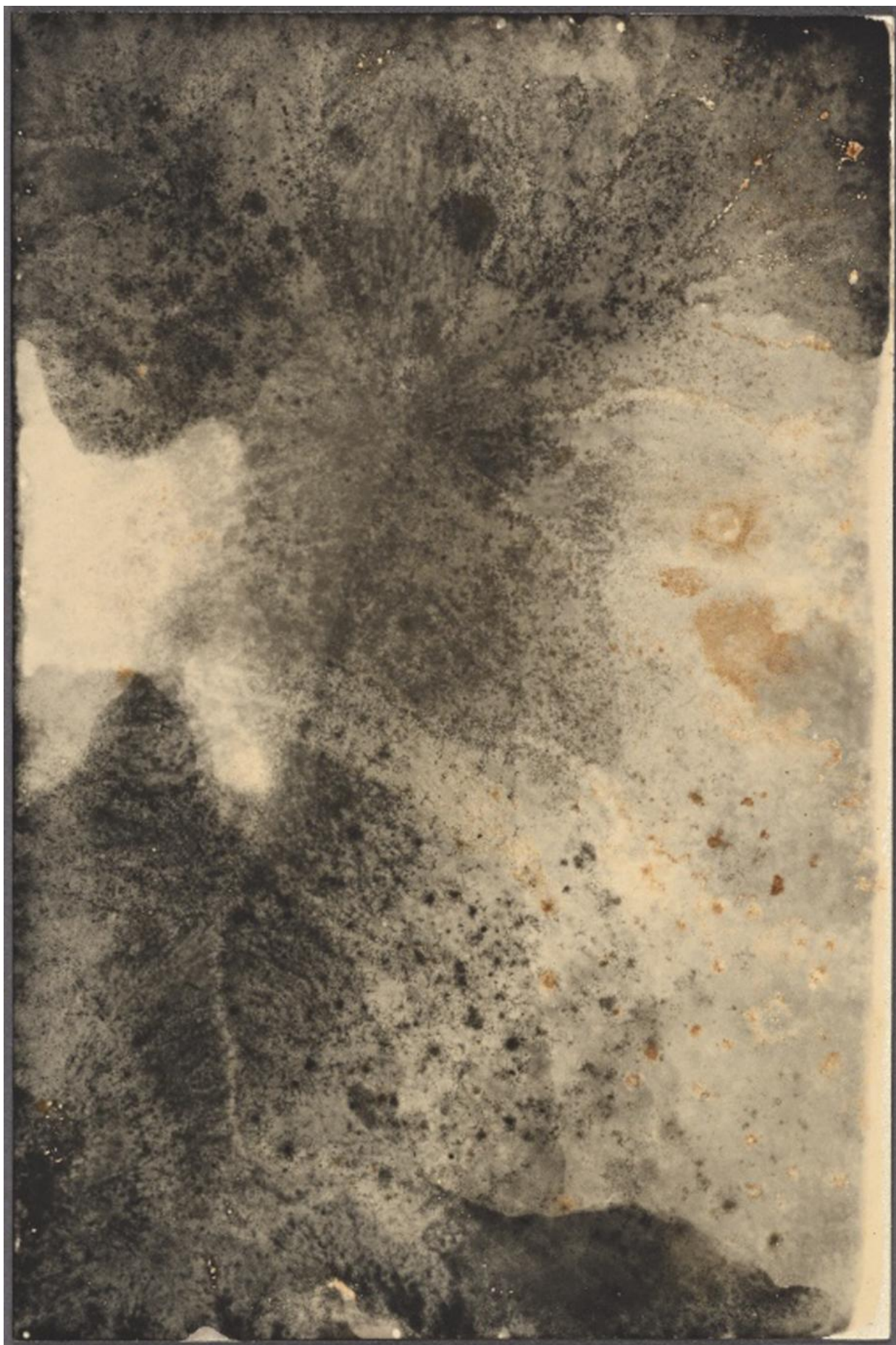
Pierre Cordier, *Chimigramme 29.11.57 I*, 1957, gelatin silver paper





Alison Rossiter, *Eastman Kodak Canada Vitava Athena C*, expiration May 1, 1927, processed 2008, dyptich, from the series *Lament*, 2007 – ongoing (left part)





Alison Rossiter, *Eastman Kodak Canada Vitava Athena C*, expiration May 1, 1927, processed 2008, dyptich, from the series *Lament*, 2007 – ongoing (right part)





Liz Deschenes, *Shift / Rise*, 2010, photograms, installation, Sutton Lane - Brussels



Liz Deschenes, *Tilt / Swing #4B*, 2009, toned silver photogram, framed, 86.4x157.5 cm



Liz Deschenes, *Tilt / Swing (360° field of vision, version 1)*, 2009, 6 photograms, whole size around 345x488x147 cm



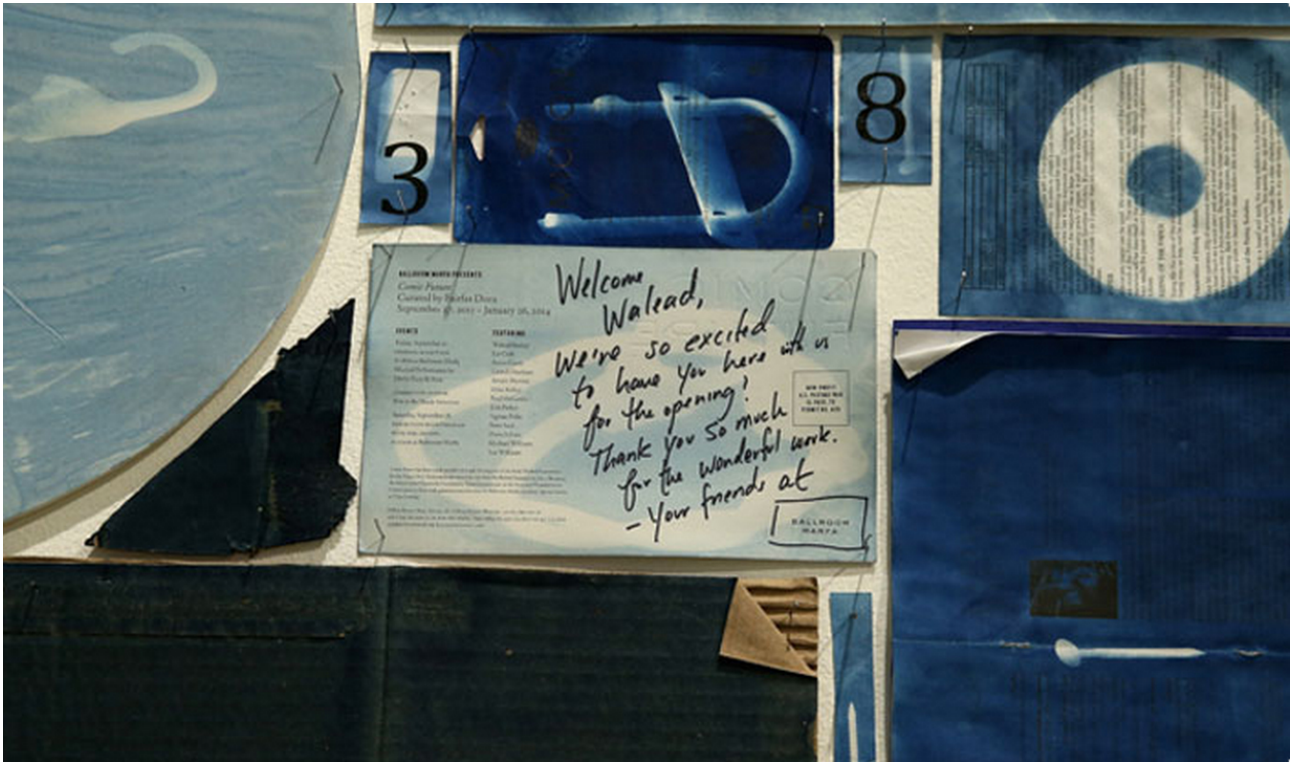


Walead Beshty, *(RMCY)*, from the series *Multisided Pictures*, 2010



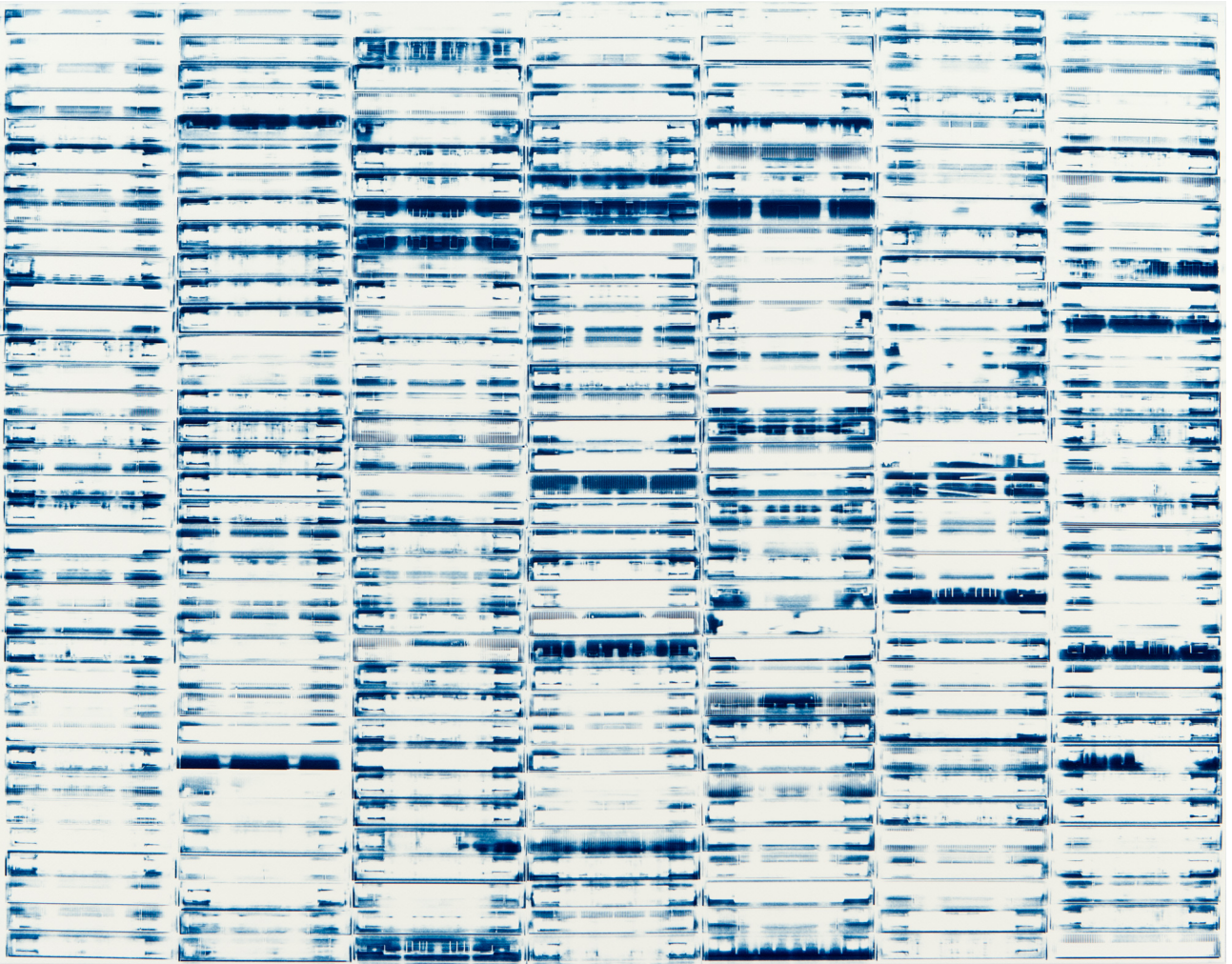
Walead Beshty, *Six Color Curl* (CMMYYC: Irvine, California, July 17th 2008, Fuji Crystal Archive Type C), chromogenic paper, 237.5x126 cm



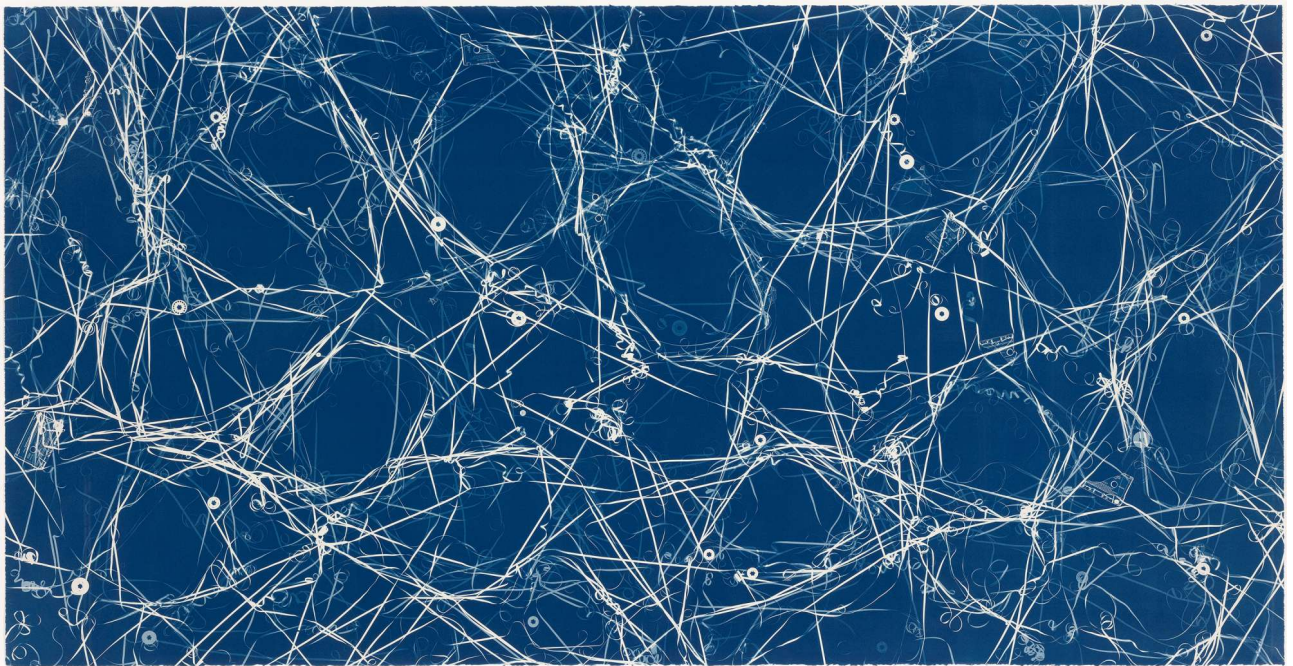


Walead Beshty, *A Partial Disassembling of an Invention Without a Future : Helter-Skelter and Random Notes in Which the Pulleys and Cogwheels Are Lying Around at Random All Over the Workbench*, The Curve, Barbican, London, 9 October 2014 – 8 February 2015, 12'000 cyanotypes on 90 meters curved wall. Above, detail photographed by Chris Jackson





Christian Marclay, *Grid No. 3 (Full and Empty Cassettes)*, 2012, cyanotype



Christian Marclay, *Allover (A Gospel Reunion)*, 2009, cyanotype



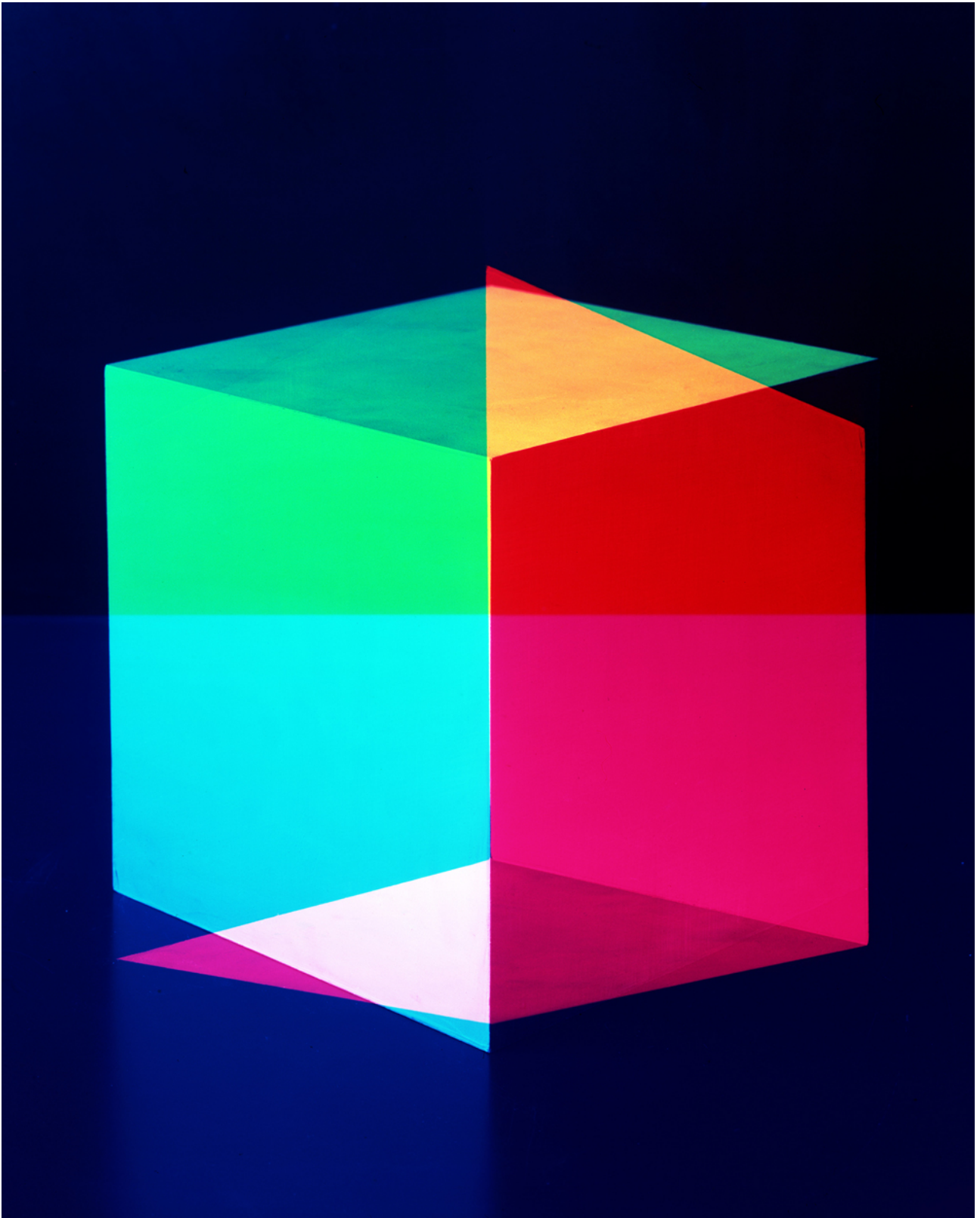


Zoe Leonard, *945 Madison Avenue*, 2014, The Whitney Museum of American Art, New York, installation, camera obscura, photographed by Bill Jacobson Studio, New York (below, on the left: the stenope)

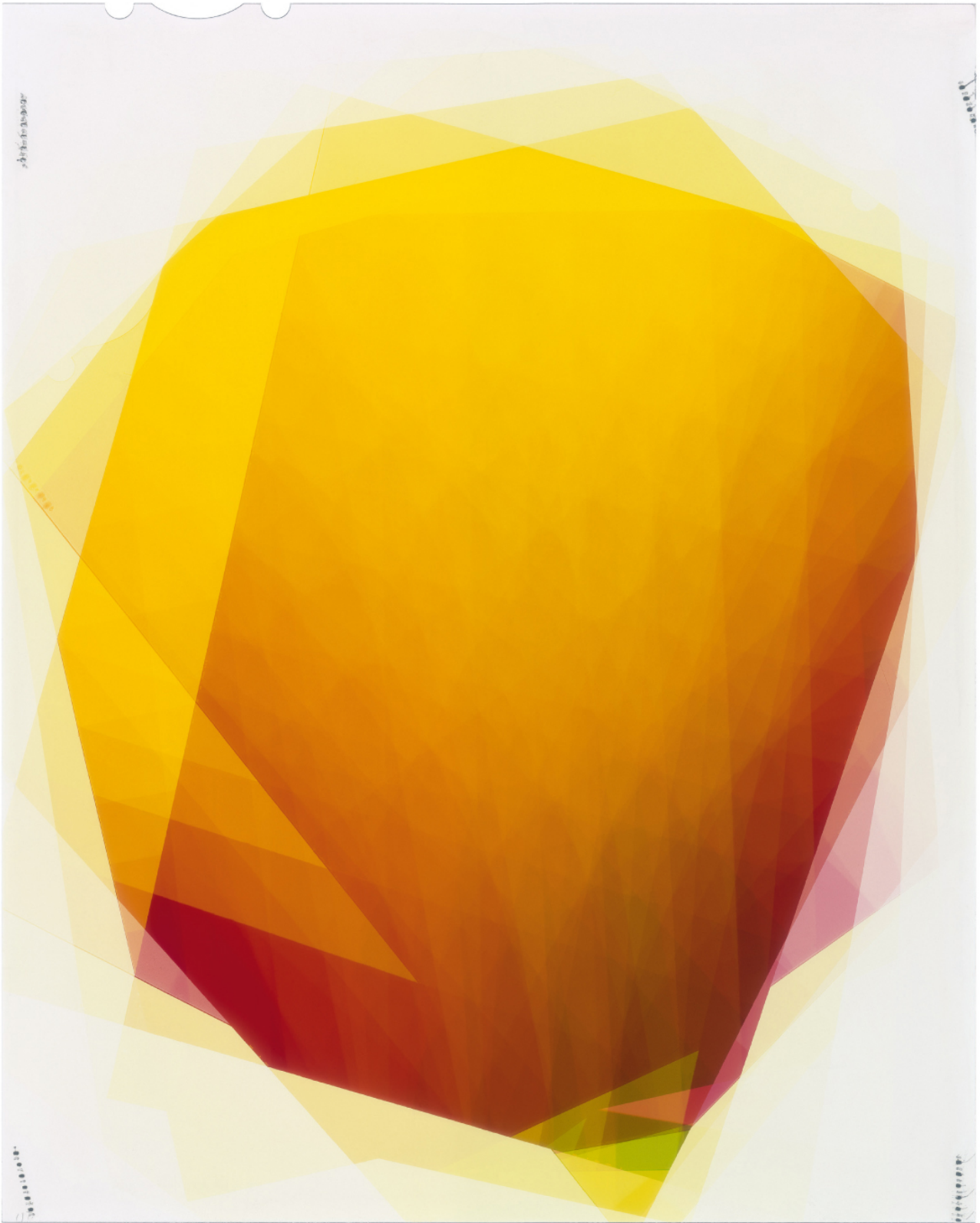


Fleur van Dodewaard, from the series Sun Set Series, 2011, inkjet print, 80x60 cm





Jessica Eaton, *cfaal 109*, 2011, from the series *Cubes for Albers and LeWitt*, 2010-2013

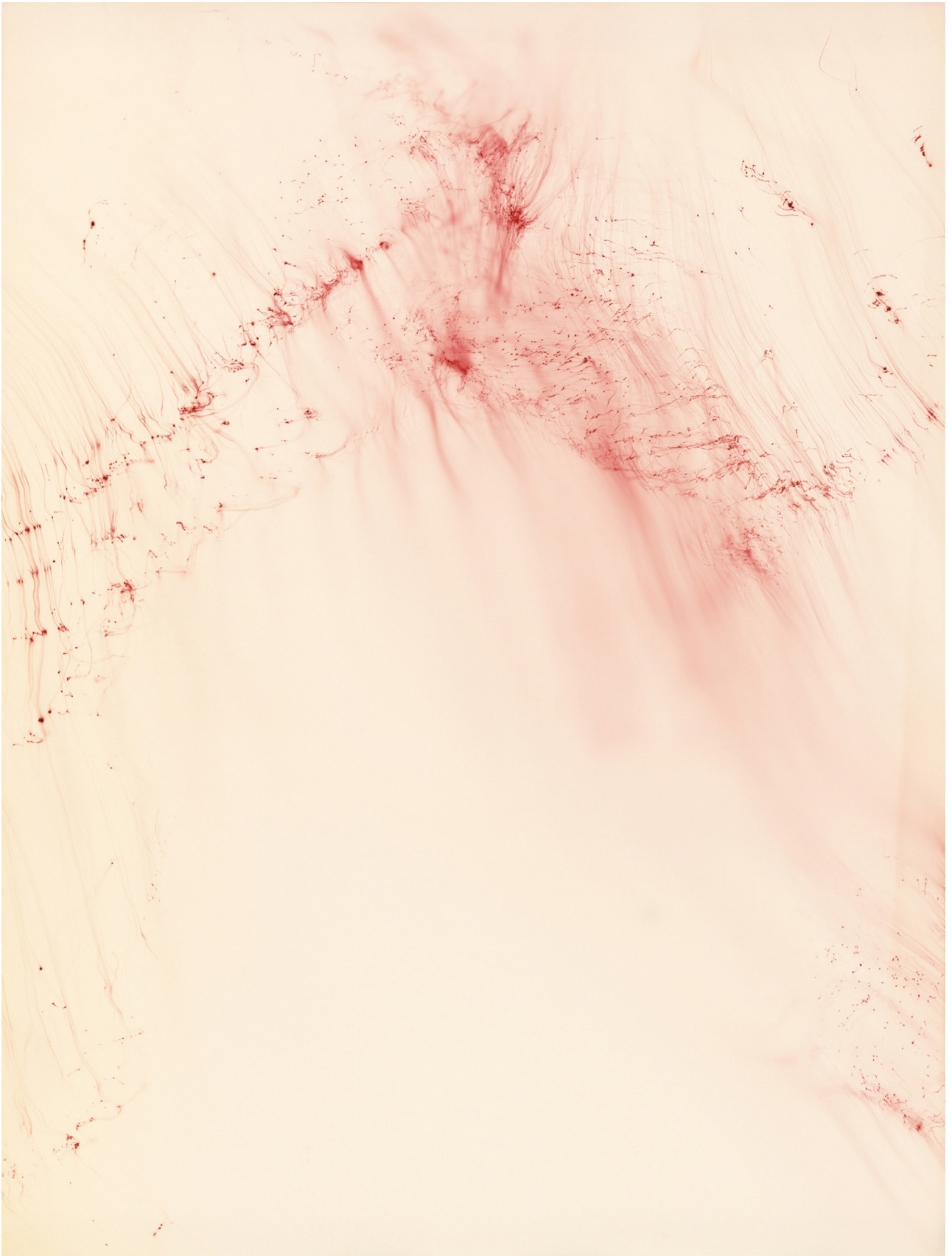


Stefanie Seufert, Untitled, from the series *Blind (colour 1)*, 2011, inkjet print, 83×68 cm





Wolfgang Tillmans, Blushes #59, 2000, inkjet print, 172x137 cm



Wolfgang Tillmans, *Urgency XXII*, 2006, c-print, framed, 238x181 cm





Mathieu Bernard-Reymond, *Cut*, from the series *Elements*, 2010-2011



Mathieu Bernard-Reymond, *Select*, from the series *Elements*, 2010-2011



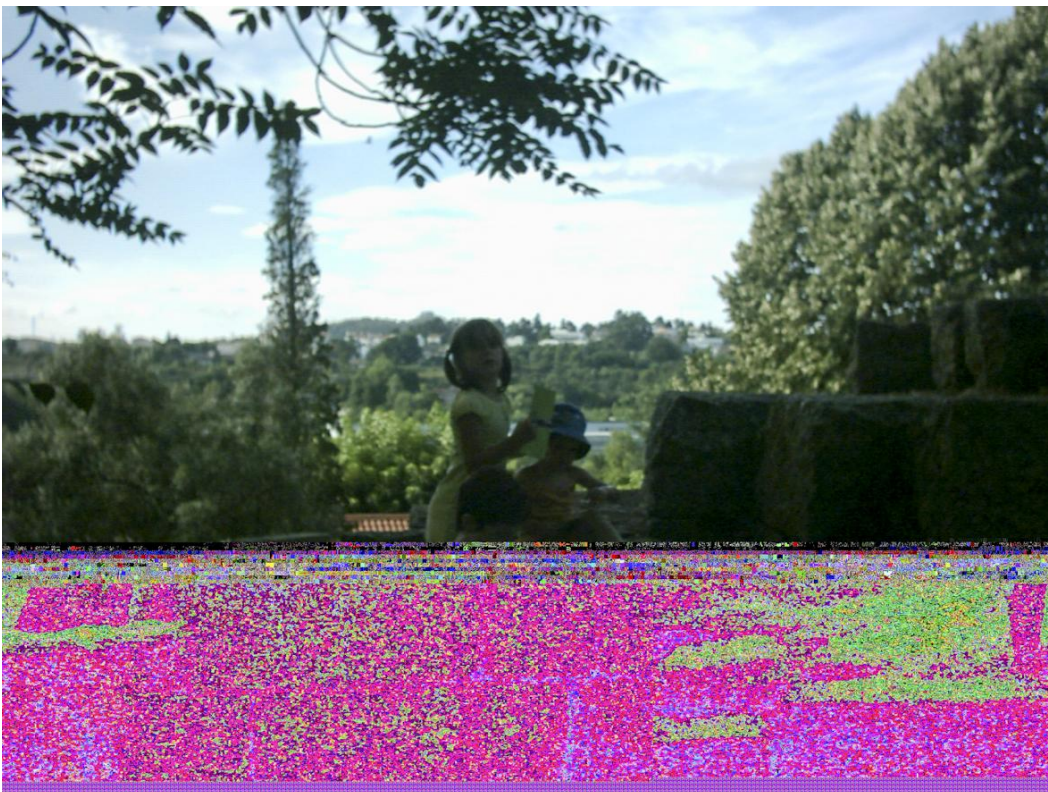


Lucas Blalock, *Loop-Loop (Picture For NM)*, 2009





Anders Clausen, *Picture 35*, 2010, self-adhesive film on aluminium, 249x199 cm



Diego Collado, from the series *Data Recovery*, 2010-2014



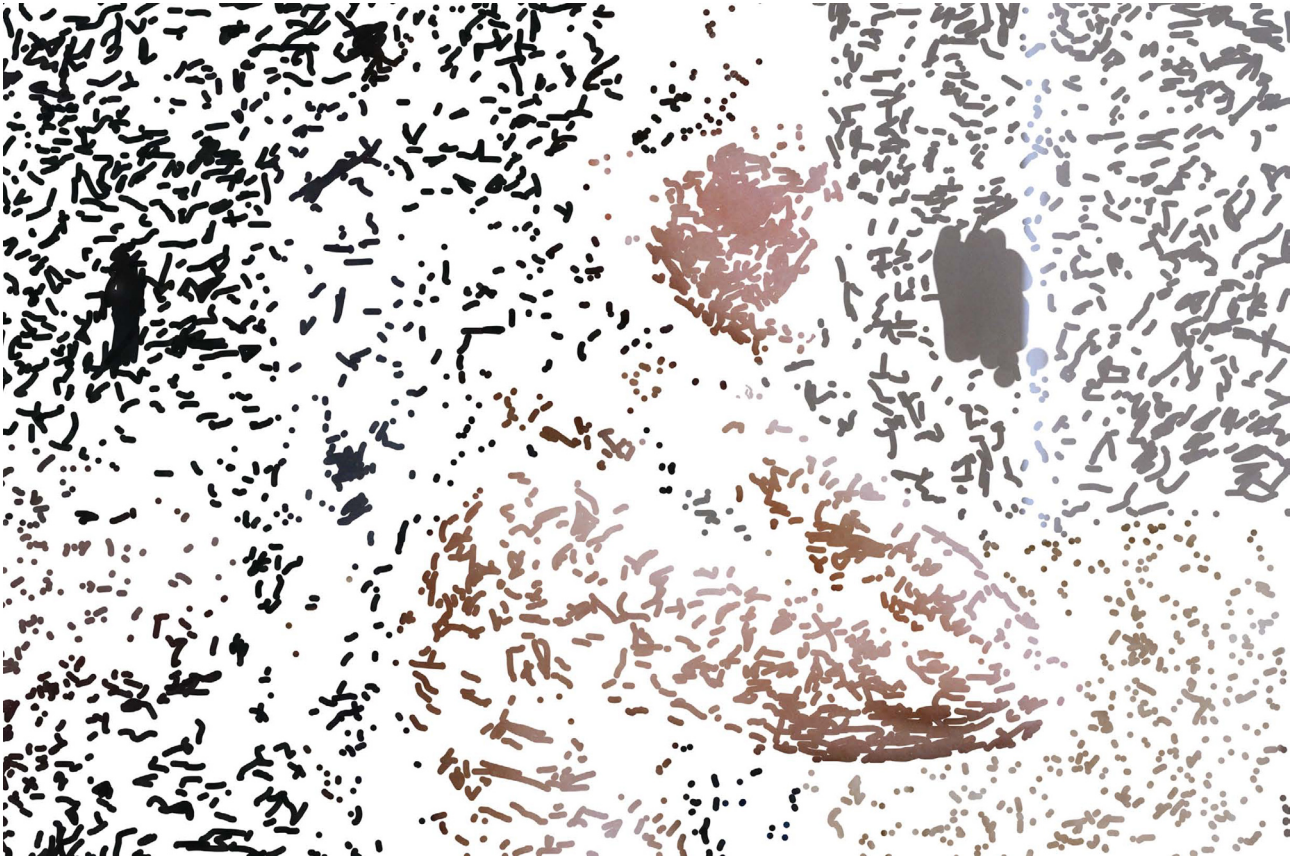
Aaron Hegert, *Blocks*, 2012, from the series *Template for Transition*





John Houck, *Aggregates*, 65,535 combinations of a 4×4 grid, 2 colors – A20007, 82947E, 2011, pigment print, 45.7x38 cm





Virginie Otth, *despotting\_01*, 2008, 100×120 cm

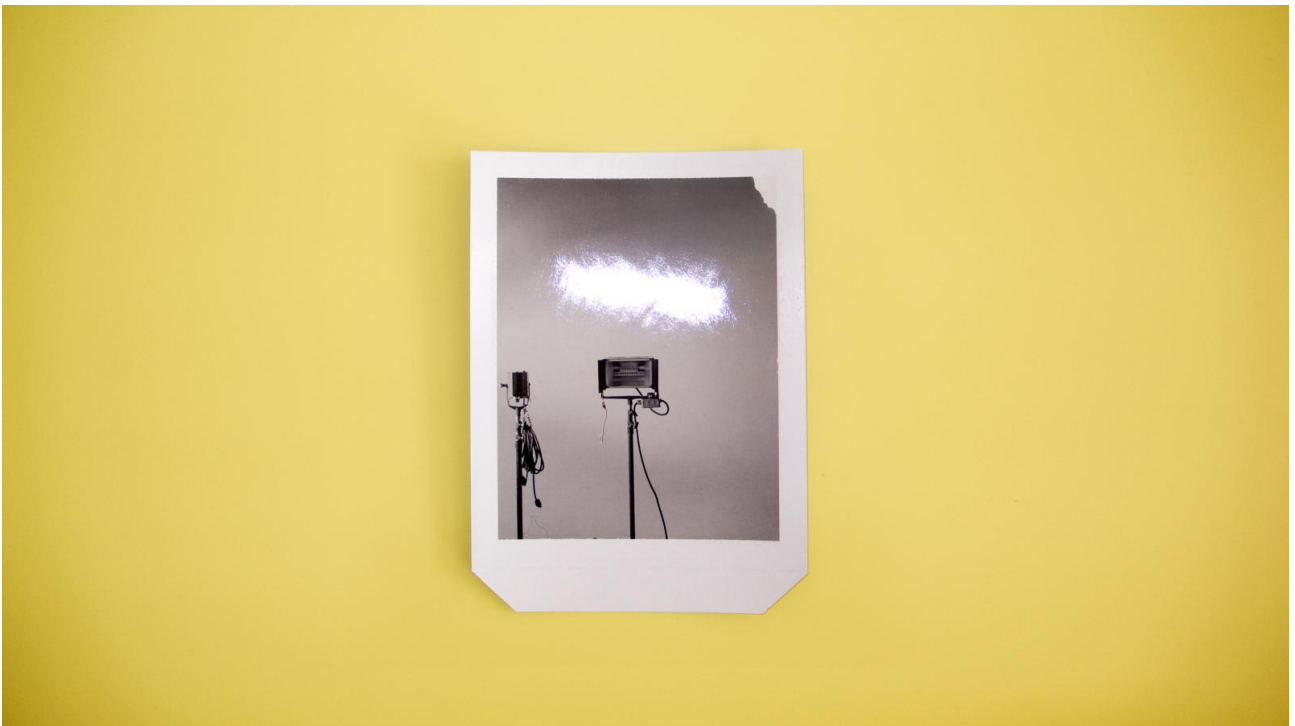


Sean Snyder, *Untitled (mis-registered scans, 8,4 Mb, bitmap, file date 14.11.1999)*, 2009, light jet print, 84.1x118.9 cm





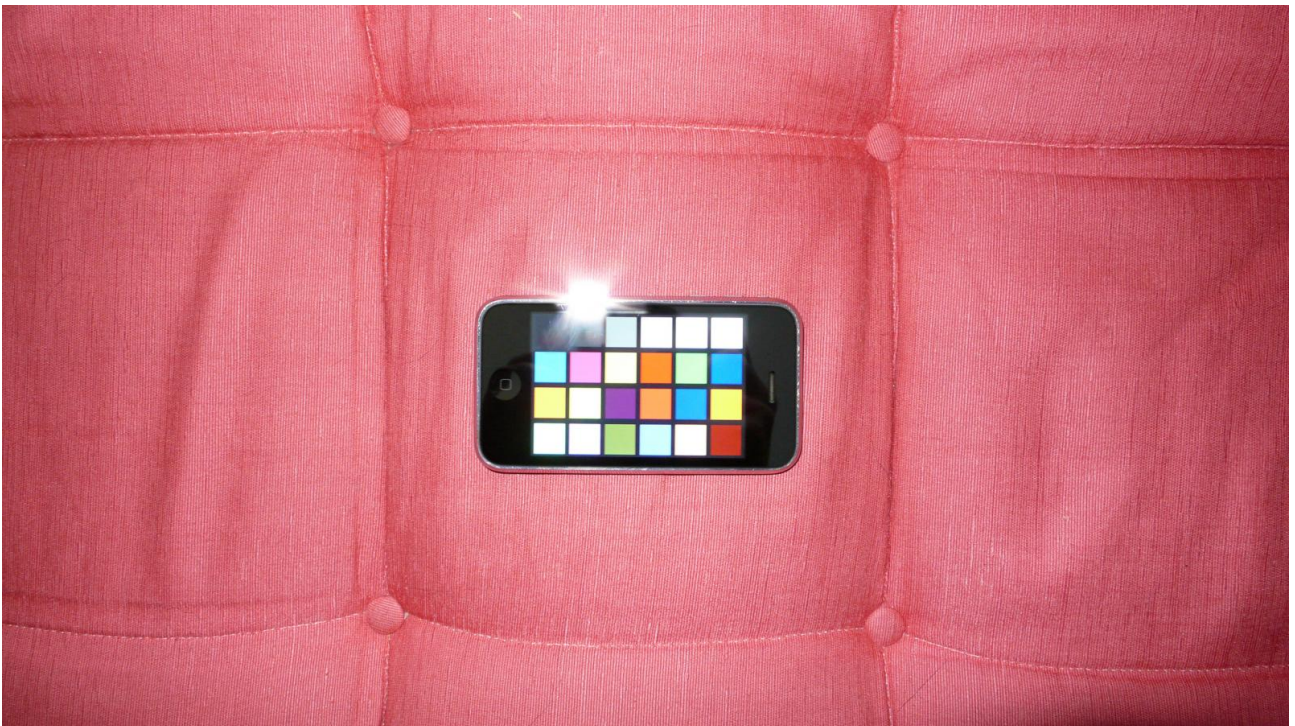
Jordan Tate, *New Work #97*, 2011-2012, from the series *New Work*



Jordan Tate, *New Work #42*, 2011-2012, from the series *New Work*

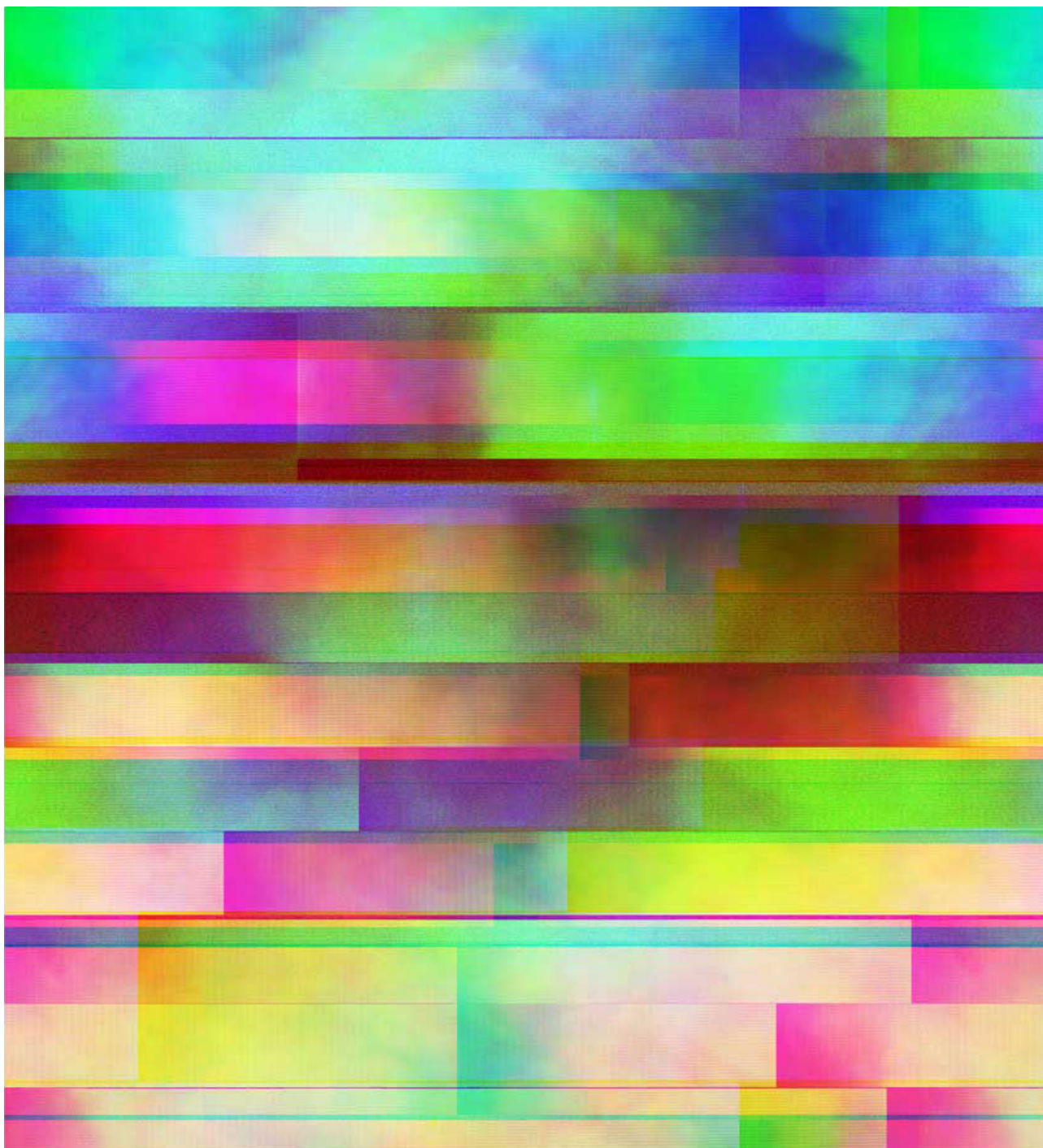


Jordan Tate, *New Work #93*, 2011-2012, from the series *New Work*

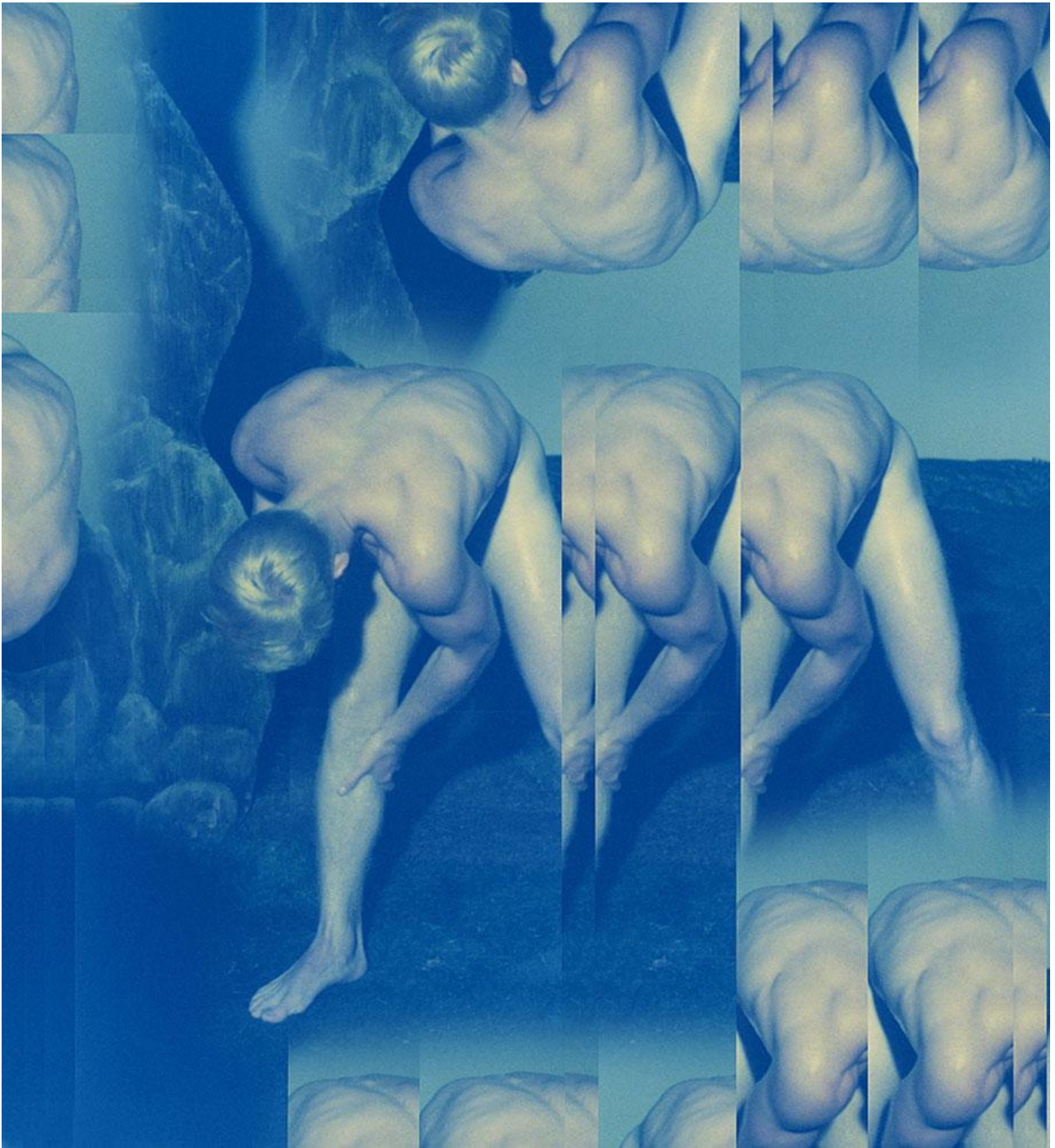


Jordan Tate, *New Work #41*, 2011-2012, from the series *New Work*





Melanie Willhide, *Swan Lake*, 1986, 2011, from the series *To Adrian Rodriguez with Love*, pigment print, 76.2x71.1 cm



Melanie Willhide, *Little Boy Blue*, 2000, 2011, from the series *To Adrian Rodriguez with Love*, pigment print, 76.2x71.1 cm