

# Thomas Demand

Roxana Marcoci, with a short story by Jeffrey  
Eugenides

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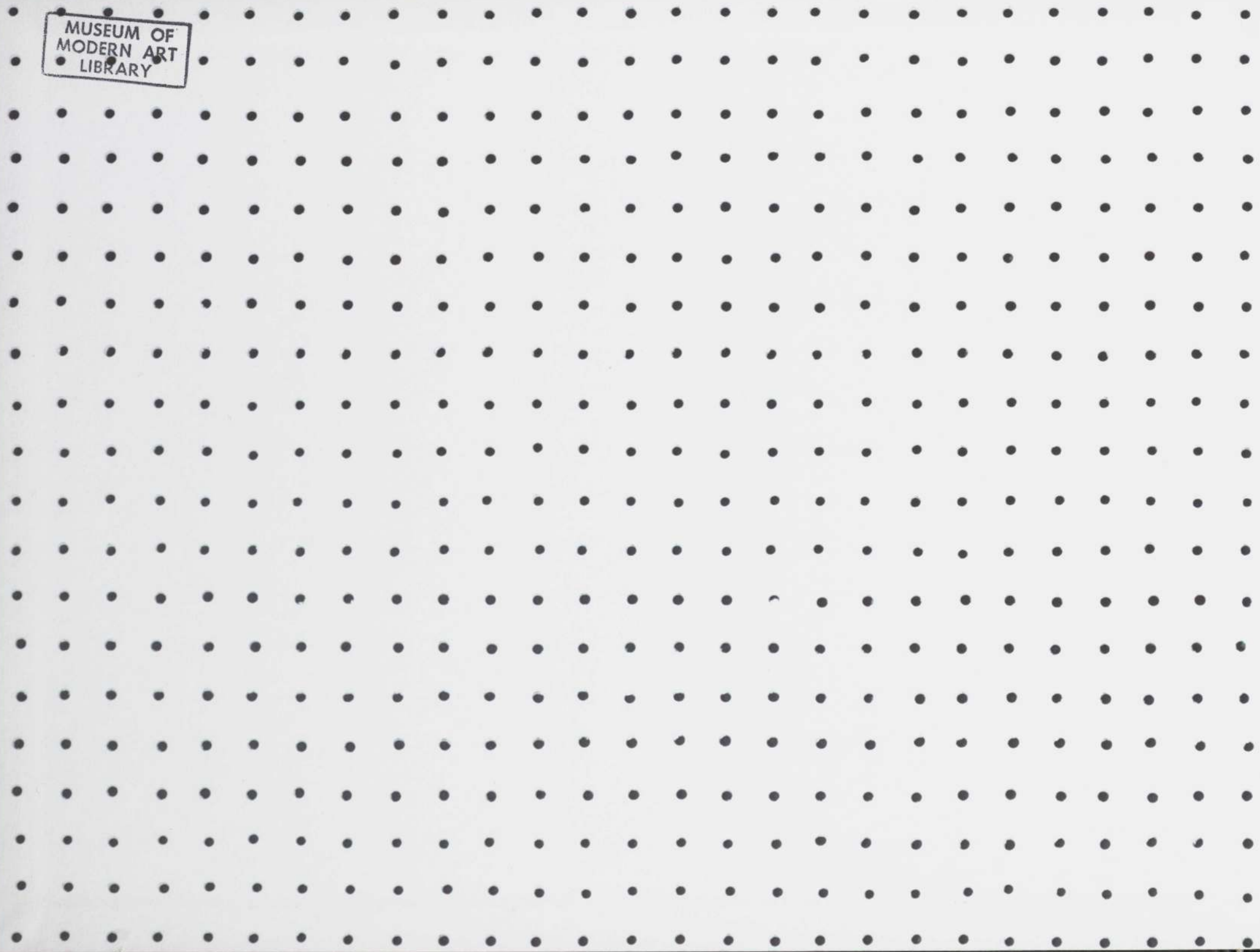
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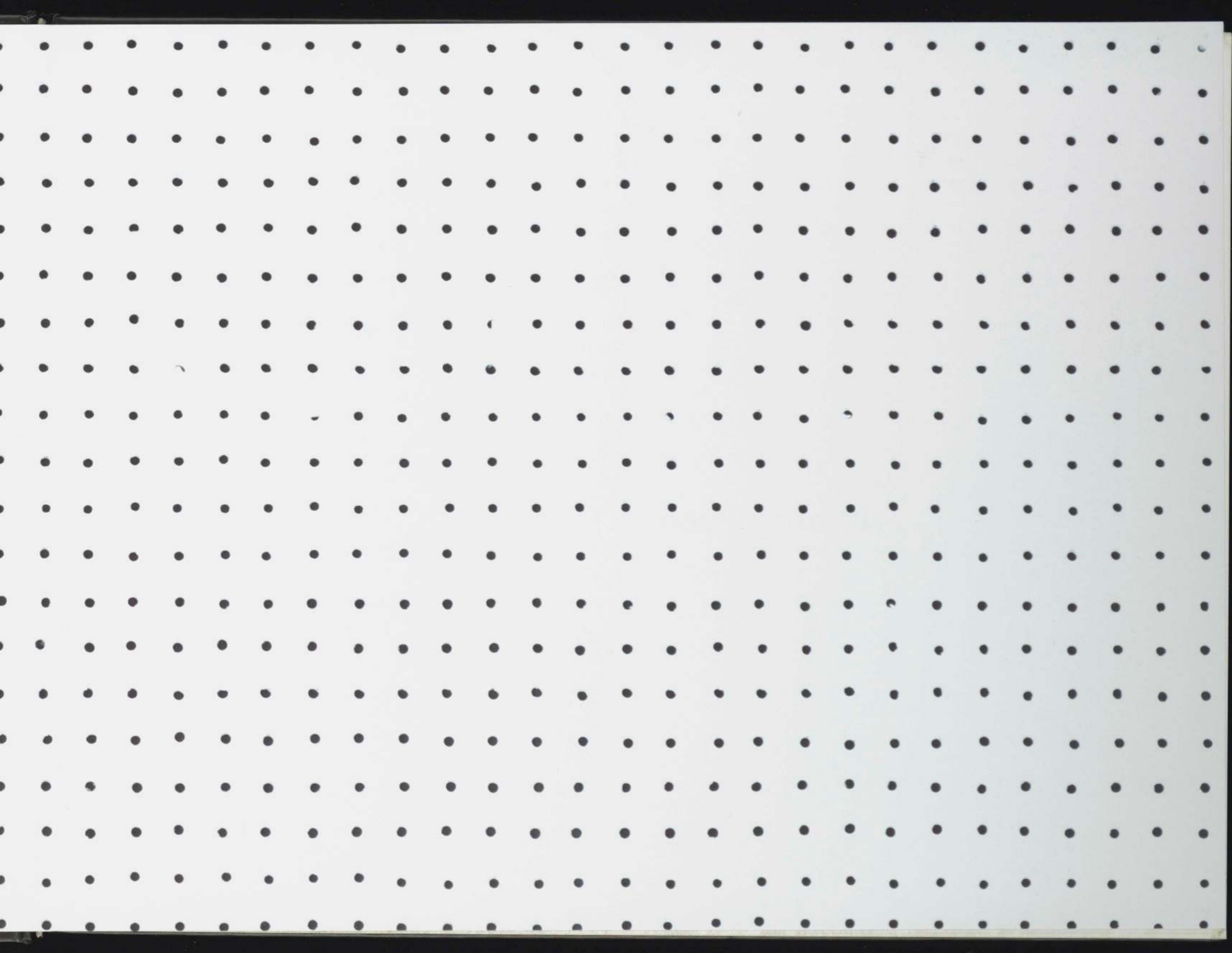


# Thomas Demand

The Museum of Modern Art

MUSEUM OF  
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LIBRARY







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Roxana Marcoci

with a short story by Jeffrey Eugenides

The Museum of Modern Art, New York



Published in conjunction with the exhibition *Thomas Demand*,  
organized by Roxana Marcoci, Assistant Curator in the Department of Photography  
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*Panel (Panneel)* (detail). 1996.

Chromogenic color print, 63 x 47<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (160 x 121 cm). Collection the artist

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*Stable (Stall)* (detail). 2000.

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## Contents

- 6 Foreword • Glenn D. Lowry
- 7 Acknowledgments
- 9 Paper Moon • Roxana Marcoci
- 29 Photographic Memory • Jeffrey Eugenides
- 37 The Photographs
- 119 The Films
- 131 Exhibitions and Selected Bibliography
- 140 Index
- 143 Photograph Credits
- 144 Trustees of The Museum of Modern Art

## Foreword

Thomas Demand's photographs were first exhibited at The Museum of Modern Art in 1996 in *New Photography 12*. At that time, Demand had only recently settled upon the distinctive method that he uses to create his thought-provoking and elegant pictures. Over the past decade, his imaginative elaboration of that method has won him wide acclaim as one of today's most lively and innovative artists. It is a pleasure, then, to present the first comprehensive survey of Demand's work to be shown in the United States.

Peter Norton, Chairman of the Trustee Committee on Photography, joins me in expressing gratitude to the very generous donors—Carol and David Appel, Anne and Joel Ehrenkrantz, Sharon Coplan Hurowitz and Richard Hurowitz, and David Teiger—for enabling the Museum to acquire an excellent suite of Demand photographs for the collection. I am thankful, as well, to Ninah and Michael Lynne, and The International Council, The Contemporary Arts Council, and The Junior Associates of The Museum of Modern Art, for their support of the exhibition. I am grateful to Anna Marie and Robert F. Shapiro, who made this publication possible.

I wish also to thank Jeffrey Eugenides for contributing a short story to this book—a brilliant homage to his friend, at once hyperbolic and illuminating.

We are all in debt to Roxana Marcoci, Assistant Curator in the Department of Photography, who skillfully organized the exhibition and prepared this book in close collaboration with the artist. Her thoughtful essay, which includes informed and probing explorations of the sources, strategies, and implications of many of Demand's most compelling works, is a significant contribution to the study of his art.

Finally, I salute and thank Thomas Demand, whose grace and generosity in meeting the countless necessities of such an ambitious project have matched the wit and originality of his work.

Glenn D. Lowry  
Director  
The Museum of Modern Art

## Acknowledgments

This exhibition and the publication it accompanies were realized thanks to the assistance and support of many people, both within and outside The Museum of Modern Art. First of all, my gratitude is extended to Glenn D. Lowry, Director, who has been exceptionally supportive of this project from its inception.

I owe a debt of gratitude to Peter Galassi, Chief Curator of the Department of Photography, for his intellectual rigor and careful guidance. I am also obliged to Susan Kismaric, Curator of the Department of Photography, for her perceptive comments on my text. Very warm thanks are due to Jeffrey Eugenides, the acclaimed Pulitzer Prize author of *Middlesex*, for contributing an insightful short story to the book. I am indebted to my friends Claire Gilman, Jordan Kantor, Pepe Karmel, Joan Kee, Eva Respini, and John Tain for the acumen of their suggestions. Appreciation is also owed to the exceptional research assistance of Béatrice Gross in Photography and Jenny Tobias in the Library. I wish also to acknowledge the generosity of Jay A. Levenson, Director, The International Program, and Carol Coffin, Executive Director, The International Council of The Museum of Modern Art, who enabled me to travel several times to Berlin, where I had the opportunity to meet with the artist.

In the Department of Publications, the thoughtful direction of Michael Maegraith, Publisher, merits special recognition, as do the fine editorial guidance of David Frankel, Managing Editor, and the editorial skills of Joanne Greenspun, Senior Editor. My praise goes to Pascale Willi, who arrived at a highly imaginative design; Marc Sapir, Director of Production, who brought his unflinching eye to the task of supervising the production of the book; and Lawrence Allen, Publications Manager, who attended with professionalism to all other aspects of the publication.

The organization of an exhibition requires the professional

help of many people. At the forefront of this effort is Jennifer Russell, Deputy Director for Exhibitions and Collections Support. In addition, Carlos Yepes, Associate Coordinator of Exhibitions, oversaw the logistics of organizing the exhibition. Susan Palamara, Associate Registrar, and Ellen Conti, Registrar Assistant, managed with great expertise the handling and transport of the exhibition. Jerome Neuner, Director of Exhibition Design and Production, and Lana Hum, Exhibition Designer/Production Manager, conceived an exhibition design that shows the artist's work at its best. Lee Ann Daffner, Photography Conservator, attended with utmost care to the condition of the works. And, finally, I salute Peter Omlor, Manager of Art Preparation and Handling, and the preparators, with whom I share the joy of the show's installation.

In conjunction with this exhibition, the Museum is sponsoring an interdisciplinary panel discussion, which has been ably organized with the assistance of David Little, Director Adult and Academic Programs, and Laura Beiles, Public Programs Coordinator. Educational materials, including an audioguide, have been created by Sara Bodinson, Assistant Educator. Claire Corey, Production Manager, Graphic Design, and Bonnie Ralston, Senior Designer, have designed the brochure and the exhibition signage. And K Mita, Director, and Allegra Burnette, Creative Manager, Digital Media, have created the Web site for this show.

Outside the Museum, I have received the enthusiastic support of the artist's assistant, Miriam Böhm, whose forbearance in answering myriad questions is nothing short of remarkable. Many thanks are also due to Lisa Spellman, director of 303 Gallery, who represents the artist in the United States.

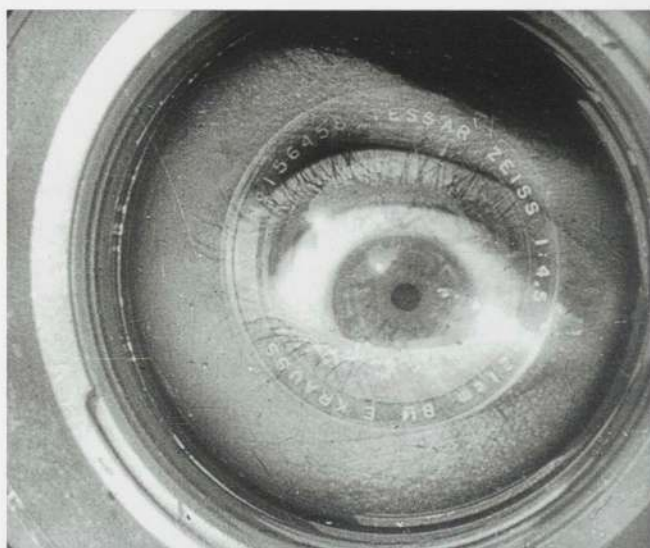
In closing, my deepest and perhaps most effusive thanks are owed to Thomas Demand. From the exhibition's inception to its realization, I thank him for his trust, his understanding, and most of all, the generosity of his collaboration.

Roxana Marcoci  
Assistant Curator  
Department of Photography



## Paper Moon

The extent to which photography and cinema have critically defined our perception of the visible was remarkably formulated seventy-five years ago by the Soviet film director Dziga Vertov. In a double-image shot from his 1929 experimental film *Man with a Movie Camera* (fig. 1), the human eye is superimposed on the camera lens to form an indivisible apparatus fit to view, process, and convey reality, all at once. Unforgettable imagery is first shaped by the camera and then seen by the human eye. Vertov redefined the medium of still and motion-picture photography through the concept of *kino-glaz* (cine-eye), asserting that the perfectible lens of the camera, due to its recording proficiency, was superior to the eye. Yet if, as Vertov opined, the camera is a truth machine that can extend vision, interpret situations that are invisible to the naked eye, capture transitory gestures, and reveal subjective



states, it can also construct the very reality it claims to report. Its mechanical mode of production relies on an indexical connection to the world, and thus a more objective form of representation. But the scene of representation can itself be a form of fiction. Indeed, since photography's inception the world has become one created by its lens.

The contemporary German artist Thomas Demand subtly notes that instead of revealing themselves to us firsthand, "things just enter reality through photographs."<sup>1</sup> What he means is that certain kinds of experience are indirect, rooted not in real life but in the media-drenched consciousness of the viewer, who recalls events from seeing them in pictures but cannot account for the reliability of the information they contain. Not surprisingly, in an age in which reality is dominated by mediated images, the truthfulness of the facts the camera records and the memories that are passed down to us, whether they be through the altered lens of the photograph, the newsreel, television, or the Internet, have unremittingly been put into question. The degree to which the reality of the picture makes us think of the ways in which the real is actually constructed is central to Demand's approach to photography.

As a rule, Demand begins with an image, usually, although not exclusively, from a photograph culled from the media, which he translates into a three-dimensional life-size paper model.<sup>2</sup> Then he takes a picture of the model with a Swiss-made Sinar, a large-format camera with telescopic lens for enhanced resolution and heightened verisimilitude.<sup>3</sup> Contributing to the overall illusion of reality, his large-scale photographs are laminated behind Plexiglas and displayed without a frame. His handcrafted facsimiles of architectural spaces, exteriors, and natural environments are built in the image of other

1. Still from the film *Man with a Movie Camera* (*Chelovek c. kino apparatom*), directed by Dziga Vertov. 1929. George Eastman House, Rochester, New York

images. Thus, his photographs are triply removed from the scenes or objects they depict. Like a practitioner of origami, Demand folds paper and cardboard of every imaginable color and texture to create full-scale environments. He builds his sets with ingenious skill, constantly checking the perspective, angle, lighting, and other technical details. Yet, despite their illusionism, Demand's staged tableaux reveal the mechanisms of their making. Minute imperfections—a pencil mark here, an exposed edge there, a wrinkle in the paper—are deliberately left visible. The lack of detail and cool, uniform lighting expose the whole as a construction. Once they have been photographed, the models are destroyed. The resulting pictures are convincingly real and strangely artificial.

To understand the distinctiveness of Demand's work, it is worth revisiting the historic and artistic influences of his formative years. Born in 1964 in the small Bavarian town of Schäftlarn (about twenty miles south of Munich), the son of two painters and the grandson of an architect, Demand grew up in a Germany still marked by the postwar years: the student protests of 1968; the debacle of the 1972 Munich Olympics; and the controversies surrounding the deaths in 1977 of three members of the social-activist-turned-terrorist Baader-Meinhof group. He recalls the nefarious events involving the kidnapping and killing of eleven Israeli athletes by a Palestinian commando that was part of the PLO faction later known as Black September, as his first memory of consequence.<sup>4</sup> This massacre of Jews on German soil was followed by another crisis, the German Autumn of 1977, when the Red Army Faction (RAF was the name invented by the Baader-Meinhof members with the intent to portray themselves as a faction of a much larger revolutionary army) engaged in a series of terrorist attacks that polarized the country and contributed to the increase of a police presence that was uncomfortably reminiscent of Germany's repressive past.<sup>5</sup> Demand's work should be seen against the background of these political events and of their intersection with his own private memories and experiences.

Demand's first encounter with art and in particular photography—outside of his father's lantern-slide lectures—occurred when he was fifteen. Nearly every day he rode his bicycle to the house of his close friend, Pepper Herbig, for a game of table tennis. In the late 1960s, Herbig's parents, Dr. Jost Herbig, a natural

scientist, and Barbara Herbig, a goldsmith, began collecting primarily Conceptual and Minimalist art and films in the small but prominent art community of Cologne-Düsseldorf. At first, they focused on internationally known and influential artists within the local academic community, such as Joseph Beuys and Erwin Heerich, who taught at the Staatliche Kunstakademie (State Art Academy) in Düsseldorf. By early 1971, when they moved to Munich, their collection comprised groups of both conceptually oriented works by Marcel Broodthaers, On Kawara, Walter de Maria, Bruce Nauman, Panamarenko, Sigmar Polke, Gerhard Richter, Dieter Roth, Robert Ryman, and Richard Tuttle, and



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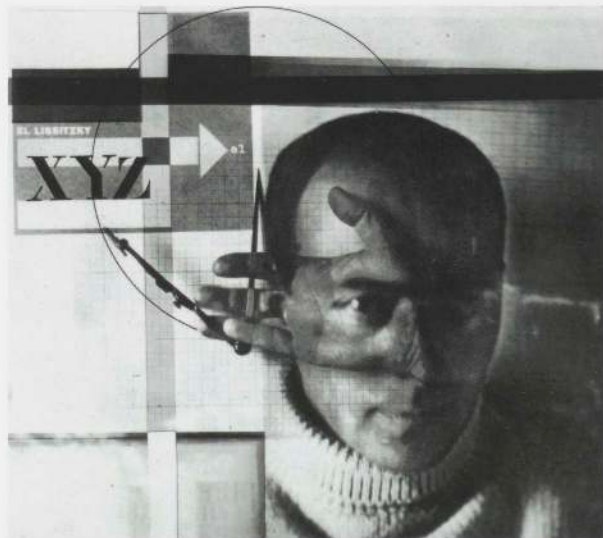


MOBIL, SHAMROCK, TEXAS

Neo-Expressionist works by Georg Baselitz, Jörg Immendorff, Blinky Palermo, and A. R. Penck. On rainy afternoons, the Herbig's art library was a bibliophile's Eden. Among noteworthy art publications, Demand recalls several of the inexpensive, small-format books of black-and-white photographs by Ed (Edward) Ruscha—*Twentysix Gasoline Stations* (1963) (fig. 2), *Some Los Angeles Apartments* (1965), *Every Building On The Sunset Strip* (1966), *Thirtyfour Parking Lots In Los Angeles* (1967)—as well as the first of his color photographs—*Nine Swimming Pools And A Broken Glass* (1968).

2. Ed Ruscha. *Enco*, Conway, Texas, and *Mobil*, Shamrock, Texas, from *Twentysix Gasoline Stations*. Alhambra: The Cunningham Press, 1963

Part of Ruscha's earliest and most original enterprises, these self-published photographic books, with their wry triviality, struck a chord in the young Demand. Unsigned and offset-printed, they were antithetical to the notion of the precious, limited-edition *livre d'artiste* (artist's book). And while their banal subject matter and documentary-style compositions were indebted to Walker Evans's remarkable pictures of signs and vernacular architecture from the 1930s, their deadpan, cool aesthetic was radically different. This difference, or newness, came from Ruscha's intention to use the medium as any other layperson would, a paradox, however, since at the time he was not a "skilled" photographer but quite literally an "amateur."<sup>6</sup> Indeed, Ruscha's snapshots of prosaic gas stations and vacant parking lots had more to do with reshuffling photographic conventions than with factual reportage. While each book chronicled an aspect of Los Angeles or of his round-trip drives between Los Angeles and Oklahoma (Ruscha even included identifying captions with the name and address for each building or parking lot), his interest in photography as a form of mapmaking or topography, as well as his "aesthetic of anti-aesthetics,"<sup>7</sup> signaled a conceptual thrust. Not coincidentally, *Every Building On The Sunset Strip* was chosen by the artist Sol LeWitt to accompany his essay "Paragraphs on Conceptual Art," which was published in the summer 1967 issue of *Artforum*. Ruscha's photographic compendia elicited as much interest in Germany as they did in the United States. With the premiere of an exhibition of his books in March 1970 at the Galerie Heiner Friedrich in Munich, Ruscha opened a field of inquiry between documentary and conceptual practice that was to have a lasting effect on younger generations of German photographers.



In 1987 Demand embarked on a formal artistic education at the Akademie der Bildenden Künste (Academy of Fine Arts) in Munich, where he studied Innenraum Gestaltung (Interior Design), focusing on theater and church design. Architectural settings, decor, and scenographic models formed the lexicon of his early student works. During World War II, the academy's buildings, including its archives and collection of artworks, were completely destroyed, but its extensive library survived. Demand spent two formative years in this library. His readings in the history of ideas focused on Friedrich Nietzsche and Ludwig Wittgenstein. Philosophy helped him form an awareness that activities related to the act of truth-telling, such as adjusting, abbreviating, omitting, padding, and falsifying, are all intrinsically linked to the process of interpretation.

From 1989 to 1992 Demand attended the Kunstakademie in Düsseldorf, one of Germany's oldest art schools. Trained as a sculptor, he worked primarily with Fritz Schwegler, a studio art instructor and veteran of two Documenta exhibitions (1972 and 1987) who also guided the work of Katharina Fritsch, Martin Honert, and Thomas Schütte. Like Schütte, whose makeshift architectural structures were always in the nature of a proposal, Demand's student works, which were based on models, underscored his interest in the reconstitution of the built environment. And like

Fritsch, whose pristine objects hovered between "the generic and the unique,"<sup>8</sup> Demand's exacting paper mock-ups aimed to cast into doubt the viewer's relation to reality. In addition to Schwegler's "model construction" classes, Demand joined in informal discussions with the newly appointed professor (and artist) Gerhard Merz. Merz enjoyed theoretical debates about twentieth-century artistic practices, such as Constructivism.

A case study critical to Demand in this context is El (Lasar Markovich) Lissitzky's picture as double artist, embodied in his famous photomontage of 1924

3. El Lissitzky. *The Constructor*. 1924.  
Gelatin silver print, 3 x 3 1/2" (7.6 x 8.5 cm).  
The Museum of Modern Art, New York.  
Thomas Walther Collection. Purchase



*The Constructor* (fig. 3). A self-portrait (his name is stenciled on the top left), this work shows the artist's hand holding a compass superimposed on a shot of his head that explicitly highlights his eye. Besides the compass, there are a number of other signs of construction such as graph paper and typographic elements that are also overlaid on the image. Devised from six different exposures, Lissitzky the photographer (eye) and Lissitzky the constructor (hand) are merged into one likeness. Contesting the idea that straight photography can provide a single, unmediated truth, Lissitzky held instead that montage, with its layering of one meaning over another, impels the viewer to reconsider the world, and thus contributes to the construction of a new meaning. Like Lissitzky, Demand draws on one medium (sculpture) to create another (photography), playing one form of representation against the other.<sup>9</sup> Inasmuch as Demand operates with a concept of reality that is constructed, he tips his hat to the "great experiments" of 1920s Constructivism. However, Demand makes no pretense of serving a utopian social order. His carefully constructed images do not offer a quixotic model for the future, nor do they endorse an ideology.

Studying at the Kunstakademie, Demand became part of a highly competitive institution, one renowned for its professionalized avant-garde. This was due, on the one hand, to Joseph Beuys's appointment in 1961 as professor and, on the other, to the presence of Bernd (Bernhard) and Hilla Becher. Although operating at opposite ends of the spectrum, together these artists fostered the creation of a serious artistic community. Beuys's dynamic personal presence, as well as his actions and theories for a social art, motivated a number of students—among them Lothar Baumgarten, Anselm Kiefer, Sigmar Polke, and Gerhard Richter—to take up photography as

a way of addressing issues pertaining to the construction of collective memory. The Bechers were, for their part, associated with a markedly different photographic practice that was entrenched in the nineteenth-century idea of an encyclopedic project. Their systematic recording of anonymous industrial architecture (fig. 4) always followed the same principles: rigorously frontal views; slightly elevated camera angles; and flat, evenly gray backgrounds. While influenced by the *Neue Sachlichkeit* (New Objectivity) movement of the 1920s, and in particular the razor-sharp work of Albert Renger-Patzsch and August Sander, the neutral aesthetic of their black-and-white photographs has been and remains autographic. Bernd Becher became the Kunstakademie's first professor of photography in 1976, and, in his new capacity, he gathered together a talented group of students that included Andreas Gursky, Candida Höfer, Axel Hütte, Thomas Ruff, and Thomas Struth. Although Demand did not study with the Bechers, he shares with them as well as with Ruscha a concern for documenting seemingly banal, unpeopled places. But unlike his precursors, he does not group these places into serial or taxonomic categories. Demand circumvents the series, the thematic unit, and the idea of modular variations, favoring instead the specific and unique image, within which found and fabricated realities are overlaid.

Obviously, Demand was steeped in the German academic tradition, but he also felt the need to gain broad-based experience. In 1993, after studying in Paris at the Cité des Arts on a one-year grant, he moved to London to complete his graduate studies at Goldsmiths College. At the beginning of the 1990s,



4. Bernd and Hilla Becher. *Water Towers*. 1988. Nine gelatin silver prints, overall: 67 11/16 x 55 1/8" (172 x 140 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Gift of Werner and Elaine Dannheisser

Goldsmiths was the hotbed of the booming British art scene, paradoxically a product of scarce grants and restricted exhibition venues. In reaction, a group of entrepreneurial students decided to turn the lessons of Thatcherism to their advantage. A year prior to his graduation from Goldsmiths, Damien Hirst organized in late 1988 a three-part exhibition, *Freeze*, in an abandoned warehouse at Surrey Docks in East London. The exhibition was instrumental in the debut of the Freeze Generation, also known as YBA (Young British Artists), which included the original *Freeze* artists, among them Angela Bulloch, Ian Davenport, Gary Hume, and Sarah Lucas, as well as their contemporaries—Tracey Emin, Chris Ofili, Jenny Saville, Yinka Shonibare, Sam Taylor-Wood, Gillian Wearing, and Rachel Whiteread. Their work came to international attention through the voracious patronage of advertising mogul Charles Saatchi, and through a number of exhibitions that culminated in the notorious 1997 *Sensation* show at the Royal Academy in London.

The YBA group was united less by a common aesthetic than by an unruly sensibility and inquisitiveness into social agendas. The dean of Goldsmiths, the artist Michael Craig-Martin, played an important role in breaking down traditional divisions between the departments of painting, sculpture, and photography, and thus in fostering a post-medium spirit of experimentation. Demand states that the London milieu was stimulating because, to him, it was at odds with his German art education: it was multifaceted as opposed to conformist; ironic as opposed to austere; and laidback as opposed to rigid. He also credits Craig-Martin with encouraging critical debate through seminars and an open-studio system and for treating his students as practicing artists from the moment they matriculated in school.

Demand first took up photography in late 1989 to record his impermanent paper constructions. In 1993 he turned the tables, henceforth making constructions (fig. 5) only to photograph them. Working in his large studio located behind Hamburger Bahnhof in Berlin, Demand uses colored cardboard and paper to recreate entire rooms, parking lots, facades, hallways, and to simulate such diverse materials as wood, plastic, metal, cloth, and foliage. Devoid of human presence, the places Demand depicts are often significant, although he provides few clues that would allow for easy identification. Many of Demand's photographs refer to salient events in Germany's history. For instance, *Room* of 1994 (pages 44, 45), an image of a space where the furniture, windows, and even



the ceiling have been blown to bits, is actually based on a photograph of the Führerhauptquartier (Adolf Hitler's headquarters) at Rastenburg, East Prussia, after it was bombed by a member of the German resistance on July 20, 1944 (fig. 6). A briefcase exploded, wounding many, but Hitler escaped. The disassociation between the picture's unstudied appearance and the precision with which its contents are constructed provides an incisive point of entry into Demand's thinking. Crisply lit, *Room* is meticulously ordered to mimic disorder. The visible space is unpopulated and littered with debris. Its staged chaos suggests a world emptied of affect, in which violence has lost its power to shock.

A similar state of controlled anarchy governs *Office* of 1995 (page 51). Here, papers, files, and folders are strewn about the room, cabinet doors hang open, and drawers lie on the floor. The furnishings look slightly tarnished and outdated. Demand has jumped from 1944 to 1990, the year after the fall of the Berlin Wall, when frenzied East Germans ransacked the deserted center of the former Stasi (secret police) building in East Berlin in search of their personal

5. Thomas Demand. Studio view. 1993.  
Courtesy the artist



6. Conference room in Adolf Hitler's headquarters at Rastenburg, East Prussia, after Claus von Stauffenberg's attempt to assassinate Hitler on July 20, 1944. Hermann Goering is in the center.

files (fig. 7). Ironically, in Demand's photograph the paper sheets are blank and the folders unlabeled, as if the censoring Kulturniks have erased not only its citizenry's past but also any trace of the written word. Certainly, the history of censorship forms part of the history of culture, especially in authoritarian regimes in which people did not stop communicating ideas but had to learn to read between the lines looking for meanings in the blanks. In 1848, when officials decided to revoke the censorship laws in

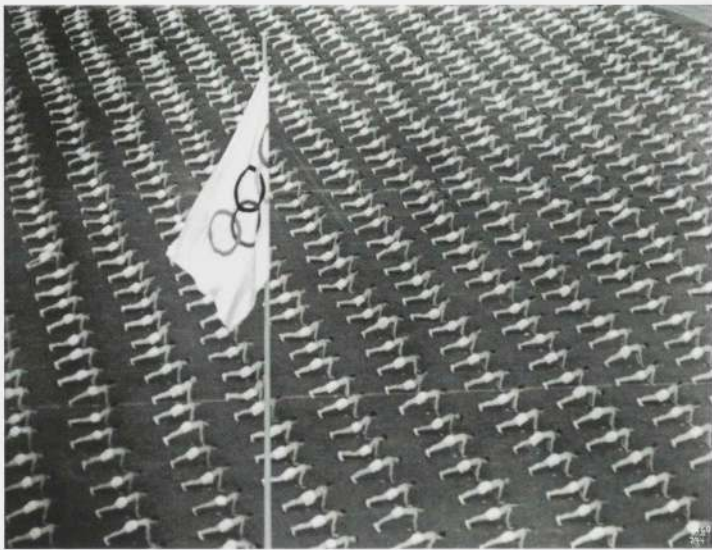
Germany in response to the revolution, the poet Heinrich Heine exclaimed in distress: "Ach! I can't write anymore. How can I write when there's no longer any censorship? How should a man who's always lived with censorship suddenly be able to write without it? All style will cease, the whole grammar, the good habits!"<sup>10</sup> Heine evidently saw the act of writing during censorship as rife with creative possibility rather than as repressive. He knew that by complicating communication, censorship assisted in producing a deluxe spectrum of devices—including allusion, ellipsis, anagrams—that forged the political subtext under the official text. Historian Robert Darnton observes that in East Germany, readers often compared texts in foreign languages to see what had been doctored in their German editions.<sup>11</sup> Demand's empty pages refer at once to the censored text and to the skill of reading into the blank spaces. *Office* suggests that the fewer possibilities people have to express themselves freely, the more likely they are to erupt.

Contrasting the chaos of *Office* is *Archive* of 1995 (page 47), with its "aura of bureaucratic order."<sup>12</sup> Untarnished by time or touch, the identical gray stacks comprising two hundred fifteen cardboard boxes look generic but, in fact, are not. They have their point of reference in the film archives of the German filmmaker and propagandist Leni Riefenstahl. The Minimalist alignment of boxes elliptically gestures to the regimented spectacle of the 1934 Nazi rally in

Nuremberg documented by Riefenstahl in *Triumph of the Will*, or to the impersonalized array of uniform, athletic bodies in *Olympia—Festival of the Nations and Festival of Beauty* (fig. 8), a two-part work on the Berlin Olympics of 1936. Demand suggests that Nazi Germany was, to a degree, a product created by the persuasiveness of the mass media and the film industry. *Olympia*, for example, was financed by the National Socialist Party, its images publicized worldwide. The film presents the Olympic Stadium as a forum where hundreds of thousands of people were caught up in Nazi rituals and mass euphoria. The opening shot shows a naked runner bringing the flame from Greece to Berlin, his disciplined, flawless body indicative of the willpower characteristic of a strictly controlled, disciplined nation. Such an obsession with the steel-like, rigid character of the armored body informed not only Riefenstahl's films but also the "pure-bred" statuary of politically conformist artists Arno Breker and Josef Thorak, and the writings of Ernst Jünger.<sup>13</sup> Demand's *Diving Board* of 1994 (page 43), photographed from a low vantage point to intensify the board's monumentality, indirectly alludes to visual and literary sources that championed the



7. Stasi (East German secret police) central office in Berlin after it was ransacked, January 16, 1990, from *Der Spiegel*



superior sporting skills of the Aryan race. Although the diving board is without a diver, the commanding body of the trained athlete can easily be imagined standing on it in the Olympic stadium.

Like *Diving Board*, *Brenner Highway* of 1994 (page 41) is conceived from visual memory rather than from any specific image. Shot from below and at the angle where the road curves on itself, it conveys a sense of force and velocity. Like the Futurists' imagery of speeding lines and all-binding vectors of energy, the highway expressed the ideals of a new social order that would thrust people into a collective will, in this case Fascism.<sup>14</sup> From the start, Nazi traffic planners saw the Autobahn as a generator of national myths, marketing it as a binding network between the far corners of the German Reich and its center. A powerful sign of political strength, it was labeled "Hitler's street."<sup>15</sup> Hitler took great pride in being filmed and photographed as he drove on each new highway, to the cheers of crowds. Masterminded by the engineer Fritz Todt, an early Party member and Inspector-General of German Highways, the high-speed road was, on the one hand, an emblem of modern technology and design and, on

8. Leni Riefenstahl. *Calisthenics, Olympic Games, Berlin*. 1936. Gelatin silver print, 8<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 11<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" (21.7 x 28 cm). Archive Riefenstahl, Poecking, Germany

the other, a carrier of "historicist echoes of Roman aqueducts . . . and romantic vistas of the German countryside in its most medievalist, Blood and Soil guise."<sup>16</sup> During World War II, Hitler and Benito Mussolini held three meetings on the Brenner Highway, which served as a connection point between the Axis Powers.

Addressing Fascism's ominous take on modernism, Demand, in 2000, produced *Model* (page 89), a photograph based on a re-creation of Albert Speer's architectural design for the 1937 International Exposition in Paris (fig. 9). Demand's picture is of a model which, in turn, is about a model. In producing this work, Demand looked at Heinrich Hoffmann's archival photographs showing Hitler and Speer with the maquette for the national pavilion. In the 1930s Speer was in charge of plans to transform Berlin into Germania, the capital of a pan-Germanic state. Hitler supervised these plans closely, revealing his original ambition to be an architect. According to Hoffmann, when asked why he had not become one, Hitler answered: "Because I decided instead to become the architect of the Third Reich!"<sup>17</sup> At times, however, he was filled with nostalgia for his missed vocation, bemoaning the fact that "If Germany had not lost the World War, I would not have become a politician, but a famous architect—a sort of a Michelangelo."<sup>18</sup> Toward the end of his life, Hitler spent a lot of time in the bunker of the Reich Chancellery toying with models for a master plan for Linz while Germany was falling apart.<sup>19</sup>

For the 1937 Fair, French officials decided that Speer's Neoclassical edifice was to be located directly across from the Soviet pavilion, designed by Boris M. Iofan in a Socialist Realist style. This infuriated Hitler, but Speer found a solution that pleased him. In *Inside the Third Reich: Memoirs*, Speer recounted his discovery of a secret drawing of the Soviet pavilion, which featured a thirty-foot-



Ein neues Denkmal nationalsozialistischer Bauempfehlung ist nach dem Willen des Führers errichtet worden. So wie die Schöpfungen des verstorbenen Baumeisters Professor Troost in München und die Aufbauten des Reichsparteitagfeldes in Nürnberg, so soll auch dieses Bau ein Wegweiser für das künftige Bauen in Deutschland sein. Wir Bauleute sind stolz darauf, daß wir die Ideen des Führers verwirklichen dürfen.

Un nouveau monument, conception d'architecture nationale-socialiste, a été érigé selon la volonté du « Führer ». Ainsi que les créations à Munich et les constructions du « Reichsparteitag » à Nuremberg de feu l'architecte professeur Troost, cette construction doit être un indicateur pour l'architecture future en Allemagne. Nous, les exécutants, nous sommes fiers que nous puissions réaliser les idées du « Führer ».

By will of the "Führer", a new monument in the National-Socialistic architectural sense has been erected. Even as the creations of the late master-builder Professor Troost in Munich and the erections of the National Party Day Field in Nuremberg, so too shall this building be a guide for the future construction in Germany. We construction people are proud to be permitted to bring about the realizations of the ideas of our "Führer".

Un nuovo monumento improntato al carattere costruttivo nazionalsocialistico è stato elevato secondo la volontà del Führer. Come le creazioni del compianto architetto, il Professor Troost, a Monaco e gli edifici dell'Assemblea del Partito a Norimberga, questa costruzione deve essere una guida per la futura architettura tedesca. Noi costruttori siamo fieri di aver potuto realizzare le idee del Führer.

Albert Speer

9. Frontispiece from Heinrich Hoffmann's *Deutschland in Paris*, an unofficial catalogue of the German Pavilion of the 1937 Paris International Exposition. Albert Speer, who won the Grand Prix in architecture at the Exposition, is shown with Adolf Hitler as they admire a model of the pavilion.

tall group statuary astride a high pedestal. In reaction, he devised a massive cube on stout pilasters surmounted by an eagle with a swastika in its claws that looked down on the Russian figures, thus ensuring that the German pavilion was higher than that of the Soviets. Although the exhibition was dedicated to peace and the progress of humanity, these two imposing, rival towers facing each other with their disproportionate sense of scale were utterly asynchronous with the exhibition theme. As art historian James Herbert points out, they both “transgressed the principles of good sportsmanship and fair play.”<sup>20</sup> Herbert, in fact, sees the architectural confrontation between the two pavilions as premonitory of the Hitler-Stalin pact of 1939, and concludes that the International Exposition, despite the intentions of its French organizers, eventually became a venue of belligerent nationalisms. Two years later Germany and the Soviet Union signed the Molotov-Ribbentrop nonaggression pact; four years later they were at war. Demand’s photograph of the model for the German pavilion, a dystopic vestige of Prussian classicism, was made the same year that the questionable nature of building national pavilions at world fairs was raised again during Expo 2000, which took place in Hanover.

In a country filled with Third Reich buildings, the postwar period in which Demand grew up promised to fulfill not only the functional aspects of reconstruction, but also, and primarily, the humanistic needs of a society psychologically scarred by its memories of the Holocaust. To achieve this civic objective, architecture had to extricate itself from the ballast of oppressive ideology. The most direct link between an “architecture of democracy” and the modernist sensibility was offered by the reformist example of the Bauhaus, the school founded in 1919 by the architect Walter Gropius, but whose proponents were exiled in the United States in the 1930s (Gropius was at Harvard, László Moholy-Nagy and Walter Peterhans at the Institute of Design in Chicago, and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe at the Illinois Institute of Technology). Themes of reconstruction inform Demand’s *Drafting Room* of



10. Oskar Schlemmer. *Bauhaus Stairway*. 1932.  
Oil on canvas, 63 7/8 x 45" (162.3 x 114.3 cm).  
The Museum of Modern Art, New York.  
Gift of Philip Johnson

1996 (pages 54, 55), based on a photograph of the studio of Richard Vorhölzer, the architect responsible for most postwar urban planning in Germany. Materials and tools characteristic of the trade are seen on the tables—Scotch tape, papers, rulers, and T squares. These are the same as those used by the artist in fabricating his own models. The gridded structure of Demand’s work reiterates Bauhaus design principles, and the clarity of its carefully diffused light evokes the period’s clichéd optimism and idealized expectations. In researching sources for this image, Demand learned that his own grandfather knew Vorhölzer. Demand remarks, “[Vorhölzer] made very elegant buildings in the Bauhaus style, but with no ideology. After the war my grandfather was in charge of architecture for the city of Munich. My grandmother even told me that they knew each other, he and Vorhölzer. This was all pure coincidence. But what’s more, I grew up in a village where the post office had been built by Vorhölzer. I knew it like the back of my hand. One’s experience of public architecture develops partly because of such seemingly insignificant places as post offices. For me, as a child, observing that place was highly instructive. Now there was suddenly a web of connections around this image, thanks to which my personal environment became linked up with public history.”<sup>21</sup>

The concurrence of various aspects of Demand’s personal experience with German history is again evoked in *Staircase* of 1995 (page 53). This image re-creates the interior stairway of Demand’s secondary art school, built in the 1950s. Like much postwar architecture, the school’s design adhered to the prem-

ise that architecture could guarantee a democratic generation of moral integrity. This premise, Demand states, was predicated "on the assumption that you can raise better people with a better architecture, a central but questionable ideal of modernism."<sup>22</sup> It is tempting to think that Demand's experience of growing up in postwar Germany, where so much of the past was part of a process of reconstruction, played a role in his methodology. If this was the case, however, the politically correct style of neo-Bauhaus architecture is altogether questioned by Demand. Unlike such contemporaries as James Casebere, whose photographs of tabletop models are of archetypal spaces, Demand is interested in the sociological function of specific architectures that shape individuals. *Staircase* especially recalls Oskar Schlemmer's 1932 painting *Bauhaus Stairway* (fig. 10), which depicts the *Maschinenstil* (machine-age) vision of Gropius's architecture in Dessau. Schlemmer made this painting from memory three years after leaving his teaching post at the Bauhaus. The work was shown as part of his first solo exhibition, which was closed a few days later as a result of a heinous review in a Nazi newspaper. Alfred H. Barr, Jr., the founding director of The Museum of Modern Art in New York, asked the architect Philip Johnson to acquire the painting as a future gift to the Museum, "partly to spite the Nazis just after they had closed [Schlemmer's] exhibition."<sup>23</sup> The history of this painting discloses the antagonistic reception of avant-garde art in 1930s Germany. Part of what Demand's *Staircase* does is to bring together the interlaced narratives of these two stories: the Nazi vilification of Bauhaus art and architecture and the rehabilitation of its modernist principles during the reconstruction period of the 1950s.

Demand's reassessment of the political narratives of the twentieth century and of the ways in which those narratives had been constructed finds parallels in Michael Schmidt's *U-ni-ty* (fig. 11), a photographic portrait of the German nation unparalleled since Sander's *Face of Our Time* (*Antlitz der Zeit*)

of 1929. Schmidt made *U-ni-ty* between 1991 and 1994 in response to the reunification, but as the hyphens in the title suggest, the wholeness of the word "unity" is suspect. Mixing 163 black-and-white prints, some taken by the artist in a factual style, others rephotographed from newspapers, propaganda journals, and private albums, Schmidt presents history not as a linear sequence of events but as a fractured, simultaneous narration of contingent frameworks. Having to determine whether a given image was taken in East or West Germany, prior to or after World War II, during division or since reunification, the viewer begins to query the limits of historical representation. Demand met Schmidt in 1995 when he moved to Berlin. While stylistically distinct from Schmidt's grave mood, Demand's brighter, albeit uninflected images of historical recollection, which comprise a majority of his work, have a similar feel of critical urgency from the contradictions that inhabit them. Between the simulated realism of his images and the high level of preparation and documentary detail that goes into their making, Demand presents the viewer with a hybrid model of historical memory.



11. Michael Schmidt. *U-ni-ty* (*Ein-heit*). 1991-94. Thirty-one from a series of 163 gelatin silver prints, each 19 7/8 x 13 1/2" (50.5 x 34.3 cm). The Museum of Modern Art, New York. Anonymous purchase fund and purchase

Not all of Demand's photographs derive from episodes in German history. Some draw on a broader pool of images that in turn refer back to the process of image-making. *Studio* of 1997 (pages 70–71), *Barn* of 1997 (page 63), and *Stable* of 2000 (page 93) concern three distinct, yet interrelated, sites of production: a television studio, an artist's studio, and a shed with mechanized equipment. *Studio* was originally intended to be a political piece about reportage. In shuffling through material from televised press conferences, Demand ended up with an image about television itself, which in Germany began as an intrinsic part of a public broadcasting system going back to the first tests of wireless transmission of pictures offered by the Reichpost in 1929. The National Socialist Party pressed it in the service of propaganda by establishing public television rooms, which functioned as movie theaters showing



programs three nights a week. An early, and major, highlight of this enterprise was the live coverage of the 1936 Olympic Games in Berlin. Following World War II, German television was established as a mass medium. In 1950 a regular television schedule was instituted as a cooperative of all federal networks called ARD.

*Studio* depicts the set of the first German quiz show *What's My Line?*, an ARD program moderated by the journalist Robert Lembke (fig. 12). The object of this remarkably popular show

was to guess people's professions. Like other types of talk shows and docudramas, this one functioned as a guarantor of actual facts. It pretended to "reveal it all" by bringing insight into German society directly from the television studio to the viewers' homes. The French philosopher Jean Baudrillard contends that the effect of a system in which information comes mostly from the screen is analogous to what is known in anthropology as the Tasmaday effect, i.e., "the intrusion of the ethnologist [who] completely alters the culture that he observes."<sup>24</sup> When the television studio became the central stage of life events, life in turn became a virtual experience. The virtual effect in *Studio* is

12. Still from a March 28, 1978, episode of the television game show *What's My Line?* (*Was bin ich?*). Host Robert Lembke is shown with his assistant, Irene Neubauer. Collection the artist

accentuated by the brightly colored, striped background of the stage set, which is adapted from the television color bars.<sup>25</sup> Additionally, the set design summons up the festive spirit characteristic of the reconstruction period, exemplified in other parts of Europe as well, as, for instance, in Le Corbusier's famous *Unité d'Habitation* in Marseille of 1947–52. A postwar exercise in utopian urban planning, this building, with its rectilinear ferro-concrete grid, is warmed by rows of windows framed by red, blue, and yellow paint.



A more direct reference to art history is made by *Barn*, a picture based on Jackson Pollock's studio in the Springs area of East Hampton as it appeared in photographs taken by Hans Namuth from July through November 1950 (fig. 13). First published in 1951 in *Portfolio*, a short-lived journal of graphic design

13. Hans Namuth. Lee Krasner. 1950. Collection Center for Creative Photography, The University of Arizona, Tucson

edited by Alexey Brodovitch, art director of *Harper's Bazaar* and Namuth's teacher at the Design Laboratory at the New School for Social Research, these classic pictures of the "shaman's" workshop in which base materials of car enamel and radiator paint were transformed into expressive abstraction, have been broadly disseminated, beginning in the May issue of *Artnews* that year. In some of the pictures, Pollock's wife, the artist Lee Krasner, appears to be watching the painting process from a high stool. She was aware of the possibilities of media attention and encouraged Pollock to work with Namuth, whose black-and-white photographs and color film of 1950 contributed to the growth of the artist's worldwide fame, and changed the way the public perceived his art.

Of interest here is a comparison between Vik Muniz's *Action Photo No. 1 (After Hans Namuth)*, from his series *Pictures of Chocolate* of 1997–98 (fig. 14), and Demand's *Barn*. Both artists play with perceptions of appearance and reality, yet their images could not be more different. Using Bosco chocolate syrup because of its high viscosity, Muniz re-creates Namuth's photograph of Pollock "in action" as a drawing, which he then photographs. Defining a technique in which illusion functions as a way of letting the viewer in on a visual pun, Muniz conveys the ethos of Pollock's creative process. In contrast, by blotting out any traces of paint cans, brushes, sticks, paint splatters, and cigarette butts on the floor, Demand's image has just the opposite effect. It estranges the space of Pollock's presence, allowing it to retain a stripped-down, bare-bones aspect, evidenced only by light streaming in through the windows and in between the barn's wooden slats. Deliberately understated, *Barn* alludes to



14. Vik Muniz. *Action Photo No. 1 (After Hans Namuth)*. 1997. Silver dye bleach print (Cibachrome), 60 x 48" (152.5 x 122 cm). Collection the artist

all the images that turned Pollock into an American cult figure while deemphasizing their iconic quality.

A symbiotic work is *Stable*, which excerpts one component (the straw) from Aleksandr Rodchenko's photograph *Milking* of 1929 (fig. 15), an image of a Socialist stable with what was then advanced machinery for milking cows. Rodchenko's visual records were produced primarily for the press, as part of a series documenting a new political era in Soviet society: the launching of Joseph Stalin's first Five-Year Plan (1928–32). In the late 1920s, photographers like Rodchenko, Boris and Olga Ignatovich, Eleazer Langman, Georgy Petrusov, and Arkadii Shaikhet left their studios to chronicle the city's Constructivist buildings, factories, workers' clubs, communal kitchens, and power plants. Rodchenko asked artists to photograph "the best or the worst—but under no circumstances the middle ground" of

the *novyi byt* (new way of life).<sup>26</sup> Soviet life was filmed and photographed by both the artistic avant-garde and activist journalists who were committed to travel to various industrial sites and directly "intervene" in the process of production. As art historian Margarita Tupitsyn notes, they were charged with the task of representing labor as a modern and gratifying experience, thus narrowing the divide between author and proletariat.<sup>27</sup> In his 1934 lecture "The Author as Producer," the German literary critic Walter Benjamin (who had traveled to Moscow in the winter of 1926/27) refers to the artist's role as a producer rather than as a creator in society, arguing that the Socialist press played a decisive part in this change. The fervent focus of Soviet photographers on mass-media publications resulted in the decrease of



15. Aleksandr Rodchenko. *Milking*. 1929. Gelatin silver print, 8 3/4 x 11 3/4" (21 x 29.8 cm). Private collection



single-frame works in favor of "disposable objects composed during the process of making agitational posters and magazines."<sup>28</sup> Demand slyly points to the disposability of revolutionary photography by re-creating the setting of Rodchenko's picture out of discarded, shredded paper. The outcome, critic Nancy Princenthal writes, is as "tellingly depleted as a doctored Stalinist photograph, troublesome Party members excised one by one."<sup>29</sup> By deleting information, Demand deprives Rodchenko's image of its ideological message.

Even if not immediately apparent, Demand's aesthetic and, in particular, his photographs' eerie sense of loss that comes from his decision to exclude human figures suggest comparison with the works of French photographer Eugène Atget. Atget's pictures of historic Paris, many of which show empty streets and storefront windows, were praised by American and European artists, but for divergent reasons. Walker Evans, for one, responded to Atget's "lyrical understanding of the street, trained observation of it, special feeling for patina, eye for revealing detail, over all of which is thrown a poetry."<sup>30</sup> The Paris Surrealists, on the other hand, spoke of the sensation of the uncanny elicited by Atget's images. In a 1928 article written for *Variétés*, Albert Valentin remarked that "seen at closer range, these dead ends of the city outskirts registered by his lens constitute the natural theater of violent crime, of melodrama."<sup>31</sup>

While the profound quality of Atget's pictures of desolate streets was likened by the Surrealists to the scene of a crime, some of Demand's works actually depend on forensic photography. This is the case with *Corridor* of 1995 (page 49) and *Bathroom* of 1997 (page 65). *Corridor*, for instance, takes us to the hallway outside the Milwaukee apartment of serial killer Jeffrey Dahmer. Discussing this work, Demand notes: "Dahmer is a negative American idol. I saw a photo of his apartment on a plane once. I tried to get hold of it and went to Milwaukee . . . Then I went to the place [where] the house

was located."<sup>32</sup> Although there are no signs of violence, the obliquely framed, windowless, fluorescent-lit hallway with its shadowy recesses instills an unshakable feeling of foreboding. Leaving nothing to chance, the artist staged this image so that it appears to be both blatantly banal yet likely to provoke discomfort in the viewer. Since details that might otherwise explain the image are not provided, the viewer only experiences an incomplete suggestiveness that alludes to the work's meaning. The film theorist Peter Wollen observes that crime scenes present us with both an excess and a dearth of meaning, appearing prosaic on the surface, yet evoking a feeling of inexplicable dread and destruction.<sup>33</sup> Nondescript and spare, *Corridor* induces precisely such a disquieting mood.

*Bathroom* relates a contemporary event that similarly had been publicized in the media. The work re-creates the bathroom at the Beau-Rivage Hotel in Geneva where the German politician Uwe Barschel was found dead in 1987. Considered one of the most controversial political scandals in postwar Germany, the "Barschel affair" was recounted in the pages of the German magazines *Der Spiegel* and *Der Stern* (fig. 16). Barschel, the rising star of the Christian Democratic Party, resigned from office after he was publicly accused by an assistant of hiring a private detective to gather damaging information about a political opponent's sex life. Later, he was found dead. Concluding that it was a suicide, the Swiss police closed the case, but the German state attorney reopened it on the basis of new evidence provided by the press. Referring to the forensic photograph published in *Der Stern*, Demand comments: "If we consider the Barschel picture, it was the first reproduction that caused a big scandal. People started asking whether it should be printed at all. [They asked]



16. Uwe Barschel, minister-president of Schleswig-Holstein, dead in a room at the Hotel Beau-Rivage in Geneva, 1987, from *Der Stern*

[w]hether a photographer should be allowed to intrude and take a picture before the police had arrived. Much later, the untiring public prosecutor in Schleswig-Holstein [the state that Barschel represented] reexamined the unresolved questions on the basis of the photos. That means, the photo medium runs through the whole affair."<sup>34</sup>

Some of the pictures Demand used in his research show the politician lying fully dressed in the bathtub, reminiscent of one of art history's most notorious crime scenes, Jacques-Louis David's *The Death of Marat* of 1793. Others reveal a shoe abandoned on the floor and smudges on the bathmat that imply the possibility of a prior struggle. In Demand's picture all these indices are gone, except for the crease in the mat and the murky bathtub water. Unlike the sensational images of murder and mayhem captured in the harsh light of the exploding flash, of which the Austrian-born Weegee (Arthur Fellig) remains the undisputed master, Demand's reworking of crime photography is cool and uninflected. He mimics the style of journalistic photography but undermines its purported documentary significance. Akin to Gerhard Richter's *October 18, 1977* of 1988, a series of fifteen blurry monochrome paintings based on newspaper photographs of the incarceration and death of three members of the Baader-Meinhof group, Demand's *Bathroom* points to the evasions and ultimately to the failure of photography's attempt to understand the violence behind the apparent ambiguity of political life.

Demand's voracious pursuit of stories is also manifest in *Room* of 1996 (pages 58, 59), a photograph which offers a view into the hotel room of the prolific American writer and Scientology founder L. Ron Hubbard. The table with a typewriter, coffee cup, ashtray, and books, and the mess of boxes lying on the bed

hint at an active working life. In 1950 Hubbard published the much-disputed *Dianetics: The Modern Science of Mental Health*, with its iconoclastic thesis that psychosomatic symptoms could be relieved through the mental purging of harmful images. Further research led him to establish Scientology in 1954, which in the mid-1960s was highly controversial in the English-speaking world. A decade later the Church of Scientology came under the scrutiny of FBI agents seeking evidence of a suspected Church-run espionage network. Facing intense media interest and several lawsuits, Hubbard retired in great secrecy to a ranch in California, where he died in 1986. Demand's picture recreates the hotel room where Hubbard worked in 1972–73 when he was in New York. Like his other pictures, Demand's construct is full of artifice. The even studio lighting, the sharp creases in the white pillow in the foreground, and the



cold precision of the miscellanea found on the desk signal that this is not reality but a mock-up of it. Demand enfolds factual clues into the *trompe l'oeil* effects, which heighten the viewer's attention by making him doubt his first impressions of the image.

Among Demand's photographs of contemporary events, *Podium* of 2000 (pages 90, 91) alludes to the rise and fall of a dictator. The picture depicts the remake of a lectern used by the Serbian leader Slobodan Milošević during his presidential inauguration on June 28, 1989. In a televised late-Socialist speech, Milošević rekindled his nation's latent ethnic tensions by referring to the six-hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Kosovo, in which the Ottoman Empire overran the Serbs and Balkan allies on the battlefield at Amsselfeld. The lectern, adorned with red laurels in the official style of Socialist Realism, is placed before a massive sign that commemorates the dates 1389 and 1989. Undermining the viewer's expectations, 1989 celebrates neither the disintegration of Communism in Eastern

17. Stage from which Slobodan Milošević held his inaugural presidential speech on June 28, 1989. Amsselfeld, Kosovo



lies in the wit and sense of ambiguity that animate them. Through unnamed citations such as these, and by referring to the darker history of a nation's progress, Demand turns a prosaic signpost into the avatar of demonstrative politicization.

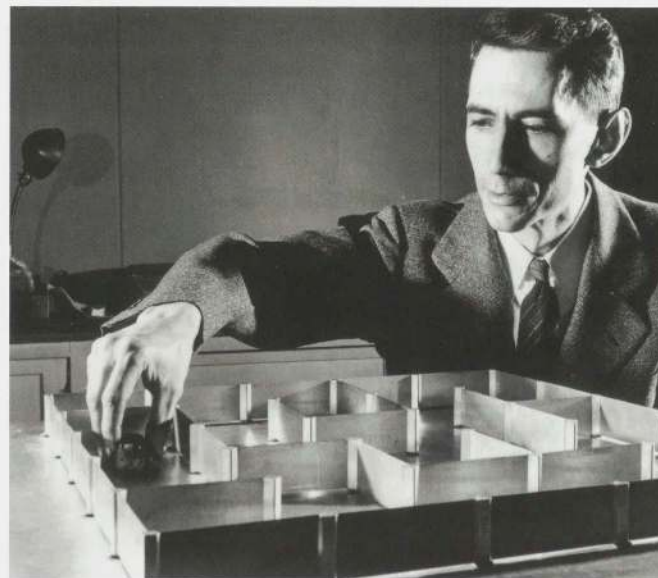
Another work with great political import is *Poll* of 2001 (page 99), which reconstitutes scenes from the havoc of the 2000 American presidential election and the media's attempts to report the results of the voting in Florida's Palm Beach County. Selected from a group of electronic pictures issued by Reuters (fig. 18), *Poll* shows a generic workplace with rows of desks topped by unplugged, numberless telephones, unused flashlights, empty archival boxes, uniform memo pads, and blank paper ballots carefully sorted into piles. The laborious process of manually recounting thousands of votes is echoed by Demand's meticulous reconstruction of the scene in paper. But, in the end, his paper world is just another record of the fables of democracy. Also informing *Poll* is an image of a maze-solving machine devised by the American mathematician Dr. Claude Elwood Shannon at the Bell Telephone Laboratories in 1952 (fig. 19). Shannon is shown with an electronic mouse, which he called Theseus, in one of his earliest attempts to "teach" a machine to "learn" its way around

18. Election counters examining one of more than 460,000 punch-card ballots with Republican and Democrat observers in Palm Beach County, Florida, on November 16, 2000. Reuters News Picture Service

Europe nor the formation of independent countries. Instead, it is used to resurrect nationalist sentiments concealing pernicious agendas. Milošević's efforts to obstruct the formation of a multiethnic civic identity by inciting bloody conflicts in Bosnia and Croatia would eventually earn him the nickname "Butcher of the Balkans." In making the sign, Demand relied not just on the publicized image of Milošević's tribune at Amsselfeld (fig. 17), but also on Walker Evans's *Truck and Sign* of 1930, an ironic picture of modern America-in-the-making that shows movers hauling a large neon sign that spells the word "DAMAGED." Demand's interest in Evans's arresting photographs of signs

a maze and one of his first experiments in artificial intelligence. Demand compares the electronic mouse to the mind of the voter who is preconditioned to think in a binary mode (voting for the Left or the Right, Democrat or Republican).

*Poll* was completed shortly after the elections, when the event was still fresh in voters' minds. Demand says, "I wanted to be so close to the real event that my picture of it and the media coverage would become indistinguishable."<sup>35</sup> *Kitchen* of 2004 (pages 114, 115) is a sort of sequel to *Poll*. This work seems to reconstruct a prosaic, messy kitchen, yet the image actually derives from a news photograph of Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein's hideaway in his hometown of Tikrit, where he took refuge during the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 (fig. 20). Shot from a high-angle perspective, the crammed cooking area with its aluminum oven, pink plastic pitcher, egg carton, bowl of soup, and sundry pots reads like a scrambled Purist still life. Once again, a mundane sight turns out to be the coded representation of a political incident.



19. Dr. Claude Elwood Shannon, a mathematician at the Bell Telephone Laboratories, May 10, 1952



If all the pictures discussed so far evoke real events, real issues, and real experiences, there are also a few that are more abstract and others that resist identification altogether. For example, the metallic, hard-edge makeup of *Laboratory* of 2000 (page 87) or the ethereal blue-light ambience of *Calculator* of 2001 (pages 94–95) look unfamiliar, in part because they relate to privileged sites of scientific experimentation. The optically mesmerizing walls and ceiling of *Laboratory* are modeled on an anechoic chamber, a soundproof room specially engineered by BMW to test the noise levels of cars as if they were speeding through an empty field devoid of wind or any other acoustic obstacles. Four microphones suspended from the ceiling are meant to capture the abstract sounds, thus turning the laboratory into a place of simulation. However, recognition of the subject involves a broader narrative, in this case, the interdependence between technology and warfare, which accounts for the fact that BMW once tested Nazi vehicles. The work precedes Demand's hyperbolic *Space Simulator* of 2003 (page 109), a structure based on a NASA photograph of the Apollo Lunar Module Mission Simulator (fig. 21), which was used in the 1960s

20. Kitchen of the farmhouse near Tikrit, Iraq, where former Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein hid, December 15, 2003. dpa Picture-Alliance

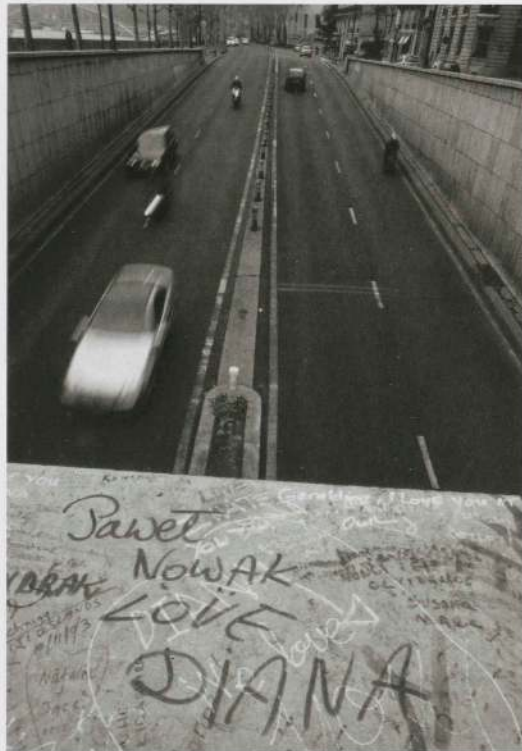
to train astronauts for the first travel in space. *Calculator*, with its room devoid of everything but overhead lighting, a few ventilation shafts in the walls, and bluish light emanating from the paneled floor, resembles nothing so much as the "light and space" projects of California artists Robert Irwin, Maria Nordman, James Turrell, and Douglas Wheeler. In fact, however, this image replicates the future IBM supercomputer, nicknamed Blue Gene, which, when completed in 2005, will process more than one quadrillion operations in a second. A project of the National Nuclear Security Administration, Blue Gene is planned for use in the investigation of areas such as cosmology, the behavior of high explosives, and laser-plasma interactions. By relinking photographic inquiry to scientific devices that exceed human vision, Demand acknowledges his interest in the logistics of perception in an age when what is perceived is increasingly mediated by technology.

Demand constantly rethinks visual perception, perhaps no more clearly than in two of his most Minimalist works, *Window* of 1998 (page 77) and *Glass I+II* of 2002 (page 101). The first subtly suggests Miesian fenestration, showing a



21. Apollo Lunar Module Mission Simulator, an astronaut training facility in Building 5, Manned Spacecraft Center, Houston, January 1967. NASA

window with its blinds drawn. The second is a diptych of two panes that appear irreparably shattered. Both images hinder vision and refuse to frame a view. Yet what obstructs vision paradoxically intensifies the act of looking. Demand toys with the age-old concept of *finestra aperta* (open window) that has haunted Western art since the invention of linear perspective by the Italian architect and writer Leon Battista Alberti in the fifteenth century. Alberti's idea was to construct an image that would resemble a view through a window. The window functions as a metaphor, allowing an idealized space to be constructed on a two-dimensional plane, with the regulating coordinates of this space centering on a single point of vision known as the vanishing point. Four centuries later, this system of rational perspective was subsumed in photography. Violating the illusion of the picture as a transparent view, Demand offers a model of vision that thrives on the frictions between opacity and intelligibility, fiction and veracity.



Through studied verisimilitude and notable craftsmanship, Demand produced a few scenes of nature that again unmoor the traditional mode through which photography represents observed reality. Among them, *Clearing* of 2003 (pages 104–105), a stunningly lifelike forest close-up that re-creates a section of the Giardini in Venice, is a tour de force. Demand's photograph of the model—

made of 270,000 individually-cut leaves of green paper—is cinematic in its panoramic scale and dramatic use of light. It is also allegorical, harking back to the tradition of late-nineteenth-century Northern Romantic painting and, specifically, the artist says, to Arnold Böcklin and Hans von Marées, whose dense and spaceless primeval landscapes reflect the mysteries of man's relation to the natural world. Playing on the nostalgia for a landscape tradition that evoked a remote Arcadia, Demand suggests that not even the natural environment

should be taken as a given. Although in its detailed rendition *Clearing* conjures photography's early ties to empiricism, its ersatz sunlight breaking through the multihued, flickering leaves bears a suspicious resemblance to calendar photography. To achieve the effect of sunlight, Demand collaborated with a professional cameraman, employing an illumination device of 10,000 watts, commercially known as "Arri Sun," that is specially used in the film industry. As with so many of his other models, the elaborate fabrication of *Clearing* functions like a movie set, lasting only as long as the shoot.

●

Given the cinematic quality of Demand's photographs, it is not surprising that he decided to set some of them in motion, producing to date five 35mm films. His first, *Tunnel* of 1999 (pages 120–21), makes use of a thirty-two-meter-long cardboard model of a two-lane underpass divided in the middle by a series of fake concrete pylons. The film consists of a tracking shot from a driver's perspective through this empty tunnel. Instead of replaying the same footage in a loop, the artist filmed twelve trips with the camera mounted onto a special-effects dolly, its speed altered with each take. The image, enhanced by a computer-generated sound track of a moving car, is, in the words of critic Adrian Searle, "like a Möbius strip," reminiscent of Giorgio de Chirico's haunting milieu, "a mental space of interminable foreboding."<sup>36</sup> It is also eerily evocative of the media-blitz reportage covering the death of Princess Diana of Wales in a car crash in 1997 in the Alma tunnel in Paris (fig. 22). Since journalists were not allowed to photograph or videotape inside the tunnel, the only pictures available were of its points of entry and exit, never of the drive itself. "What I wanted to do," Demand explains, is "connect the two places of main reportage into an unbroken chain of pictures,"<sup>37</sup> thus implying the journey that took place, but remained invisible.

22. Messages left above the tunnel where Princess Diana of Wales and Dodi Al-Fayed were killed in a car crash in Paris on August 31, 1997

His second film, *Escalator* of 2000 (page 123), is a deceptively simple animation of two side-by-side escalators. Twenty-four individual stills were needed to make one second of film. Projected in a continuous loop, the film records the ascending and descending steps of the escalators as always in motion, triggering in the viewer a sense of expectation about the next traveler who could appear in the frame. But the film, like Demand's photographs, includes no people. It re-creates a location near Charing Cross in London where a surveillance camera captured a gang of teenagers shortly after they robbed two men and threw them into the Thames in the summer of 1999. The source for this work is a video recording made by a closed-circuit security camera, which was used as evidence in the trial of the gang members. An invention of the late nineteenth century, the escalator was initially conceived as an amusement ride at Coney Island, but soon assumed its present function. Located primarily in transit zones and often monitored by cameras, it exercises control over individuals so that "criminals who were hurrying a moment ago suddenly stand still and can easily be identified on the film recordings."<sup>38</sup> In *Escalator*, the camera, with its intent to provide information, underscores the complicity between photography or, in this case, video, and disciplinary authority.

The notion of surveillance is also critical to *Yard* of 2001 (pages 126–27). Suffused in a noirish atmosphere, this minute-and-a-half film consists of a slow pan across the façade of a building with a fenced-in backyard. Flashlights illuminate the building, otherwise immersed in the dark of night, as if paparazzi were taking shots in quick succession. The clicks of cameras and a series of footsteps can be heard on the sound

track. This suspenseful, nocturnal scene is intended to recall the steps taken by Milošević in June 2001 after his arrest on charges of war crimes against humanity. *Yard* is based on a news clip broadcast by several television stations, which showed Milošević being handed over to authorities at the International Criminal Court at The Hague. A sequel to Demand's *Podium*, the film offers a voyeur's view through the fence in front of the bare wall of the prison where Milošević was to spend his days. Assisted by only a minimal arsenal of cues, the film elicits a feeling of unease.



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A very different tone, slightly nostalgic, is set by *Recorder* of 2002 (page 124), a film conceived in response to a promotional clip made by Capitol Records to advertise the postponed release of *Smile*, the Beach Boys' supposedly lost album of 1967. Made from a series of photographs of a studio tape recorder with the position of the reels slightly altered in each shot so as to create the illusion of movement, this film is accompanied by the spell-binding, tremulous sound of a piano. By reconstructing one of the greatest "lost" hits of popular music, Demand extends his interest in artifice and mediation to the apparatus used for the recording. Among the visual sources

23. BBC radiophonic studio, June 29, 1965. Delia Derbyshire is editing a musical note on tape, while Desmond Briscoe consults the score.

recorded on the tape deck, [and] the same thing would later be played back on the turntable. But what listeners heard on these two albums [the Beach Boys' *Pet Sounds* and The Beatles' *Revolver*] for the first time was a synthetically constructed sound—that music only existed in that particular mix of tracks. The manipulation was now the original.<sup>39</sup> Put otherwise, synthetic sounds, like constructed photographs, assert their own claim to authenticity.

Demand's most recent film, *Trick* of 2004 (page 128–29), refers back to the beginnings of film. As is well known, the moving picture grew out of stop-action photography, perhaps best seen in the work of Eadweard Muybridge in the late 1870s. From the first moments of film, the impulse to document reality was matched by the camera's special effects (dissolves, superimpositions, fast and slow motion, freeze-frames), which led to the early genre of trick films. Based on one of the first films of the Lumière brothers, titled *Turning Plates* (*Assiettes Tournantes*), of 1896, Demand's *Trick* re-creates a sequence in which a performer executes a stunt by spinning a set of bowls and plates on a tabletop. The illusionist structure of trick films was further perfected by Georges Méliès, a magician who owned the Théâtre Robert-Houdin, named for the legendary French conjuror. A pioneer of cinematic effects, Méliès established the basis for what would become the avant-garde film in Europe in the 1920s, the experimental film in America in the 1940s and 1950s, and the international independent film in the late 1960s and 1970s. Tapping into the whimsy of Lumières' and Méliès's non-narrative films, Demand's *Trick* enhances the artifice of the illusion by presenting the spinning dishes in the absence of a performer.

The film is closely related to Demand's photograph *Ghost* of 2003 (page 107), in which inanimate objects such as a pot, a sheet of paper, and a pair of

scissors levitate above a desk without explanation. Deriving its inspiration from the story of a poltergeist in action published in 1955 in the French tabloid weekly *Samedi-Soir* and the *London Weekend Mail* (fig. 24), *Ghost* brings to mind a host of other illusionist stories from the history of still and moving pictures: nineteenth-century spirit photography focused on para-

normal activities; Hans Richter's first Surrealist film, *Ghosts Before Breakfast* (*Vormittagsspuk*), of 1927, which was inscribed by the recurring image of floating derby hats; and Bernhard and Anna Blume's "photo actions" of the 1980s, in which domestic, quotidian objects like potatoes suddenly assume a life of their own amidst German middle-class surroundings. In spite of these formal links, however, it would be erroneous to say that Demand's *Ghost* and *Trick* are about illusionism. Rather, what comes into view in these—as in all of his works—is literally a ghost: an afterimage of a situation, an event, or a place

that continues to bewilder us with its presence long after its original manifestation disappeared from the scene. In an era when even the most sensationalist stories have only a brief shelf life, Demand's photographs and films offer a paradigm for memory premised on a new way of looking at what is presented to us as "truth." His images of paper constructions set out not so much to determine what truth was in a historical sense (since that context is irretrievably lost) but to put it to work again.

Demand does this by presenting photography as something constructed, not natural. Clearly, his approach draws concur-



24. "Mystery of the Invisible Hand," from *London Weekend Mail*, May 12–16, 1955

rently on the montage techniques of the Constructivist project of the 1920s and on the spare syntax of Conceptualist art practices of the 1960s (which explains his interest in both Lissitzky and Ruscha) while pointing in a new direction. The direction of his interrogation into truth takes as its subject the media-based perceptions of reality. As we have seen, the certainty of this "reality" is destabilized, however, as soon as an auxiliary reality—the world of paper and cardboard constructs—is detected. But since he never exhibits the paper mock-ups, we can never entirely conclude the former reality as an illusion. When looking at a Demand picture, the eye is subjected to the unrelenting act of having to decode two kinds of "reality." In this way, the artist reinscribes his documentary sources. The removal of figures, clinical handling, lack of detail, shallowness of depth, and cool and utterly uniform lighting call into question the pretense that such sources can tell the truth of the events they have in principle objectively documented. As such, it seems, Demand ensures that photography becomes a vehicle of consciousness as much as a form of testimony to seeing anew.

#### Notes

1. Vik Muniz and Thomas Demand, "A Notion of Space," *Blind Spot*, no. 8 (1996): n.p.
2. The models are built life-size (1:1).
3. The camera accommodates either a five-by-seven or an eight-by-ten-inch transparency.
4. Unless otherwise indicated, all comments by Demand were made in conversation with the author in 2004.
5. At the same time, the initials RAF evoked the Royal Air Force that bombed Germany in World War II. For an excellent account of the Baader-Meinhof story, see Robert Storr, *Gerhard Richter: October 18, 1977* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2000).
6. The exception was *Thirtyfour Parking Lots in Los Angeles*, for which Ruscha hired commercial photographer Art Alanis to take the shots during a helicopter ride over downtown Los Angeles on a Sunday morning, when the parking lots were empty.
7. Peter Galassi, *Walker Evans & Company* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2000), p. 36.
8. Robert Storr, *On the Edge: Contemporary Art from the Werner and Elaine Dannheisser Collection* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 1997), p. 44.
9. See Michael Wetzel, "Der Tatort als Baustelle," in *Thomas Demand* (Freiburg: Kunstverein Freiburg, 1998), p. 19.
10. Heinrich Heine quoted in Michael G. Levine, *Writing Through Repression: Literature, Censorship, Psychoanalysis* (Baltimore and London: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1994), p. 1.
11. See Robert Darnton, "Censorship, a Comparative View: France, 1789–East Germany, 1989," *Representations*, no. 49 (winter 1995): 40–60.
12. Andreas Ruby, "Memoryscapes," *Parkett*, no. 62 (2001): 126.
13. See Klaus Theweleit, *Male Fantasies* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1989), and Hal Foster, "Armor Fou," *October*, no. 56 (spring 1991): 65–97.
14. Kirk Varnedoe, *A Fine Disregard: What Makes Modern Art Modern* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1990), p. 152.
15. Peter Adam, *Art of the Third Reich* (New York: Harry N. Abrams, 1995), p. 216.
16. Iain Boyd Whyte, "National Socialism and Modernism," in *Art and Power: Europe Under the Dictators 1930–45* (Stuttgart: Oktagon Verlag, 1995), p. 269.
17. Alla Efimova, "Boris Groys. The Total Art of Stalinism: Avant-Garde, Aesthetic Dictatorship, and Beyond" (book review), *Art Bulletin* 24, no. 4 (December 1992): 691.
18. Adolf Hitler quoted in Vittorio Magnago Lampugnani, *Architecture and City Planning in the Twentieth Century* (New York: Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1983), p. 150.
19. Adam, *Art of the Third Reich*, p. 209.
20. James D. Herbert, "The View of the Trocadéro: The Real Subject of the Exposition Internationale, Paris, 1937," *Assemblage*, no. 26 (April 1995): 107.
21. Demand quoted in François Quintin, "There is No Innocent Room," in *Thomas Demand* (New York: Thames & Hudson, 2000), p. 62.
22. Muniz and Demand, "A Notion of Space," n.p.
23. *MoMA Highlights* (New York: The Museum of Modern Art, 2004), p. 118.
24. Jean Baudrillard, "The Timișoara Syndrome: The Télécratie and the Revolution," in *Columbia Documents of Architecture and Theory*, vol. 2 (New York: Columbia University Press, 1992), p. 63.
25. The stripped, colored background echoes the cool of Pop and innovative hard-edge abstraction of the 1960s. In addition, it provides a compelling point of comparison with the color experiments of Bauhaus theorist Josef Albers, the intense spectrum paintings of Ellsworth Kelly from 1968 on, and the impersonal facture of Gerhard Richter's Color Charts from the 1960s and 1970s.
26. Aleksandr Rodchenko quoted in Margarita Tupitsyn, *The Soviet Photograph, 1924–1937* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1996), p. 47.
27. *Ibid.*, pp. 47–48.
28. *Ibid.*, p. 63.
29. Nancy Princenthal, "Thomas Demand: Paper Chases," *Art/Text*, no. 67 (November 1999–January 2000): 69; reprinted as "Paper Chases," in *Thomas Demand* (Dresden: Oktogon der Hochschule für Bildende Künste, 2000), p. 14.
30. Walker Evans quoted in Maria Morris Hamburg, "A Portrait of the Artist," in Maria Morris Hamburg et al., *Walker Evans* (New York: The Metropolitan Museum of Art, 2000), pp. 21–22.
31. Albert Valentin quoted in Molly Nesbit, *Atget's Seven Albums* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 1992), p. 196.
32. Demand quoted in Ruedi Widmer, "Building the Scene of the Crime," *Camera Austria*, no. 66 (July 1999): 11.
33. Peter Wollen, "Vectors of Melancholy," in Ralph Rugoff, *Scene of the Crime* (Cambridge and London: The MIT Press, 1997), p. 25.
34. Demand quoted in Widmer, "Building the Scene of the Crime," 10.
35. Thomas Demand, "A Thousand Words," *Artforum* 39, no. 9 (May 2001): 145.
36. Adrian Searle, "Every Picture Tells a Porkie," *The Guardian*, March 2, 1999, p. 10.
37. Demand quoted in Jason Oddy, "Copy This!," *Modern Painters* 14, no. 1 (spring 2001): 39.
38. Holger Liebs, "Out of Time," in *Thomas Demand: Report* (Hanover: Sprengel Museum, 2001), p. 19.
39. Thomas Demand, "Wa Halla Loo Lay" (unpublished manuscript).





## Photographic Memory

Five days after the artist Shanghai Buns was arrested in a condition the newspapers reflexively called "scandalous," I arrived at the Fasano Hotel, in São Paulo, Brazil, to try to find out what had happened. The papers in question weren't American but German. What did Americans care about postwar German artists? Even in the land of his birth (Shanghai was born Detlef Beerbaum in Frankfurt an der Oder, near the Polish border, in 1944), the stories of his arrest appeared in the *Frankfurter Allgemeine*, *Süddeutsche Zeitung*, and *Die Zeit*, as well as the papers of his adopted Berlin, but for the most part weren't picked up by the local press of Thuringia or Mecklenburg-Vorpommern. Shanghai was a big-time artist, internationally known, collected by museums and Mexican multimillionaires, but he wasn't a football star or an aging Schlager singer, and so his demise under unflattering circumstances (the cocaine, the remunerated ladies) was of interest mainly to fine-art photographers and bitter feuilletonists.

I was in Santiago when news of the arrest hit. Alexander Freund, Shanghai's Düsseldorf gallerist, reached me at the home of the Chilean novelist Nestor Cantoral, whom I was interviewing for an American literary magazine.

"Martin?"

"Yes."

"You don't know the news?"

He proceeded to fill me in on the essentials. Sometime in the early morning hours of June 9, 2004, the police were called to the Fasano Hotel by the night manager, a Señor Leonidas Sottomayor. Guests had been complaining about noise coming from Shanghai's suite. Sottomayor called Shanghai to ask what was going on. According to the papers, Shanghai had responded, "Tell them it's fame. They love fame, don't they? Well, this is what it sounds like."

The manager called the police. The officers rode the elevator to the eleventh floor and rang the doorbell of Shanghai's suite. After receiving no response, they knocked, and finally entered with the aid of a master key provided by housekeeping. Inside they allegedly found Shanghai Buns, one of Germany's preeminent contemporary artists, hunched naked over a coffee table heaped with cocaine, while nine street prostitutes, his last assistants, were busy smearing feces on the walls of the room.

"It can't be true," said Alexander.

"I'm shocked."

"People are saying the girl's father is behind it. He blames Shanghai for what happened. First he prints lies in his newspapers, and now he's having his speakers repeat them on TV. He owns the entire media in Brazil."

This call came at a difficult time in my own life. I was recently separated from my wife and, more as cause than result, was drinking too much. In the daytime I found myself unable to write, prone to a wandering attention span nothing like my usual plodding singlemindedness. I'd taken the Santiago assignment to force myself to work on something small and containable with a looming deadline. I admired Cantoral's novels but, on meeting him, found him to be a self-satisfied bore. He wore a ridiculous poncho, Gaucho-style, and had a spaniel's breath. Fortunately he drank too. We'd start cracking open the wine bottles at lunch and, by adhering to this method, I managed to get through the hours in his company.

At night, in the cabin where I slept, I thought about my wife and children. They were in Chicago, having just moved from Germany. My sons don't look anything like me. People are always surprised I'm the father. And now I was a faraway father, plus drunk, in a country where it was winter in the summertime.

"Shanghai keeps calling me," Alexander continued on the phone. "He calls me in the middle of the night. He won't tell me where he is. When I ask about the trial he avoids the question. All he wants to know about is his auction prices."

He may go to jail for twenty years, Martin. And he acts totally unconcerned.”

I agreed that this was alarming.

“Go to São Paulo,” Alexander urged. “You’re close by. See if Shanghai needs help. He’s a great artist. We have to save him.”

The next day I left for São Paulo. I made my apologies to Cantoral—he gave me a signed book as a parting gift, mistaking me for a real admirer—and an hour later I landed in that vast, overbuilt, overgrown city. The fourth largest city in the world, home to twenty-one million people. Somewhere among them, Shanghai Buns was hiding.

I should explain his nickname. It doesn’t sound quite so silly in German. Shanghai came by his sobriquet during an art-school trip to Communist China in 1965. At that point young Detlef was a committed Marxist. He specialized in tiny, hyperrealist sculptures of workers in the DDR. A Trabant factory the size of a shoebox. A wheat combine that fit in your palm. In China he photographed noodle shops with the intent of making miniatures of them. The quiet, hermetic atmosphere of those photos presaged his later work, though at that point Shanghai was unaware of his real talent. In those apprentice photos you can hear his talent trying to get his attention. I’m over here, his talent keeps saying.

There wasn’t much nightlife in Mao’s Beijing. One night the German art students threw a party in their room. Free of their minders, they began to imitate their Chinese accents. A bottle of plum wine made the rounds. Shanghai got up and performed a rude dance. By the end of the trip he was no longer Detlef Beerbaum but had become Shanghai Buns.

Later, when he became a dissident, and especially after the Wall fell, the nickname had an absurdist, showbiz ring to it, which didn’t hurt.

Shanghai Buns was part of the generation including Baselitz and Penck, though his work was nothing like theirs. Where they were romantic, mystical, and expressionistic, Buns was rational, enigmatic, and self-abnegating. His own artistic epiphany had come in his last year of art school. During a studio visit, a professor had been unimpressed with Shanghai’s latest miniature: a civic swimming pool, or Stadtbad, ten inches long, made of balsa wood, with a strip of cellophane suggesting water. Before leaving, the professor noticed a photo-

graph Shanghai had taken of the model. In the photo the swimming pool had been ingeniously lit to make the water appear real and liquid. “The further you get away,” the professor said, “the closer you are.”

Shanghai switched to photography after that. He began to document his models and never again displayed them. He could spend months making a model, but when he was finished shooting it, he demolished it and sent it out with the trash.

In 1999 I came with my wife and two sons to Berlin on a grant from the Deutscher Akademischer Austausch Dienst. At the art parties, I noticed him: a gray-haired man with a long, alert face and huge eyeglasses. Shanghai was rail thin and favored black leather trousers. He always seemed to be staring at me, but I soon learned that this was just an effect of his thick lenses, which magnified his blue eyes.

Shanghai’s earliest memory, in fact, was of losing his glasses. He was only three or four—and already myopic—and he was standing on the deck of a ferry boat during a family vacation. The boat was plying the Rhine. Shanghai became curious to see what the water looked like below. Were there fishes? Rhine maidens? He stuck his head out over the rail and in the next second his glasses slipped off his head and plummeted into the water.

I always thought this memory was the key to Shanghai’s art. The world losing focus. The anxiety involved in that. To be small and crushable and, on top of it all, not to be able to see. I feel like that now. Shanghai, from the beginning.

The terrible way everything keeps blurring together in my head, images from last night’s news, the trials and murders of the century, all going fast, and what was my phone number, and where did I leave my keys, and who was I married to, and did my children remember me? The world is being recorded with greater and greater efficiency. Soon everything that happens, in every bathroom, garage, or athletic stadium, will be on tape. And through repetition and fidelity to its verisimilitude the world is quickly passing into mist.

Give Shanghai some paper and glue and he could make anything. Give him lights and a fog machine and he could make it look real. But counterfeiting wasn't the point. Shanghai took pictures not of things but of the essence of things. In order to do this he had to construct, out of commonplace materials—cardboard, tinfoil, train-set lights—the locales he dematerialized on film.

And so: looking at a Shanghai Buns, you're there and you're not there. And isn't that where we all are? A memory of a time or a place isn't that time or place, and even as the mind grapples to perceive the present there's the inevitable filtering of consciousness: our brains constructing a portrait of reality. This real irreality was the quarry Shanghai's work sought.

His early photographic memories came from childhood. My favorite piece shows an empty box suspended in fabricated trees. *Treehouse*, it's called. Shanghai only used one-word titles. Everything had to be reduced to its essentials.

He was mildly famous and then very famous and then very, very rich. Shanghai began to be something of a celebrity in Germany. He dated models. He appeared in red-carpet shots in *Bunte*. Rumors claimed he was abusing drugs. I never saw any of this. With me he was always sane, clear-headed, though oddly impenetrable. He drove me around Berlin in his black 7-Series BMW. The car was equipped with the first DVD navigation system I'd ever seen. As we raced around Alexanderplatz, the car spoke to Shanghai in commanding tones and showed our progress through a simulated, Christmas-colored city.

And then Shanghai left Berlin and everything came apart.

The facts, as best I can assemble them, are as follows:

In September of 2003 Shanghai went to Brazil to attend the São Paulo Bienal. The work he showed was a billboard, fifty feet long and thirty feet wide, of a deep green jungle. Fuzzy vines

hung down from the leaf canopy and mist infiltrated the trees. I'd seen this rain forest being made. In the airplane hangar of Shanghai's Pankow studio, fifteen assistants had labored like elves, taping, twisting, and glueing paper leaves to cardboard trees, while Shanghai shouted to still other assistants hanging lights above. *Jungle* consisted of twenty-one trees bearing forty-one thousand two hundred and eleven leaves, at a cost of sixty-one thousand euros.

From a certain perspective, it was a great success. Shanghai's rain forest stood in the middle of a city block. People walked past his trees—and took them for trees. It was a case of perfect mimicry, unappreciated genius.

The day after the work was installed, in the elevator at the Fasano, a voice spoke behind him.

"I like your jungle," said Isabel Pereira.

"So you're the one who noticed it."

"Yes. I did. Do you want to know how?"

"How?"

"It had no smell."

Photographs of Isabel Pereira aren't hard to come by. The daughter of Moacyr Pereira, the Brazilian media tycoon, Isabel often appeared in the society pages. By the age of thirty-six she had already married and divorced two national-team soccer players, appeared in a soap opera (produced by her father's company) as a wayward nurse, and settled down to being the most famous weatherwoman in Brazil. Night after night, in her leopard-skin dresses, her dangerous pumps, she prognosticated a day of rain or a day of sun but nothing ever in between.

In Berlin I'd met a number of Brazilian-German couples and none of them was any more mismatched than Isabel and Shanghai. The otherness was what sweetened the togetherness. Isabel was loud, lively, funny, coarse; she believed in the spirit world. Shanghai spoke in quiet tones about theory and rarely moved his head. His attention was often taken up with high-tech gadgetry: a microwave wristwatch, a cell phone that doubled as a shaver. Isabel told him she didn't like his work. "It's too cold for a hottie like me." She didn't much care for art in general.

When the Bienal ended, Shanghai stayed on in São Paulo. He rented an apartment and a studio.

Isabel had other entanglements, of course. For a while it was unclear what

would happen. In October Shanghai e-mailed me: "Maybe she goes back to her old boyfriend. I don't know." He was acting stoic but I could tell he was panicked at the thought of losing her.

Sometime in December, Isabel officially broke it off with her fiancé. Shanghai and Isabel left the city to spend time in the coastal, colonial town of Parati, where Isabel's father had a house.

During their time in Parati they left the high-walled villa only twice, once to go swimming in a natural pool, and once to have dinner. At the *Restaurante da Matriz*, on the night of December 15, Isabel asked the waiter to bring over a bottle of *pinga con cobra*. Curled at the bottom of the bottle was a dead snake.

"The local aphrodisiac," Isabel said.

"I don't normally like snakes," said Shanghai, putting an eye to the bottle. "But I have a feeling this one might be different."

With her eyes never leaving his, Isabel lifted the bottle to her lips and drank.

"Is it working?" asked Shanghai.

"It always works."

"So this would be a good time to ask you to marry me."

The last e-mail I received from him went as follows: "Am engaged. Wedding June in Rio. You're invited."

Two days later, as they drove back to São Paulo, a soft-drink truck strayed into their lane, forcing them from the road. Their car went over the side of the mountain and plunged fifty feet before it was stopped by trees. Shanghai, at the wheel, survived. Isabel did not.

Señor Pereira barred Shanghai from Isabel's funeral. There were reports that the patriarch sent his bodyguards to rough Shanghai up, threaten his life, and demand that he leave the country. But Shanghai stayed on at the Fasano through the winter and spring.

To his friends in Berlin he went silent. Gone were his customary e-mails, his cell-phone calls. When we called the Fasano he didn't answer.

But he was still working. His final piece, shown at London's White Cube in April of 2004, wasn't a photograph but a film. It opens with a view from inside a car, at night. The windshield is black. The audio brings the sound of shifting gears; gradually the windshield fills with milky light. Just when it appears that the viewer will see where he is, the camera swerves. And then all is silent flight. Upward at first, toward still more light, and then finally down into darkness.

The first time I saw the film I thought it was the same crash over and over again. But after a while I noticed little differences: the angle of descent changed, the tires shrieked more or less loudly. The nightmare is relived over and over again with slight alterations. After a while you realize that the camera is looking out from the passenger's seat. Isabel's side. You accompany her down to death.

Shanghai didn't show up for the opening of this last work, *Mountain*. A month later, he was arrested on drug and procurement charges.

São Paulo was surprisingly cold the night I arrived. A car from the Fasano shuttled me in from the airport and then I, like Shanghai nine months earlier, entered the tasteful, welcoming, dark amber-lit bar inside the front doors. I had a drink to brace myself for what I might discover.

At the check-in desk around back I asked for Leo Sottomayor, the man who'd been working the night Shanghai was arrested. He came over smiling. I asked Leo if I could stay in room 1102.

The smiling stopped.

"Is there a reason you prefer that particular room?"

"A friend of mine stayed here," I said.

"The artist?"

"Yes."

"We are no longer renting that room."

"Can I see it?"

When Leo hesitated, I explained, "Mr. Buns, the artist, has disappeared. No one knows where he is. I thought he might have left something behind."

"Your friend left far too much behind," said Leo.

"I'm in contact with his gallerist in Germany. If there are damages, I'm sure he'll find a way to settle them with you."

Leo walked to the end of the desk and returned with a box. "Your friend left this," he said. "That's all."

Inside the box was a bottle of *pinga con cobra*, along with a letter. The letter was addressed to me.

After taking down the address and phone number of Alexander Freund, Leo came from behind the desk and escorted me up to Shanghai's old suite. It was bare, empty, the carpet removed, the walls freshly repainted.

"It was disgusting what they did here," Leo said. "We have to make again the whole room."

"So the reports are true?" I asked.

Leo paused before replying. "It was all in the papers, wasn't it?"

From childhood I've had a phobia for snakes. When I checked into my own room—one floor down from Shanghai's suite—I opened the box again and took out the bottle. The seal was unbroken. The snake floated at its full length, its mouth open in what looked like protest. I shuddered and put the bottle back into the box. I closed it, wrapped it in a hotel towel, and put it in my suitcase.

The letter from Shanghai was brief. "Hi there. Welcome to Brazil. (I knew you would come.)" Below was a São Paulo address.

It took a half hour, by cab, to get there. Shanghai was staying in a modest rented house in a neighborhood far from the center. Fruit trees hunched in the front yard, and there was a smell of equatorial mildew. When Shanghai opened the door I almost didn't recognize him. He was grayer, fatter. He wasn't wearing his glasses, which made him look tiny-eyed and panicked, weaker-seeming. The Poindexter effect of his bulging brow no longer had its former power. Shanghai looked babylike, undefended. But his voice had the same light cheer.

"Hi there," he said, as always.

I moved to embrace him. He permitted the briefest contact.

"Sick," he said. "Don't want you to catch what I have."

"What do you have?"

"I have to make a list."

He'd brought with him his usual paraphernalia: computers, recording equipment, cameras. Three computer screens glowed in the living room, providing the only light, but Shanghai seemed uninterested in them. He sat in a chair and motioned for me to sit, too.

"Alexander sent me here. He's worried about you."

"Isn't that nice in a gallerist?"

"What about the trial?"

He waved this away. "That's nonsense."

"Alexander wants to know if you need any help. Do you have a lawyer?"

"That's all in order. I have a New York lawyer."

There was silence. In a softer voice I said, "I'm sorry about what happened. The accident."

His body registered my words by further shrinking into itself. After a while he said, "Did you get my present?"

"The snake in the bottle? Yes."

"Did you try it?"

"I don't like snakes," I said.

Shanghai stared out the dirty window and said, "I don't like them either."

"I saw *Mountain*," I told him.

"And?"

"Personal reaction or critical?"

"Critical, of course."

"I think it's a tremendous piece."

"I never saw it in the space," said Shanghai. "First time I didn't install a show myself."

"It's not the same crash over and over, is it?"

"No, it's always a little bit different. Like it is in your head."

"The camera's in the passenger seat in one of the sequences."

Shanghai nodded.

"I thought maybe you wanted to be in Isabel's place."

"No, that's too simple. That's how a writer would see it." He frowned, sat up straight, a bit of his old argumentativeness returning. "I only wanted to repeat something that happened, but not by repeating it in a normal way but by changing places with the elements in the thing. That way I get a proper distance

from the event, so that it's not a memory anymore but it's also not happening in real time like in performance art or something. Nobody is there to see what's happening but still it's happening."

Shanghai had often explicated his work for me before, and as usual I understood only about half of what he said. As usual, too, I knew that he had spent a long time thinking about *Mountain*, working out every problem from a technical and theoretical angle, and that the final product had left nothing to chance. I knew, in other words, that any confusion was my own problem.

So I stuck to what I did know. "You shouldn't blame yourself for the accident."

"Tell Alexander not to worry about me. The trial is nonsense, I get off easy, and then when that's all sorted I come back to Berlin and we all have a schnitzel together."

Shanghai, who could fake anything, now tried to fake a smile.

"You can go now," he said. "I'm tired."

I left São Paulo, which was a mistake. Two days later the artist Shanghai Buns was found dead in that very same rented house. The German newspapers claimed it was suicide, motivated by his upcoming trial and likely imprisonment. He was financially ruined, too. The scandal hadn't increased the value of his work at auction but devalued it.

Alexander Freund, who later flew down to Brazil to claim Shanghai's body, said the coroner put the cause of death as a drug overdose. Shanghai was terminally ill, it turned out. The cocaine he was taking may have been a way to dull the pain.

Shanghai's death was reported in the papers the day I arrived back in Berlin. I telephoned my wife with the news. In a high-rise by Lake Michigan, an apartment I'd never seen, she answered. Her voice sounded as though it were filtering through all that lake water to get to me. When I asked to speak to my sons, she put them on, one after the other. They sounded happy with their new home and eager to get back to playing. My wife took the receiver again.

"How long do I have to stay away?" I asked.

"I don't know," she said. And then: "Maybe forever."

Later, while gray rain fell in Berlin, I began unpacking. At the bottom of my suitcase I found the box wrapped in the hotel towel. Inside was the *pinga con cobra*. Without thinking I unscrewed the cap, breaking the paper seal. Closing my eyes to overcome my fear of snakes, I drank a large gulp, tasting greedily for venom.

But the bottle was full of water. I put my eyes to the glass and stared closely at the snake inside. Near the open jaw I saw a loose thread and, in the bulge this created, a tiny patch of white stuffing.

What I was holding in my hands was Shanghai's last model. It was different from the others. He hadn't stripped it of specificity but had labored to make it a perfect replica of the bottle of *pinga* he'd shared with Isabel the night before she died. Inside the bottle was a memory Shanghai couldn't bear to have. And this memory, which had nothing to do with me, was now, magically and sadly, my own.







**The Photographs**

Plates are arranged chronologically and then alphabetically within each year.  
Unless otherwise noted, all works are in the collection of the artist.

**Grand Piano (Flügel). 1993**

Chromogenic color print

24<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 61<sup>7</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" (62 x 156 cm)



**Brenner Highway (Brenner Autobahn).** 1994

Chromogenic color print

59 1/8 x 46 7/16" (150 x 118 cm)



**Diving Board (Sprungturm). 1994**

Chromogenic color print

59 1/16 x 46 7/16" (150 x 118 cm)







**Room (Raum).** 1994

Chromogenic color print

6'1/4" x 8' 10 5/16" (183.5 x 270 cm)

Detail



**Archive (Archiv). 1995**

Chromogenic color print

6' 1/4" x 7' 7/4" (183.5 x 233 cm)



**Corridor (Flur). 1995**

Chromogenic color print

6' 1/4" x 8' 10 5/16" (183.5 x 270 cm)



**Office (Büro).** 1995

Chromogenic color print

6' 1/2" x 7' 10 1/2" (183.5 x 240 cm)





**Staircase (Treppenhaus), 1995**

Chromogenic color print

59 1/16 x 46 7/16" (150 x 118 cm)





**Drafting Room (Zeichensaal). 1996**

Chromogenic color print

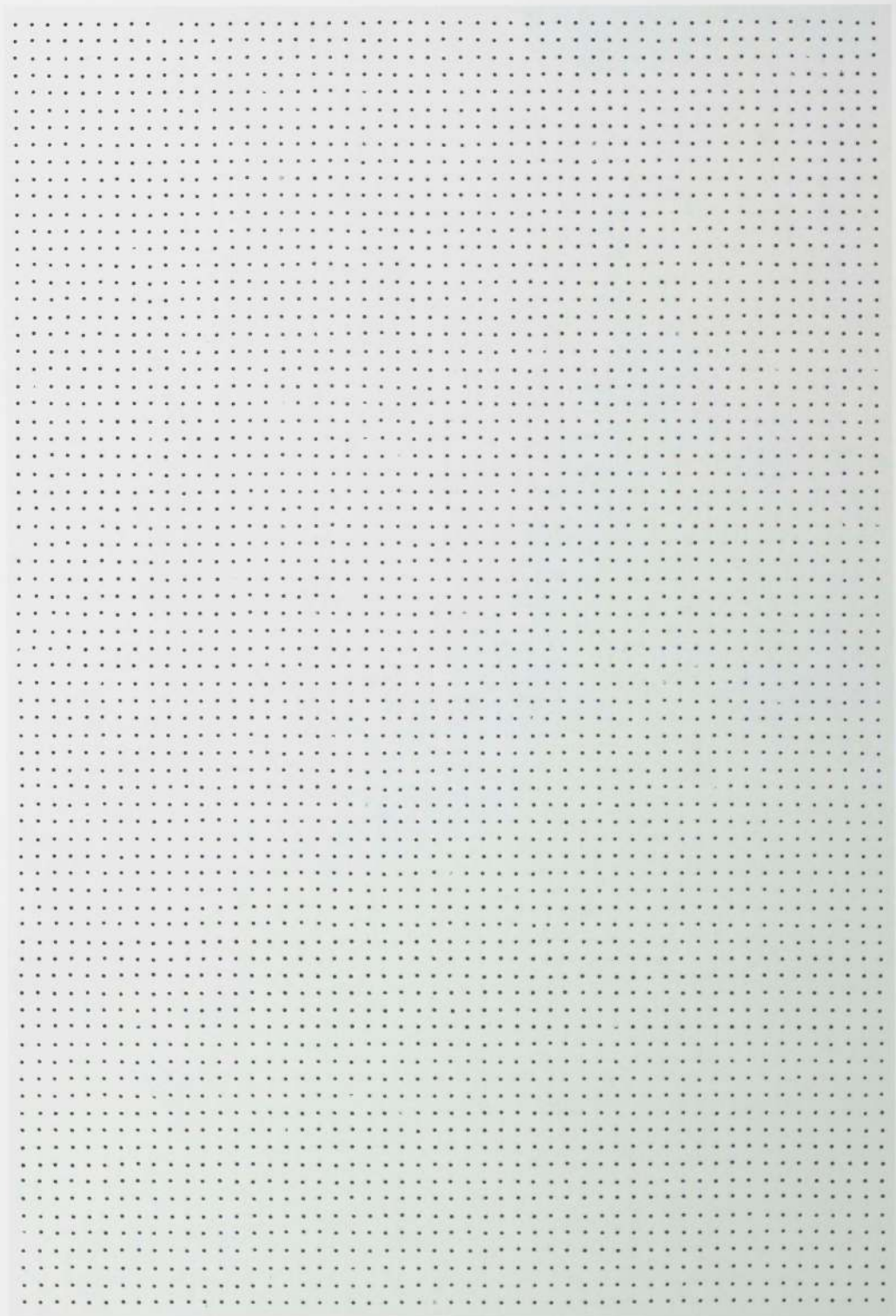
6' 1/4" x 9' 4 3/16" (183.5 x 285 cm)

Detail



**Panel (Paneel). 1996**

Chromogenic color print  
63 x 47<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (160 x 121 cm)





**Room (Zimmer). 1996**

Chromogenic color print

67<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" x 7' 7<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (172 x 232 cm)

The Museum of Modern Art, New York

Gift of the Nina W. Werblow Charitable Trust

Detail





**Balconies (Balkone). 1997**

Chromogenic color print

59 1/16 x 50 3/8" (150 x 128 cm)



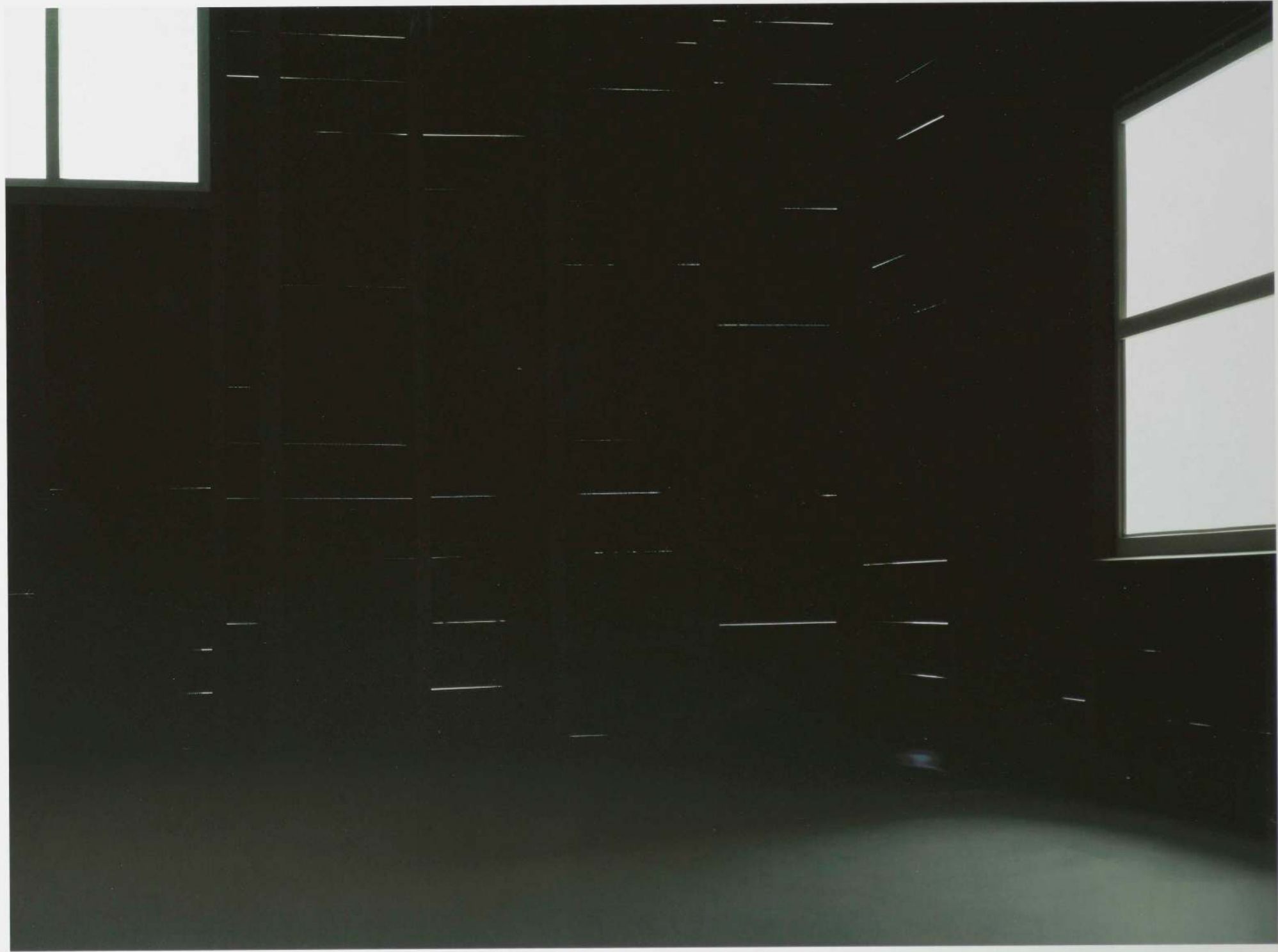
**Barn (Scheune). 1997**

Chromogenic color print

6' 1/4" x 8' 4" (183.5 x 254 cm)

The Museum of Modern Art, New York

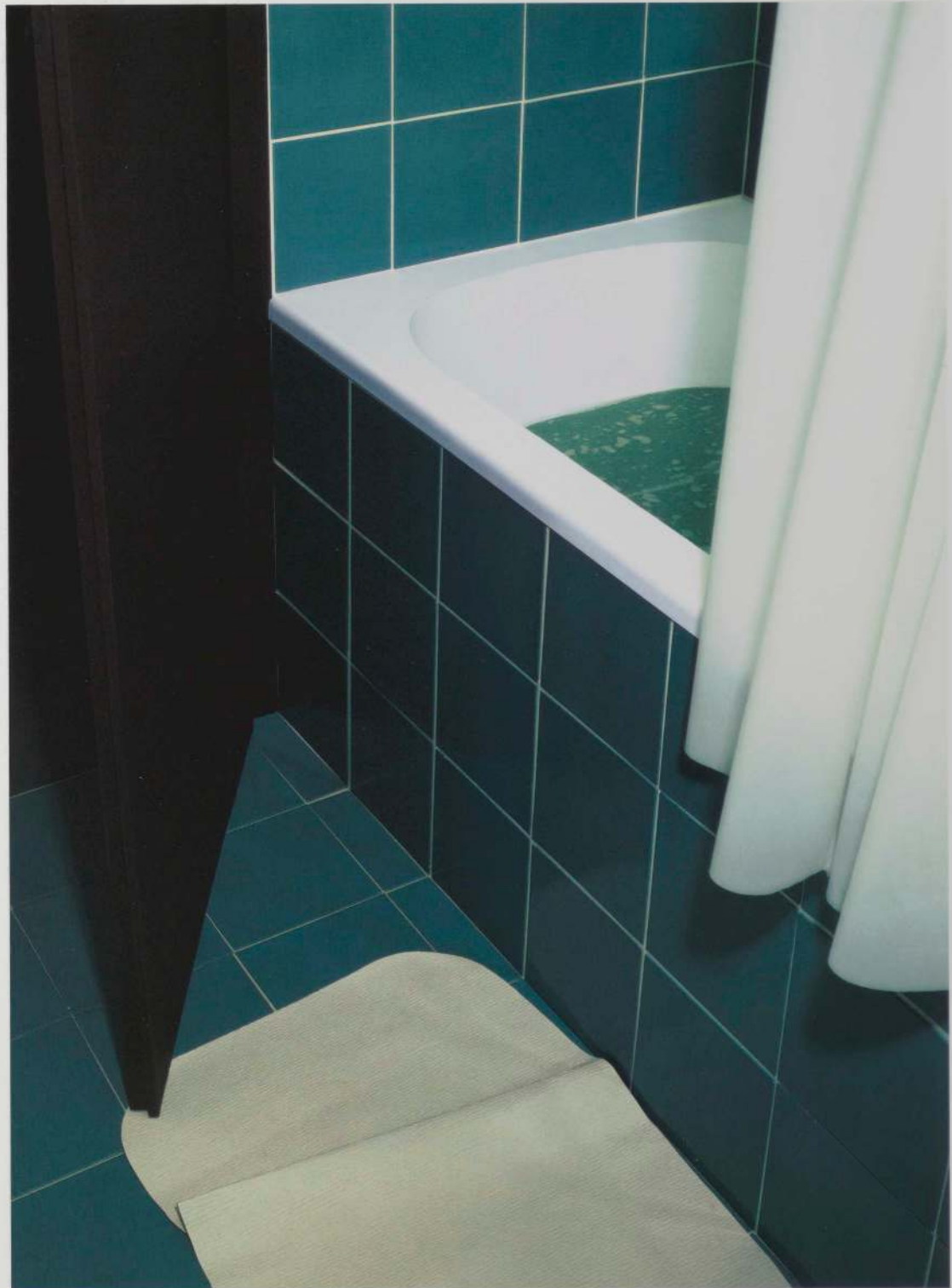
Fractional and promised gift of David Teiger



**Bathroom (Badezimmer). 1997**

Chromogenic color print

63 x 48 1/16" (160 x 122 cm)



**Parlor (Salon). 1997**

Chromogenic color print

6'1/4" x 55'1/2" (183.5 x 141 cm)





**Sink (Spüle). 1997**

Chromogenic color print

20 1/2 x 22 1/4" (52 x 56.5 cm)



**Studio. 1997**

Chromogenic color print

6' 1/4" x 11' 5 1/8" (183.5 x 349.5 cm)



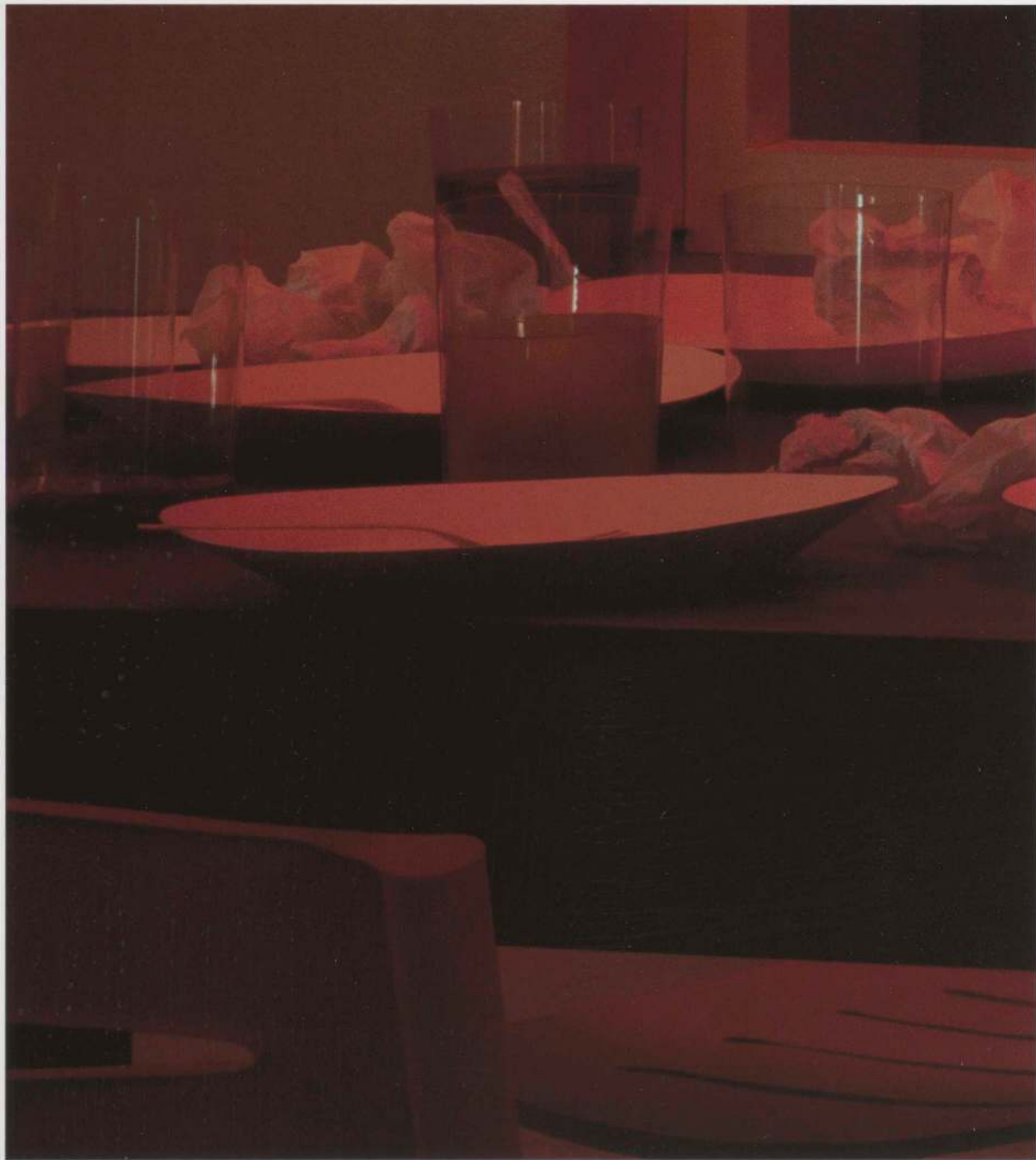


**Lawn (Rasen). 1998**

Chromogenic color print

48 1/16 x 66 15/16" (122 x 170 cm)





**Terrace (Terrasse), 1998**

Chromogenic color print

6' 1/4" x 8' 9 1/2" (183.5 x 268 cm)

Detail





**Window (Fenster). 1998**

Chromogenic color print

6' 1/4" x 9' 4 5/8" (183.5 x 286 cm)



**Camping Table (Campingtisch). 1999**

Chromogenic color print

33 $\frac{1}{2}$  x 22 $\frac{7}{8}$ " (85 x 58 cm)



**Copy Shop. 1999**

Chromogenic color print

6' 1/4" x 9' 10 1/8" (183.5 x 300 cm)





**Mural (Wand).** 1999

Chromogenic color print

6'1/4" x 8' 10" (183.5 x 270 cm)



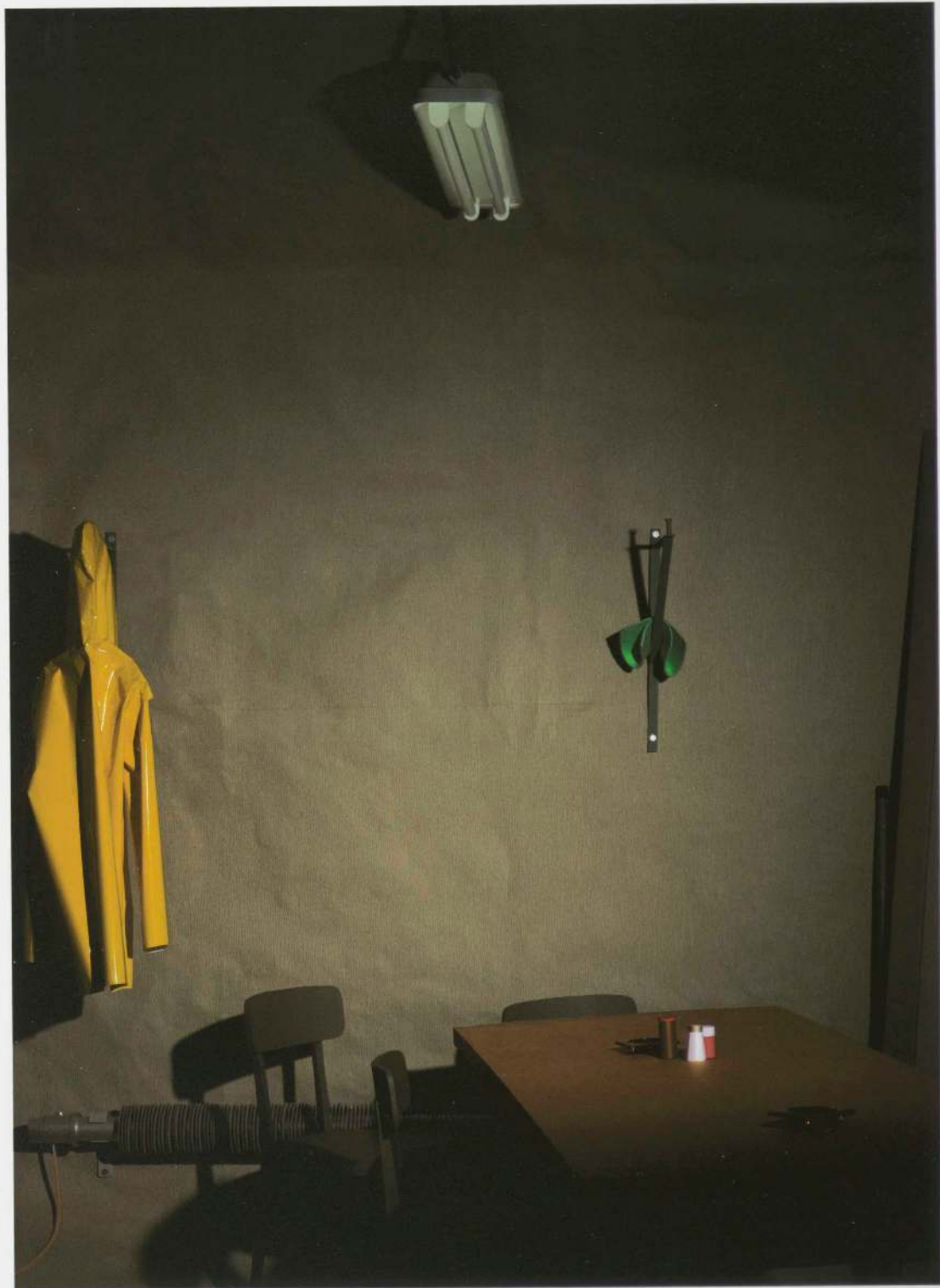




**Pit (Grube). 1999**

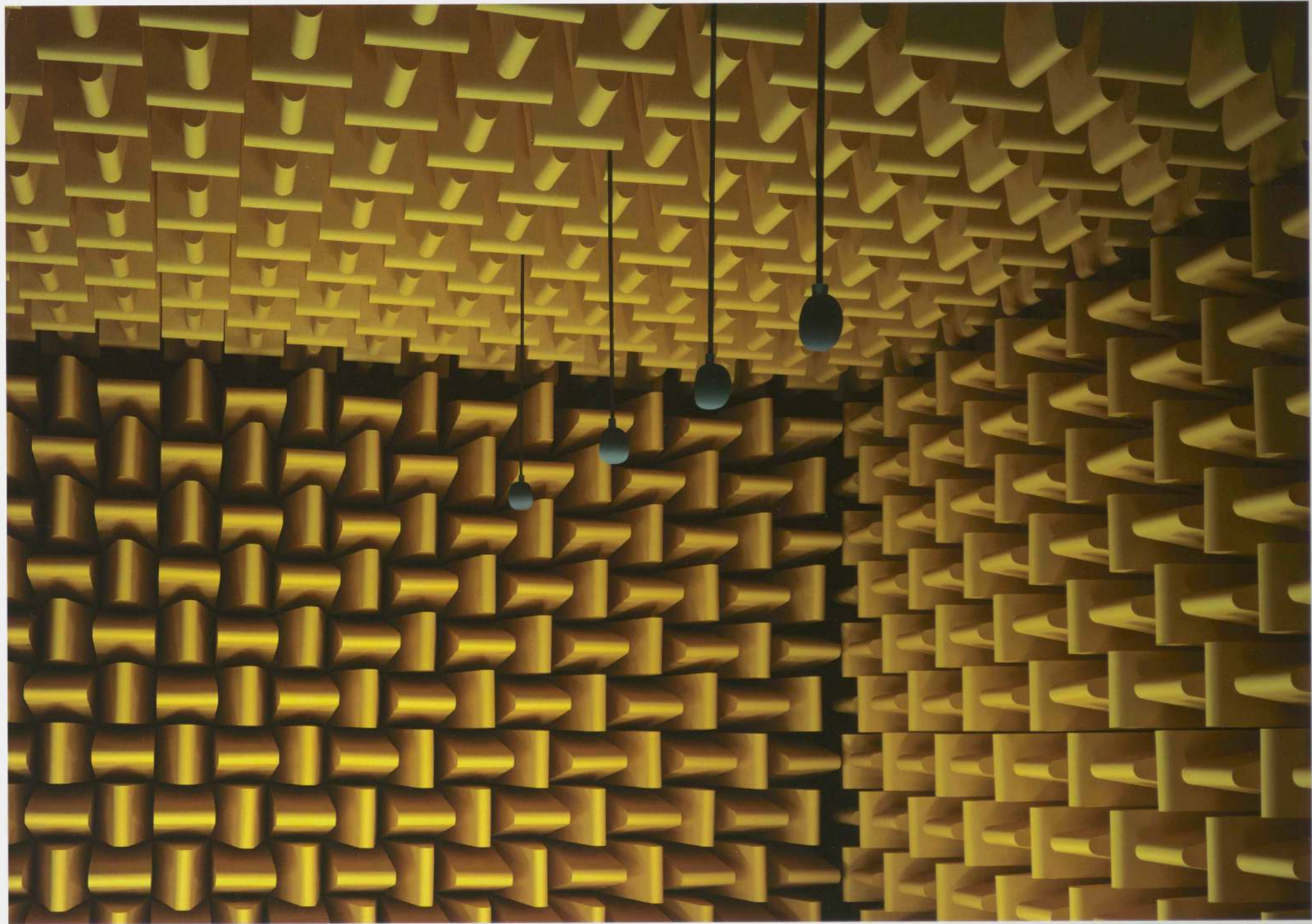
Chromogenic color print

7' 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" x 65<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (229 x 167 cm)



**Laboratory (Labor). 2000**

Chromogenic color print  
70 7/8" x 8' 9 1/2" (180 x 268 cm)



**Model (Modell). 2000**

Chromogenic color print

64 3/4" x 6' 10 11/16" (164.5 x 210 cm)





**Podium. 2000**

Chromogenic color print

9' 8<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" x 70<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" (296 x 178 cm)





**Stable (Stall). 2000**

Chromogenic color print

43<sup>5</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 49" (110 x 125 cm)



**Calculator (Rechner). 2001**

Chromogenic color print

68 7/8" x 14' 4" (175 x 437 cm)





**Collection. 2001**

Chromogenic color print

59 1/16" x 6' 6 3/4" (150 x 200 cm)



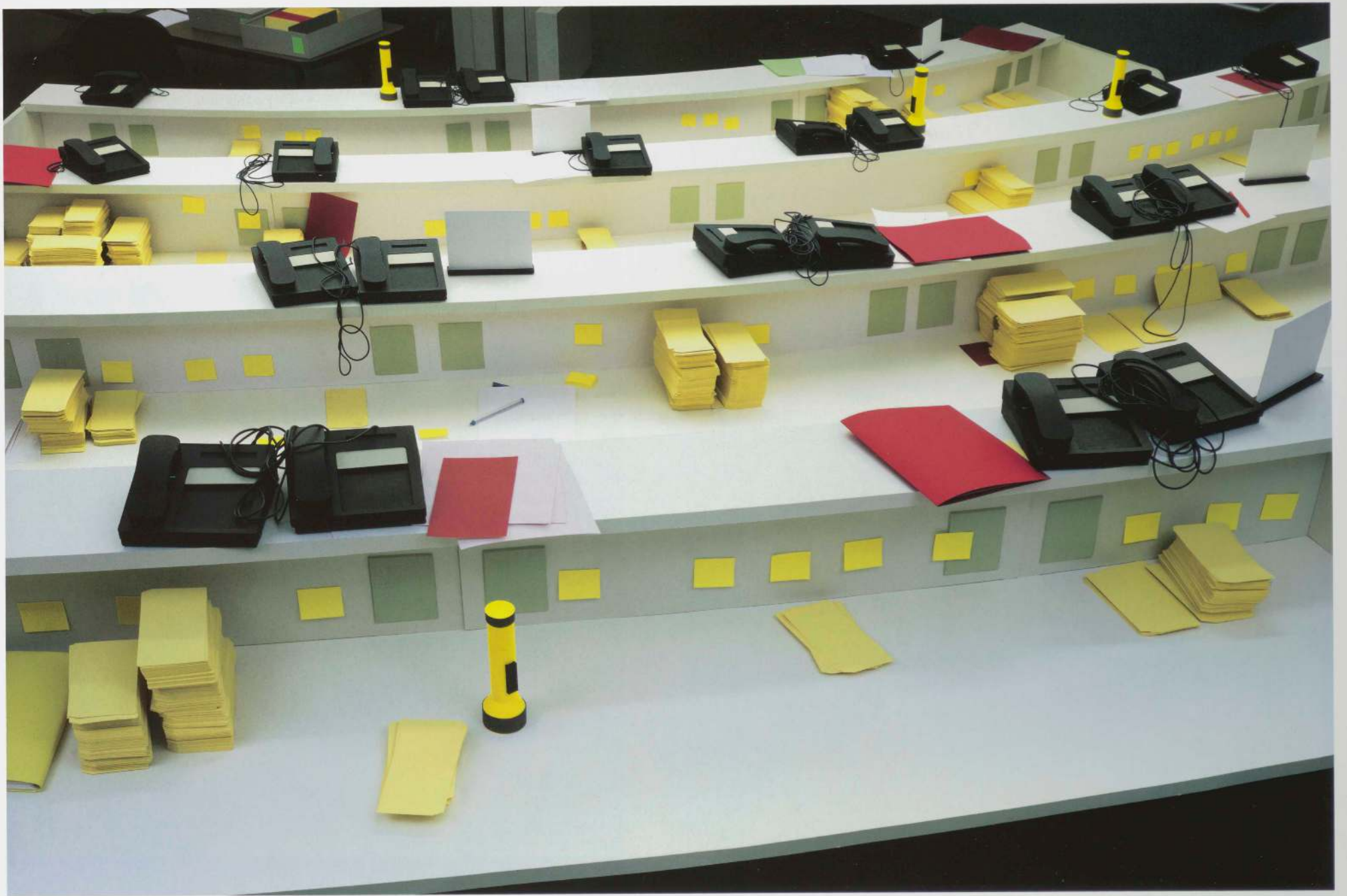
**Pile (Stapel) #5. 2001**

Chromogenic color print  
13 x 21 5/8" (36 x 55 cm)



**Poll. 2001**

Chromogenic color print  
71" x 8' 6" (180 x 260 cm)  
The Museum of Modern Art, New York  
Fractional and promised gift of  
Sharon Coplan Hurowitz and Richard Hurowitz

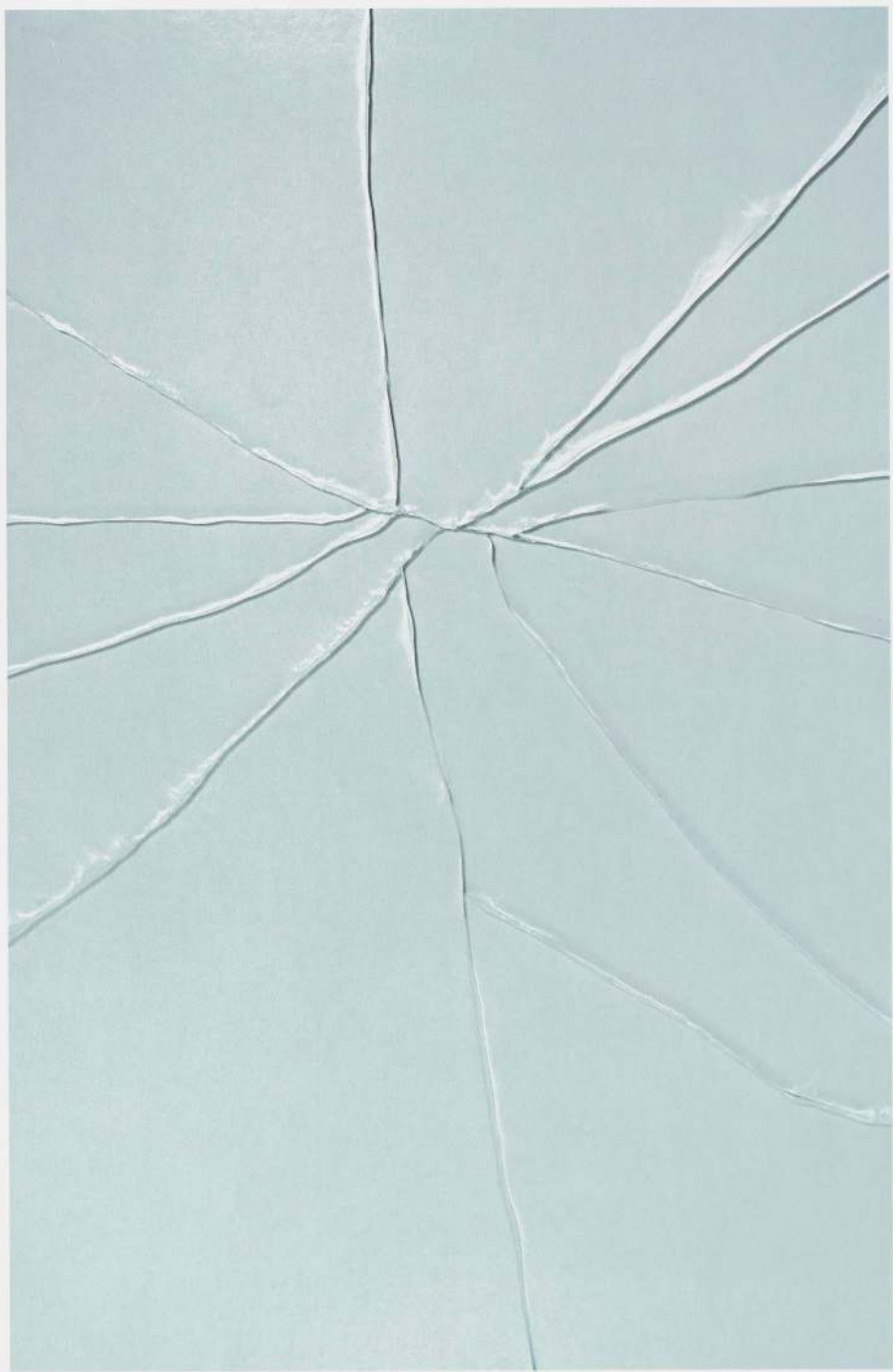




**Glass (Glas), I+II. 2002**

Chromogenic color print

Diptych, each: 22<sup>12</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 15<sup>3</sup>/<sub>4</sub>" (58 x 40 cm)



**Bullion. 2003**

Chromogenic color print

16<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 23<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (42 x 60 cm)



**Clearing. 2003**

Chromogenic color print

6' 3<sup>9</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" x 16' 2<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (192 x 495 cm)

The Museum of Modern Art, New York

Gift of Carol and David Appel in honor

of the Seventy-fifth Anniversary of

The Museum of Modern Art





**Ghost. 2003**

Chromogenic color print

48<sup>1</sup>/<sub>16</sub> x 63" (122 x 160 cm)





**Space Simulator. 2003**

Chromogenic color print

9' 10" x 14' 1" (300 x 429.4 cm)



**Fence (Zaun).** 2004

Chromogenic color print

70<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" x 7' 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" (180 x 230 cm)



**Gate. 2004**

Chromogenic color print

70<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" x 7' 9<sup>1</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" (180 x 238 cm)





**Kitchen (Küche). 2004**

Chromogenic color print

52<sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> x 65" (133 x 165 cm)

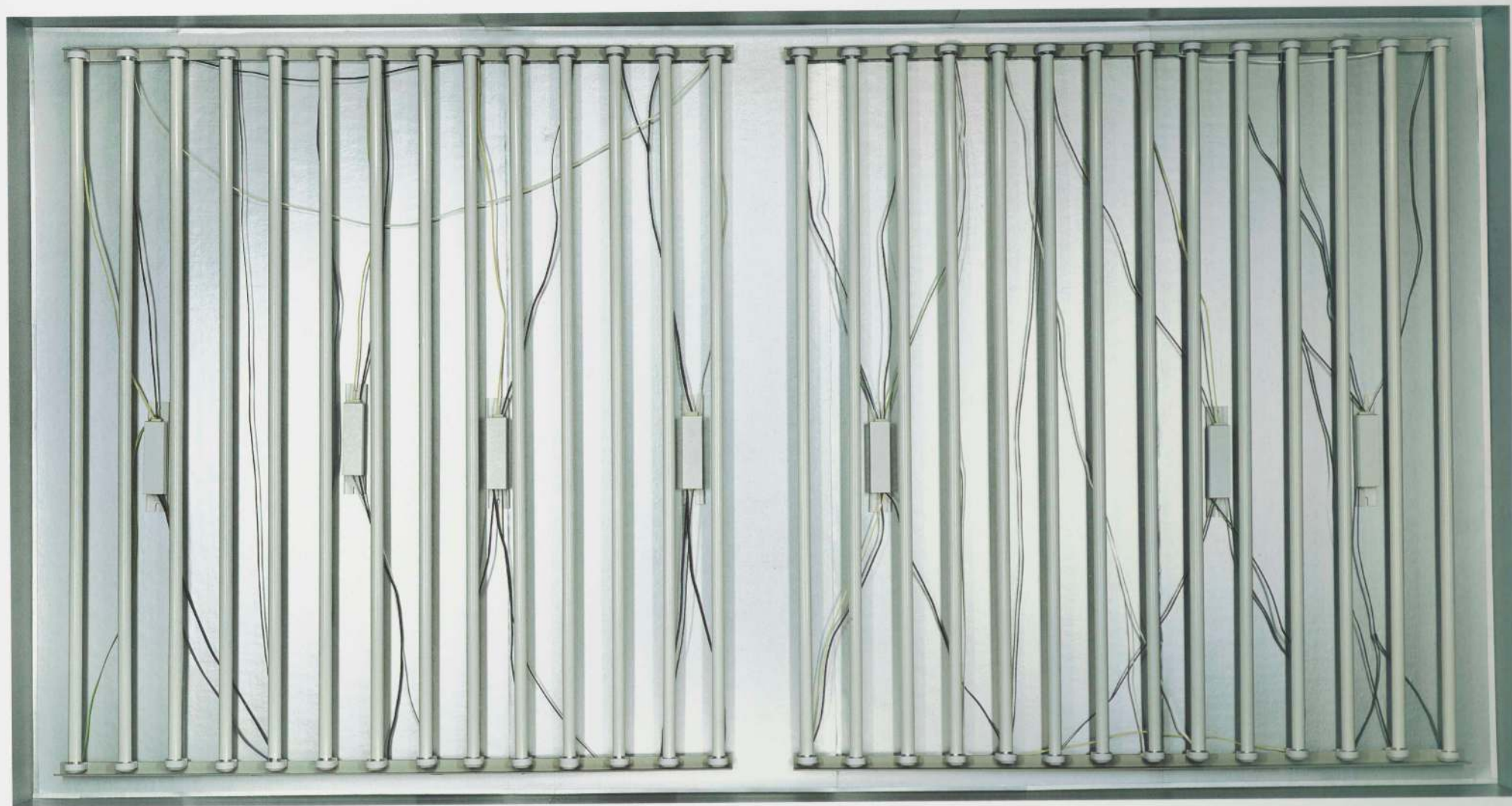




**Lightbox (Leuchtkasten). 2004**

Chromogenic color print

59<sup>7</sup>/<sub>8</sub>" x 9' 6<sup>3</sup>/<sub>16</sub>" (152 x 290 cm)





The Films





**Tunnel.** 1999

35mm film loop, 2 minutes, Dolby SR

**Escalator (Rolltreppe). 2000**

35mm film loop, 2 minutes



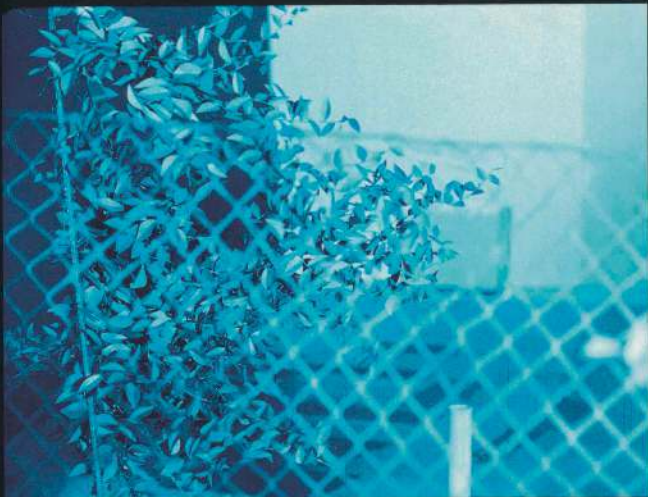




**Recorder. 2002**

35mm film loop, 2 minutes 17 seconds, Dolby SR





**Yard (Hof). 2002**  
35mm film loop, 1 minute 28 seconds, Dolby SR

Trick. 2004

35mm film loop, 59 seconds







Exhibitions and Selected Bibliography



## Exhibitions

Arranged chronologically within each year

### Solo Exhibitions

#### 1992

Galerie Guy Ledune, Brussels  
Förderkoje, Art Cologne, Cologne  
Galerie Tanit, Munich

#### 1994

Galerie Blancpain-Stepcynski, Geneva  
Galerie Tanit, Cologne

#### 1995

Victoria Miro Gallery, London  
Galerie Guy Ledune, Brussels  
Galerie Renos Xippas, Paris

#### 1996

Galerie Tanit, Munich  
Galerie de l'Ancienne Poste, Le Channel, Calais (December 7,  
1996–February 12, 1997). Traveled to: Vassivière en  
Limousin, Centre national d'art et du paysage, Vassivière  
(April 19–June 28, 1997)  
Max Protetch Gallery, New York

#### 1997

Victoria Miro Gallery, London  
Galerie Monika Sprüth, Cologne

#### 1998

Kunsthalle Zurich, Zurich (March 28–May 24). Traveled to:  
Kunsthalle Bielefeld, Bielefeld (June 7–September 6)  
Galeria Monica de Cardenas, Milan  
Galerie Schipper & Krome, Berlin

303 Gallery, New York  
Kunstverein Freiburg im Marienbad, Freiburg

#### 1999

*Tunnel, Art Now 17*. Tate Gallery, London

#### 2000

Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich  
Victoria Miro Gallery, London  
Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris (November  
24, 2000–February 4, 2001)  
*Hof*. Galerie Monika Sprüth, Cologne  
Oktogon der Hochschule für Bildende Künste Dresden,  
Dresden. Traveled to: Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Kunstverein  
für die Rheinlande und Westfalen, Düsseldorf

#### 2001

*Thomas Demand con Caruso St. John architetti a Palazzo Pitti*.  
Galleria d'Arte Moderna di Palazzo Pitti, Florence  
303 Gallery, New York  
Sprengel Museum, Hanover  
De Appel, Centrum voor Beeldende Kunst, Amsterdam  
ArtPace, San Antonio (September 6–November 25). Traveled  
to: Aspen Art Museum, Aspen (December 14, 2001–  
January 27, 2002); and SITE Santa Fe, Santa Fe (February  
16–June 2, 2002)

#### 2002

Galerie Schipper & Krome, Berlin  
Castello di Rivoli, Museo d'Arte Contemporanea, Turin  
Louisiana Museum for Moderne Kunst, Humlebæk  
(October 10–December 14). Traveled to: Städtische Galerie  
und Kunstbau im Lenbachhaus, Munich (October 26,  
2002–January 19, 2003)

#### 2003

Galleri K, Oslo  
Dundee Contemporary Arts, Dundee

Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo  
Galeria Helga de Alvear, Madrid

#### 2004

303 Gallery, New York  
*Phototrophy*. Kunsthaus Bregenz, Bregenz  
German contribution for the 26 Bienal of São Paulo, São Paulo  
Galerie Schipper & Krome, Berlin

#### 2005

Victoria Miro Gallery, London

### Group Exhibitions

#### 1990

*Gezweigt in sieben Mosigwellen*. Galerie Löhr,  
Mönchengladbach

#### 1991

*Quellen und Ergänzungen*. Galerie der Künstler, Munich  
*Materiaux Photo*. Galerie Guy Ledune, Brussels

#### 1992

*Photoladen*. Kunstwerkstatt Lothringerstrasse, Munich

#### 1993

*Het Intellectuele Geweeten van de Kunst*. Galerie d'Eendt,  
Amsterdam

#### 1994

*Scharf im Schauen*. Haus der Kunst, Munich

#### 1995

*Le Paysage retrouvé*. Galerie Renos Xippas, Paris  
*Frühe Werke*. Galerie Tanit, Cologne  
*Temples*. Victoria Miro Gallery, London  
*Herbert Hamak, Thomas Demand et Stephan Dean*.

Galerie Renos Xippas, Paris  
*Ulrich Meister und Thomas Demand*. Galerie Christian Gögger, Munich  
*Morceaux Choisis du Fonds National d'Art Contemporain*. Magasin-Centre national d'art contemporain de Grenoble, Grenoble  
*Ars Viva 95/96: Thomas Demand, Wolfgang Tillmanns, Barbara Probst und Jochen Lempert*. Kunstverein Frankfurt, Frankfurt (December 6, 1995–January 7, 1996). Traveled to: Kunsthalle Nuremberg, Nuremberg (February 15–March 24, 1996)

#### 1996

*Passions privées*. Musée d'art moderne de la ville de Paris, Paris  
*Prospect 96—Photographie in der Gegenwartskunst*. Kunstverein Frankfurt, Frankfurt  
*Radikale Bilder*. 2. Österreichische Triennale zur Fotografie. Neue Galerie und Künstlerhaus Graz (June 15–July 28). Traveled to: Szombathelyi Képtár, Szombathely (September 10–October 31)  
*Fotografia nell'arte tedesca contemporanea*. Galleria Claudia Gian Ferrari Arte Contemporanea, Milan (September 19–November 9). Traveled to: Foro Boario, Modena (November 24, 1996–February 9, 1997)  
*Campo 6: Il Villaggio a Spirale*. Galleria Civica d'Arte Moderna e Contemporanea, Turin (September 28–November 3). Traveled to: Bonnefonten Museum, Maastricht (January 19–May 25, 1997)  
*New Photography 12*. The Museum of Modern Art, New York (October 24, 1996–February 4, 1997)  
*Raumbilder–Bildräume*. Museum Folkwang, Essen  
*Ritratti di interno*. Studio La Città, Verona  
*Leonkart*. Centro Sociale Occupato Leoncavallo, Milan

#### 1997

*Making It Real*. Organized by Independent Curators Incorporated, New York. Traveled to: Aldrich Museum of Contemporary Art, Ridgefield, Connecticut (January

19–April 20); Reykjavik Municipal Art Museum, Reykjavik (October 18–November 23); Portland Museum of Art, Portland, Oregon (January 22–March 22, 1998); and Bayly Art Museum, University of Virginia, Charlottesville (September 18–November 15, 1998)

*Defamiliar: Julie Becker, Miles Coolidge, Thomas Demand*.

Regen Projects, Los Angeles  
*Broken Home*. Greene Naftali Gallery, New York  
*Une minute scénario*. Le Printemps de Cahors, Saint-Cloud  
*The Set-Up: Demand, Crewdson, Morimura*. Galerie Barbara Farber, Amsterdam

*Positionen künstlerischer Photographie in Deutschland seit 1945*. Berlinische Galerie and Martin-Gropius-Bau, Berlin

*Transit*. Centre national des arts plastiques and the École nationale supérieure des beaux-arts, Paris

*Strange Days: British Contemporary Photography*. Galleria Claudia Gian Ferrari Arte Contemporanea, Milan  
*Kunstpreis der Böttcherstrasse in Bremen 1997*. Bonner Kunstverein, Bonn

*Heaven*. P.S.1 Center for Contemporary Art, Long Island City, New York (October 1997–spring 1998)

*Thomas Demand/Clay Ketter*. Galerie Peter Kilchmann, Zurich  
*Stills: Emerging Photography in the 1990s*. Walker Art Center, Minneapolis

*Elsewhere*. Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh

#### 1998

*View (One)*. Mary Boone Gallery, New York  
*Artificial*. Museu d'Art Contemporani, Barcelona  
*The Citibank Private Bank Photography Prize 1998*. The Photographers' Gallery, London  
*Exterminating Angel*. Galerie Ghislaine Hussenot, Paris  
*Vollkommen gewöhnlich*. Kunstverein Freiburg im Marienbad, Freiburg (March 20–May 3). Traveled to: Germanisches Nationalmuseum, Nuremberg (May 21–August 23); Kunstverein Braunschweig, Braunschweig (September 6–October 18); Kunsthalle zu Kiel, Kiel (November 29, 1998–January 24, 1999); and Kunstsammlung Gera, Gera

(February 12–April 11, 1999)

*Être Nature*. Fondation Cartier pour l'art contemporain, Paris  
*Everyday*. Sydney Biennial, Sydney  
*Guarene Arte 98 + Zone*. Fondazione Sandretto Re Rebaudengo per l'Arte, Turin

*Berlin-Berlin*. 1. Berlin Biennale. Akademie der Künste, Kunst-Werke, and Ehemaliges Postfuhramt Oranienburgerstrasse, Berlin

*Site Construction*. South London Gallery, London  
*Situacionismo, Un Grupo de Fotografias*. Galeria OMR, Mexico City

*The End is the Beginning*. Bricks & Kicks, Vienna

#### 1999

*Insight-Out: Landschaft und Interieur als Themen zeitgenössischer Photographie*. Kunstraum Innsbruck, Innsbruck (February 20–May 8). Traveled to: Kunsthau Hamburg, Hamburg (July 27–September 5); and Kunsthau Baselland, Basel (October 9–November 21)  
*Photography: An Expanded View, Recent Acquisitions*. Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York  
*Contemplating Pollock: Thomas Demand, Peter Doig, Andreas Gursky*. Victoria Miro Gallery, London  
*Anarchitecture*. De Appel Centrum voor Beeldende Kunst, Amsterdam  
*Spaced Out: Late 1990s Works from the Vicki and Kent Logan Collection*. California College of Arts and Crafts, San Francisco  
*Reconstructing Space: Architecture in Recent German Photography*. Architectural Association, London  
*Objects in the rear view mirror may appear closer than they are*. Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin  
*Grosse Illusionen (Great Illusions): Thomas Demand, Andreas Gursky, Edward Ruscha*. Kunstmuseum Bonn, Bonn (June 17–August 15). Traveled to: Museum of Contemporary Art, North Miami, Miami (October 9–November 28)  
*Wohin kein Auge reicht*. 1. Triennale der Photographie. Deichtorhallen, Hamburg  
*Kraftwerk Berlin*. Aarhus Kunstmuseum, Aarhus

*Fotografie und Archiv.* Stadthaus Ulm, Ulm

*Das Versprechen der Photographie: Die Sammlung von DG Bank.* Kestner Gesellschaft, Hanover

*Can you hear me?* 2nd Ars Baltica Triennial of Photographic Art. Stadtgalerie im Sophienhof, Kiel (November 3–December 12). Traveled to: Kunsthalle Rostock, Rostock (February 6–April 2, 2000); and Contemporary Art Centre, Vilnius (June 9–July 23, 2000)

*Carnegie International 1999–2000.* Carnegie Museum of Art, Pittsburgh

*Children of Berlin: Cultural Developments 1989–1999.* P.S.1 Center for Contemporary Art, Long Island City, New York (November 7, 1999–January 2, 2000). Traveled to: Museum Folkwang, Essen (February 11–March 19, 2000)

*Space.* Galerie Schipper & Krome, Berlin

*Mirror's Edge.* BildMuseet Umeå Universitet, Umeå (November 21, 1999–February 20, 2000). Traveled to: Vancouver Art Gallery, Vancouver (March 18–August 13); Castello di Rivoli, Turin (October 5, 2000–January 14, 2001); Tramway, Glasgow (March 2–April 15, 2001); and Charlottenborg Udstillingsbygning, Copenhagen (June 20–August 26, 2001)

*Flashes, Tendências contemporâneas, Coleção Fondation Cartier.* Centro Cultural de Belém, Lisbon

## 2000

*Small World: Dioramas in Contemporary Art.* Museum of Contemporary Art, San Diego

*Cruce de Caminos/Cross-Roads: Artists in Berlin.* Sala Plaza de España de la Comunidad de Madrid, Madrid

*Raw.* Victoria Miro Gallery, London

*The Age of Influence: Reflections in the Mirror of American Culture.* Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago

*Deep Distance: Die Entfernung der Fotografie.* Kunsthalle Basel, Basel

*Négociations.* Centre régional d'art contemporain, Sète  
*Les Rumeurs urbaines/Urban Rumors.* FriArt Centre d'Art Contemporain, Freiburg

*Clip City/City Vision.* Media City Seoul. Metropolitan Museum, Seoul

*Die Scheinbaren Dinge.* Haus der Kunst, Munich

*Perfidy.* Couvent de La Tourette, l'Arbresle

*Vision og Virkelighed.* Louisiana Museum for Moderne Kunst, Humlebæk

*Open Ends: 11 Exhibitions of Contemporary Art from 1960 to Now. Sets and Situations.* The Museum of Modern Art, New York

*La forma del mondo/la fine del mondo.* Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, Milan

*Autowerke: Europäische und Amerikanische Fotografie 1999–2000.* Deichtorhallen, Hamburg

*Supermodel.* MASS MoCA, North Adams

## 2001

*Big Nothing.* Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Baden-Baden

*Tracking.* California College of Arts and Crafts, San Francisco

*Und keiner hinkt.* 1. Triennale der Photographie. Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Kleve (April 4–June 17). Traveled to: Kunsthalle Düsseldorf, Düsseldorf (June 29–July 22)

*Public Offerings.* Museum of Contemporary Art, Los Angeles

*Tempted to Pretend.* Kunsthalle Kaufbeuren, Kaufbeuren

*Inside House.* Musée des Beaux-Arts, Orléans

*TRADE. Waren, Wege und Werte im Welthandel heute.*

Fotomuseum Winterthur, Winterthur (June 16–August 19). Traveled to: Nederlands Foto Instituut, Rotterdam (January 13–March 3, 2002)

*Connivence.* Biennale de Lyon, Lyon

*Ich bin mein Auto.* Kunsthalle Baden-Baden, Baden-Baden

*Klasse Schwegler.* Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Kleve

*Ten Photographers.* Galleri K, Oslo

*Tele(visions)–Kunst: Kunst sieht fern.* Kunsthalle Wien, Vienna

*La Natura della natura morta da Manet ai nostri giorni.* Galleria d'Arte Moderna, Bologna

*Loop.* P.S.1 Center for Contemporary Art, Long Island City, New York

## 2002

*Pictures.* Greene Naftali Gallery, New York

*In Szene gesetzt: Architektur in der Fotografie der Gegenwart.*

Museum für Neue Kunst and Zentrum für Kunst und Medientechnologie, Karlsruhe (February 9–April 1).

Traveled to: Kunsthau Kaufbeuren, Kaufbeuren (July 4–September 28)

*Non-Places.* Kunstverein Frankfurt, Frankfurt

*Telling Tales.* Tate Liverpool, Liverpool

*Paarungen.* Berlinische Galerie, Berlin

*Screen Memories.* Art Tower Mito, Contemporary Art Center, Mito

*Andere Räume.* Hamburg Foto-Triennale. Kunstverein Hamburg, Hamburg

*Balsam-Exhibition der Fussballseele.* Helmhaus, Zurich

*Moving Pictures.* Solomon R. Guggenheim Museum, New York

*Lila, Weiss und Andere Farben.* Galerie Max Hetzler, Berlin

*Everyday Utopias.* Padiglione d'Arte Contemporanea, Milan  
*Great Theatre of the World.* Taipei Biennial. Taipei Fine Arts Museum, Taipei

*Thomas Demand, Yasumasa Morimura, Fred Tomaselli.* SITE Santa Fe, Santa Fe

## 2003

*Imperfect Innocence: The Debra and Dennis Scholl Collection.*

Contemporary Museum, Baltimore (January 11–March 11).

Traveled to: Palm Beach Institute of Contemporary Art, Lake Worth (April 12–June 15)

*Rijksakademie—Artists from the past ten years at the Rijksakademie van beeldende kunsten.* Victoria Miro Gallery, London

*Re-Produktion 2.* Galerie Georg Kargl, Vienna

*Gallery Artists.* Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo

*Imaginando espacios, recreando realidades.* Colección Fundación ARCO. Centro Galego de Arte Contemporánea, Santiago de Compostela

*Zeitgenössische Deutsche Fotografie.* Museum Folkwang, Essen

*Journey to Now: John Kaldor Art Projects and Collection.*  
Art Gallery of South Australia, Adelaide

*20th Anniversary Show.* Galerie Monika Sprüth, Cologne

*Horizonte.* Museum Franz Gertsch, Burgdorf

*Cover Theory: L'arte contemporanea come re-interpretazione.*  
Officina della Luce, Piacenza

*Archive and Simulation.* Centro Cultural de Belém, Lisbon

*Interludes.* Venice Biennale, Venice

*Eden.* Antiquo Colegio de San Ildefonso, Centro Histórico,  
Guadalajara

*Contemporary Collecting: New Art for Manchester.* Manchester  
Art Gallery, Manchester

*Neo Rauch und Europäische Gegenwartskunst.* Ludwig Forum  
für Internationale Kunst, Aachen

*Berlin-Moskau/Moskau-Berlin 1950–2000.* Martin-Gropius-Bau,  
Berlin (September 28, 2003–January 5, 2004). Traveled to:  
State Historical Museum, Moscow (April 3–June 15, 2004)

*Strange Days.* Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago

*Colección Sandretto Re Rebaudengo.* Institut Valencia d'Art  
Modern, Valencia

*Fast Forward: Media Art.* Sammlung Goetz. Zentrum für Kunst  
und Medientechnologie, Karlsruhe

*Outlook: International Art Exhibition Athens 2003.* Arena—  
Society for the Advancement of Contemporary Art in  
Athens, Athens

*Print Publishers Spotlight: Edition Schellman.* Barbara Krakow  
Gallery, Boston

*Adorno: Die Möglichkeit des Unmöglichen.* Kunstverein  
Frankfurt, Frankfurt

*Real Space Conceptual Space.* Anna Achmatowa Museum,  
St. Petersburg (November 18–December 15). Traveled  
to: Muzeum Historii Fotografii w Krakowie, Krakow  
(January 16–February 14, 2004)

*The Office.* The Photographers' Gallery, London

*BONOBOS.* Niels Borch Jensen—Verlag und Druckkunst, Berlin

*Jede Fotografie ein Bild.* Siemens Fotosammlung. Pinakothek  
der Moderne, Munich (December 18, 2003–April 11, 2004)

## 2004

*Double Exposure.* Brigitte March Galerie, Stuttgart (February  
6–28). Traveled to: Galeria 2000, Nuremberg (April 30–May  
31); and Traywick Contemporary, Berkeley, California  
(September 1–October 9)

*La Collection Ordóñez Falcón—Une passion partagée.* Le  
Botanique, Brussels

*Sculptural Sphere.* Sammlung Goetz, Munich

*Paisaje y Memoria.* La Casa Encendida, Madrid

*Sammlung Plum.* Museum Kurhaus Kleve, Kleve

*Love-Hate from Magritte to Cattelan: Masterpieces from the  
Museum of Contemporary Art, Chicago.* Villa Manin—  
Centro d'Arte Contemporanea, Passariano

*Ten Year Anniversary Exhibition.* Taka Ishii Gallery, Tokyo

*Zeitgenössische Kunst aus Deutschland.* Europäische  
Zentralbank, Frankfurt

*Die Zehn Gebote (The Ten Commandments).* Deutsches  
Hygiene-Museum, Dresden

*Værker og Dage. Nyerhvervelser i Louisianas Samling  
2000–2004.* Louisiana Museum for Moderne Kunst,  
Humlebæk

*ArchiSkulptur.* Fondation Beyeler, Basel

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Spirale," 15–28.

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"Take away the apparent order established through  
systems of cultural distinction, and things begin to fall  
apart in the loveliest ways imaginable," n.p.

#### 1997

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Demand, Yasumasa Morimura.* Amsterdam: Galerie  
Barbara Farber, 1997.

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## 2002

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## 2004

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## Index

Numbers in *italics* refer to the color plates.

- Adam, Peter: 27 notes 15, 19  
Alanis, Art: 27 note 6  
Albers, Josef: 27 note 25  
Alberti, Leon Battista: 24  
Apollo Lunar Module Mission Simulator: 23; fig. 21  
Atget, Eugène: 20
- Baader-Meinhof group: 10, 21, 27 note 5  
Baar, Alfred H., Jr.: 17  
Barschel, Uwe: 20, 21; fig. 16  
Baselitz, Georg: 10  
Baudrillard, Jean: 18, 27 note 24  
Baumgarten, Lothar: 12  
Beach Boys: 25, 26  
Beatles, The: 25, 26  
Becher, Bernhard: 12; fig. 4  
Becher, Hilla: 12; fig. 4  
Benjamin, Walter: 19  
Beuys, Joseph: 10, 12  
Blume, Anna: 26  
Blume, Bernhard: 26  
Böcklin, Arnold: 24  
Breker, Arno: 14  
Briscoe, Desmond: fig. 23  
Brodovitch, Alexey: 19  
Broodthaers, Marcel: 10  
Bulloch, Angela: 13
- Casebere, James: 17  
de Chirico, Giorgio: 24  
Craig-Martin, Michael: 13
- Dahmer, Jeffrey: 20  
Darnton, Robert: 14, 27 note 11  
Davenport, Ian: 13
- David, Jacques-Louis: 21  
Demand, Thomas: 9–10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24, 25, 26, 27, notes 1, 21, 22, 32, 34, 35, 37, 39; fig. 5  
*Archive (Archiv)*: 14, 47  
*Balconies (Balkone)*: 61  
*Barn (Scheune)*: 18, 19, 63  
*Bathroom (Badezimmer)*: 20, 21, 65  
*Brenner Highway (Brenner Autobahn)*: 15, 41  
*Bullion*: 103  
*Calculator (Rechner)*: 23, 94–95  
*Camping Table (Campingtisch)*: 79  
*Clearing*: 24, 104–105  
*Collection*: 97  
*Copy Shop*: 80–81  
*Corridor (Flur)*: 20, 49  
*Diving Board (Sprungturm)*: 14–15, 43  
*Drafting Room (Zeichensaal)*: 16, 54, 55  
*Escalator (Rolltreppe)* (film): 25, 123  
*Fence (Zaun)*: 111  
*Gate*: 113  
*Ghost*: 26, 107  
*Glass (Glas), I+II*: 23–24, 101  
*Grand Piano (Flügel)*: 39  
*Kitchen (Küche)*: 22, 114, 115  
*Laboratory (Labor)*: 23, 87  
*Lawn (Rasen)*: 73  
*Lightbox (Leuchtkasten)*: 117  
*Model (Modell)*: 15, 89  
*Mural (Wand)*: 83  
*Office (Büro)*: 13–14, 51  
*Panel (Paneel)*: 57  
*Parlor (Salon)*: 67  
*Pile (Stapel)*: 98  
*Pit (Grube)*: 21, 25; 84, 85  
*Podium*: 21, 25, 90, 91  
*Poll*: 22, 99  
*Recorder* (film): 25, 124  
*Room (Raum)*: 13, 44, 45
- Room (Zimmer)*: 21, 58, 59  
*Sink (Spüle)*: 69  
*Space Simulator*: 23, 109  
*Stable (Stall)*: 18, 19, 93  
*Staircase (Treppenhaus)*: 16–17, 53  
*Studio*: 18, 70–71  
*Terrace (Terrasse)*: 74, 75  
*Trick* (film): 26, 128–29  
*Tunnel* (film): 24, 120–21  
*Window (Fenster)*: 23–24, 77  
*Yard (Hof)* (film): 25, 126–27
- Derbyshire, Delia: fig. 23  
Diana, Princess of Wales: 24; fig. 22
- Efimova, Alla: 27 note 17  
Emin, Tracey: 13  
Evans, Walker: 11, 20, 22, 27 note 30
- Fayed, Dodi Al-: fig. 22  
Foster, Hal: 27 note 13  
Fritsch, Katharina: 11
- Galassi, Peter: 27 note 7  
Goering, Hermann: 14; fig. 6  
Gropius, Walter: 16, 17  
Gursky, Andreas: 12
- Hambourg, Maria Morris: 27 note 30  
Heerich, Erwin: 10  
Heine, Heinrich: 14, 27 note 10  
Herbert, James: 16, 27 note 20  
Herbig, Barbara: 10  
Herbig, Dr. Jost: 10  
Herbig, Pepper: 10  
Hirst, Damien: 13  
Hitler, Adolf: 13, 15, 16, 27 note 18; figs. 6, 9  
Höfer, Candida: 12  
Hoffmann, Heinrich: 15; fig. 9

- Honert, Martin: 11  
Hubbard, L. Ron: 21  
Hume, Gary: 13  
Hussein, Saddam: 22; fig. 20  
Hütte, Axel: 12
- Ignatovich, Boris: 19  
Ignatovich, Olga: 19  
Immendorff, Jörg: 10  
Iofan, Boris M.: 15  
Irwin, Robert: 23
- Johnson, Philip: 17  
Jünger, Ernst: 14
- Kawara, On: 10  
Kelly, Ellsworth: 27 note 25  
Kiefer, Anselm: 12  
Krasner, Lee: 19; fig. 13
- Lampugnani, Vittorio Magnano: 27 note 18  
Langman, Eleazer: 19  
Le Corbusier (Charles-Édouard Jeanneret): 18  
Lembke, Robert: 18; fig. 12  
Levine, Michael G.: 27 note 10  
LeWitt, Sol: 11  
Liebs, Holger: 27 note 38  
Lissitzky, Lasar Markovich: 11–12, 27; fig. 3  
Lucas, Sarah: 13  
Lumière brothers: 26
- Marées, Hans von: 24  
de Maria, Walter: 10  
Méliès, Georges: 26  
Merz, Gerhard: 11  
Mies van der Rohe, Ludwig: 16, 23  
Milošević, Slobodan: 21–22, 25; fig. 17  
Moholy-Nagy, László: 16
- Muniz, Vik: 19, 27 notes 1, 22; fig. 14  
Mussolini, Benito: 15  
Muybridge, Eadweard: 26
- Namuth, Hans: 18–19; fig. 13  
Nauman, Bruce: 10  
Nesbit, Molly: 27 note 31  
Neubauer, Irene: fig. 12  
Nietzsche, Friedrich: 11  
Nordman, Maria: 23
- Oddy, Jason: 27 note 37  
Ofili, Chris: 13
- Palermo, Blinky: 10  
Panamarenko: 10  
Penck, A. R.: 10  
Peterhans, Walter: 16  
Petrusov, Georgy: 19  
Polke, Sigmar: 10, 12  
Pollock, Jackson: 18–19  
Princenthal, Nancy: 20, 27 note 29
- Quintin, Francois: 27 note 21
- Renger-Patzsch, Albert: 12  
Richter, Gerhard: 10, 12, 21, 27 notes 5, 25  
Richter, Hans: 26  
Riefenstahl, Leni: 14; fig. 8  
Rodchenko, Aleksandr: 19, 20; fig. 15  
Roth, Dieter: 10  
Ruby, Andreas: 27 note 12  
Ruff, Thomas: 12  
Rugoff, Ralph: 27 note 33  
Ruscha, Edward: 10, 11, 12, 27, note 6; fig. 2  
Ryman, Robert: 10
- Saatchi, Charles: 13
- Sander, August: 12, 17  
Saville, Jenny: 13  
Schlemmer, Oskar: 17; fig. 10  
Schmidt, Michael: 17; fig. 11  
Schütte, Thomas: 11  
Schwegler, Fritz: 11  
Searle, Adrian: 24, 27 note 36  
Shaikhet, Arkadii: 19  
Shannon, Claude Elwood: 22; fig. 19  
Shonibare, Yinka: 13  
Speer, Albert: 15, 16; fig. 9  
Stalin, Joseph: 16, 19  
Stauffenberg, Claus von: fig. 6  
Storr, Robert: 27 notes 5, 8  
Struth, Thomas: 12
- Taylor-Wood, Sam: 13  
Theweleit, Klaus: 27 note 13  
Thorak, Josef: 14  
Todt, Fritz: 15  
Tupitsyn, Margarita: 19, 27 notes 26–28  
Turrell, James: 23  
Tuttle, Richard: 10
- Valentin, Albert: 20, 27 note 31  
Varnedoe, Kirk: 27 note 14  
Vertov, Dziga: 9; fig. 1  
Vorhölzer, Richard: 16
- Wearing, Gillian: 13  
Weegee (Arthur Fellig): 21  
Wetzel, Michael: 27 note 9  
Wheeler, Douglas: 23  
Whiteread, Rachel: 13  
Whyte, Iain Boyd: 27 note 16  
Widmer, Ruedi: 27 notes 32, 34  
Wittgenstein, Ludwig: 11  
Wollen, Peter: 20, 27 note 33



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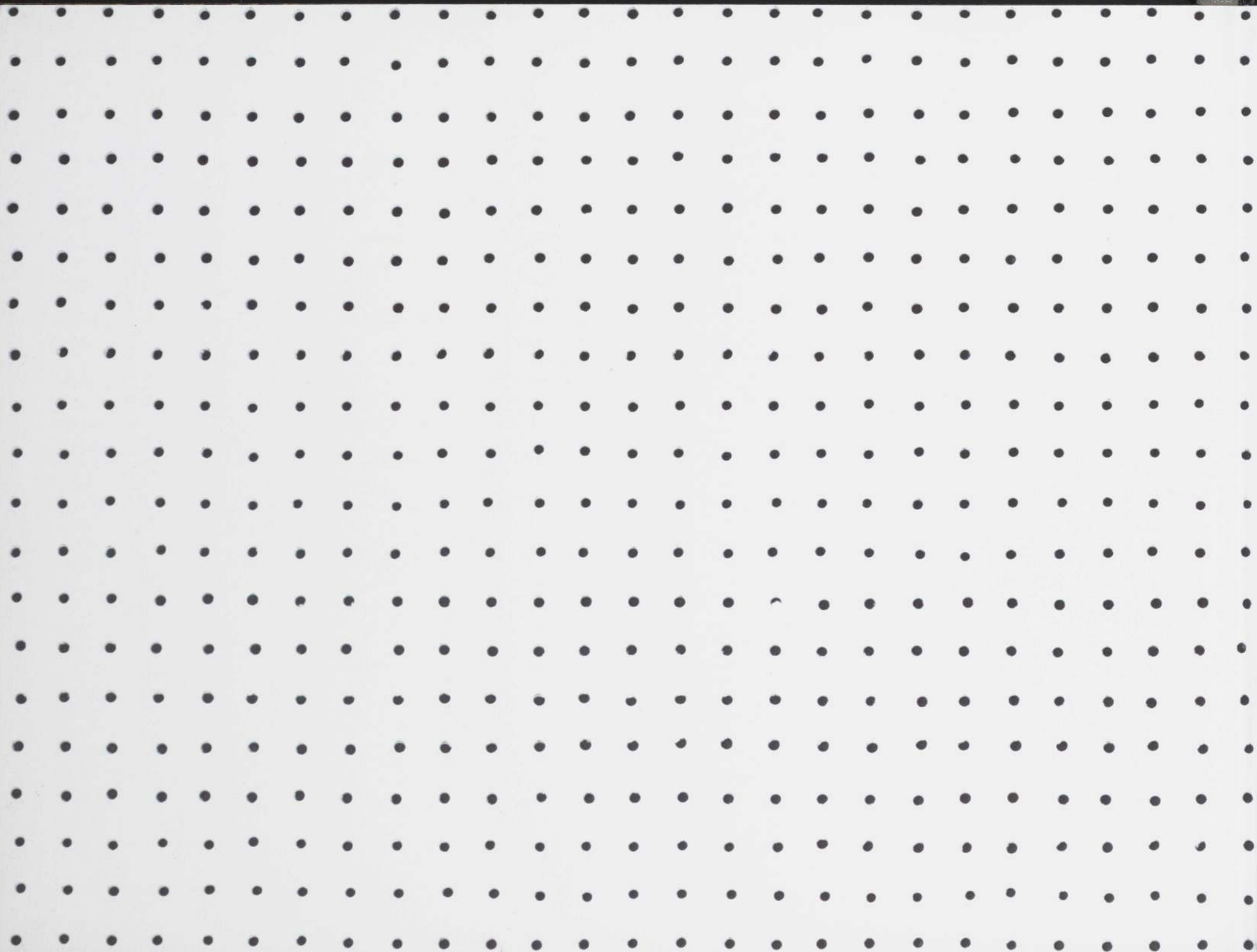
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Photographs can seem convincingly real or strangely artificial. The work of German photographer Thomas Demand achieves a disquieting balance between the two. Born in 1964, Demand began as a sculptor and took up photography to record his ephemeral paper constructions. In 1993 he turned the tables, henceforth making constructions for the sole purpose of photographing them. Demand begins with a preexisting image, usually culled from the media, which he translates into a life-size model made out of colored paper and cardboard. His handcrafted facsimiles of architectural spaces and natural environments are built in the image of other images. Thus, his photographs are triply removed from the scenes or objects they purport to depict. Once they have been photographed, the models are destroyed. Demand recently began to make 35mm films, setting his cinematic still images in motion. Combining craftsmanship and conceptualism in equal parts, Demand pushes the medium of photography toward uncharted frontiers. His originality has won him recognition as one of the most innovative artists of his generation.

This comprehensive publication presents all of Demand's major works from 1993 to the present. Roxana Marcoci, curator of this exhibition, has written an insightful analysis of the sources, methods, and themes of Demand's striking and provocative imagery. Jeffrey Eugenides, author of the Pulitzer Prize-winning novel *Middlesex*, contributes at once a comic homage and an illuminating appreciation of Demand's art.

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